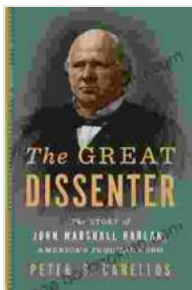


# John Marshall Harlan: America's Judicial Hero

John Marshall Harlan was one of the most influential Supreme Court justices in American history. He served on the Court for 34 years, from 1877 to 1911, and wrote some of the most important opinions in the Court's history. Harlan was a strong advocate for civil rights, and he dissented from the Court's infamous decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which upheld the doctrine of "separate but equal."



## The Great Dissenter: The Story of John Marshall Harlan, America's Judicial Hero by Peter Canellos

★★★★☆ 4.8 out of 5

Language : English  
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X-Ray : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 620 pages  
Screen Reader : Supported



Harlan was born in Kentucky in 1833. He graduated from Transylvania University and practiced law in Louisville before entering politics. He served in the Kentucky legislature and the United States House of Representatives. In 1877, President Rutherford B. Hayes appointed Harlan to the Supreme Court.

Harlan quickly became one of the most respected members of the Court. He was a brilliant legal scholar and a gifted writer. He was also a man of

great integrity and courage. Harlan was not afraid to stand up for what he believed in, even when it was unpopular.

One of the most important cases that Harlan dissented from was *Plessy v. Ferguson*. In this case, the Court upheld the constitutionality of a Louisiana law that required railroads to provide separate but equal accommodations for white and black passengers. Harlan wrote a powerful dissent, arguing that the law was unconstitutional because it violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* was a lonely one. He was the only member of the Court who dissented from the majority opinion. However, his dissent has been vindicated by history. In 1954, the Supreme Court overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Harlan's legacy is one of courage, integrity, and unwavering commitment to justice. He was a true judicial hero, and his work has helped to make America a more just and equal society.

## **Harlan's Early Life and Career**

John Marshall Harlan was born in Boyle County, Kentucky, on June 1, 1833. He was the son of James Harlan, a prominent Kentucky politician, and Ann Eliza Harlan. Harlan's father served in the Kentucky legislature and the United States House of Representatives. He was also a close friend of Henry Clay, the famous American statesman.

Harlan attended Centre College in Danville, Kentucky, and Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky. He graduated from Transylvania University in 1853. After graduating from law school, Harlan practiced law

in Louisville, Kentucky. He quickly became one of the most successful lawyers in the city.

In 1858, Harlan was elected to the Kentucky legislature. He served in the legislature for two terms. In 1861, he was elected to the United States House of Representatives. He served in the House for one term.

During the Civil War, Harlan served in the Union Army. He rose to the rank of colonel. After the war, Harlan returned to Kentucky and resumed his law practice.

In 1877, President Rutherford B. Hayes appointed Harlan to the Supreme Court. Harlan was 44 years old at the time. He was the youngest person to be appointed to the Court since Joseph Story in 1811.

### **Harlan's Supreme Court Career**

Harlan served on the Supreme Court for 34 years. He wrote some of the most important opinions in the Court's history. Harlan was a strong advocate for civil rights. He dissented from the Court's decision in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, which upheld the doctrine of "separate but equal."

Harlan also wrote important opinions in cases involving the Sherman Antitrust Act, the Interstate Commerce Act, and the Fourteenth Amendment. He was a strong supporter of the federal government's power to regulate the economy and protect civil rights.

Harlan was a brilliant legal scholar and a gifted writer. His opinions are models of clarity and logic. He was also a man of great integrity and

courage. He was not afraid to stand up for what he believed in, even when it was unpopular.

Harlan retired from the Supreme Court in 1911. He died in Washington, D.C., on October 14, 1911. He was 78 years old.

## **Harlan's Legacy**

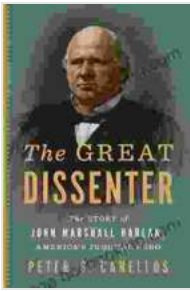
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Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* is one of the most famous dissents in American history. It is a powerful indictment of racial segregation. Harlan argued that the law was unconstitutional because it violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* was a lonely one. He was the only member of the Court who dissented from the majority opinion. However, his dissent has been vindicated by history. In 1954, the Supreme Court overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* in *Brown v. Board of Education*.

*Brown v. Board of Education* was a landmark decision that declared racial segregation in public schools unconstitutional. It was a major victory for the civil rights movement. Harlan's dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson* played an important role in paving the way for *Brown v. Board of Education*.

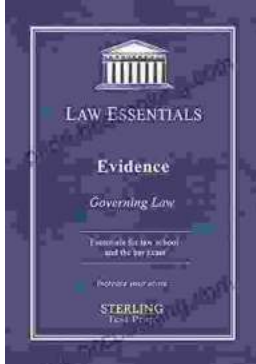
Harlan was a great American jurist. He was a man of courage, integrity, and unwavering commitment to justice. His work has helped to make America a more just and equal society.



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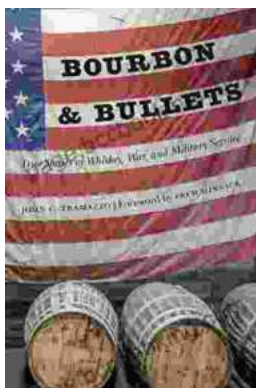
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