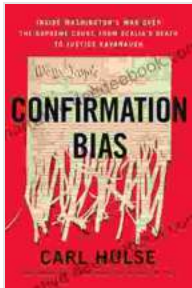


Inside Washington's War Over the Supreme Court, From Scalia's Death to the Confirmation of Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson



Confirmation Bias: Inside Washington's War Over the Supreme Court, from Scalia's Death to Justice

Kavanaugh by Carl Hulse

★★★★☆ 4.2 out of 5

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The death of Justice Antonin Scalia in February 2016 set off a political firestorm that has raged ever since. President Barack Obama nominated Merrick Garland to fill the seat, but the Republican-controlled Senate refused to hold hearings or vote on his nomination. This unprecedented obstructionism led to a bitter partisan battle that has continued to shape the court and American politics to this day.

The Scalia Vacancy

Scalia was a conservative icon and his death was a major blow to the right. Republicans were determined to prevent Obama from filling the seat with a liberal justice, and they used every procedural tool at their disposal to block Garland's nomination. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) declared that he would not allow any vote on a Supreme Court nominee in an election year, and he held firm to that position even as pressure mounted from Democrats and the public.

The Garland Nomination

Garland was a moderate judge who had been confirmed to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals with bipartisan support. He was widely seen as a qualified and non-controversial nominee, but Republicans refused to even consider his nomination. McConnell's unprecedented obstructionism set a new low in American politics and it has had lasting consequences for the court.

The Gorsuch Nomination

After Trump won the 2016 election, he nominated Neil Gorsuch to fill the Scalia vacancy. Gorsuch was a conservative judge who had been confirmed to the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals with bipartisan support. However, Democrats were still bitter over the Garland nomination and they vowed to block Gorsuch's confirmation. McConnell invoked the "nuclear option" and changed the Senate rules to allow Gorsuch to be confirmed with a simple majority vote. This move further escalated the partisan warfare over the court.

The Kavanaugh Nomination

In 2018, Trump nominated Brett Kavanaugh to fill the seat vacated by Justice Anthony Kennedy. Kavanaugh was a conservative judge who had

been confirmed to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals with bipartisan support. However, Kavanaugh's nomination was marred by allegations of sexual misconduct from his past. These allegations led to a bitter and divisive confirmation process that further polarized the country.

The Barrett Nomination

In 2020, Trump nominated Amy Coney Barrett to fill the seat vacated by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Barrett was a conservative judge who had been confirmed to the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals with bipartisan support. However, Barrett's nomination was made just weeks before the 2020 presidential election, and Democrats accused Republicans of hypocrisy for rushing her confirmation through after they had blocked Garland's nomination in an election year.

The Jackson Confirmation

In 2022, President Joe Biden nominated Ketanji Brown Jackson to fill the seat vacated by Justice Stephen Breyer. Jackson was a liberal judge who had been confirmed to the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals with bipartisan support. However, Republicans were still bitter over the Garland nomination and they vowed to block Jackson's confirmation. McConnell led the opposition to Jackson, but she was ultimately confirmed with a 53-47 vote. Jackson's confirmation was a historic moment, as she became the first Black woman to serve on the Supreme Court.

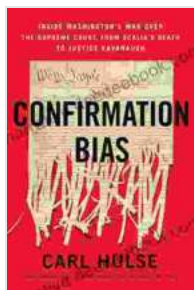
The Future of the Court

The Supreme Court is now more ideologically divided than it has been in decades. The conservative justices hold a 6-3 majority, and they are likely

to continue to issue rulings that favor conservative causes. This could have a profound impact on American law and society for years to come.

The future of the court is uncertain. Democrats have called for expanding the number of justices on the court, but Republicans have opposed this idea. It is also possible that the court could become even more partisan in the years to come, as both parties become more entrenched in their ideological positions.

The battle over the Supreme Court has been one of the most consequential political battles in recent American history. The stakes are high, as the court has the power to shape American law and society for generations to come. It is essential that both parties work together to ensure that the court remains an independent and impartial institution.



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