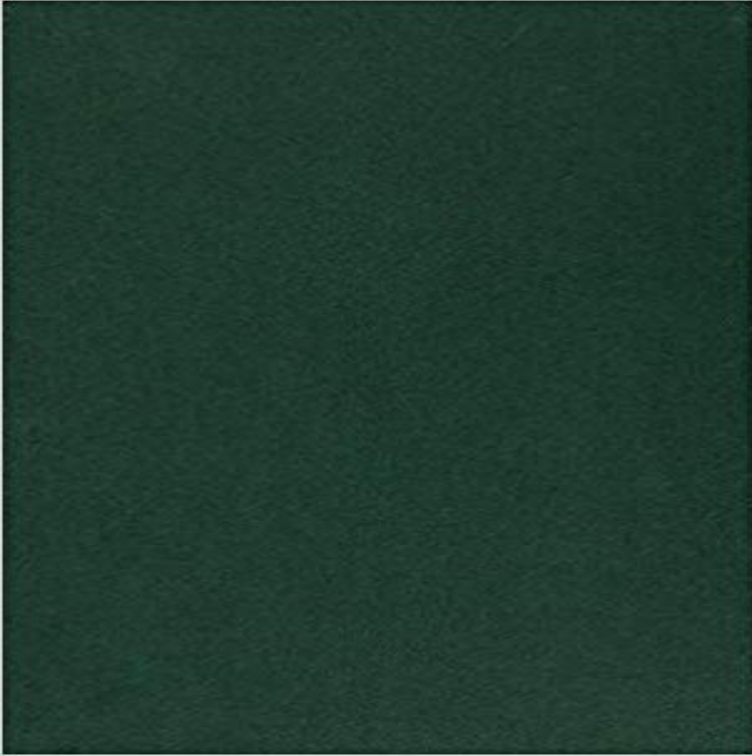


# The Political Role of Law Courts in Modern Democracies



No society can function without judicial institutions. At a minimum, conflict must be regulated and the criminal law enforced. Ironically, though, modern political science has tended to ignore the role of courts in advanced industrial societies, so much so that even basic information has often been unavailable. This book covers three important bases. First, it provides, for the first time, up-to-date material about the court systems - their structures, their personnel, their jurisdictions - of the major democratic nations. Second, it places the courts in their political context, eschewing legalism and stressing their linkages with other institutions and their role in the policy process. Third, there is an attempt to assess the direction of contemporary change, especially how it relates to broader themes of other types of political change.

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