

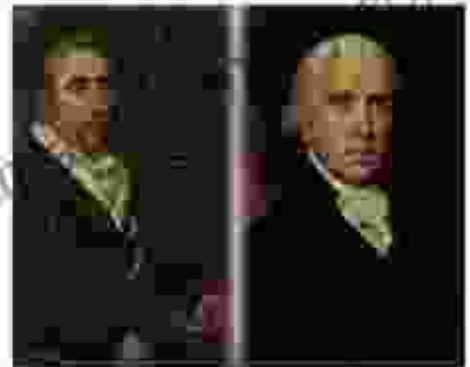
Landmark Supreme Court Decisions: A Historical Overview

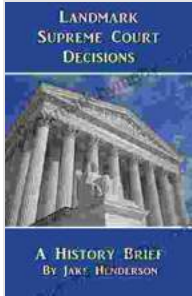
The Supreme Court of the United States is the highest court in the land, and its decisions have a profound impact on American law and society. Throughout its history, the Court has issued numerous landmark rulings that have shaped the nation's legal landscape. This article provides a brief overview of some of the most significant decisions made by the Supreme Court.

Marbury v. Madison (1803)

Supreme Court Cases Marbury v Madison

1. Marbury was commissioned by John Adams as a Justice of the Peace.
2. Madison was Jefferson's Secretary of State.
3. Madison was ordered not to deliver the commission to Marbury.
4. Court rule in favor of Marbury.
5. **IMPORTANT BECAUSE:** 1st time a congressional act was found unconstitutional. The case established **JUDICIAL REVIEW.**





Landmark Supreme Court Decisions (History Brief

Book 12) by Random House

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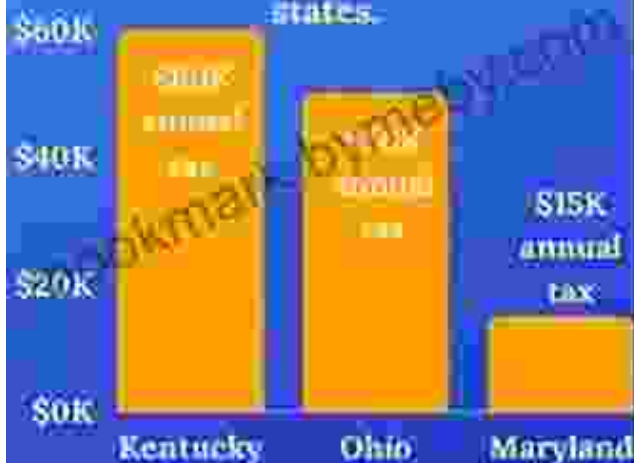


This case established the principle of judicial review, which allows the Supreme Court to declare laws unconstitutional. In Marbury, President John Adams appointed William Marbury to a position as justice of the peace in the District of Columbia. However, the new Secretary of State, James Madison, refused to deliver Marbury's commission. Marbury sued Madison, arguing that he had a legal right to the appointment. The Supreme Court ruled in Marbury's favor but also held that the law giving Marbury the appointment was unconstitutional. This decision established the Court's authority to interpret the Constitution and strike down laws that violate it.

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)

MCCULLOCH v. MARYLAND SUPREME COURT DECISION

In *Mcculloch v. Maryland* the Supreme Court unanimously ruled that the Maryland law taxing the Second Bank of the US was unconstitutional due to a broadened interpretation of the 'Necessary and Proper' clause. Interestingly, the Maryland tax on the bank was relatively low in comparison to other states.



Maryland's attorneys focused on the exceedingly private nature of the national bank, arguing that it did not deserve tax exemption given its disposition. Their arguments failed as the court ruled on the implications of states having the ability to tax federal institutions. "The power to tax is the power to destroy."

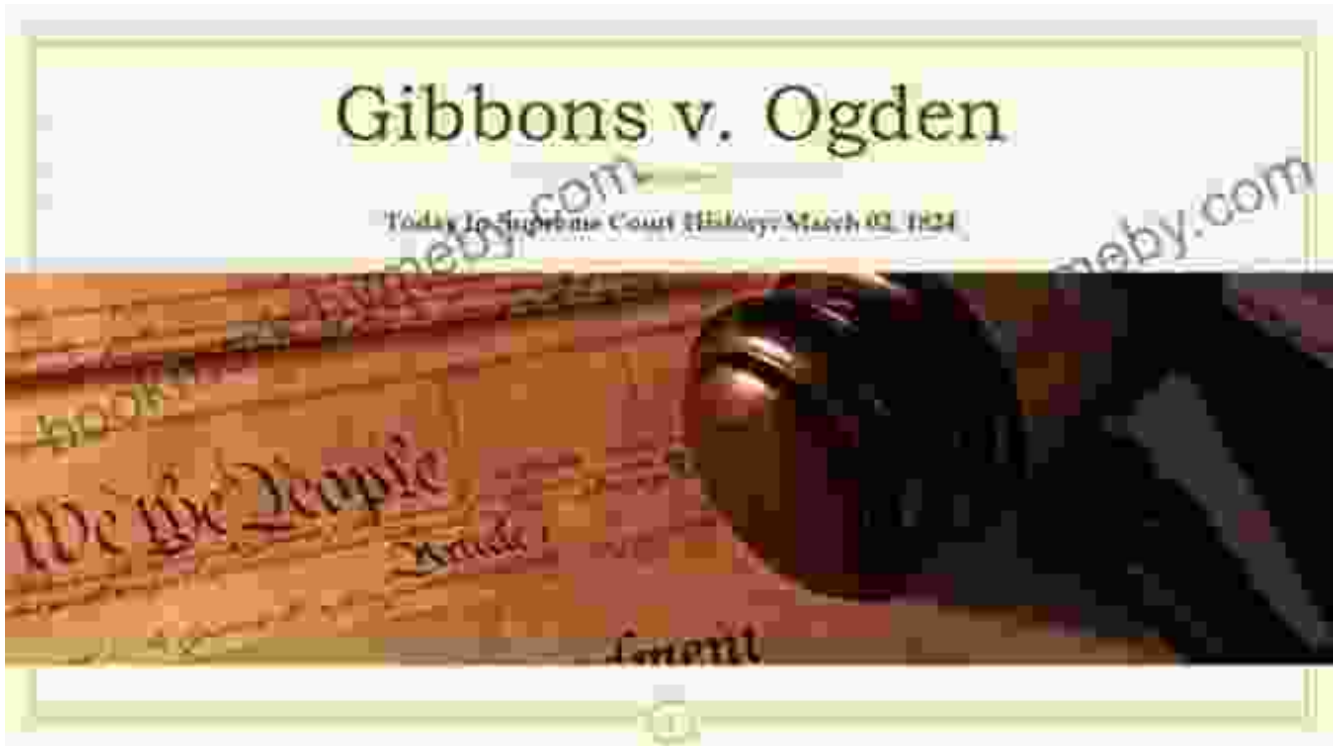


HISTORYinCHARTS

This case upheld the federal government's power to create a national bank. Maryland had tried to tax the Bank of the United States, but the Supreme Court ruled that the federal government had the authority to establish a bank under the Constitution's necessary and proper clause. This decision strengthened the federal government's power and established the principle of implied powers, which allows Congress to pass laws that are not

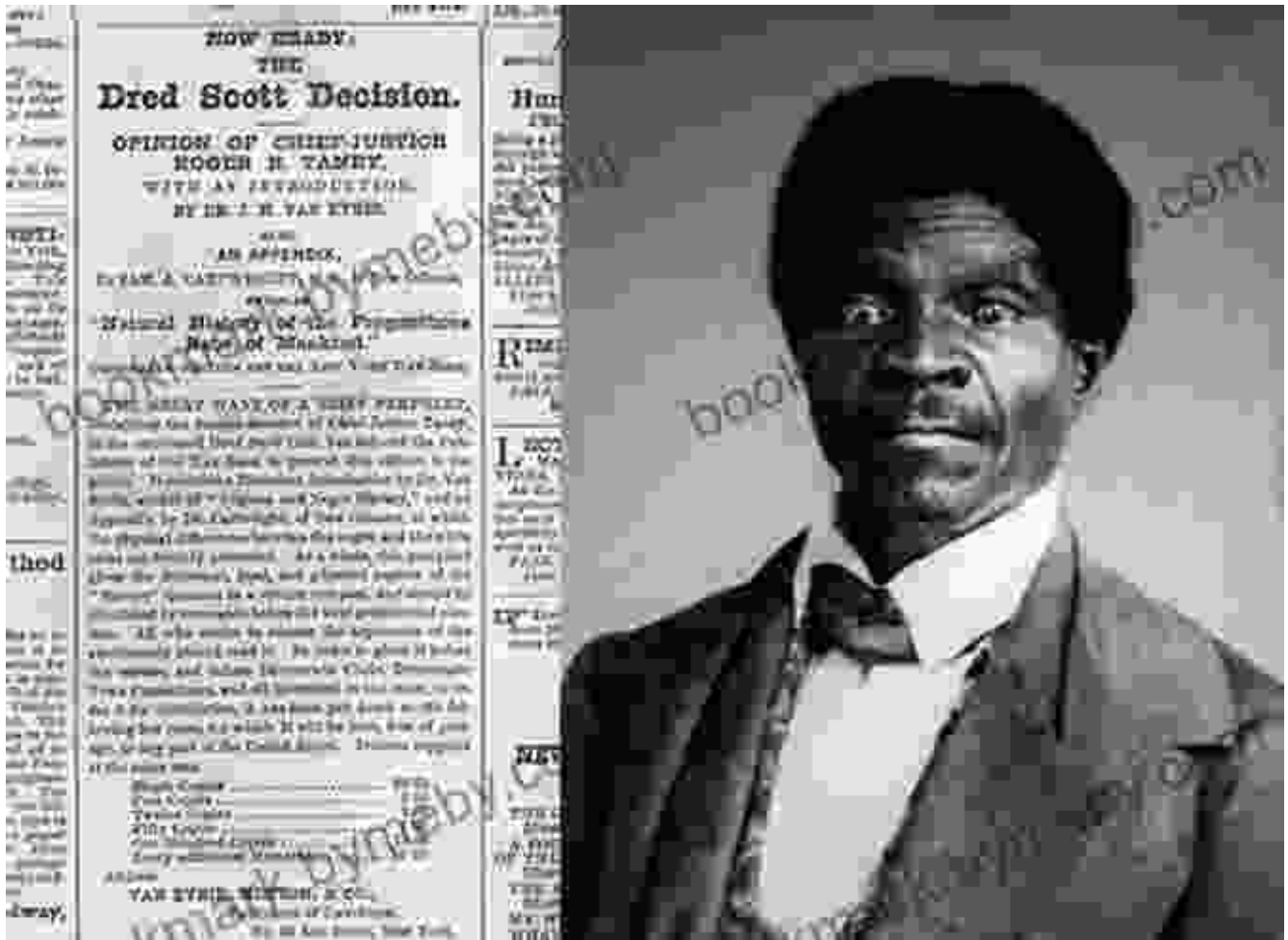
explicitly authorized by the Constitution but are necessary to carry out its enumerated powers.

Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)



This case established the federal government's power to regulate interstate commerce. New York had granted a monopoly to Robert Fulton to operate steamboats on the Hudson River, but the Supreme Court ruled that this monopoly was unconstitutional. The Court held that the federal government has the exclusive power to regulate interstate commerce, and states cannot interfere with this power. This decision was a major victory for the federal government and helped to promote economic growth and trade.

Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857)



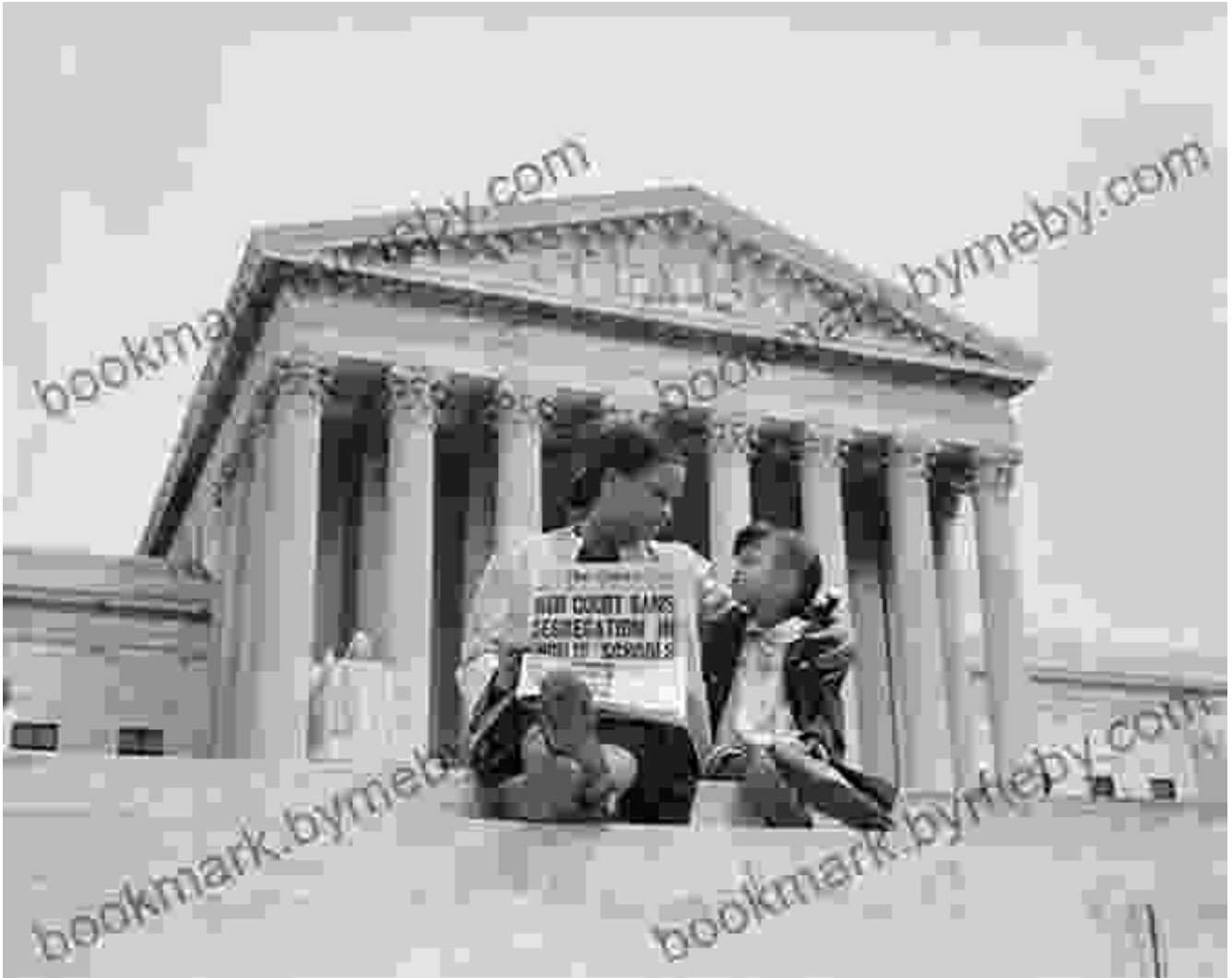
This case ruled that African Americans were not citizens of the United States and could not sue in federal court. Dred Scott was a slave who had been taken to free states by his master. He sued for his freedom, arguing that his residence in free states had made him a free man. However, the Supreme Court ruled against Scott, holding that he was not a citizen and had no standing to sue in federal court. This decision was a major setback for the abolitionist movement and helped to precipitate the Civil War.

Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)



This case upheld the constitutionality of racial segregation laws. Homer Plessy, a mixed-race man, refused to sit in the "colored" section of a train car and was arrested. He sued, arguing that the segregation law violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. However, the Supreme Court ruled that the law was constitutional, holding that separate but equal facilities for blacks and whites did not violate the Constitution. This decision established the "separate but equal" doctrine, which allowed for racial segregation in public facilities.

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)



This case overturned *Plessy v. Ferguson* and ruled that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. Linda Brown, a black student, had been denied admission to an all-white school in Topeka, Kansas. She sued the school board, and the Supreme Court ruled in her favor, holding that segregation violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This decision was a major victory for the civil rights movement and helped to end racial segregation in public schools.

Roe v. Wade (1973)



This case legalized abortion in the United States. Jane Roe, a pregnant woman, sued the Dallas County district attorney, arguing that Texas's abortion law was unconstitutional. The Supreme Court ruled in Roe's favor, holding that the right to privacy includes the right to terminate a pregnancy. This decision was a major victory for reproductive rights advocates but has also been the subject of much controversy.

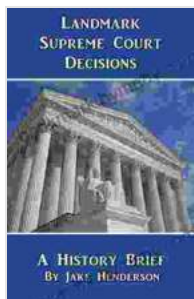
Citizens United v. FEC (2010)



This case overturned campaign finance restrictions and allowed corporations and unions to spend unlimited amounts of money on political campaigns. Citizens United, a conservative nonprofit organization, wanted to run a documentary critical of Hillary Clinton during the 2008 Democratic primary, but the Federal Election Commission (FEC) ruled that the film violated campaign finance laws. Citizens United sued the FEC, and the Supreme Court ruled in its favor, holding that the First Amendment protects corporate spending on political campaigns. This decision has been criticized by many who believe it will lead to increased corruption in politics.

The Supreme Court of the United States has issued numerous landmark rulings that have shaped the nation's legal landscape. These decisions have addressed a wide range of issues, from the power of the federal government to the rights of individuals. The Supreme Court's decisions

have had a profound impact on American society and continue to be debated and discussed today.

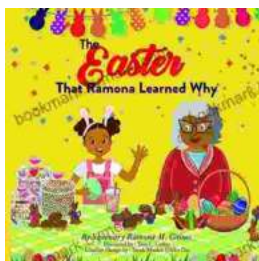


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