

ing is plain English."⁶

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The Dred Scott Case: Its Significance in American Law and Politics. By Don Fehrenbacher. New York: Oxford University Press, 1978. Pp. xii, 741. \$25.00.

The Dred Scott Case: Its Significance in American Law and Politics— in addition to being a detailed historical account of the Dred Scott Case, is also a lengthy exploration of topics not directly related to the case itself. In the author's words, "Over the years . . . the book grew . . . becoming something considerably more than a history of the Dred Scott case." Although the history of the case is well detailed, the inclusion of unrelated topics and the lack of analysis as to the long terms significance of the case, make the title somewhat misleading.

Part I of the book, "Out of the Past," contains an extensive review of slavery in North America from the 17th Century. This section comprises over one third of the book, and could very well be a book unto itself. This section is the primary example of how the book has become "something considerably more than a history of the Dred Scott case."

Part II, "A Decade of Litigation," is a comprehensive account of the life of Dred Scott and the case that bears his name. For the student of the Dred Scott case this section is required reading. The author boasts of no new discoveries, but his in-depth coverage of both *Scott v. Emerson* and *Scott v. Sanford* is cogently and expertly presented.

In Part III, "Consequences and Echoes," the author analyzes the effects of the decision within a limited time span. The analysis mainly covers the political consequences between 1857, the year of the decision, and the 1860 presidential election. Even here the book is more of a historical account rather than a forceful attempt to show cause and effect. In the final chapter, the author gives examples of instances of where the case is cited. Unfortunately, the instances are not of major significance.

The Dred Scott case will always be important to people of color because it represented the high water mark in official recognition of dehumanization. Professor Fehrenbacher has done a very good job of presenting the Dred Scott case historically. However, he does not give us very much analysis of the decision's long term effects upon people of color, as well as upon American law and politics.

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6. WYDICK, *supra* note 1 at 5-6.