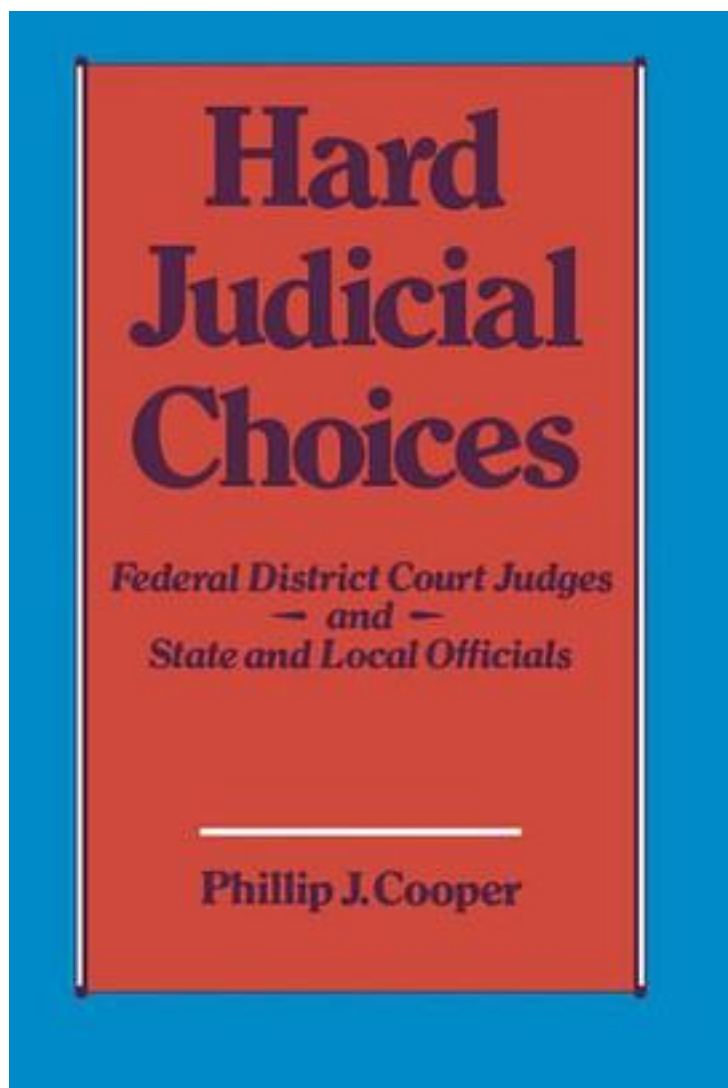


Hard Judicial Choices



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In controversial court cases involving civil rights, schools and housing, prison reform, and other social issues, federal district-court judges are often called upon to make some of the most difficult judicial decisions. Asked to protect the constitutional rights of all individuals, even when such protection may be at odds with the interests of local majorities, federal district-court judges are frequently faced with pressure, ridicule, and even threats to themselves or their families when deciding and implementing complex remedial decrees. Why do judges issue these decrees given the difficulties involved? How do these cases arise? How are they prosecuted and remedies fashioned when federally protected rights are violated? How can relations between federal judges and state and local officials be improved? This book, the first to attempt to view these cases from the perspective of district-court judges, examines some of these questions through five comparative case studies involving housing discrimination, school desegregation, mental health facilities, and the right to treatment, prison conditions, and policy/community relations. An introductory chapter presents a clear overview of the remedial decree process. Each of the following case studies is preceded by a chapter that sets the case in its legal, administrative, and political context.

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