



# **Priests of Our Democracy: The Supreme Court, Academic Freedom, and the Anti-Communist Purge**

*Marjorie Heins*

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## **Priests of Our Democracy: The Supreme Court, Academic Freedom, and the Anti-Communist Purge**

Marjorie Heins

Priests of Our Democracy tells of the teachers and professors who battled the anti-communist witch hunt of the 1950s. It traces the political fortunes of academic freedom beginning in the late 19th century, both on campus and in the courts. Combining political and legal history with wrenching personal stories, the book details how the anti-communist excesses of the 1950s inspired the Supreme Court to recognize the vital role of teachers and professors in American democracy. The crushing of dissent in the 1950s impoverished political discourse in ways that are still being felt, and First Amendment academic freedom, a product of that period, is in peril today. In compelling terms, this book shows why the issue should matter to everyone.

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