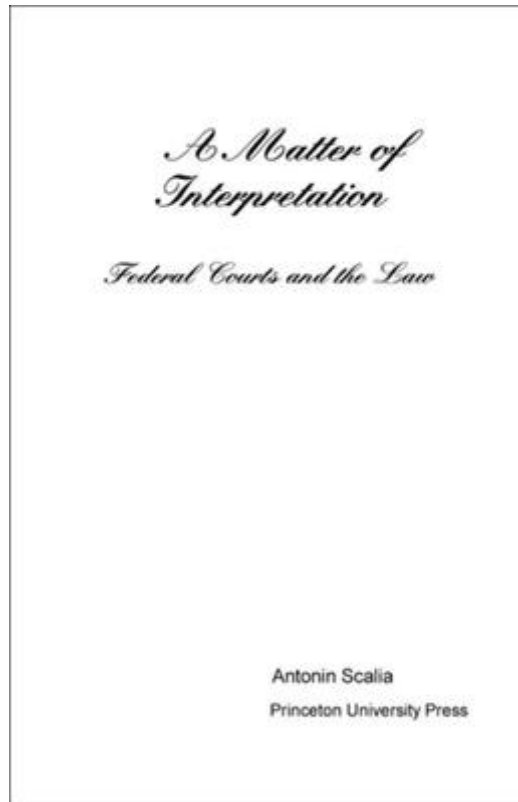


# Matter Of Interpretation: Federal Courts And The Law - Antonin Scalia



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We are all familiar with the image of the immensely clever judge who discerns the best rule of common law for the case at hand. According to U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, a judge like this can maneuver through earlier cases to achieve the desired aim--"distinguishing one prior case on his left, straight-arming another one on his right, high-stepping away from another precedent about to tackle him from the rear, until (bravo!) he reaches the goal--good law." But is this common-law mindset, which is appropriate in its place, suitable also in statutory and constitutional interpretation? In a witty and trenchant essay, Justice Scalia answers this question with a resounding negative. In exploring the neglected art of statutory interpretation, Scalia urges that judges resist the temptation to use legislative intention and legislative history. In his view, it is incompatible with democratic government to allow the meaning of a statute to be determined by what the judges think the lawgivers meant rather than by what the legislature actually promulgated. Author: Scalia, Antonin Publisher: Princeton University Press Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: Matter of Interpretation: Federal Courts and the Law Pages: 00128 (Encrypted

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