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Alan M. Dershowitz

FUNDAMENTAL CASES:

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY COURTROOM BATTLES
THAT CHANGED OUR NATION

The courtroom trial has fascinated human beings from the beginning of recorded history. Trials are theater, trials are history, and the great trials of the twentieth century and beyond provide a unique window into American history and the sense of America's enduring commitment to law.

It was Alexis de Tocqueville who, when he visited the new republic for the first time, said that America was a unique country when it comes to law. Every great issue eventually comes before the courts. With this in mind, esteemed professor and civil liberties lawyer Alan Dershowitz looks at history through the prism of the trial, because a trial presents a snapshot of what's going on in a particular point in time of the nation's history.

What's a great trial? People will often say the trial of the moment. But those trials are often not enduring. The focus of this course is on landmark trials and the important, dramatic aspects of the history of the time in which they occurred.

ALAN M. DERSHOWITZ of Harvard Law School has been a pioneer in making the legal profession accessible to the general public. Dershowitz is the author of twenty-two nonfiction works and two novels. More than a million of his books have been sold worldwide. Dershowitz has published hundreds of articles in magazines and journals and has written more than 1,000 op-ed articles. Over the course of his thirty-five-year career as a lawyer, Dershowitz has won more than 100 cases. He has been a consultant to several presidential commissions and has testified before congressional committees on numerous occasions, including as a witness against President Clinton's impeachment. He has represented and consulted with major media companies on free-speech issues, and he helped to obtain the largest fee in history for lawyers against the cigarette industry.

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