

Sec. 2—Judicial Power and Jurisdiction

Cl. 1—Cases and Controversies

than in majority opinions.⁷⁵⁰ Of lesser formal effect than outright overruling but with roughly the same result is a Court practice of “distinguishing” precedents, which often leads to an overturning of the principle enunciated in a case while leaving the actual case more or less alive.⁷⁵¹

Conclusion.—The common denominator of all these maxims of prudence is the concept of judicial restraint. “We do not sit,” said Justice Frankfurter, “like a kadi under a tree dispensing justice according to considerations of individual expediency.”⁷⁵² “[A] jurist is not to innovate at pleasure,” wrote Justice Cardozo. “He is not a knight-errant, roaming at will in pursuit of his own ideal of beauty or of goodness. He is to draw his inspiration from consecrated principles. He is not to yield to spasmodic sentiment, to vague and unregulated benevolence. He is to exercise a discretion informed by tradition, methodized by analogy, disciplined by system, and subordinated to the primordial necessity of order in the social life.”⁷⁵³ All Justices will, of course, claim adherence to proper restraint,⁷⁵⁴ but in some cases at least, such as Justice Frankfurter’s dissent in the *Flag Salute Case*,⁷⁵⁵ the practice can be readily observed. The degree of restraint, however, the degree to which legislative enactments should be subjected to judicial scrutiny, is a matter of uncertain and shifting opinion

491 U.S. 164, 171–175 (1989), at least in part since Congress may much more easily revise those decisions, *but compare* *id.* at 175 n.1, *with id.* at 190–205 (Justice Brennan concurring in the judgment in part and dissenting in part). *See also* *Flood v. Kuhn*, 407 U.S. 258 (1972).

⁷⁵⁰ *E.g.*, *United States v. Rabinowitz*, 339 U.S. 56, 86 (1950) (Justice Frankfurter dissenting); *Baker v. Carr*, 369 U.S. 186, 339–340 (1962) (Justice Harlan dissenting); *Gray v. Sanders*, 372 U.S. 368, 383 (1963) (Justice Harlan dissenting). *But see* *Green v. United States*, 356 U.S. 165, 195 (1958) (Justice Black dissenting). *Compare* Justice Harlan’s views in *Mapp v. Ohio*, 367 U.S. 643 (1961) (dissenting), *with Glidden Co. v. Zdanok*, 370 U.S. 530 (1962) (opinion of the Court).

⁷⁵¹ Note that, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833 (1992), while the Court purported to uphold and retain the “central meaning” of *Roe v. Wade*, it overruled several aspects of that case’s requirements. *See also, e.g.*, the Court’s treatment of *Pope v. Williams*, 193 U.S. 621 (1904), in *Dunn v. Blumstein*, 405 U.S. 330, 337, n.7 (1972). *See also id.* at 361 (Justice Blackmun concurring.)

⁷⁵² *Terminiello v. City of Chicago*, 337 U.S. 1, 11 (1949) (dissenting).

⁷⁵³ B. CARDOZO, *THE NATURE OF THE JUDICIAL PROCESS* 141 (1921).

⁷⁵⁴ *Compare* *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479, 482 (1965) (Justice Douglas), *with id.* at 507 (Justice Black).

⁷⁵⁵ *West Virginia State Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624, 646 (1943) (dissenting).