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Introduction and Overview

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU, Union or organization) grew from the seeds of social activism in 1917. It was born on January 20, 1920, and its centennial was January 20, 2020. Since its founding, the ACLU has fought for rights embedded (yet sometimes hidden from view) in our Constitution – rights they believe all Americans should have.

While many think the ACLU is wrong-headed in some or in many of its positions, and that the ACLU is a left-wing or socialist organization, the Union doesn't seem to take exception to those tags. However, as this handbook shows, given the Union's wins and losses in their 1,100 cases at the Supreme court over 94 years, any specific designation of who they are may not be clear.

Despite the Union's 100 years of existence, few know much about it. Many praise while others rail against them, and often in subjective if not emotional terms. If you ask 10 people what the Union does and how it does what it does, be prepared for quite different responses – or blank looks.

This handbook shows information about the ACLU's cases in the U.S. Supreme Court (Supreme Court or Court) over 94 of its 100 years, from 1925 to 2019 when the ACLU was a party, an amicus filer or because an ACLU attorney was involved in those cases.

The information in this handbook includes:

- The ACLU's 1982 Draft Statement of What It Does and How It Does It (on page 7);
- Win/Loss Record of the ACLU in the U.S. Supreme Court by Vote and Decade (on page 9);
- The ACLU's Involvement in, and its Wins and Losses at the U.S. Supreme Court (Alphabetically). (on page 11);