

**Supremacy of law or supremacy of politics?**  
**The position of the U.S. Supreme Court in the 21st century American**  
**reality.**

Paweł Laidler, PhD.

Institute of American Studies and Polish Diaspora, Jagiellonian University

The clash of law and politics seems to be a significant feature of American governmental system, but when politics influences actions undertaken by the federal judiciary (whose members serve for life tenures), a question should be posed about the legitimization of such process. The U.S. Supreme Court is responsible for final interpretation of the constitution and reshaping the scope and meaning of various legal, social and economic issues concerning everyday life of Americans. Therefore many political institutions and lobbying groups influence functioning of the tribunal in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: the appointment of its Justices, its procedures, as well as the process of Justices' decision-making. As a result, the weakest (in theory) and the "the least democratic" branch of government becomes in many respects the leading actor in American contemporary politics. The purpose of the presentation is to address the most crucial issues regarding the clash of law and politics in the U.S. Supreme Court, taking into consideration its growing impact on American democracy.