

Americas Consution A Biography Akhil Reed Amar

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[Verdict: this work is certain to enthrall legal scholars, particularly readers of Akhil Reed Amar's classics The Bill of Rights: Creation and Reconstruction and America's Constitution: A Biography.'](#) ...

Restoring the Fundamental Constitutional Role of the Criminal, Civil, and Grand Juries

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A Conversation On the Constitution with Leading Legal Scholar Akhil Reed Amar

To assure, therefore, that the American states remained more purely democratic republics, the drafters of the Constitution inserted Article I, Section 10, which forbids states from conferring ...

Guarantee Clause

In an excellent decision, the Court held that the Constitution's Eighth Amendment ... there would be 40 percent of such a majority. America might be moving closer to a more robust role for ...

Justices Push to Broaden the Rights of National Citizenship

A fuller account of how the Framers handled this sensitive matter requires looking as well at the Direct Taxes Clause (Article I, Section 9, Clause 4) and at other clauses of the Constitution ...

Three-fifths Clause

Part I. The Afghanistan Papers Guest: Craig Whitlock is an investigative reporter for The Washington Post. He has covered the global war on terrorism for the Post since 2001 as a foreign correspondent ...

Letters and Politics

Even while pushing \$6 trillion in spending and mass-producing executive orders, Joe Biden has run the country much as he ran his campaign — quietly. The less said, the less can go wrong. And ...

The Weekend Jolt

Verdict: this work is certain to enthrall legal scholars, particularly readers of Akhil Reed Amar's classics The Bill of Rights: Creation and Reconstruction and America's Constitution: A Biography.' ...

In America's Constitution, one of this era's most accomplished constitutional law scholars, Akhil Reed Amar, gives the first comprehensive account of one of the world's great political texts. Incisive, entertaining, and occasionally controversial, this "biography" of America's framing document explains not only what the Constitution says but also why the Constitution says it. We all know this much: the Constitution is neither immutable nor perfect. Amar shows us how the story of this one relatively compact document reflects the story of America more generally. (For example, much of the Constitution, including the glorious-sounding "We the People," was lifted from existing American legal texts, including early state constitutions.) In short, the Constitution was as much a product of its environment as it was a product of its individual creators' inspired genius. Despite the Constitution's flaws, its role in guiding our republic has been nothing short of amazing. Skillfully placing the

document in the context of late-eighteenth-century American politics, America's Constitution explains, for instance, whether there is anything in the Constitution that is unamendable; the reason America adopted an electoral college; why a president must be at least thirty-five years old; and why—for now, at least—only those citizens who were born under the American flag can become president. From his unique perspective, Amar also gives us unconventional wisdom about the Constitution and its significance throughout the nation's history. For one thing, we see that the Constitution has been far more democratic than is conventionally understood. Even though the document was drafted by white landholders, a remarkably large number of citizens (by the standards of 1787) were allowed to vote up or down on it, and the document's later amendments eventually extended the vote to virtually all Americans. We also learn that the Founders' Constitution was far more slavocratic than many would acknowledge: the "three fifths" clause gave the South extra political clout for every slave it owned or acquired. As a result, slaveholding Virginians held the presidency all but four of the Republic's first thirty-six years, and proslavery forces eventually came to dominate much of the federal government prior to Lincoln's election. Ambitious, even-handed, eminently accessible, and often surprising, America's Constitution is an indispensable work, bound to become a standard reference for any student of history and all citizens of the United States.

A renowned constitutional scholar explores the little-understood relationship between the written Constitution and the many external factors that shape our interpretations of this foundational document.

A history of the American Constitution's formative decades from a preeminent legal scholar When the US Constitution won popular approval in 1788, it was the culmination of thirty years of passionate argument over the nature of government. But ratification hardly ended the conversation. For the next half century, ordinary Americans and statesmen alike continued to wrestle with weighty questions in the halls of government and in the pages of newspapers. Should the nation's borders be expanded? Should America allow slavery to spread westward? What rights should Indian nations hold? What was the proper role of the judicial branch? In *The Words that Made Us*, Akhil Reed Amar unites history and law in a vivid narrative of the biggest constitutional questions early Americans confronted, and he expertly assesses the answers they offered. His account of the document's origins and consolidation is a guide for anyone seeking to properly understand America's Constitution today.

"I don't think there is anyone in the academy these days capable of more patient and attentive reading of the constitutional text than Akhil Amar."--Jeremy Waldron, *New York Review of Books* When the stories that lead our daily news involve momentous constitutional questions, present-minded journalists and busy citizens cannot always see the stakes clearly. In *The Constitution Today*, Akhil Reed Amar, America's preeminent constitutional scholar, considers the biggest and most bitterly contested debates of the last two decades--from gun control to gay marriage, affirmative action to criminal procedure, presidential dynasties to congressional dysfunction, Bill Clinton's impeachment to Obamacare. He shows how the Constitution's text, history, and structure are a crucial repository of collective wisdom, providing specific rules and grand themes relevant to every organ of the American body politic. Leading readers through the constitutional questions at stake in each episode while outlining his abiding views regarding the direction constitutional law must go, Amar offers an essential guide for anyone seeking to understand America's Constitution and its relevance today.

From Kennebunkport to Kauai, from the Rio Grande to the Northern Rockies, ours is a vast republic. While we may be united under one Constitution, separate and distinct states remain, each with its own constitution and culture. Geographic idiosyncrasies add more than just local character. Regional understandings of law and justice have shaped and reshaped our nation throughout history. America's Constitution, our founding and unifying document, looks slightly different in California than it does in Kansas. In *The Law of the Land*, renowned legal scholar Akhil Reed Amar illustrates how geography, federalism, and regionalism have influenced some of the biggest questions in American constitutional law. Writing about Illinois, "the land of Lincoln," Amar shows how our sixteenth president's ideas about secession were influenced by his Midwestern upbringing and outlook. All of today's Supreme Court justices, Amar notes, learned their law in the Northeast, and New Yorkers of various sorts dominate the judiciary as never before. The curious *Bush v. Gore* decision, Amar insists, must be assessed with careful attention to Florida law and the Florida Constitution. The second amendment appears in a particularly interesting light, he argues, when viewed from the perspective of Rocky Mountain cowboys and cowgirls. Propelled by Amar's distinctively smart, lucid, and engaging prose, these essays allow general readers to see the historical roots of, and contemporary solutions to, many important constitutional questions. *The Law of the Land* illuminates our nation's history and politics, and shows how America's various local parts fit together to form a grand federal framework.

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Are the deep insights of Hugo Black, William Brennan, and Felix Frankfurter that have defined our cherished Bill of Rights fatally flawed? With meticulous historical scholarship and elegant legal interpretation a leading scholar of Constitutional law boldly answers yes as he explodes conventional wisdom about the first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution in this incisive new account of our most basic charter of liberty. Akhil Reed Amar brilliantly illuminates in rich detail not simply the text, structure, and history of individual clauses of the 1789 Bill, but their intended relationships to each other and to other constitutional provisions. Amar's corrective does not end there, however, for as his powerful narrative proves, a later generation of antislavery activists profoundly changed the meaning of the Bill in the Reconstruction era. With the Fourteenth Amendment, Americans underwent a new birth of freedom that transformed the old Bill of Rights. We have as a result a complex historical document originally designed to protect the people against self-interested government and revised by the Fourteenth Amendment to guard minority against majority. In our continuing battles over freedom of religion and expression, arms bearing, privacy, states' rights, and popular sovereignty, Amar concludes, we must hearken to both the Founding Fathers who created the Bill and their sons and daughters who reconstructed it. Amar's landmark work invites citizens to a deeper understanding of their Bill of Rights and will set the basic terms of debate about it for modern lawyers, jurists, and historians for

years to come.

Explores the little-understood relationship between the written Constitution and the many external factors that shape the interpretations of this foundational document.

Constitutional law's central narrative in the 20th century has been one of radical reinterpretation--Brown v. Board of Education, Roe v. Wade, Bush v. Gore. What justifies this phenomenon? How does it work doctrinally? What structures it or limits it? Rubenfeld finds a pattern in constitutional interpretation that answers these questions.

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