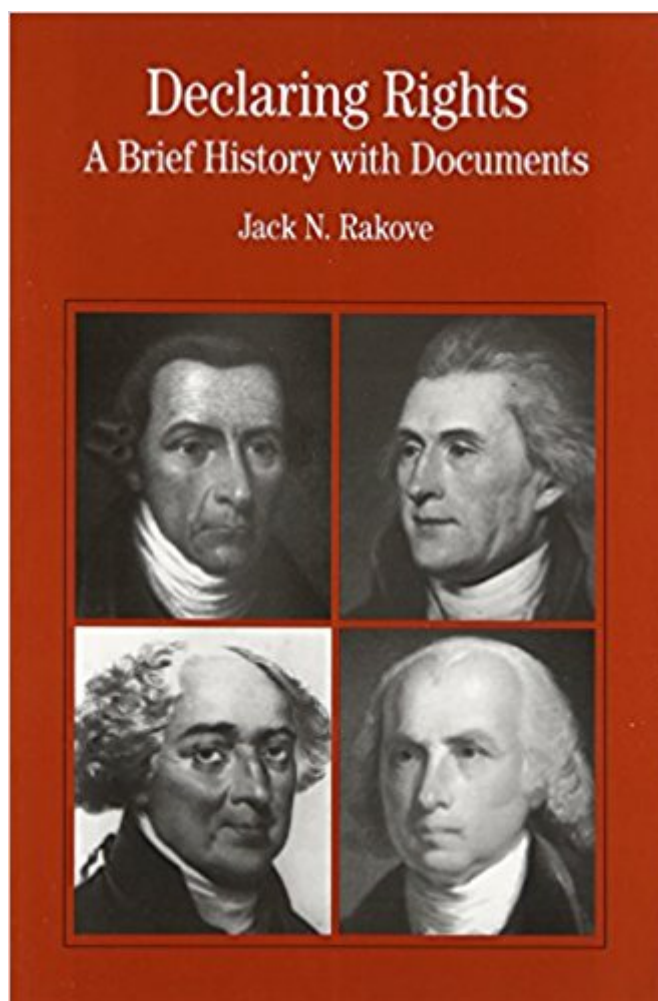


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Declaring Rights: A Brief History With Documents



Synopsis

Questions about the original meaning of the Bill of Rights remain a source of active concern and controversy in the twenty-first century. In order to help students consider the intentions of the first Constitutional amendments and the significance of declaring rights, Jack Rakove traces the tradition and describes the deliberations from which the Bill of Rights emerged.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"This book will be a worthy addition to the Bedford series. In a thoughtful introduction, Rakove takes the reader through the development of the notion of rights as well as through the specific history of the first ten amendments to the federal Constitution. He presents his readers with a well-chosen set of documents and groups them coherently, introducing each group with a brief but provocative sketch-essay."

Jack N. Rakove is Coe Professor of History and American Studies and professor (by courtesy) of political science at Stanford University. His scholarly work concentrates on the creation of a national policy in Revolutionary America, the problem of ascertaining the "original meaning" on the Constitution, and the political career and thinking of James Madison. His most recent book, *Original Meanings: Politics and Ideas in the Making of the Constitution* (1996), won the 1997 Pulitzer Prize in history. Rakove's other works include *James Madison and the Creation of the American Republic* (1990), *Interpreting the Constitution: The Debate over Original Intent* (1990), and *The Beginnings of*

National Politics: An Interpretative History of the Continental Congress (1979). He contributes to numerous scholarly and legal journals and lectures both in the United States and abroad.

I bought this book because I needed it for some homework assignments in my History Class. The book was very insightful and easy to read. I personally learned a lot about the history of rights and I think that this book should be used in more history classes.

This is a fine collection of documents leading up to and through the American Revolution. It puts the issues in clear perspective from the people who were writing about them. Rakove's introductions are what you would expect from him: clear, articulate, reminding you of some things you maybe did know and telling you quite a few you didn't. An excellent mix of primary- and secondary-source information.

The book provides some background to the subject along with excerpts from some key documents. I expected a more comprehensive and readable summary of the basics here. Basically, disappointed.

smooth transaction - as advertised

This book is a little hard to read - but has the necessary information for school. I appreciate the promptness with which the person I bought it from used to get it to me in a timely manner.

"Declaring Rights" uses primary documents (supplemented by historical commentary) to tell the story of the birth of the Bill of Rights. It is an incredibly elegant book: the documents are well-selected, the commentary is concise and judicious, the issues are of perennial legal and political importance, and the book is only 200 pages long. It would be a perfect introduction to historical and constitutional thinking for serious college freshmen. Six stars.

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