



# **The Guardian of Every Other Right: A Constitutional History of Property Rights (Bicentennial Essays on the Bill of Rights)**

*James W. Ely*

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The Guardian of Every Other Right chronicles the pivotal role of property rights in fashioning the American constitutional order from the colonial era to the current controversies over eminent domain and land use controls. The book emphasizes the interplay of law, ideology, politics, and economic change in shaping constitutional thought and provides a historical perspective on the contemporary debate about property rights. Since publication of the original edition of this work, both academic and popular interest in the constitutional rights of property owners has markedly increased. Now in its third edition, this text has been revised to incorporate a full treatment of important judicial decisions, notable legislation, and scholarship since the second edition appeared in 1997. In particular, Ely provides helpful background and context for understanding the controversial Kelo decision relating to the exercise of eminent domain power for "public use." Covering the entire history of property rights in the United States, this new edition continues to fill a major gap in the literature of constitutional history and is an ideal text for students of legal and constitutional history.

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