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A Community Built on Words The Constitution in History and Politics

By H. Jefferson Powell

University Of Chicago Press. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 261 pages. Dimensions: 8.9in. x 5.8in. x 0.6in.H. Jefferson Powell offers a powerful new approach to one of the central issues in American constitutional thinking today: the problem of constitutional laws historicity, or the many ways in which constitutional arguments and outcomes are shaped both by historical circumstances and by the political goals and commitments of various actors, including judges. The presence of such influences is often considered highly problematic: if constitutional law is political and historical through and through, then what differentiates it from politics per se, and what gives it integrity and coherence Powell argues that constitutional theory has as its (sometimes hidden) agenda the ambition of showing how constitutional law can escape from history and politics, while much constitutional history seeks to identify an historically true meaning of the constitutional text that, once uncovered, can serve as a corrective to subsequent deviations from that truth. Combining history and theory, Powell analyzes a series of constitutional controversies from 1790 to 1944 to demonstrate that constitutional law from its very beginning has involved politically charged and ideologically divisive arguments. Nowhere in our past can one find the golden age of...



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