

Constitutionality

On the anniversary of its signing, faculty, students reflect on the U.S. Constitution

Thursday, September 17, 2015

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Across the country, universities and colleges will celebrate Constitution Day, an annual commemoration of the signing of the U. S. Constitution on Sept. 17, 1787, by the 39 delegates to the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. Here, UNH scholars of American history and politics, and their students, share their own tweet-sized reflections on the Constitution and its lasting effect on the human story. **Share your reflections using the hashtag #ConstitutionDay.**

The Constitution was an imperfect document at the beginning. But after the Civil War, it inched nearer to perfection with the addition of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments — which still stand as great safeguards of the rights of minorities.

—[Jason Sokol](#), Associate Professor of History

One hundred years ago, the U.S. government used a treaty to do something otherwise unconstitutional, via the Migratory Bird Treaty and *Missouri v. Holland*.

—[Kurk Dorsey](#), Professor of History

In honor of Constitution Day, stop tweeting and read [this](#) today.

—[Dante Scala](#), Associate Professor of Political Science

Hard to believe but true: The U.S. Constitution, timeless and glorious document that it is, was written by a committee.

—[Mark Huddleston](#), President of the University of New Hampshire and Professor of Political Science

Pondering how best to honor the First Amendment: by speaking aggressively or by speaking responsibly?

—[Charles Putnam](#), Clinical Professor of Justice Studies

"Ensuring domestic tranquility" was central to the framers' aims, and it is not exactly coincidental that "the right to keep and bear arms" was perceived as necessary in a new nation where one-fifth of the population was enslaved.

—[Jeff Bolster](#), Professor of History

Can anyone doubt that the U.S. Constitution, a document written in the 18th century, remains a living, breathing force in American democracy today? Today, in 2015, political debate on immigration turns around the 14th Amendment and the meaning of "birthright citizenship."

—[Ellen Fitzpatrick](#), Professor of History

The U.S. Constitution shows us the worst as well as possibilities for the best the U.S. can be. Let's face the worst honestly and work for the best.

—[Marla Brettschneider](#), Professor of Political Science and Women's Studies

In *Jacobson vs. Massachusetts*, the Supreme Court said that the Constitution permitted compulsory vaccination. What if it hadn't?

—[Molly Dorsey](#), Associate Professor of History

Americans were too busy fighting over the Panic of 1837's effects to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Constitutional Convention's end.

—[Jessica Lepler](#), Associate Professor of History

"I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves." (—Thomas Jefferson)

—Virginia Grinch, student in History of Early American Republic course

The Constitution: Let's face it, the Articles of Confederation were going nowhere fast.

—Khalid Antar, student in History of Early American Republic course

Can we talk about how Federalists pushed for centralized government when we fought the revolution to be free?

—Elisabeth Iacono, student in History of Early American Republic course

Fun facts explaining why George Washington didn't smile [here](#).

—Jen King, student in History of Early American Republic course

The Founding Fathers wanted to create the Constitution to create equality for all people ... except Native Americans and slaves.

—Savannah Harris, student in History of Early American Republic course

We actually have those opposed to the Constitution to thank for the Bill of Rights.

—Aaron Chin, student in History of Early American Republic course

The Constitution doesn't include the principle of judicial review — some early Americans thought that power should rest with the states' legislatures.

—Braedon Stacey , student in History of Early American Republic course

Share your reflections. Use #ConstitutionDay @UofNH

- WRITTEN BY:

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360 EXPERIENCE



University of New Hampshire

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