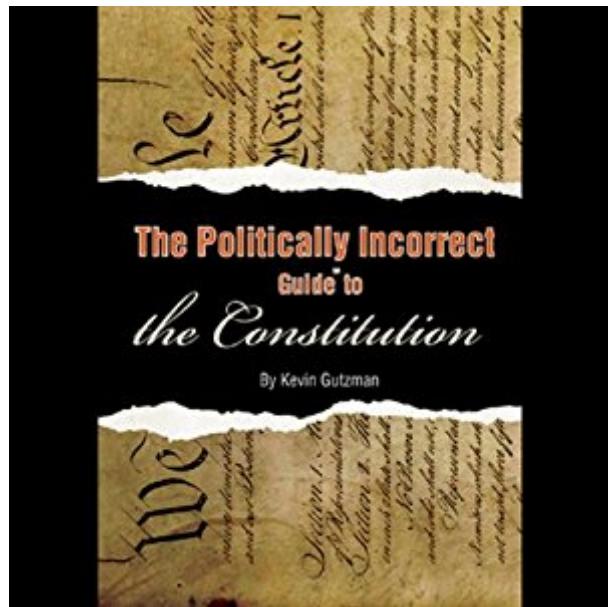


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# The Politically Incorrect Guide To The Constitution



## **Synopsis**

While the government claims to be a representative republic, somehow hot-button topics from gay marriage to the allocation of Florida's presidential electors always seem to be decided by unelected judges. What gives them the right to decide such issues? The judges say it's the Constitution. Author and law professor Kevin Gutzman shows that there is very little relationship between the Constitution ratified by the thirteen states more than two centuries ago and the "constitutional law" imposed upon us since then. Instead of the intended system of state-level decision makers and elected officials, judges have given us a centralized system in which bureaucrats and appointed officials make most of the important policies. The Constitution guarantees our rights and freedoms, but activist judges are threatening those very rights because of the Supreme Court's willingness to substitute its own opinions for the perfectly constitutional laws enacted by "we, the people" through our elected representatives.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Bought this as a loaner for pastor's wife (an indefatigable reader) who enjoyed the book so much asked if she could keep it! OF COURSE! Happy to educate those in the pulpit about the constitution of these states united. We need more pastors and their wives to become knowledgeable about what our form of government. This is the only way to discern IF and WHEN those elected to serve us [in it] abide their oaths and thus govern according to God, Godly principles and remain a terror to evil (not good) (romans 13).It's a must in any library. Especially those who are charged with discernment, leadership and teaching (perhaps prophecy as well!).

One of the most glaring deficiencies in our federal government today is its complete disregard for the set of rules that should govern its behavior, limiting its power and scope: the Constitution. Today, it's unpopular to say government isn't the best solution to our country's deep problems. But Gutzman, like a man willing to state publicly that he likes the music of Van Halen with Sammy Hagar singing lead, is willing to tell the truth even when it goes against the grain. Perhaps if we'd heeded the Constitution in the first place and the Federal Reserve had never been unconstitutionally created, Alan Greenspan wouldn't have been able to set artificially low interest rates in the early 2000s, extending the life and size of a financial bubble that desperately needed deflating, regardless of the inevitable pain to financial markets. Perhaps too, quasi-government agencies like Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac wouldn't have existed or been forced to make home loans to unqualified borrowers. The benefits to our country of adhering to the Constitution would be real and immediate and few people have the courage and thoughtfulness to articulate that point as clearly as Gutzman does in this book. I rate the book four stars, instead of five because of my firm belief in the sanctity of freedom, civil rights and liberty. As Gutzman rightfully points out, consistent application of the Constitution doesn't automatically lead immediately to greater freedoms. He refers specifically to the specious judicial legerdemain of the Supreme Court regarding civil rights. While it has brought more freedom to some in our country, it did so by blatantly usurping powers the Constitution clearly leaves to the states or individual citizens. I think civil rights is an important enough facet of American society for Gutzman to then explain how it could have been achieved with Constitutional legitimacy. While I'm sure Gutzman addresses this point in other writings, I think it should have been quickly addressed here. It's great to read such an impartial call for the application of our Constitution as its ratifiers intended it. Gutzman points out many historic examples of both parties abusing the Constitution when it served their needs. I highly recommend this book. Adherence to our Constitution would have helped us avoid many of our nation's current problems, and excitingly, can still help us find our way back onto the right track. Better?

My boyfriend and I are reading this book together after attending a Tea Party meeting on the history of Constitutional interpretation, where this book was on a recommended reading list. My boyfriend is more conservative than I am on the Supreme Court's rulings, but we both felt largely ignorant about the Constitution's "original intent" or its history, and this looked like a good primer. Two points we both agree on: 1) The book presents an interesting history of the Revolutionary period -- both the issues leading to our declaring of independence and the many variations of thought concerning the

kind of government the founders wanted to form after independence. 2) But the author, while well-versed in Constitutional history, is not a skilled writer. We both found the book very confusing and difficult to read. Granted, he is describing an era every bit as turbulent and polarized as today's political climate, but rather than sorting out the ideas, Gutzman seems to be throwing up random thoughts without clear transitions to guide the reader. To make matters worse, many statesmen apparently changed their positions as events moved along, but the author doesn't highlight these changes -- rather he just seems to be making incongruous, contradictory statements. (So what did Hamilton actually believe? we found ourselves asking.) Another source of confusion in the narrative concerns the book's central conflict between those founders who wanted a federal system of government, one that loosely connects the sovereign states, and those who wanted a national system of government, in which the national (central) government is sovereign over the states. The federalist system and the nationalist system,.....but wait a minute. The political party that called itself Federalists were the people who actually wanted a strong central government (the nationalists). And the people who wanted a weaker central government (federalist system) were called Anti-Federalists! Gutzman doesn't point out the contradiction of terms (or misnomers) until chpt. 3, leaving the reader to think the confusion is in his or her own brain.Those were the points we agreed on, but I personally have another, more serious, complaint about the book. I found the author's slanted view to be more than a tad overbearing. I expected the book to represent a conservative view of the Constitution, or at least of how the Constitution should be applied. But I did not expect a historian to use derision when describing the viewpoint of founders who would today be called "liberals." For, truth be told, Gutzman's own retelling of the events makes it clear that the "founding fathers" were not all of one mind. The same polarization we see today about how much power the central government (and the Supreme Court) should have, was in play back in the 18th century. In fact, if I understand it correctly, the final version of the Constitution that was ratified was a compromise and was deliberately left somewhat vague in language so that it could be interpreted later as the times warranted. Gutzman holds that the Constitution should only be interpreted according to the original intent of the founders.....but not just any founders -- only those who preferred the original Articles of Confederation that the Constitution replaced. In other words, only those who wanted the central government to be federal, not national -- weaker than the states, not stronger. It's a valid viewpoint, but not the only viewpoint being pushed by the "founders."I fear that I have shown my own prejudices as well as my lack of knowledge about Constitutional history. Let me just say that the book has value both for the history it presents (though confusingly) and for the very controversies it reveals in the founding fathers' thinking. That's why I gave it three stars. But I

would have liked more clarity in the writing and a more objective view of the various arguments and viewpoints that were in play during the creation of the Constitution. Clearly that was never the author's goal.

Incredible book! Gutzman explains the things your public school government class wants to overlook. He hits on all the major constitutional history points. If you also want a book that goes more in depth on the biggest unconstitutional transgressions by the national government in the 20th century, read his other book co-written with Thomas E. Woods, Jr. "Who Killed the Constitution?".

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