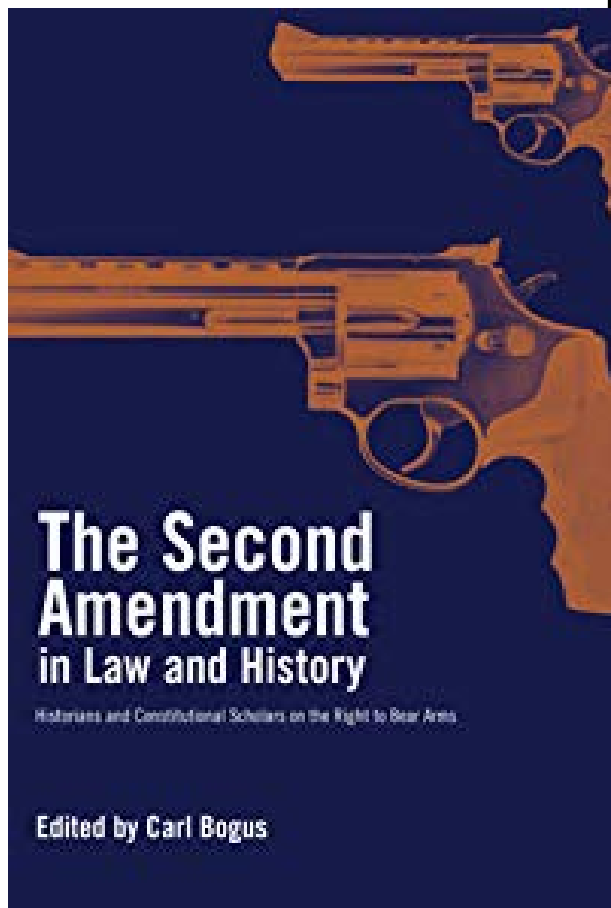


# The Second Amendment in Law and History: Historians and Constitutional Scholars on the Right to Bear Arms



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With help from the National Rifle Association and the pro-gun lobby, the idea that the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution guarantees an unrestricted right to gun ownership has achieved a firm footing in recent decades. Yet few issues of public policy are so misunderstood, so oversimplified—and so crucially important to the health and welfare of all Americans. The gun lobby and its proponents would have us believe that the constitutional issue is moot, and that the regulation of firearms is beyond the reach of legislation. But as the contributors to this important anthology demonstrate, both the historical and constitutional arguments are very much alive—and in fact weigh heavily in favor of those who would restrict gun ownership. In the eight essays in *The Second Amendment in Law and History*, the nation's leading historical and constitutional scholars—including Jack Rakove (author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Original Meanings*), Michael Bellesiles (author of *Arming America*), Michael Dorf, Daniel Farber, and Paul Finkelman—marshal a broad range of historical and legal arguments revealing current gun policy to be radically out of step with deep historical and constitutional trends.