



# **The Mississippi State Constitution (Oxford Commentaries on the State Constitutions of the United States)**

*John W. Winkle III*

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In *The Mississippi State Constitution*, John W. Winkle III explores constitutional meaning in Mississippi, both past and present, and shows how, through their own interpretations, judges and other government actors have shaped that meaning. This book illustrates how the popular will of the moment, through constitutional reform conventions or approved amendments, may have both intended and unintended consequences for generations to come. Whether a constitution is a document of power or of limitation is an ageless and important question. The current and now antiquated 1890 version, its patchwork pattern of amendments, and numerous judicial interpretations since, by and large leave that question unsettled.

*The Mississippi State Constitution* features three structural components that are useful for lay and professional audiences alike. First, it surveys the history and development of Mississippi's four constitutions (1817, 1832, 1869, and 1890) by examining the nineteenth century preference for state conventions as agents of comprehensive constitutional reform, and the twentieth and twenty-first century preferences for piecemeal amendments (more than 160 proposals). Second, the book offers a detailed section-by-section commentary on the fifteen articles of the current constitution. It explains the meaning and traces the origins of each provision. In the interest of a fair and thorough analysis, this commentary relies on rulings handed down by Mississippi appellate courts, opinions issued by the office of state attorney general, and enabling legislation passed by state lawmakers. Third, this volume provides a bibliographic essay on available primary and secondary sources for those interested in further study.

*The Oxford Commentaries on the State Constitutions of the United States* is an important new series that reflects a renewed international interest in constitutional history and provides expert insight into each of the 50 state constitutions. Each volume in this innovative series contains a historical overview of the state's constitutional development, a section-by-section analysis of its current constitution, and a comprehensive guide to further research.

Under the expert editorship of Professor G. Alan Tarr, Director of the Center on State Constitutional Studies at Rutgers University, this series provides essential reference tools for understanding state constitutional law. Books in the series can be purchased individually or as part of a complete set, giving readers unmatched access to these important political documents.

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