

Signposts

New Directions in Southern Legal History

Edited by Sally E. Hadden and Patricia Hagler Minter

Dynamism and diversity in the study of southern legal history

"Constitutional and legal history converge comfortably in this welcome rethinking of the southern legal heritage. *Signposts* is a milestone in the emergence of a more encompassing vision of the legal and constitutional history of the South."—William M. Wiecek, author of *The Birth of the Modern Constitution: The United States Supreme Court, 1941-1953*

"This exciting anthology promises to stir renewed interest in southern legal history, raising new questions, refocusing old lenses, and shaping research agendas for decades to come."—Anders Walker, author of *The Ghost of Jim Crow: How Southern Moderates Used Brown v. Board of Education to Stall Civil Rights*

"This collection is truly first rate, offering essays that plow new ground or offer fresh perspectives on more familiar topics. While the individual essays are more than worth the price of admission, together they offer rich insights into the ways law shaped and was shaped by southern society. Hadden and Minter have done an enormous service to the field of legal history by bringing this outstanding group of authors together in a volume that underscores the vitality of southern legal history and sets an ambitious agenda for future scholarship."—Donald G. Nieman, coeditor of *Local Matters: Race, Crime, and Justice in the Nineteenth-Century South*

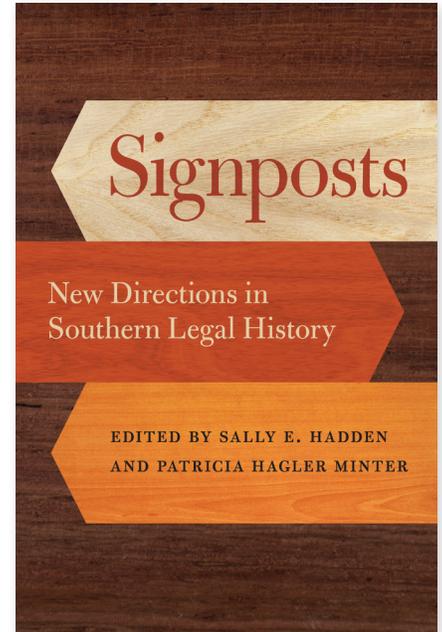
"This engaging collection of essays demonstrates just how diverse and lively the field of southern legal history has become. *Signposts*, from its savvy introduction to its closing essay, reminds us of myriad ways, some familiar and many surprising, that southerners used the law to define themselves and their region. This collection is destined to be a foundation for the next generation of southern legal history."—W. Fitzhugh Brundage, author of *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory*

In *Signposts*, Sally E. Hadden and Patricia Hagler Minter have assembled seventeen essays, by both established and rising scholars, that showcase new directions in southern legal history across a wide range of topics, time periods, and locales. The essays will inspire today's scholars to dig even more deeply into the southern legal heritage, in much the same way that David Bodenhamer and James Ely's seminal 1984 work, *Ambivalent Legacy*, inspired an earlier generation to take up the study of southern legal history.

Contributors to *Signposts* explore a

wide range of subjects related to southern constitutional and legal thought, including real and personal property, civil rights, higher education, gender, secession, reapportionment, prohibition, lynching, legal institutions such as the grand jury, and conflicts between bench and bar. A number of the essayists are concerned with transatlantic connections to southern law and with marginalized groups such as women and native peoples. Taken together, the essays in *Signposts* show us that understanding how law changes over time is essential to understanding the history of the South.

SALLY E. HADDEN, an associate professor of history at Western Michigan University, is the author of *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* and coeditor of *The Blackwell Companion to American Legal History*. PATRICIA HAGLER MINTER, associate professor of history at Western Kentucky University, is a coauthor of the 2003 edition of *Out of Many Lives, Many Stories: Biographies in American History*.



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