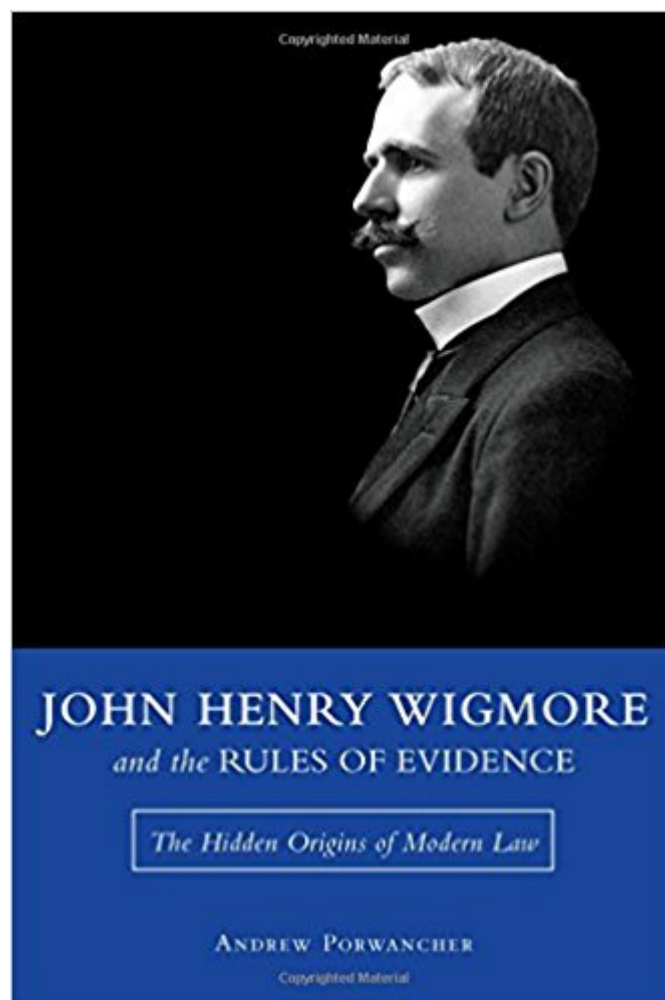




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John Henry Wigmore And The Rules Of Evidence: The Hidden Origins Of Modern Law (Studies In Constitutional Democracy)



Synopsis

Honorable Mention, 2017 Scribes Book Award, The American Society of Legal Writers At the dawn of the twentieth century, the United States was reeling from the effects of rapid urbanization and industrialization. Time-honored verities proved obsolete, and intellectuals in all fields sought ways to make sense of an increasingly unfamiliar reality. The legal system in particular began to buckle under the weight of its anachronism. In the midst of this crisis, John Henry Wigmore, dean of the Northwestern University School of Law, single-handedly modernized the jury trial with his 1904-5 Treatise on evidence, an encyclopedic work that dominated the conduct of trials. In so doing, he inspired generations of progressive jurists—among them Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Benjamin Cardozo, and Felix Frankfurter—to reshape American law to meet the demands of a new era. Yet Wigmore's role as a prophet of modernity has slipped into obscurity. This book provides a radical reappraisal of his place in the birth of modern legal thought.

Book Information

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“[The book] will become the standard work on the subject, and more than that, will contribute to emerging clarity in the field of early twentieth-century legal ideas more broadly.”—Noah Feldman, Professor of Law, Harvard Law School, author of *Cool War: The Future of Global Competition* “It evidences a close reading of Wigmore's work and extensive work in the archives at Harvard and Northwestern, bringing to light a good deal of new material on the connections among important figures in legal

modernism. • Robert P. Burns, Professor of Law, Northwestern University School of Law, author of A Theory of the Trial

Andrew Porwancher is an Assistant Professor at the University of Oklahoma, where he teaches legal history. Dr. Porwancher is also the author of *The Devil Himself: A Tale of Honor, Insanity, and the Birth of Modern America* (Oxford University Press, 2016). Currently, he is at work on *The Jewish Founding Father: Alexander Hamilton's Hidden Life* (under contract with Harvard University Press). His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Supreme Court History*, *History of Education*, *Journalism History*, *Paedagogica Historica*, and *American Educational History Journal*. Dr. Porwancher has been awarded fellowships at Oxford (2013-2014), the American Jewish Historical Society (2015), the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History (2016), Yeshiva (2017), and Princeton (2018). At the University of Oklahoma, he serves as a faculty fellow at Headington College and on the Faculty Advisory Board of the Center for the History of Liberty.

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