OVERVIEW
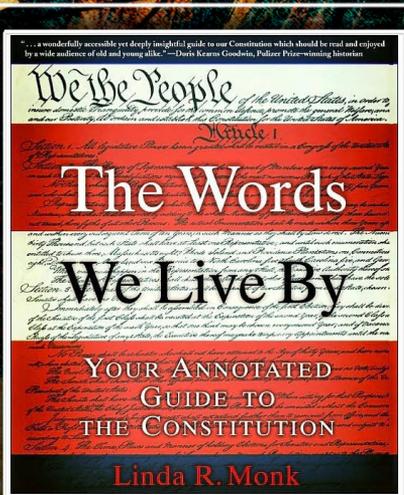
The U.S. Constitution gets a comprehensive overview in this engaging blend of history and commentary. Monk, author of *The Bill of Rights: A User's Guide*, traces the history and consequences of each part of this vital document in a line-by-line analysis of the original seven articles and the 27 amendments. Drawing on the writings of constitutional scholars, Supreme Court Justices and concerned citizens like Charlton Heston, playwright Arthur Miller and rock star Ted Nugent, she also gives even-handed but lively accounts of the debates over such Constitutional controversies as the right to bear arms, the right to privacy, church-state separation, and capital punishment. The portrait of the Constitution that emerges is a mixture of the sublime and the ridiculous. Some parts, like the Civil War amendments that defined citizenship and equality in granting them to African-Americans, are terse milestones in our evolving understanding of freedom, while elsewhere, the Constitution seems like a scratch-pad for ill-considered ideas, like the hastily repealed Prohibition Amendment.

> "...a wonderfully accessible yet deeply insightful guide to our Constitution which should be read and enjoyed by a wide audience of old and young alike."—Doris Kearns Goodwin, Pulitzer Prize-winning historian

The Words We Live By

YOUR ANNOTATED GUIDE TO THE CONSTITUTION

Linda R. Monk

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