

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910554222703321
Autore	Breslin Beau <1966->
Titolo	A constitution for the living : imagining how five generations of Americans would rewrite the nation's fundamental law // Beau Breslin
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Stanford, California : , : Stanford University Press, , [2021] ©2021
ISBN	1-5036-2754-3
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (383 pages)
Disciplina	342.73029
Soggetti	Constitutional history - United States Counterfactual histories.
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	Frontmatter -- Contents -- Preface -- 1787 An Introduction -- 1825 -- 1863 -- 1903 -- 1953 -- 2022 -- Epilogue -- Acknowledgments -- Notes -- Index
Sommario/riassunto	What would America's Constitutions have looked like if each generation wrote its own? "The earth belongs to the living, the dead have neither powers nor rights over it." These famous words, written by Thomas Jefferson to James Madison, reflect Jefferson's lifelong belief that each generation ought to write its own Constitution. According to Jefferson each generation should take an active role in endorsing, renouncing, or changing the nation's fundamental law. Perhaps if he were alive today to witness our seething debates over the state of American politics, he would feel vindicated in this belief. Madison's response was that a Constitution must endure over many generations to gain the credibility needed to keep a nation strong and united. History tells us that Jefferson lost that debate. But what if he had prevailed? In A Constitution for the Living, Beau Breslin reimagines American history to answer that question. By tracing the story from the 1787 Constitutional Convention up to the present, Breslin presents an engaging and insightful narrative account of historical figures and how they might have shaped their particular generation's Constitution. Readers are invited to join the Founders in candlelit taverns where, over glasses of

wine, they debated fundamental issues; to witness towering figures of American history, from Abraham Lincoln to Booker T. Washington, enact an alternate account through startling and revealing conversations; and to attend a Constitutional Convention taking place in the present day. These possibilities come to life in the book's prose, with sensitivity, verve, and compelling historical detail. This book is, above all, a call for a more engaged American public at a time when change seems close at hand, if we dare to imagine it.
