

## Law and Society in US History

21H.224 Spring 2003

### First Writing Assignment

#### Property Regulation in the Early Republic

Choose **one** of the following two assignments. Your paper is due in class 8. You may submit the paper in class the previous day by email attachment. If you send the paper by attachment, you must keep a backup paper copy and be ready to submit that if there are any computer difficulties. Extensions will be granted only for good reasons explained well in advance; computer malfunctions are never an acceptable excuse for a late submission. Adherence to standards of academic honesty is required. You may use any citation system that you wish (MLA parenthetical reference style, *Chicago Manual of Style*, legal citation), as long as your references are clear and complete.

**Option One: Case Brief.** Write a brief and analysis on one of the four cases that we studied for class 5. You should write this as a 2-3 pp. narrative summary of the case, but you will want to use the case brief handout as a way to guide your thinking and writing. Your brief should address the facts of the case, the legal and constitutional issues at stake, the Court's holding, and its rationale. In addition, you should include your own argument as to why you believe that the case you are writing about was rightly or wrongly decided. You may use strictly constitutional reasons for your point, or you may place the case in the context of broader social and historical developments of the early republic.

**Option Two: Response Paper.** Do the four cases that we have studied for class 5 offer a coherent vision of the role of the state in protecting and regulating property rights? What is that vision? If you choose to answer this question, you should write a 2-3 pp. response paper that focuses on explaining what holds the cases together (or not), drawing from the cases selectively rather than summarizing all four of them. You may use strictly constitutional reasons for your essay, or you may place the cases in the context of broader social and historical developments of the early republic.