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Halbrook, Stephen P. **The founders' Second Amendment: origins of the right to bear arms.** Ivan R. Dee, 2008. 425p index afp ISBN 1566637929, \$28.95; ISBN 9781566637923, \$28.95

Halbrook (research fellow, The Independent Institute, Oakland, CA) is a well-published scholar who has written a timely, well-informed, lucid book on the "origins of the right to bear arms." He covers the Second Amendment's historical underpinnings from 1768-1826, and so offers readers a rich interpretive framework from which to grasp the US Supreme Court's (conservative) decision in June 2008, which was handed down after the book's publication. The decision affirms the constitutional right of individuals to keep guns at home for self-defense, and prohibits government from violating said right. (That is, the Court struck down the District of Columbia's ban on individual ownership of handguns.) In brief, Halbrook explores why he believes the "original intent" of the framers was to underscore a personal, and not merely a militia-based, collective right to bear arms. Given his interpretation that only individual persons have substantive rights, whereas it is states that possess "powers" in the requisite sense, it is not unexpected that the author's argument supports the Supreme Court's subsequent decision. Fine index; no bibliography. **Summing Up:** Recommended. ★★ Suitable for educated readers, all levels.—*A. S. Rosenbaum, Cleveland State University*