

What happened to property rights in America?

Our laws today do little to protect property owners from either the dictator abroad or the bureaucrat in D.C. How did this come to pass in a country founded on the principle that all men have the inalienable right to life, liberty and property? In this lecture, Professor Adam Mossoff explains the rise and fall of property rights in America. He first discusses the intellectual history of the right to property and how the Founding Fathers turned 17th-century theory into 18th-century practice. He then explains how early twentieth-century Progressives destroyed property in order to remove this fundamental obstacle to the implementation of their socialist programs. The effects of this assault are still felt today, which he illustrates with examples from famous and recent court cases in which judges disintegrated basic property protections, such as the Supreme Court's recent decision in *Kelo v. City of New London*. Ultimately, the lesson to be learned is that a renaissance in the protection of property rights will not occur through politics or law, but rather in the proper justification of property as a fundamental moral right.

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The Rise and Fall of Property in America

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