

2005

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By Jaime Welch-Donahue

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William & Mary Law School's Property Rights Project recently honored University of Chicago Law Professor Richard A. Epstein with the 2005 Brigham-Kanner Prize.

The prize, first awarded in 2004, recognizes a leading figure in property rights law and was presented to Epstein at a dinner in his honor at the College of William & Mary's historic Wren Building on Oct. 28. The Law School's Property Rights Project hosted its property rights conference the following day.

Eric A. Kades, Professor of Law and the Project's director, described Epstein's enormous influence on the field. He estimated that Epstein's publications have been cited by legal scholars about 6,500 times. He also noted that the Supreme Court has cited Epstein in four takings cases. "Not only does the Supreme Court cite him," Kades said, "but his work has clearly influenced the Court," perhaps most clearly in *Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council*.

Epstein, Kades told the audience, "has all of the scholarly virtues." His writings display "complete mastery" of economics, political theory, and the common law while employing a systematic approach that makes his scholarship accessible to laypeople. His work has played a role in the greater protection of property rights in the courts and "has inspired a generation of property rights advocates."

Epstein is the James Parker Hall Distinguished Service Professor of Law at the University of Chicago where he also serves as director of the John M. Olin Program in Law and Economics. He has written on a wide range of legal and interdisciplinary topics and is the author of numerous works including *Skepticism and Freedom: A Modern Case for Classical Liberalism* (University of Chicago Press, 2003), *Simple Rules for a Complex World* (Harvard University Press, 1995), *Bargaining with the State* (Princeton University Press, 1993) and *Takings: Private Property and the Power of Eminent Domain* (Harvard University Press, 1985). Epstein is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution and at the University of Chicago Medical School's Center for Clinical Medical Ethics. He was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1985.



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The William & Mary Prize is named in recognition of Toby P. Brigham and Gideon Kanner for their lifetime contributions to private property rights, their efforts to advance the constitutional protections thereof, and their accomplishments in preserving the protections and dignity of the individual and civil rights to private property. Brigham is a founding partner of Brigham Moore in Florida and has specialized in eminent domain and property rights law for more than 40 years. Gideon Kanner is professor of law emeritus at Loyola Law School (Los Angeles) and is currently Of Counsel at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips in California.

Harvard Law School Professor Frank I. Michelman was the Prize's inaugural recipient in 2004.