The University of Adelaide Law School Staff Seminar presented by Professor Horst Dippel, "William Blackstone and the Origins of Modern Constitutionalism" on Friday, 12 March 2010 at 2.00pm, Moot Court Room, Ligertwood Building, Law School, University of Adelaide

**Topic:** This paper demonstrates that Blackstone's Commentaries were highly influential in the British North American colonies in relation both to the common law and to constitutional ideas. Indeed, the established wisdom that Americans extracted from Blackstone their common law but rejected the constitutional ideas found there is altogether misleading. Blackstone was not only readily at hand when constitutional issues were debated in the U.S. but there were also a number of constitutional topics in which the Commentaries played a crucial role in the American Constitutional debates. This is particular true for the "American" idea of checks and balances.

**Speaker:** Professor Horst Dippel taught British and American history at the University of Kassel, Germany, from 1992 through 2009. His major field of research is the history of modern constitutionalism. He has published widely in this area, including seven volumes of Constitutional Documents of the United States of America, 1776-1860, in the series Constitutions of the World from the End of the 18th Century through the Middle of the 19th Century, of which he is editor-in-chief (25 volumes to date). For more information please see Professor Dippel's website at [http://www.uni-kassel.de/~dippel/](http://www.uni-kassel.de/~dippel/)

For further information on this Seminar please contact Dr Paul Babie, Associate Dean (Research), University of Adelaide Law School. Phone: 8303 5521 or email paul.babie@adelaide.edu.au.