



Religious Freedom in the Liberal State

Rex Ahdar, Ian Leigh



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Examining the law and public policy relating to religious liberty in Western liberal democracies, this book contains a detailed analysis of the history, rationale, scope, and limits of religious freedom from (but not restricted to) an evangelical Christian perspective. Focussing on United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and EU, it studies the interaction between law and religion at several different levels, looking at the key debates that have arisen.

Divided into three parts, the book begins by contrasting the liberal and Christian rationales for and understandings of religious freedom. It then explores central thematic issues: the types of constitutional frameworks within which any right to religious exercise must operate; the varieties of paradigmatic relationships between organized religion and the state; the meaning of 'religion'; the limitations upon individual and institutional religious behaviour; and the domestic and international legal mechanisms that have evolved to address religious conduct. The final part explores key subject areas where current religious freedom controversies have arisen: employment; education; parental rights and childrearing; controls on pro-religious and anti-religious expression; medical treatment; and religious group (church) autonomy.

This new edition is fully updated with the growing case law in the area, and features increased coverage of Islam and the flashpoint debates surrounding the accommodation of Muslim beliefs and practices in Anglophone nations.

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