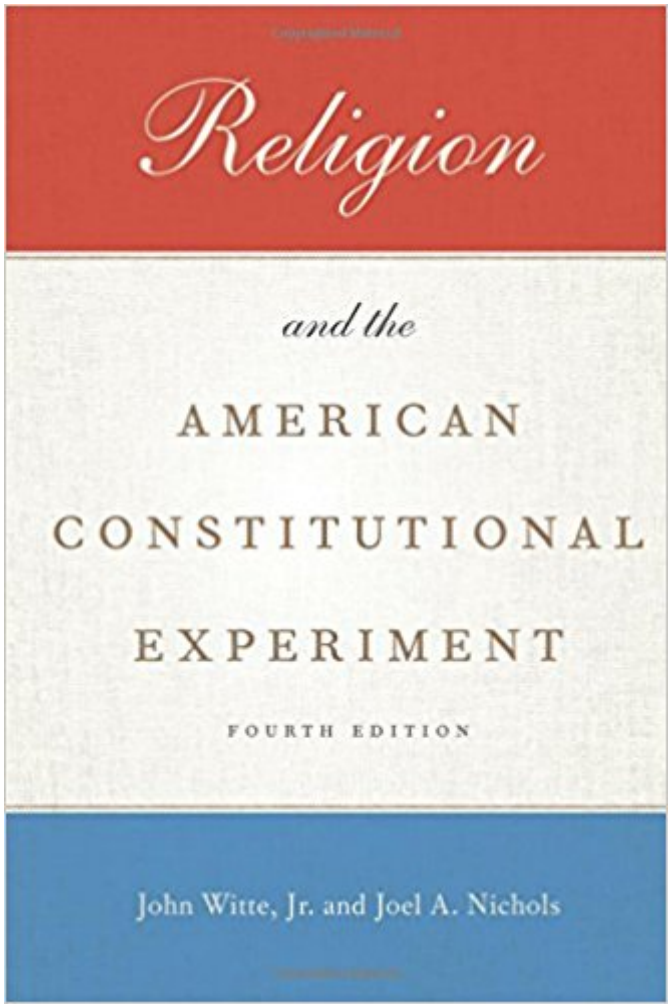
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Religion And The American Constitutional Experiment



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Synopsis

This accessible introduction tells the American story of religious liberty from its colonial beginnings to the latest Supreme Court cases. The authors provide extensive analysis of the formation of the First Amendment religion clauses and the plausible original intent or understanding of the founders. They describe the enduring principles of American religious freedom--liberty of conscience, free exercise of religion, religious equality, religious pluralism, separation of church and state, and no establishment of religion--as those principles were developed by the founders and applied by the Supreme Court. Successive chapters analyze the two hundred plus Supreme Court cases on religious freedom--on the free exercise of religion, the roles of government and religion in education, the place of religion in public life, and the interaction of religious organizations and the state. A final chapter shows how favorably American religious freedom compares with international human rights norms and European Court of Human Rights case law. Lucid, comprehensive, multidisciplinary, and balanced, this volume is an ideal classroom text and armchair paperback. Detailed appendices offer drafts of each of the religion clauses debated in 1788 and 1789, a table of all state constitutional laws on religious freedom, and a summary of every Supreme Court case on religious liberty from 1815 to 2015. Throughout the volume, the authors address frankly and fully the hot button issues of our day: religious freedom versus sexual liberty, freedom of conscience and its limitations, religious group rights and the worries about abuse, faith-based legal systems and their place in liberal democracies, and the fresh rise of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Christianity in America and abroad. For this new edition, the authors have updated each chapter in light of new scholarship and new Supreme Court case law (through the 2015 term) and have added an appendix mapping some of the cutting edge issues of religious liberty and church-state relations.

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Customer Reviews

"This book by John Witte and Joel Nichols is probably the best combination that exists of historical background, theoretical understanding, and legal doctrines of the religion clauses. It allows scholars, students, and other citizens to grasp the history behind the clauses without undertaking full-scale research on their own. The book is also a superb source to understand modern controversies and how courts are dealing with them." --Kent Greenawalt, University Professor, Columbia Law School "In evenhanded and clear prose, Witte and Nichols provide a clear and comprehensive history of religious liberty in the United States. Broad in scope, updated with the latest developments, and supplemented with impressive appendices that catalog state constitutional provisions and Supreme Court decisions, this text offers cogent analysis from leading scholars of law and religion. Already a trusted and valuable classroom resource, this book will also enlighten those seeking a deeper understanding of the contours of this important topic."--Amy E. Black, Professor of Political Science, Wheaton College "The authors provide clear description of complicated case law and public policy for students and citizens. They reveal patterns and principles on a subject often caricatured by wild generalizations and widespread confusion. Academics and experts across a range of fields and professions will appreciate their fine analysis and comprehensive scholarship. The authors refute a weak postmodernist critique of religious freedom and offer a provocative perspective on the history of liberty of conscience."--Reading Religion"In the inevitably contentious field of church-state constitutional issues in America, it is rare to find a volume that is as accessible, thoughtful, and measured as Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment by John Witte, Jr. and Joel A. Nichols. Their remarkable ability to create order in the midst of the chaos of the ever-changing constitutional law of religious liberty makes this an ideal volume for classroom use, and this new fourth edition updates the church-state story through the US Supreme Court s 2015 decisions."--Journal of Church and State

John Witte, Jr. is Robert W. Woodruff Professor of Law, McDonald Distinguished Professor, and Director of the Center for the Study of Law and Religion at Emory University. A leading specialist in law and religion, legal history, and religious liberty, he has published 220 articles and 28 books, including Religion and Human Rights (Oxford, 2012) and No Establishment of Religion (Oxford,

2012).Joel A. Nichols is Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Professor of Law at the University of St. Thomas (MN), and Senior Fellow in the Center for the Study of Law and Religion. He has published two dozen articles on family law, constitutional law, and human rights, including Marriage and Divorce in a Multicultural Context (2012).

Actually took John Witte's class using this book. The book is just a good read for anyone interested in the US Constitution.A thoughtful, well written book.

Got it for Law School. In great condition. Great Book

Good book

Religion and the American Constitutional Experiment provides an excellent multidisciplinary approach to American religious liberty, appears in a third updated edition, and provides college-level history classes with an in-depth survey of the history, theory, law and analysis of American religious liberty form colonial to modern times. This is the only coverage to provide a review of all facets of American religious history, and the latest edition includes seven new cases following the latest Supreme Court rulings.

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