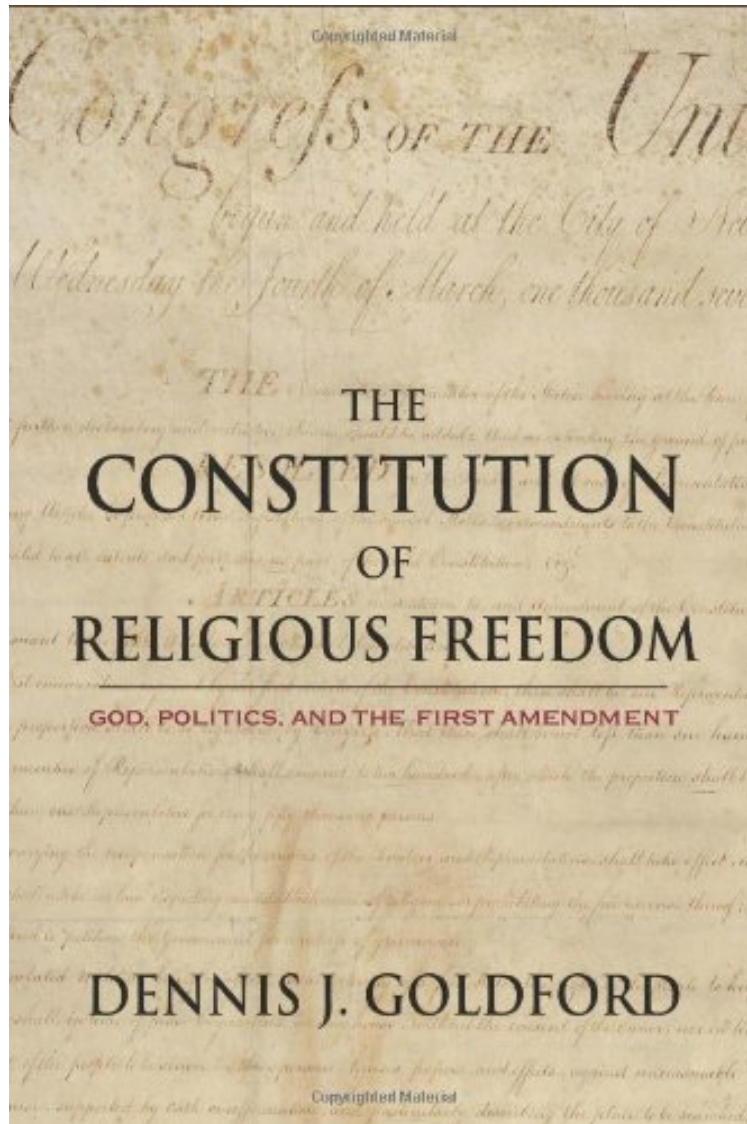


(Free pdf) The Constitution of Religious Freedom: God, Politics, and the First Amendment

# The Constitution of Religious Freedom: God, Politics, and the First Amendment

Dennis J. Goldford

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**Dennis J. Goldford : The Constitution of Religious Freedom: God, Politics, and the First Amendment** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Constitution of Religious Freedom: God, Politics, and the First Amendment:

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provides a convincing argument for his thesis: that the Founders intended America to be a nation that never uses the power of government to express a preference of one religion over another, or religion over no religion; or inhibit any American from exercising the freedom of religion. Extensive footnotes add depth to the understanding of this issue, which has been manipulated for political gain too often in our history.

In a time when the question of American religious identity underlies much political conversation that fills the public square, Dennis Goldford directs his readers to consider the First Amendment. The founding fathers' words, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," are the constitutional means of ensuring, however imperfectly, the American freedom to stand for something sacred. In his analysis, Goldford ably demonstrates that the very nature of these religion clauses establishes protection not for religion but for religious freedom. The Constitution of Religious Freedom argues that religious identity inheres not in the nation, but in the individual citizen.

"Goldford's robust defense of the Religion Clauses as protecting religious freedom and not religion itself is a welcome antidote to conservative scholars and advocates." Aram Schvey, Policy Council at the Center for Reproductive Rights, Conscience  
"In this tightly reasoned but accessible volume, Goldford exposes the mistaken assumption that the American government espouses a religious mission rather than champions a commitment to religious freedom. The Constitution of Religious Freedom should be required reading for the policymakers and policy activists who shape the role of religion in American political life." Richard A. Brisbin, Jr., Professor of Political Science, West Virginia University  
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From the Inside Flap  
Uncovering what is really at stake in American religious identity  
About the Author  
Dennis J. Goldford is Professor of Politics at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. The author of *The American Constitution and the Debate Over Originalism*, Goldford has contributed election cycle political analysis to more than eighty major newspapers, magazines, or wire services in the United States, Canada, Japan, and many European and Eastern European countries. He lives in Clive, Iowa.