

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910338057303321
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Titolo	The Free Exercise of Religion in America : Its Original Constitutional Meaning / / by Ellis M. West
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Cham : , : Springer International Publishing : , : Imprint : Palgrave Macmillan, , 2019
ISBN	3-030-06052-7
Edizione	[1st ed. 2019.]
Descrizione fisica	1 online resource (XIV, 317 p.)
Disciplina	322.1 342.730852
Soggetti	Religion and politics America - Politics and government Constitutional law Religion and sociology Politics and Religion American Politics Constitutional Law Sociology of Religion
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Nota di contenuto	1. Introduction -- 2. Constitutional Rights and Ascertaining their Original Meaning -- 3. Setting the Stage -- 4. The Meaning of Religious Liberty in Virginia -- 5. The Meaning of Religious Liberty in the Other Southern States -- 6. The Meaning of Religious Liberty in the Middle States -- 7. The Meaning of Religious Liberty in the New England States -- 8. Initial Conclusion -- 9. The Constitutional Meaning of Religious Freedom: Part One -- 10. The Constitutional Meaning of Religious Freedom: Part Two -- 11. Final Conclusion.
Sommario/riassunto	This book explains the original meaning of the two religion clauses of the First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law [1] respecting an establishment of religion or [2] prohibiting the free exercise thereof." As the book shows, both clauses were intended to protect the free exercise of religion or religious freedom. West shows the position taken by early Americans on four issues: (1) the general meaning of the "free

exercise of religion,” including whether it is different from the meaning of “no establishment of religion”; (2) whether the free exercise of religion may be intentionally and directly limited, and if so, under what circumstances; (3) whether laws regulating temporal matters that also have a religious sanction violate the free exercise of religion; and (4) whether the free exercise of religion gives persons a right to be exempt from obeying valid civil laws that unintentionally and indirectly make it difficult or impossible to practice their religion in some way. A definitive work on the subject and a major contribution to the field of constitutional law and history, this volume is key to a better understanding of the ongoing constitutional adjudication based on the religion clauses of the First Amendment.
