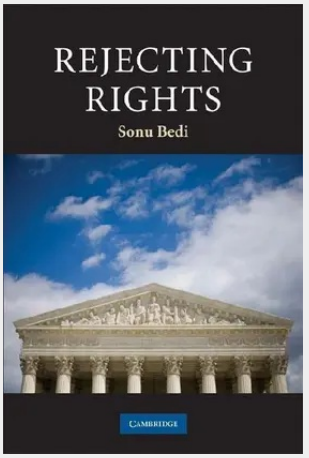
Bedi

Rejecting Rights



The language of rights is ubiquitous. It shapes the way we construct our debates over issues such as abortion, affirmative action and sexual freedom. This provocative new study challenges the very concept of rights, arguing that they jeopardize our liberty and undermine democratic debate. By re-conceptualizing our ideas about limited government, it suggests that we can limit the reasons or rationales on which the polity may act. Whereas we once used the language of rights to thwart democratic majorities, Bedi argues that we should now turn our attention to the democratic state's reason for acting. This will permit greater democratic flexibility and discretion while ensuring genuine liberty. Deftly employing political theory and constitutional law to state its case, the study radically rethinks the relationship between liberty and democracy, and will be essential reading for scholars and students of political and legal philosophy.

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