Norman Williams is the Ken and Claudia Peterson Professor of Law and Director of the Center for Constitutional Government at Willamette University.

Constructing a Democracy

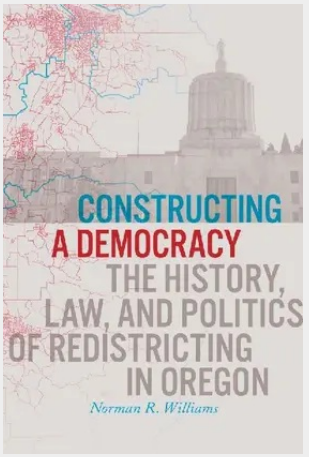
The History, Law, and Politics of Redistricting in Oregon

Every ten years, after new census data is released, states go through the process of redistricting: choosing how to divide up and apportion their state and federal legislative districts. Although the process may be different in every state, the questions are the same: Who draws the maps? Who approves the maps? Is gerrymandering always bad or can it be permissible in some scenarios? What power do legislatures, governors, courts, and political parties have to influence the process and the outcomes? In Constructing a Democracy, legal scholar Norman Williams presents a comprehensive history of legislative redistricting in Oregon. Because redistricting impacts the representativeness of the ensuing legislative body, Oregon's constitutional framers, legislators, and courts alike have understandably focused on developing legal rules to constrain the redistricting process. Williams is primarily interested in identifying and understanding the scope of those rules: What legal constraints have existed over time? How aggressively have the courts enforced those restraints? How have political actors undertaken the redistricting task in light of the various rules and the judicial pronouncements regarding those constraints? The redistricting process has not drawn national attention in Oregon the way it has in states like North Carolina and Pennsylvania. But the process here is notable in several ways, including an early attention to malapportionment, early adoption of direct election of senators, and early enfranchisement of women. The Oregon process has also notably lagged behind other states, particularly in considering issues of race and minority representation.

Every ten years, states go through the process of redistricting: choosing how to divide up and apportion their state and federal legislative districts. How the districts are drawn can determine which party wins the district and therefore controls the legislature or Congress. Although the process may be different in every state, the questions are the same: Who draws the maps? Who can prevent gerrymandering? What power do legislatures, governors, courts, and political parties have to influence the process and the outcomes?

In Constructing a Democracy, legal scholar Norman Williams presents a comprehensive history of legislative and congressional redistricting in Oregon. Because redistricting impacts the representativeness of the ensuing legislative body, Oregon’s constitutional framers, legislators, and courts alike have understandably focused on developing legal rules to constrain the redistricting process. Williams is primarily interested in identifying and understanding the scope of those rules: What legal constraints have existed over time? How aggressively have the courts enforced those restraints? How have political actors undertaken the redistricting task in light of the various rules and the judicial pronouncements regarding those constraints?

The redistricting process in Oregon has not drawn national attention the way it has in states like North Carolina and Pennsylvania. But the process in Oregon is notable in several ways, including an early attention to malapportionment, the use of the initiative to reform the process, and and the impact of women leaders on the redistricting process. The Oregon process, however, has also notably lagged behind other states, particularly in considering issues of race and minority representation and preventing gerrymandering.



48,50 €
48,50 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Nicht mehr lieferbar

Artikelnummer: 9780870712432
Medium: Buch
ISBN: 978-0-87071-243-2
Verlag: Oregon State University Press
Erscheinungstermin: 10.10.2023
Sprache(n): Englisch
Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2023
Produktform: Kartoniert
Gewicht: 612 g
Seiten: 376
Format (B x H): 163 x 236 mm