

Diversity in America



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出版者:The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press

出版时间:2003-5

装帧:平装

isbn:9780674010536

America is the first society in history to make ethno-racial diversity an affirmative social ideal rather than viewing it as a fearful menace, as almost all other societies still do. Since the 1960s, America has pursued this ideal in many forms - not only to remedy past discrimination against minorities but also to increase diversity for its own sake. It is high time for an accounting. How diverse are we now and what can we expect in the future? Why do we, unlike the rest of the world, think that diversity is desirable and that more of it is better? What risks does diversity pose? What are the roles of law, politics and informal social controls in promoting diversity? How can we manage diversity better? In this book, Peter H. Schuck explains how Americans have understood diversity, how we came to embrace it, how the government regulates it now, and how we can do better. He mobilizes a wealth of conceptual, historical, legal, political and sociological analysis to argue that diversity is best managed not by the government but by families, ethnic groups, religious communities, employers, voluntary organizations and other civil society institutions. Analyzing some of the most controversial policy arenas where politics and diversity intersect - immigration, multiculturalism, language, affirmative action, residential neighbourhoods, religious practices, faith-based social services, and school choice - Schuck reveals the conflicts, trade-offs, and ironies entailed by our commitment to the diversity ideal. He concludes with recommendations to help us manage the challenge of diversity in the future.

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