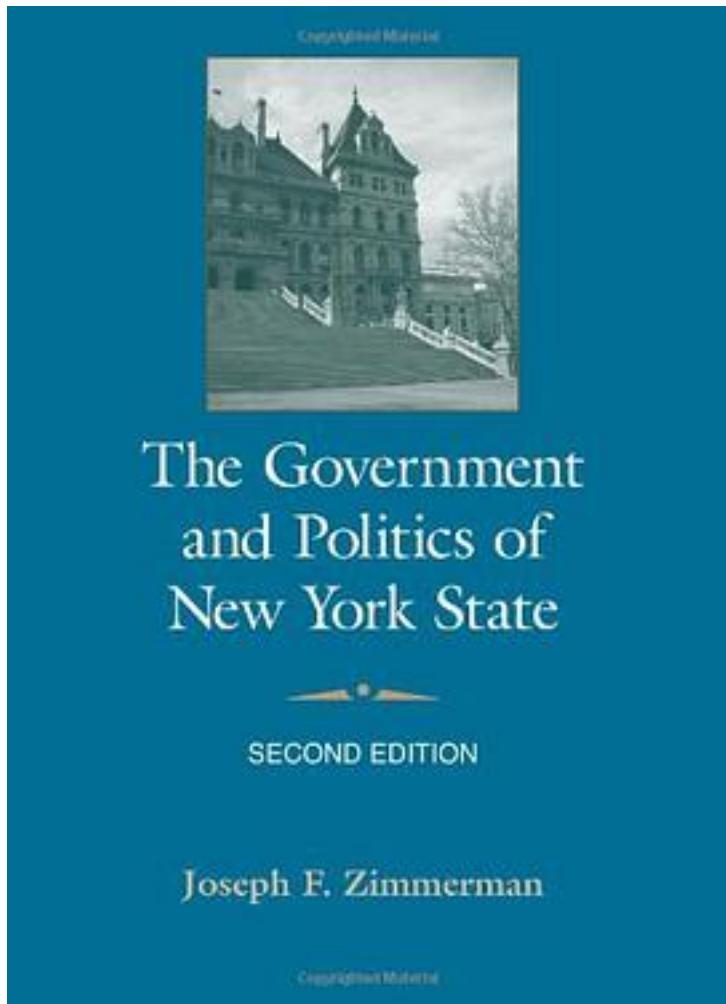


The Government and Politics of New York State



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出版者:

出版时间:2008-4

装帧:

isbn:9780791474358

Since the mid-19th century, American law has recognized adoption as a way to create

parent-child relationships. As the product of law, rather than blood, adoptive families have become a focal point for debates about the meaning of family, the rights and responsibilities of parents, and the best interests of children. Families by Law brings together diverse perspectives on contemporary aspects of adoption law and practice. Following a historical overview of adoption in American law and society, the reader presents different responses to concerns about who may place children for adoption, the status of birth parents, who may adopt, and the legal and psychosocial consequences of adoption. The new frontiers of adoption are explored: from transracial and intercountry adoption, adoption by same sex couples, and the adoption of children with special needs, to the movements for opening records and maintaining post-adoption contact between adoptive and birth families. The relationship between adoption and assisted reproductive technologies is discussed, as are feminist, economic, and philosophical perspectives on adoption and procreation. The volume includes statutes and cases, advocacy organization statements, and pieces from legal scholars, social scientists, philosophers, psychologists, and sociologists in order to provide a wealth of information about the contemporary dimensions of adoption. Families by Law provides undergraduates, as well as law, social welfare, and public policy graduate students and others interested in family relationships with a multifaceted context for understanding the complexities of contemporary family life.

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