



THE
HARM IN
HATE
SPEECH

Jeremy Waldron

Every liberal democracy has laws or codes against hate speech—except the United States. For constitutionalists, regulation of hate speech violates the First Amendment and damages a free society. Against this absolutist view, Jeremy Waldron argues powerfully that hate speech should be regulated as part of our commitment to human dignity and to inclusion and respect for members of vulnerable minorities.

“Waldron . . . challenges society and its legal system to do something about [the harm done by hate speech]. But the likelihood that something will be done is slim if Waldron is right about the state of First Amendment discourse: ‘In the American debate, the philosophical arguments about hate speech are knee-jerk, impulsive and thoughtless.’ Not the arguments of this book, however; they hit the mark every time.”

—Stanley Fish, *New York Times*

“[Waldron’s] book sheds light on a number of difficult issues, and occasionally exposes the difference between historical fact and fiction . . . We should all do our best to preserve President Ford’s conception of America as a place where we can disagree without being disagreeable. An understanding of the arguments in Waldron’s book may help us to do so.”

—John Paul Stevens, *New York Review of Books*

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