



The Politics of the Charter: The Illusive Promise of Constitutional Rights

Andrew Petter

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Andrew Petter is a leading constitutional scholar who served from 1991 to 2001 as a British Columbia MLA and cabinet minister, including Attorney General. In *The Politics of the Charter*, Petter assembles a set of his original essays written over three decades to provide a coherent critique of the political nature, impact, and legitimacy of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Showing how *Charter* rights have been shaped by the institutional character of the courts and by the ideological demands of liberal legalism, the essays contend that the *Charter* has diverted progressive political energies and facilitated the rise of neo-conservatism in Canada.

Drawing upon his constitutional expertise and political experience, Petter evaluates the *Charter* in practical, legal, and philosophical terms. These essays, along with a new introduction and conclusion, map out Petter's political philosophy and review the entirety of the *Charter* record. *The Politics of the Charter* is vividly written, free of legal jargon, accessible to a broad readership, and will provoke renewed discussion about how best to achieve a more compassionate and egalitarian Canadian society.

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