

Church, State, and New Religions (Christiano et al., chapter 11)

There is internal tension in the First Amendment between the establishment clause and the free exercise clause. Also, “the course of judicial reasoning on religious matters is convoluted.”

One source of church-state tension is the regular appearance of New Religious Movements (NRMs).

Social science has discredited many common claims about so-called “cults,” e.g., they use “brainwashing” as part of very efficient recruitment programs.

There is an anti-cult movement, but those organizations that used “deprogramming” were sued into bankruptcy.

NRMs in the U.S. tend to be mystical rather than ascetic.

NRMs often offer (1) a supportive community, (2) “immediate experience and emotional gratification,” (3) firm authority, and (4) “authenticity and naturalness.”

The Unification Church is given as an example of a NRM.

Although there is not an organized Satanist movement, there is an organized anti-Satanist movement. There is also a neo-pagan movement.