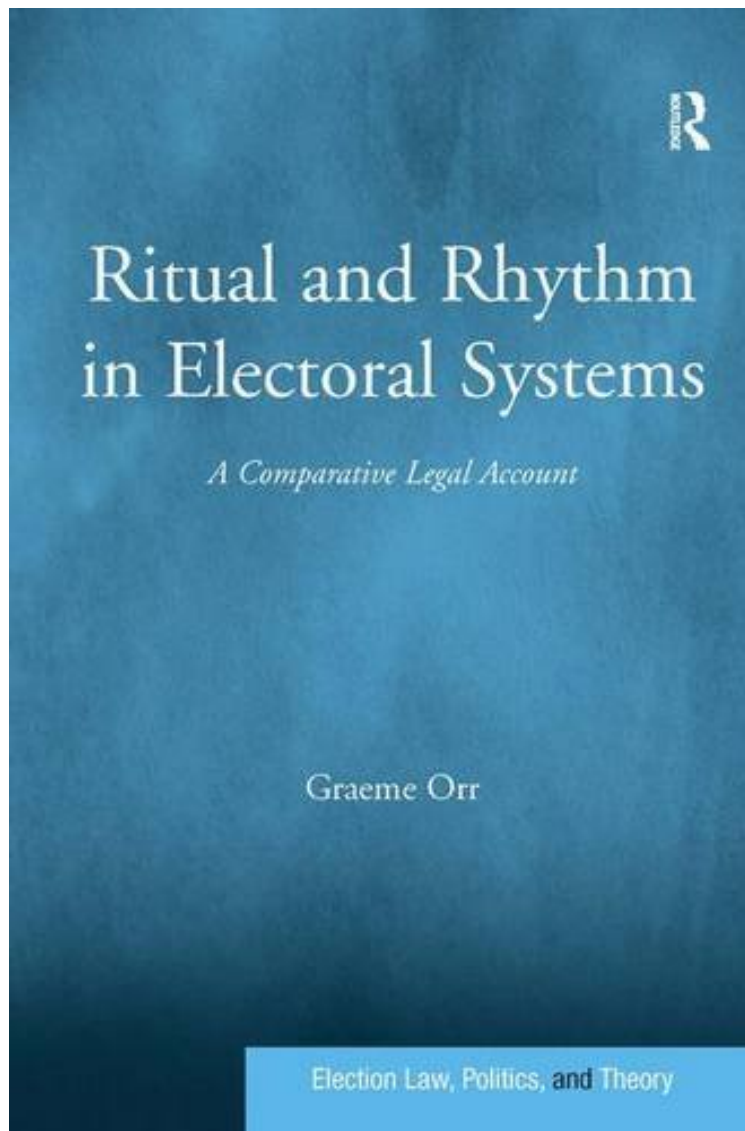


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Ritual and Rhythm in Electoral Systems: A Comparative Legal Account (Election Law, Politics, and Theory)

Graeme Orr

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Graeme Orr : Ritual and Rhythm in Electoral Systems: A Comparative Legal Account (Election Law, Politics, and Theory) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ritual and Rhythm in Electoral Systems: A Comparative Legal Account (Election Law, Politics, and Theory):

Why do we vote in schools? What is the social meaning of secret balloting? What is lost if we vote by mail or computers rather than on election day? What is the history and role of drinking and wagering in elections? How does the electoral cycle generate the theatre of election night and inaugurations? Elections are key public events - in a secular society the only real coming together of the social whole. Their rituals and rhythms run deep. Yet their conduct is invariably examined in instrumental ways, as if they were merely competitive games or liberal apparatus. Focusing on the political cultures and laws of the UK, the US and Australia, this book offers an historicised and generalised account of the intersection of electoral systems and the concepts of ritual, rhythm and the everyday, which form the basis of how we experience elections. As a novel contribution to the theory of the law of elections, this book will be of interest to researchers, students, administrators and policy makers in both politics and law.

'Graeme Orr has produced a brilliant and compelling account of the role of ritual in elections. This book should be required reading for constitutional lawyers and electoral administrators who will come to understand that the act of voting is but one moment in a far bigger cultural drama.' Stephen Coleman, University of Leeds, UK, and author of *How Voters Feel* 'In this important book, Graeme Orr goes a long way to helping us understand why elections matter so much. Beyond the mere casting and counting of votes, they consist of practices and processes that are imbued with deep meaning. This account of how the law provides a canvas upon which that meaning may be painted is masterful.' Andrew Geddis, University of Otago, New Zealand, and author of *Election Law in New Zealand* 'This is a masterly book - imaginative in conception, brilliantly executed, and above all beautifully written. Professor Orr is not only one of our best election lawyers, but also one of our most elegant and accessible legal writers. His original and skilful account of the "ritual and rhythms" of election day is both a work of great scholarship and a compelling read.' Keith Ewing, King's College London, UK, and author of *The Cost of Democracy* 'Departing from the usual demographic-quantitative accounts, Graeme Orr offers an engaging, thoroughly researched interpretation of the tenor and cadence of the rituals of electoral politics, rituals redolent with intriguing symbolism and meaning.' Ron Hirschbein, California State University, USA, and author of *Voting Rites* 'In a radical departure from the usual writing about elections, Graeme Orr offers a fascinating sociology of elections, unmasking them as important rituals with deep social and affective significance. He persuades us that elections are not just about rules and numbers, winners and losers; they also operate on a social-systems level as indispensable occasions for political communion and the renewal of democratic community.' Lisa Hill, University of Adelaide, Australia and author of *Compulsory Voting: For and Against* 'Ritual and Rhythm in Electoral Systems brings an eye-catching "High Church" flourish, and a near sacerdotal intensity, to the complex field of comparative electoral law, canvassing its rites and elaborate ceremonies with an eye that is as much anthropological as it is theological. The result is a profound study in what might be called the "jurispathology" of everyday electoral life. Judiciously combining theory and practice, as well as doctrine and context, Orr's elegantly written and meticulously researched book is sure to attract a wide readership in law, politics, and government.' William MacNeil, Griffith University, Australia and author of *Lex Populi* About the Author Graeme Orr is Professor of Law at the University of Queensland, Australia. He has authored and edited several books on the regulation of democracy including *The Law of Politics*, as well as over 150 articles, chapters and media pieces. Graeme has been a visiting scholar at UCLA and NYU, and is the International Editor of the *Election Law Journal* and Australian correspondent for *The Annual Register*.