Gender equality law in Czechia, as in other parts of post-socialist Central and Eastern Europe, is facing serious challenges. When obliged to adopt, interpret and apply anti-discrimination law as a condition of membership in the EU, Czech legislators and judges have repeatedly expressed hostility and demonstrated a fundamental lack of understanding of key ideas underpinning it. This important new study explores this scepticism to gender equality law, examining it with reference to legal and socio-legal developments that started in the state-socialist past and that remain relevant today. The book examines legal developments in gender-relevant areas, most importantly in equality and anti-discrimination law. But it goes further, shedding light on the underlying understandings of key concepts such as women, gender, equality, discrimination and rights. In so doing, it shows the fundamental intellectual and conceptual difficulties faced by gender equality law in Czechia. These include an essentialist understanding of differences between men and women, a notion that equality and anti-discrimination law is incompatible with freedom, and a perception that existing laws are objective and neutral, while any new gender-progressive regulation of social relations is an unacceptable interference with the 'natural social order'. Timely and provocative, this book will be required reading for all scholars of equality and gender and the law.

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