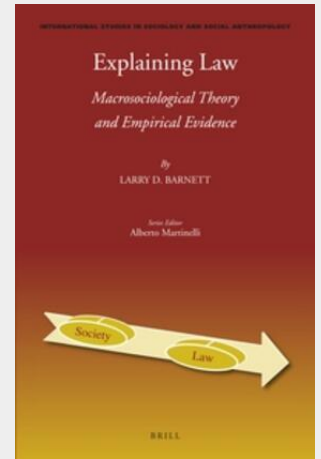Barnett

Explaining Law

Macrosociological Theory and Empirical Evidence

Sociologist-lawyer Larry D. Barnett advances the macrosociological thesis that, in nations that are structurally complex and democratically governed, concepts and doctrines of law on society-central social activities are fashioned by society-level conditions, not by particular (or even prominent) individuals. Because a substantial body of social science research has found that law in a modern nation does not have a large, permanent effect on the frequency of such activities, the book contends that the content of law on the activities is a product, not a determinant, of the society in which the law exists. Explaining Law bolsters this contention with several original studies, and illustrates types of quantitative evidence that can be used to build a macrosociological theory of law.

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185,50 €
173,36 € (zzgl. MwSt.)

Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9789004281202
Medium: Buch
ISBN: 978-90-04-28120-2
Verlag: Brill
Erscheinungstermin: 07.08.2015
Sprache(n): Englisch
Auflage: Erscheinungsjahr 2015
Serie: International Studies in Sociology and Social Anthropology
Produktform: Gebunden
Gewicht: 673 g
Seiten: 336
Format (B x H): 159 x 241 mm

16.08.2024 | 01:28 Uhr