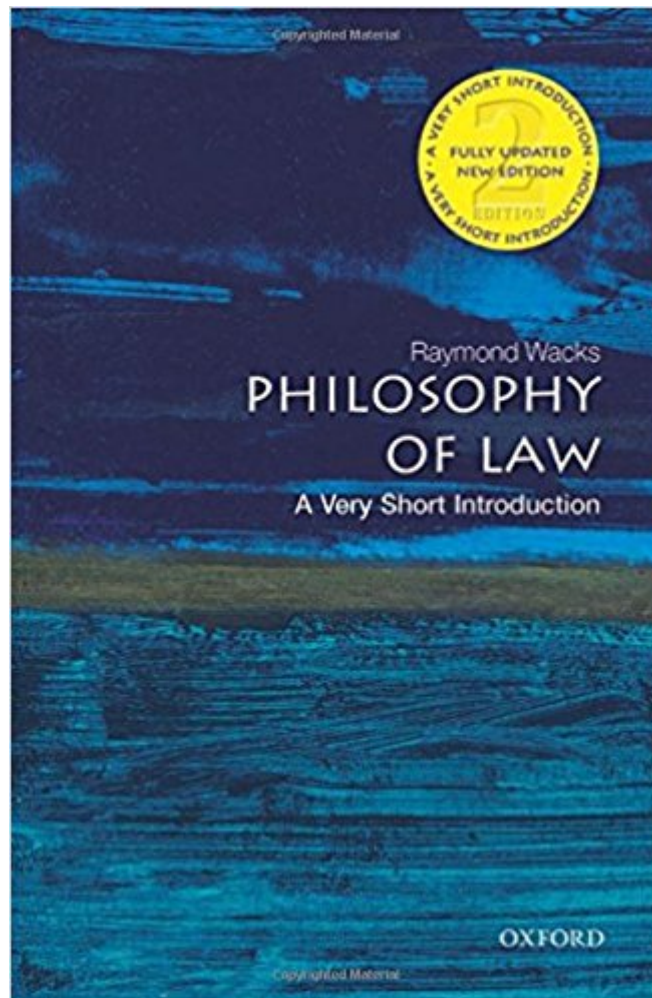




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Philosophy Of Law: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)



Synopsis

The concept of law lies at the heart of our social and political life, shaping the character of our community and underlying issues from racism and abortion to human rights and international war. Legal philosophy, or jurisprudence, explores the notion of law and its role in society, illuminating its meaning and its relation to the universal questions of justice, rights, and morality. In this Very Short Introduction Raymond Wacks analyzes the nature and purpose of the legal system, and the practice by courts, lawyers, and judges. Wacks reveals the intriguing and challenging nature of legal philosophy with clarity and enthusiasm, providing an enlightening guide to the central questions of legal theory. In this revised edition Wacks makes a number of updates including new material on legal realism, changes to the approach to the analysis of law and legal theory, and makes updates to historical and anthropological jurisprudence. About the Series: Oxford's Very Short Introductions series offers concise and original introductions to a wide range of subjects--from Islam to Sociology, Politics to Classics, Literary Theory to History, and Archaeology to the Bible. Not simply a textbook of definitions, each volume in this series provides trenchant and provocative--yet always balanced and complete--discussions of the central issues in a given discipline or field. Every Very Short Introduction gives a readable evolution of the subject in question, demonstrating how the subject has developed and how it has influenced society. Eventually, the series will encompass every major academic discipline, offering all students an accessible and abundant reference library. Whatever the area of study that one deems important or appealing, whatever the topic that fascinates the general reader, the Very Short Introductions series has a handy and affordable guide that will likely prove indispensable.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a somewhat accessible introduction to the social, moral, and cultural foundations of law. It covers a broad scope of information spanning philosophy, law, politics, economics, and discusses a wide range of topics including women's rights, racism, and the environment. Wacks approaches the great debates and controversies with clarity by, for the most part, avoiding technical language, while still revealing the intriguing and challenging nature of legal philosophy. However, due to its emphasis on brevity, while trying to give an introduction and essentials of various schools of legal philosophy, Wacks's book is little more than an examination guide in the end. And even here some chapters fail, particularly the fifth and sixth chapters. Chapter 5 departs from the standard philosophical approach to law and moves to the sociological theories of Durkheim, Weber, and Marx, and then ends with very brief expositions of Habermas and Foucault. Chapter 6 goes into critical approaches: postmodern legal theory, Lacan, Derrida, feminist legal theory, and critical race theory. These are vast terrains and Wacks leaves the impression that he is reproducing notes on these figures and theories rather than providing anything like real explanations of the theories. This impression is heightened by the disjointed nature of Wacks's writing, where the different ideas are set out with little connection, and the book even ends without any summary or conclusion. I would be hesitant in recommending these last two chapters to readers except as a source of references to other readings. This book is not to be recommended to a layperson. At best it can serve as a quick revision guide for the student who has read about this book's subjects in the past.

A classical case of : "... it is all there in a nutshell". I do know a bit about law and ethics and I do not believe that a better primer has ever been written. Excellent choice for anyone with no time for the full 600 pages of John Rawls "Theory of Justice" or similar textbooks but who never the less needs a top notch quality introduction to the subject

The text of the book can be shortened in order to justify being called "a very short introduction :) The text is repetitions with some of the repeated paragraphs being almost identical. Apart from that the book presents a good summary of existing legal theories.

A really good book to introduce students to the fundamental issues of Philosophy of Law.

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