

Everyday Harm



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By investigating the harms routinely experienced by the victims and survivors of domestic violence, both inside and outside of law, "Everyday Harm" studies the limits of what domestic violence law can - and cannot - accomplish. Combining detailed ethnographic research and theoretical analysis, Mindie Lazarus-Black illustrates the ways persistent cultural norms and ingrained bureaucratic procedures work to unravel laws designed to protect the safety of society's most vulnerable people.

Lazarus-Black's fieldwork in Trinidad traces a story with global implications about why and when people gain the right to ask the court for protection from violence, and what happens when they pursue those rights in court. Why is it that, in spite of laws designed to empower subordinated people, so little results from that legislation? What happens in and around courts that makes it so difficult for people to obtain their legally available rights and protections? In the case of domestic violence law, what can such legislation mean for women's empowerment, gender equity, and protection? How do cultural norms and practices intercept the law?

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