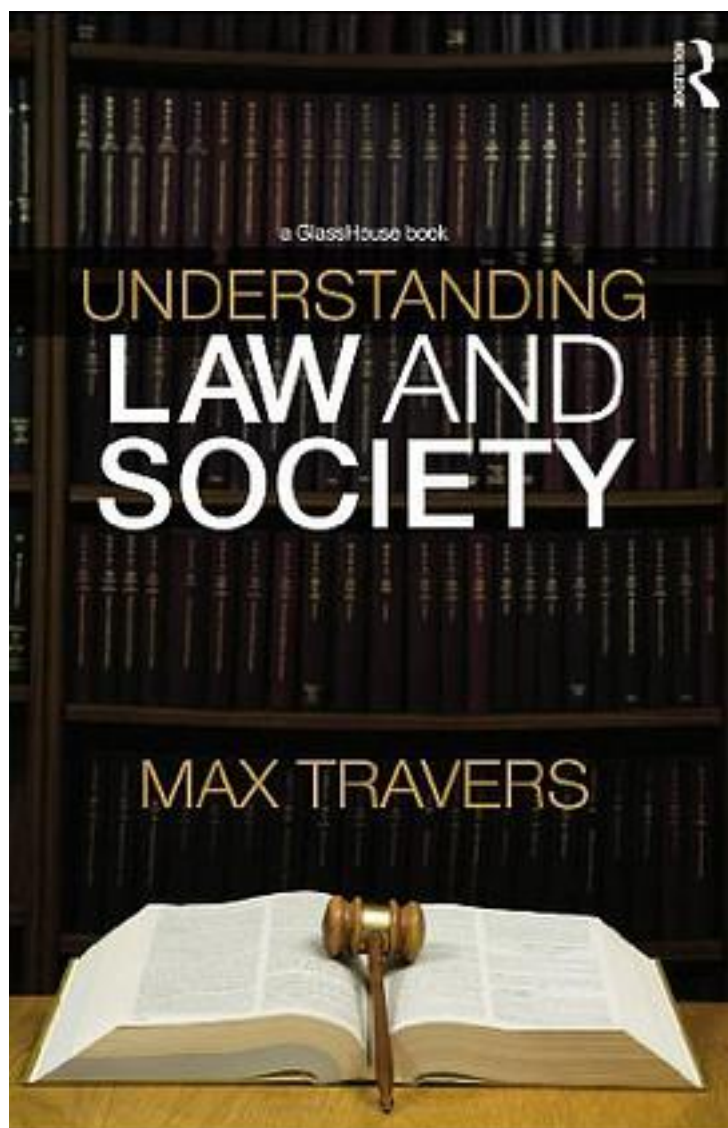


Understanding Law and Society



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This textbook on the sociology of law is organised according to the theoretical traditions of sociology, and oriented towards providing an accessible, but sophisticated, introduction to, and overview of, the central themes, problems and debates in this field. The book employs an international range of examples - including the state, minority rights, terrorism, family violence, the legal profession, pornography, mediation, religious tolerance, and euthanasia - in order to distinguish a sociological approach to law from 'black-letter', jurisprudential and empirical policy-oriented traditions. Beginning with 'classical', 'consensus' and 'critical' sociological approaches, the book covers the full range of contemporary perspectives, including the new institutionalism, feminism, the interpretive tradition, postmodernism, legal pluralism and globalisation. It then concludes with a consideration of current theoretical issues, as well as a reflection upon the importance of a sociological approach to law. Understanding Law and Society provides a clear, but critical, discussion of the relevant literature, along with study questions and guides to further reading. It is designed to support courses in law and society and in the sociology of law, but will also be of value to others with interests in these areas.

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