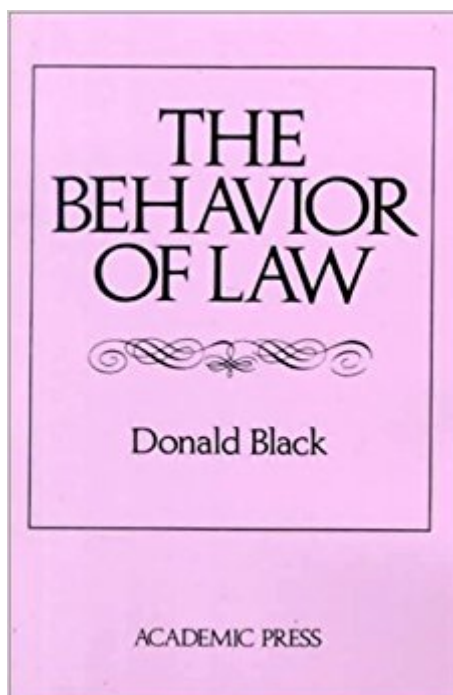


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# The Behavior Of Law



## Synopsis

This book contains a number of propositions about the variation of law across social space. The purpose of these propositions is to predict and explain this variation, and so to contribute to a scientific theory of law. Theory of this kind has practical applications, and also applications to the study of other social life.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

High praise from the reviewers:"...brilliant...a major breakthrough...a crashing classic."LAURA NADER FROM A PREPUBLICATION REVIEW"Occasionally - perhaps once in a decade - there comes a sociological book that makes a difference because it reports that a new set of important facts has been creatively assembled... These volumes become classics. The Behavior of Law is one of them."DONALD R. CRESSEY IN SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH"This book has already been hailed as the most important contribution ever made to the sociology of law. It is that and more."LAWRENCE W. SHERMAN IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGY

This is a fairly complex analysis of how "Law"....interacts with various segments of our society. How do you measure law and law enforcement??? This author does a fantastic job.....this should be required reading for those in law enforcement; from District Attorney Down...to Cop on the beat. Quite an experience in the reality of Law.

I had to buy this book for a college class. I'm pretty impressed with the book. It's easy to read and

understand if you already have taken a few human behavior classes and have a general understanding of the law and socioeconomic status. Once you get the general understanding of the book it gets kind of repetitive, but it's good for people that may not understand the concept.

Donald Black's *The Behavior of Law* is not for the faint of heart. Mr. Black, a professor of sociology at Yale University, first published his mini-textbook some 40 years ago, yet it remains a staple in law classrooms. The book's inviting purple cover and thin spine beckon many a weary college student to flip through its crisp white pages and read what they/we believe will be an "easy-read" due to its size. However, don't let him fool you - the pages are full of well-researched and fascinating ideas that can make one's head spin. Yet it is still intriguing all the same - I for one can say I thoroughly enjoyed reading this text book cover to cover! Black argues that behavior is a part of reality, and therefore all things behave including society. He thus breaks down society into 5 subsections (which also are the titles of the chapters of his book): stratification, morphology, culture, organization, and social control (he also has a chapter on anarchy, however does not include that in his groupings of society). One must be asking how law fits in here. Black goes on to describe law as governmental social control - the inevitable and unavoidable. This can get a bit confusing and wordy. However, once out of the introduction chapter and on to the meaty chapters, or those that contain the bulk of his argument in example and descriptive terms, Black's argument becomes very clear and, dare I say, easy to understand. He gets right to the point every time, gives clear examples, explains them in relation to his argument and even calls up counter arguments which further solidify his argument, as well as the reader's understanding of Black's concepts. One of the unique aspects of Black's book that only further adds to its appeal is his use of basic and easy-to-understand examples. Country-specific and modern societal references help the reader to relate Black's argument to that which they know and understand, further assisting in the overall comprehension of the book. This book helps readers to understand the many correlations between law and society, as well as the law itself (particularly the US system), its functions, its role, its evolution and its adaptability. Lastly, you don't have to be a lawyer or an ivy-league professor to read this book - anyone can pick it up and understand the argument that Black is making because we witness the phenomena he describes every day. This may not be the best vacation book to read while on the beach, but if you ever have a spare weekend, sit down, grab a pen and get ready to annotate this book with your own free flowing ideas. I can guarantee you won't regret it.

Donald Black's investigation into the behavior of law presents readers with a thorough examination

of the characteristics of law, framed within the greater context of society. His meticulously constructed language, well defined parameters, and simple italicized phrases make this book a slow, but educational read. His scientific writing style forces readers to pay attention to every last word. This dense language achieves a high level of efficiency that allows Black to pack his complicated set of propositions into only 137 pages of text. The format of the book is easy enough to follow; Black lays down his five characteristics of society (Stratification, Morphology, Culture, Organization and Social Control), and describes their connections to law. Each characteristic is assigned a chapter in which Black makes several propositions about how variances within the characteristic affects the quantity of law. It is this idea of quantity that sets Black apart from others. Rather than seeking to uncover any causations, he sticks to the simple correlations between law and society. After each proposition, Black provides an in-depth explanation as well as examples from societies around the world to back up his claims. Even before Black states his arguments, He is careful to define every word he uses. He defines law, quantity of law, stratification, and so on. Also, includes a chapter on anarchy before the conclusion of his book. The book is sure to make readers aware of the empirical disjunction between law and justice in America as well as other societies. I highly recommend this book to anyone who seeks to have a new perspective on law, and how it operates as a subset of society.

Black explains us how law - that supreme controller of our behavior - itself behaves (or variates) through history and across the world! Actually he is only telling us some of the basic findings of the sociology of justice, but his crisp and courageously reductive way to present his generalizations is really stimulating. The behavioral space of law (so to speak) - from pure anarchy to an all-pervading rule of law - is structured with few central variables (stratification, culture, other forms of social control...) Simple conceptualization is however coupled with short yet interesting, often colorful, examples about respective rules. But Black doesn't try to do too much with his generalizations (certainly no absolute quantification is attempted), so I found them in no way unduly simplistic. An interesting and originally crafted map to (at least some of) the basics of the sociology of justice.

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