



# Philosophy of Law: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

By Raymond Wacks

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## Philosophy of Law: A Very Short Introduction (Very Short Introductions)

By Raymond Wacks

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.

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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.

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- Sales Rank: #582175 in Books
- Brand: imusti
- Published on: 2014-04-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 4.40" h x .50" w x 6.80" l, .26 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 168 pages

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#### Review

With an admirable and elegant economy of expression - which compromises neither subtlety nor nuance - Ray Wacks has written in *Philosophy of Law: A Very Short Introduction*, a juristic gem that not only shines with clarity but sparkles with insight on topics as diverse as natural law, rights theory, utilitarianism, the sociology of the law, critical legal studies and law-and-economics. An indispensable introduction for the student of legal philosophy, as well as a sound and reliable guide for the seasoned scholar, Wacks' *Philosophy of Law* makes a knock-down case, concisely and capaciously, for the absolute centrality of jurisprudence to the study of law. Professor William MacNeil, Griffith Law School

#### About the Author

**Raymond Wacks** is Emeritus Professor of Law and Legal Theory. His areas of interest are legal theory, privacy, and human rights, and he has published numerous books and articles on various aspects of law, including *Understanding Jurisprudence: An Introduction to Legal Theory* (OUP, 2012), *Law: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2008), and *Privacy: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2010).

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