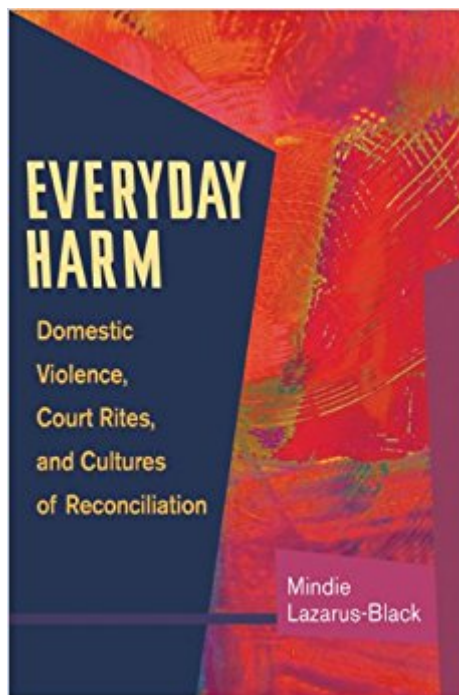




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# Everyday Harm: Domestic Violence, Court Rites, And Cultures Of Reconciliation



## Synopsis

By investigating the harms experienced by the victims/survivors of domestic violence, this work studies the limits of what domestic violence law can - and can't - do. It illustrates the ways cultural norms and bureaucratic procedures work to unravel laws designed to protect the safety of society's most vulnerable people.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This book is an important contribution to studies that show how law can both reproduce hegemony while simultaneously providing an avenue to contest that hegemony. This book is also a welcome addition to studies of law and legal processes in the global South."--Contemporary Sociology "What a tour de force of a book. . . . Data about one intensively studied court in Trinidad supplement and reconstruct our knowledge about courts of all kinds elsewhere, and the position of low status litigants within them. If this were not feat enough, our 'grand' theoretical understandings of the way law works are also challenged. So do go away and read this book."--Howard Journal of Criminal Justice "[Lazarus-Black] goes beyond previous studies by synthesizing multiple factors into a model to explain how societies discourage victims of domestic violence from pursuing their legal rights. . . . This well-done study would be useful to activists as well as academics seeking to understand the obstacles faced by those prosecuting cases of domestic violence."--NWSA Journal

Exposing the powerful contradictions between empowering rights and legal ritesBy 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?

An engrossing exploration of legal reform to address the problem of domestic violence. Professor Lazarus-Black details domestic violence as impeded by everyday practices of law and courts. I found the individual case studies of battered women seeking legal protection most absorbing, especially in light of the pointed discussion of cultural and political change.

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