Through interviews with many of the most noteworthy authors in law and society, Conducting Law and Society Research takes students and scholars behind the scenes of empirical scholarship, showing the messy reality of research methods. The challenges and the uncertainties, so often missing from research methods textbooks, are revealed in candid detail. These accessible and revealing conversations about the lived reality of classic projects will be a source of encouragement and inspiration to those embarking on empirical research, ranging across the full array of disciplines that contribute to law and society. For all of the ambiguities and challenges to the social 'scientific' study of law, the reflections found in this book – collectively capturing a portrait of the field through the window of the research efforts – individually remind readers that 'good research' displays not an absence of problems, but the care taken in negotiating them.

Table of Contents

1. Beyond methods: law & society in action
2. Stewart Macaulay and Non-Contractual Relations and Business (1963)
5. Lawrence Friedman and The Roots of Justice (1981)
12. Sally Engle Merry and Getting Justice and Getting Even (1990)
13. Tom Tyler and Why People Obey the Law (1990)
19. Patricia Ewick and Susan Silbey and The Common Place of Law (1998)