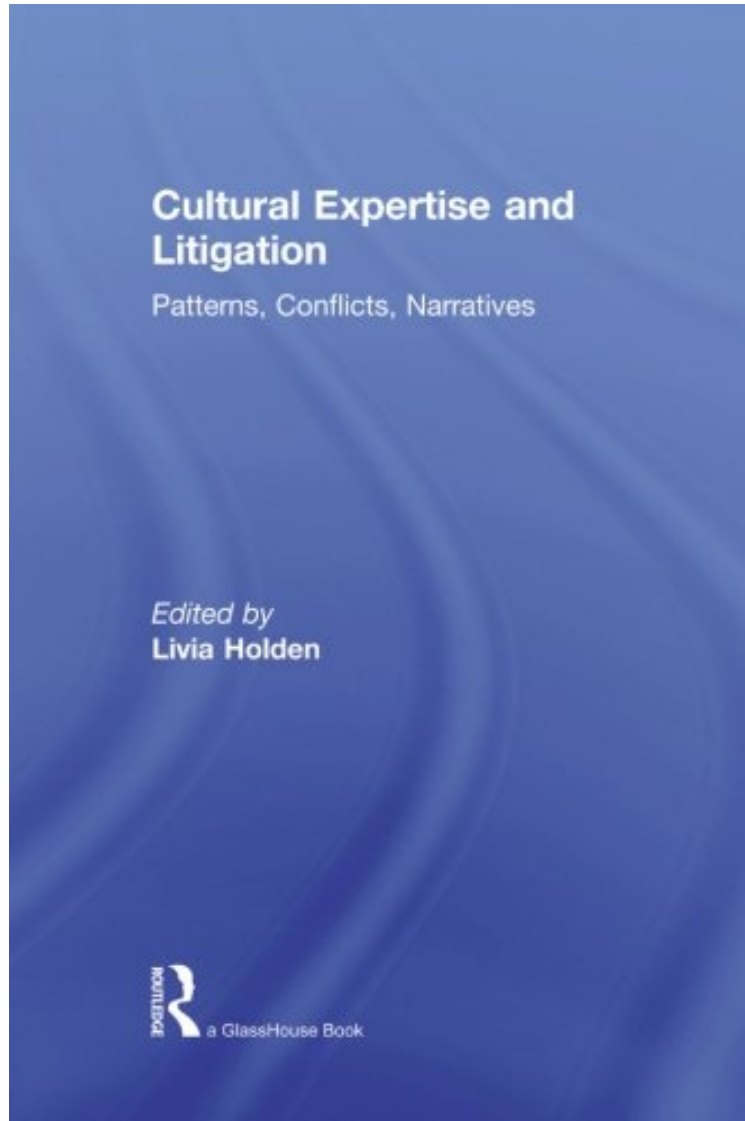


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Cultural Expertise and Litigation: Patterns, Conflicts, Narratives

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Cultural Expertise and Litigation addresses the role of social scientists as a source of expert evidence, and is a product of their experiences and observations of cases involving litigants of South Asian origin. What is meant in court by

"culture," "custom" and "law"? How are these concepts understood by witnesses, advocates, judges and litigants? How far are cross-cultural understandings facilitated - or obscured - in the process? What strategies are adopted? And which ones turn out to be successful in court? How is cultural understanding and misunderstanding produced in these circumstances? And how, moreover, do the decisions in these cases not only reflect, but impact, upon the law and the legal procedure? *Cultural Expertise and Litigation* addresses these questions, as it elicits the patterns, conflicts and narratives that characterize the legal role of social scientists in a variety of de facto plural settings including immigration and asylum law, family law, citizenship law and criminal law.

"This thought-provoking book should be disconcerting to readers because it documents the propensity of courts to give short shrift to cultural arguments thereby risking the miscarriage of justice. One comes away from reading this work with a clear understanding of the urgent need for legal systems to pay greater attention to cross-cultural jurisprudence. The compelling narratives reveal the failure of modern legal systems to establish adequate juridical mechanisms to evaluate the law practices of people around the world. For those interested in the impact of applied social science in legal systems, this fascinating book deserves careful consideration. It makes a major scholarly contribution to this important question." Alison Dundes Renteln, Professor of Political Science, University of Southern California