CONFÉRENCE

LAW AS POLITICS: THE SYMBOLIC USES OF LEGAL NORMS

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Very often the law works as a system of cultural meaning rather than a system of instrumental control. Legal language, like any language, has not only an instrumental function but also a symbolic function, that is to say, a communicative purpose. The concept of symbolic efficacy of law is not only central in the current political arena, both in France and in the United States (as illustrated for instance by the so called "war on drugs", or the political uses of rights) but also in the socio-legal scholarship,

when it comes to make sense of the political dimension of legal production.