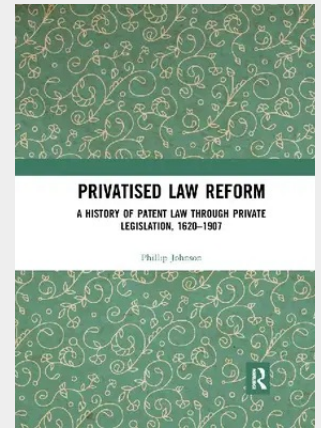


Privatised Law Reform

A History of Patent Law through Private Legislation, 1620-1907

In the history of British patent law, the role of Parliament is often side-lined. This is largely due to the raft of failed or timid attempts at patent law reform. Yet there was another way of seeking change. By the end of the nineteenth century, private legislation had become a mechanism or testing ground for more general law reforms. The evolution of the law had essentially been privatised and was handled in the committee rooms in Westminster. This is known in relation to many great industrial movements such as the creating of railways, canals and roads, or political movements such as the powers and duties of local authorities, but it has thus far been largely ignored in the development of patent law. This book addresses this shortfall and examines how private legislation played an important role in the birth of modern patent law.

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65,00 €

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Lieferfrist: bis zu 10 Tage

Artikelnummer: 9780367593988

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-0-367-59398-8

Verlag: Routledge

Erscheinungstermin: 14.08.2020

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2020

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 425 g

Seiten: 232

Format (B x H): 174 x 246 mm

