



BAD LAWS

HOW LEGAL HISTORY REVEALS THE AMERICAN CHARACTER

LAW ★ DEMOCRACY ★ JUSTICE ★ FREEDOM

A MUST-READ FOR OUR TIME.
A MUST-DISCUSS ON YOUR PLATFORM.



PERFECT FOR
PODCAST INTERVIEWS



BOOK CLUBS



CIVICS & LAW DISCUSSIONS



SOCIAL JUSTICE CONVERSATIONS

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



LESLIE JUVIN-ACKER, J.D.

Author, legal thinker, former celebrity life and career coach, and public speaker currently living in France.

With degrees in law and international affairs, she writes at the intersection of legal history, democracy, inequality, and civic ethics.

Her mission: to make the law understandable, empower citizens with legal literacy, and defend democracy, justice, and human dignity.

BOOK SUMMARY

What do America's laws say about who we are?

In *Bad Laws*, Leslie Juvin-Acker, J.D., exposes how laws reflect our values, fears, and power structures. From slavery to surveillance, deregulation to disinformation, this book reveals how bad ideas become bad laws—and how those laws shape a divided and unequal society.

Written after fleeing the United States on the eve of its authoritarian unraveling, this powerful work combines legal analysis, history, and civic philosophy to show how the system alternates between protecting liberty and legitimizing exploitation.

Through 14 accessible essays, readers gain legal literacy—our most powerful tool of resistance—and the moral clarity to reclaim the promise of equal justice and shared power.

**EQUAL JUSTICE IS NOT A GIFT OF THE POWERFUL.
IT IS THE BIRTHRIGHT OF EVERY AMERICAN.
THIS BOOK SHOWS YOU HOW TO CLAIM IT.**

CORE THEMES

- ★ Legalized Exploitation
- ★ Democracy vs. Authoritarianism
- ★ Constitutional Rights
- ★ Corporate Influence
- ★ Propaganda & Misinformation
- ★ Economic Inequality
- ★ Women's Rights & Reproductive Freedom
- ★ Labor Exploitation & Working Poverty
- ★ Civil Rights & Historical Injustice
- ★ Civic Responsibility & Legal Literacy

THE FIVE QUESTIONS

TO DETERMINE IF A LAW IS A "BAD LAW"

- 1 Is the law **exploitative or oppressive**? Examples: slavery, Jim Crow laws, discriminatory legislation.
- 2 Does the law have **unintended consequences**? Example: Repeal of the Glass-Steagall Act and the 2008 financial crisis.
- 3 Is the **legislative language weak or unclear**? Poorly written laws can fail to deliver justice.
- 4 Does the law **benefit some at the exclusion of others**? Example: The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) institutionalized inequality.
- 5 Does the law **violate constitutional principles**? A law can be legal on paper but still violate constitutional protections.

KEY CONCEPTS

- PILLARS OF DEMOCRACY**
- Legitimacy – consent of the governed
 - Justice – applied fairly and equally
 - Freedom – protected rights and liberties
 - Power – constrained, shared, accountable
- DEMOCRACY:** Shared power.
- AUTHORITARIANISM:** Imposed order over freedom.
- FASCISM:** Consolidation of power.
- AUTOCRATIC LEGALISM:** Using laws without democratic principles leads to oppression and eventual collapse.

IMPORTANT IDEAS

- HOW INEQUALITY BREEDS LEGALIZED EXPLOITATION**
Inequality limits access to voting, income, jobs, housing, legal protection, healthcare, freedom to bargain and contract, and political representation.
- THE "SLAVE CLASS"**
A modern class stripped of legal protections, economic mobility, reproductive freedom, and political power—forced to work, obey, and survive in systems designed to control and exploit.
- THE U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**
One of the largest business lobbying groups in the U.S. It influences laws, judges, and public opinion to advance corporate interests—often against the public good.

BELIEFS ONCE NORMALIZED BY LAW (THAT ARE ABSURD TODAY)

- **Women don't have souls.** A 1849 Tennessee legislator claimed married women lacked independent souls and shouldn't own property.
- **partus sequitur ventrem.** Enslaved women were treated as property; their children belonged to their owner.
- **Black people are property, not people.**

“When life is hard—and keeps getting harder—you start to wonder why. This book shows how laws were used to answer that question... and how we can write a better one.”
—Leslie Juvin-Acker, J.D.

TALKING POINTS FOR PODCASTS

- How laws reveal the moral character of a society
- Legal literacy as a form of resistance
- The influence of propaganda and misinformation
- Corporate lobbying and the creation of policy
- Economic inequality and working poverty
- Women's rights, reproductive freedom, and economic independence
- The role of courts in correcting injustice
- Why democracies drift toward authoritarianism
- Hope, reform, and the future of shared power

PERFECT FOR

- PODCAST INTERVIEWS
- BOOK CLUBS
- CIVICS & LAW DISCUSSIONS
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PODCAST INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- 1 What inspired you to write *Bad Laws*?
- 2 Why is legal literacy essential today?
- 3 What historical law shocked you most?
- 4 How do propaganda and misinformation influence democracy?
- 5 What does the book mean by a modern "slave class"?
- 6 How can ordinary citizens recognize exploitative laws?
- 7 What role does corporate lobbying play?
- 8 Why do democracies drift toward authoritarianism?
- 9 What gives you hope for the future of democracy?
- 10 What do you hope readers take away?

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Which chapter or legal example affected you most?
- 2 Do laws reflect society's values—or shape them?
- 3 Can democracies survive extreme inequality?
- 4 What modern laws may be viewed as unjust in the future?
- 5 How does propaganda influence political identity?
- 6 What responsibilities do citizens have in protecting democracy?
- 7 Should corporations have the influence they do?
- 8 What role should courts play in protecting rights?
- 9 How do economic insecurity and fear affect voting?
- 10 What reforms could strengthen democratic accountability?

LET'S CONNECT!

For interviews, events, book clubs & collaborations.

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