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# The Case Against Lawyers: How the Lawyers, Politicians, and Bureaucrats Have Turned the Law into an Instrument of Tyranny--and What We as Citizens Have to Do About It

By Catherine Crier

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THE EMMY AWARD-WINNING HOST OF COURT TV'S "CATHERINE CRIER LIVE" DESCRIBES AN AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM DANGEROUSLY OUT OF CONTROL – AND FINDS THE LAWYERS GUILTY AS CHARGED.

As a child, Catherine Crier was enchanted by film portrayals of crusading lawyers like Clarence Darrow and Atticus Finch. As a district attorney, private lawyer, and judge herself, she saw firsthand how the U.S. justice system worked – and didn't. One of the most respected legal journalists and commentators today, she now confronts a profoundly unfair legal system that produces results and profits for the few – and paralysis, frustration, and injustice for the many. Alexis de Tocqueville's dire prediction in *Democracy in America* has come true: We Americans have ceded our responsibility as citizens to resolve the problems of society to "legal authorities" – and with it our democratic freedoms.

*The Case Against Lawyers* is both an angry indictment and an eloquent plea for a return to common sense. It decries a system of laws so complex even the enforcers – such as the IRS – cannot understand them. It unmasks a litigation-crazed society where billion-dollar judgments mostly line the pockets of personal injury lawyers. It deplores the stupidity of a system of liability that leads to such results as a label on a stroller that warns, "Remove child before folding." It indicts a criminal justice system that puts minor drug offenders away for life yet allows celebrity murderers to walk free. And it excoriates the sheer corruption of the iron triangle of lawyers, bureaucrats, and politicians who profit mightily from all this inefficiency, injustice, and abuse.

*The Case Against Lawyers* will make readers hopping mad. And it will make them realize that the only response can be to demand change. Now.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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**Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #2585464 in Books
- Published on: 2003-09-23
- Released on: 2003-09-23
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1

- Dimensions: 8.50" h x .75" w x 5.50" l, .74 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 256 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

From Publishers Weekly

"You can't win, but the lawyers will": in support of this statement, former judge and Court TV personality Crier strings together anecdotes highlighting the unfairness and economic inefficiencies that lawyers have engendered in a commonsensical and sometimes shocking indictment. A self-described "inveterate newspaper clipper," Crier bases her argument on examples of legal excess. A woman who collected \$450,000 after tripping in a Tucson park gopher hole illustrates how extreme civil damage awards have become. (Her lawyer contended that the city needed to "provide a safe alternative to dodging holes and caved-in tunnels.") Fear of lawsuits has led to all kinds of absurdities, like the warning on the baby stroller that reads, "Remove child before folding." Crier couples her storytelling with a folksy Texas vernacular that makes her points accessible to nonlawyers. Her contention that the legal system is broken is not new, and she acknowledges her debt to books such as Philip K. Howard's *The Death of Common Sense*. In her desire to convince, however, she tends to overstate her case and sometimes the law itself. When Richard Garcia sued police for not arresting him for public intoxication, thereby allowing him to get into a later car wreck, Crier writes, "We seem to expect cops to anticipate new court decisions as their behavior is critiqued after the fact." But the Supreme Court holds that government officials are immune from suit unless they violate "clearly established" rights. In her defense, however, Crier makes no pretense of presenting a balanced, scholarly book. Hers is an amusing polemic that correctly identifies many of our legal system's problems. Agent, Jan Miller. (On sale Oct. 8)

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From Library Journal

Crier, a former district attorney, lawyer, and judge and host of Court TV's Crier Report, here argues that "the rule of law has become a source of power and influence, not liberty and justice" and is being used by lawyers and others to the detriment of society. She sees U.S. law as often not clearly understood, fair, or reasonable and as more adversarial than truth seeking. At her best, Crier offers clear and forceful critiques of such issues as the war on drugs, the death penalty, and criminal sentencing and proposes thoughtful changes to current laws. She is at less than her best, though, on topics such as jury awards and lawyer fees in lawsuits, on suits involving disadvantaged groups, and on regulation, the revolving door, lobbyists, and campaign contributions. Here she blends considerable legitimate criticism with lengthy diatribes full of wordy examples. The content is mainly opinion, although newspapers are quoted and events, studies, and statistics cited. For a well-written and -researched book with a distinctly different view of lawyers and civil law, see Carl T. Bogus's *Why Lawsuits Are Good for America*. Recommended for public libraries.

--*Mary Jane Brustman, SUNY at Albany Libs., NY*

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From [Booklist](#)

In another diatribe against the victimization of America, well-known television courtroom commentator Crier tells how she's fed up with the system. A lawyer and a former judge herself, Crier knows of what she speaks. And she doesn't take sides. Both the Right and the Left are maligned for their influence peddling, whether it's the Clinton White House's cozy relationship with China or the younger Bush's connections to Enron. Although she spares no one, plaintiffs' attorneys are a particular sore spot, and she blames them for everything from silly warning labels (such as "remove child before folding" on a stroller) to skyrocketing damage awards (including treble damages, which are meant to be punitive but which go to the plaintiff and

her attorney rather than back to society) to class action suits that result in the lawyer getting a hefty fee while millions of perhaps disabled plaintiffs get nominal recovery. Her arguments are grounded, certainly, but we've heard it all before. To her credit, Crier takes a stab at finding a solution in the final chapter, but the changes she proposes are so vast that it reads more like a stump speech, full of "we should's" on such matters as civil litigation, regulatory law, and politics in general. She might get your ire up, but to what end? *Mary Frances Wilkens*

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#### **Michael Anderson:**

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