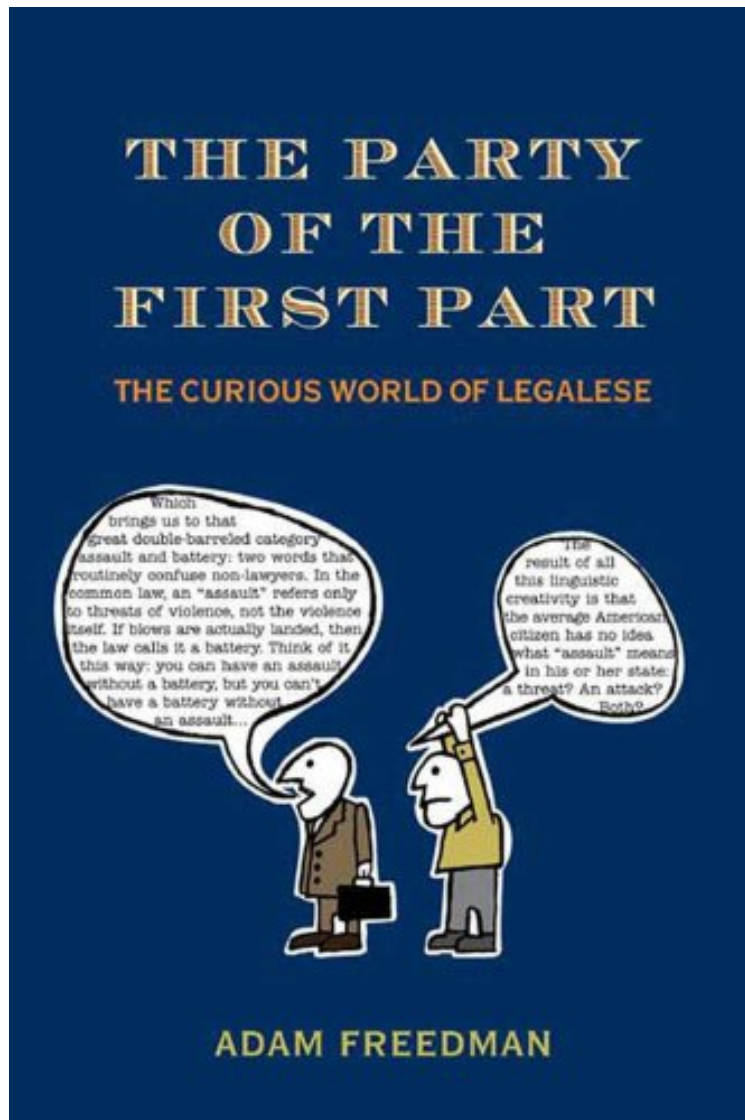


# The Party of the First Part: The Curious World of Legalese

Adam Freedman

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#1539650 in Books 2007-09-04 2007-09-04Original language:EnglishPDF # 1 8.88 x .92 x 5.37l, .83 #File Name: 0805082239256 pages | File size: 40.Mb

**Adam Freedman : The Party of the First Part: The Curious World of Legalese** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Party of the First Part: The Curious World of Legalese:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. In a perfect world this book would be required readingBy Free Range Clickin""The Party of the First Part" is an erudite, hilarious tour through 21st Century American legalese. Alan Freedman leads us through the ankle-grabbing underbrush of redundancy, dead phrases, faux Latin, and mindless obfuscation into which every reader - and writer - of legal documents eventually must stagger.Freedman is a sure-

footed guide who knows the territory. Time and again, he yanks up a hoary word or phrase and shows us its tangled roots. Sometimes we find, clutching a root with a deathgrip, an advocate of the so-called "Precision School" of legal drafting. These lawyers and pros fear that awful chaos would result if lawyers quit using ancient Anglo/French/Latin phrases, in favor of words used by 21st Century Americans in everyday life. Chaos? Well gosh, people might have to \*sue\* if they can't agree what a word or phrase written in 21st Century English means. Uh-huh, thinks I: as if they aren't already suing by the thousands over the meaning of Roman-numeraled legal documents bristling with boilerplate clunkers such as "witnesseth," "hereinabove," "aforementioned," "covenant and agree," and "hereunto." This book should be required reading for every law student, law professor, judge and lawyer in the United States. It encourages those among us who want to write clearly when drafting legal documents. I hope it will at least give pause for thought to our colleagues who never met a hundred-word clause in the passive voice, that they didn't like.

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. the humorous side of legalese By Carol C. This book is a funny and expansive look at the origin of legal terms and obscure laws, ranging. Although a fun read, the book seemed to lack focus. At times, it read as an advocacy piece encouraging the legal community to abandon traditional legalese, supported by what is inexplicably called "The Precision School", in favor of simple and widely accessible plain English, supported the "The Plain English School." At other times, the agenda seemed to be purely entertaining or educational. Perhaps all three. My reaction to this book varied as I was reading it. Parts are laugh-out-loud funny. The author's treatment of sex laws and laws regulating sales of sex toys is as entertaining as any stand-up comedian's monologue. For example, in describing an Alabama court's 2004 decision that "ordinary vibrators" not designed primarily for genital stimulation are not impermissible sex toys, the author notes that this leaves the door wide open for the "sale of vibrators designed primarily for making cappuccino." He notes that North Dakota's sodomy laws specifically prohibit copulation with a bird, and catalogues the various (and often humorous) terms used to describe impermissible sex acts in throughout the US. Alternately, sections of the book are a little tedious, with broad-brush descriptions of term after legal term. The author is quite witty, but occasionally the wit teeters on the edge of sarcasm and sophomoric humor. Throughout the book, he uses little snippets of created dialogue that show the humor of a particular usage in a particular setting. Some are funnier than other. There is much to be learned here. The author tells the stories of the origins of negligence-based tort liability (an engineer named MacAdam, who developed a system for paving), He draws from ages-old legal cases from the US and UK, and isn't afraid to identify the judge or court responsible..

WHAT I LIKED: Overall the book is funny, full of information, seemingly well-researched, and nicely indexed. I read a lot and often don't notice, or am critical of the font and presentation. The presentation is also very visually appealing. The font, page layout, and paper quality are nice. WHAT I DIDN'T: Occasionally tedious, references are not cited

Overall, I would recommend this book to collectors of legal trivia or anyone interested in understanding legalese or learning about the origin of legal terms.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. See you in court By Daniel Lufkin A slim volume, packed with interest. The chapter on Wills, Wives and Wrecks is worth the price of admission. Are you sure that your will can pass the Fertile Octogenarian Rule? Adam Freedman has assembled a menagerie of legal expressions, many dating back to Norman French, with very specific meanings forged in thousands of judge's decisions. It's tempting to scorn legalese as a way for lawyers to obscure what they're up to, but the truth is that careful use of legal terms is a vital part of our justice system. This book is well indexed if you just need to consult it in a pinch, but it's so entertaining that you'll want to read every word.

The Party of the First Part: The Curious World of Legalese

The Eats, Shoots Leaves of legalese, this witty narrative journey through the letter of the law offers something for language lovers and legal eagles alike

From Publishers Weekly Freedman, who translates legal jargon into English for an investment bank and writes the Legal Lingo column for the New York Law Journal, offers a cornucopia of hilarious, offbeat and downright bizarre examples of simple concepts contorted into words that defy understanding, often retaining centuries-old lingo like Further affiant sayeth naught (which means: this is the end of the affidavit). Freedman is as much reformer as humorist, and he ably demonstrates that legal documents can be written in understandable prose. He also skewers the contingent of lawyers and academics who resist such changes in the name of precision and lampoons flaws in the legal system, such as judges' refusal to explain instructions to jurors who are mystified by phrases such as Circumstantial evidence is evidence that, if found to be true, proves a fact from which an inference of the existence of another fact may be drawn. Occasionally the three-jokes-a-page approach is more cute than clever, but this lighthearted farrago of the follies of the law is sure to amuse and to convince readers that legal language can be made plain. (Sept. 4)

Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. If you ever wanted to go to law school but thought it would be painful and dull, you were right. Fortunately, Adam Freedman's wit and insight will give you in an afternoon what you need to navigate a lawyered-up world and more laughs than you'd find in class, too.

Kermit Roosevelt, Professor, University of Pennsylvania Law School and author of In the Shadow of the Law