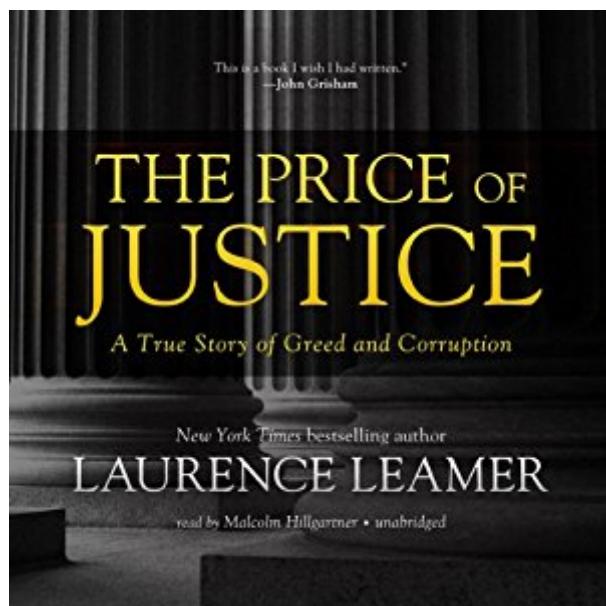


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# The Price Of Justice: A True Story Of Greed And Corruption



## Synopsis

This nonfiction legal thriller traces the 14-year struggle of two lawyers to bring the most powerful coal baron in American history to justice. Don Blankenship, head of Massey Energy since the early 1990s, ran an industry that provides nearly half of America's electric power. But wealth and influence weren't enough for Blankenship and his company, as they set about destroying corporate and personal rivals, challenging the Constitution, purchasing the West Virginia judiciary, and willfully disregarding safety standards in the company's mines - mines in which scores died unnecessarily. As Blankenship hobnobbed with a West Virginia Supreme Court justice in France, his company polluted the drinking water of hundreds of citizens; he himself fostered baroque vendettas against anyone who dared challenge his sovereignty over coal country. Just about the only thing that stood in the way of Blankenship's tyranny over a state and an industry was a pair of odd-couple attorneys, Dave Fawcett and Bruce Stanley, who undertook a legal quest to bring justice to this corner of America. From the backwoods courtrooms of West Virginia they pursued their case all the way to the US Supreme Court and to a dramatic decision declaring that the wealthy and powerful are not entitled to purchase their own brand of law. The Price of Justice is a story of corporate corruption so far-reaching and devastating it could have been written a hundred years ago by Ida Tarbell or Lincoln Steffens. And as Laurence Leamer demonstrates in this captivating tale, because it's true, it's scarier than fiction.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"You couldn't make this stuff up." How often have you heard/read this? Mr. Leamer has written a book that proves the quote to be true. I was looking for a "white collar true crime" type book. The name Don Blankenship piqued my curiosity. He was in the news a few years ago when we all heard about the awful mine disaster in West Virginia. What a great read this book is. I realized there's more to the story (sadly) than what I saw on the news. Blankenship was evil incarnate. Money, corporate corruption, disregard for the good people of Appalachian heritage, back room legal shenanigans.... It's all here.

This book was recommended to me by a friend who holds a senior position with an institutional investor. She knows a lot about companies and a lot about corporate governance. And she's recommended some terrific books to me in the past. When she recommended this, she said it was good, if not as good as some others she's recommended to me over time. She was totally spot on. This is a good book, and yet another cautionary tale about big business breeding big egos and big, bad behavior. In other words, it's disturbing and - SPOILER ALERT - sad, because the ending is bittersweet at best. When my friend said that the book was good rather than great, I didn't probe, but in my view it doesn't rise to greatness because there are places where it's a bit slow and bogged down in details - sometimes in the cases themselves, but sometimes in more extraneous aspects, such as the attorneys' personal lives or the personal tragedies of some of Massey's victims. That said, it's well written and definitely worth reading; in fact, it's an important read. If you're interested in books about business gone bad and how the legal profession occasionally does the right thing, this is a book you should read.

Living in West Virginia and being aware of these trials, but not in such detail, I was very interested to read about the trials and tribulations of the people involved in the struggle. The only thing I wished was that the book had been published later, so we could read of the fall of Blankenship. A more despicable person who has ruined the lives of so many good people, some of whom I've known. Great read.

In light of the disparities facing our nation this book is required reading. A compelling, mesmerizing, telling of the events that took place in the mines and courts of West Virginia and the advantages that those with power can employ in the pursuit of profit. Only the heroic efforts of two young lawyers stand in the way of the offending actors and their political allies in the state's highest court from

achieving total domination of those struggling for economic survival.

As a resident of southwest Virginia, having practiced law in several of the Virginia courts mentioned in the text, I was very impressed with this book. It is a very timely issue. Civil justice is radically different today than it was even a few decades ago. Like it or not, money talks today in a way it would never have in years past. The politicization of the legal system is a critical issue that every citizen must examine and understand, as courts are our last stop to address wrongs done to us, whether we are poor people or well-funded litigants. We should all have access to a level playing field. Leamer's writing style is very good. There is enough technical analysis to keep even a lawyer's interest, while not overwhelming a lay person. You can follow the author on Twitter, @Leamer, and there is a Facebook page for the book as well.

This is a gripping story of two lawyers who take on Massey Coal and its head, Don Blankenship. It should be required reading for anyone who considers suing big business even for the most egregious and obvious wrong

As a resident of Charleston West Virginia I am well aware of the stanglehold Don Blankenship has on this State. Mr. Leamer, an outsider, has done what no West Virginian has ever, or will ever do: he stood up to Mr. Blankenship. Certainly not our cowed media. For that he receives my eternal gratitude. But the real heroes of this book are Mr. Fawcett and Mr. Stanley. In addition to every other aspect of West Virginia life, Mr. Blankenship has intimidated the West Virginia legal community to the point where very few attorneys will take him on. But these two had no fear. They are truly warriors. Like the attorney in *A Civil Action*, they are driven by a intense desire for justice. My hat is off to them both, and I wish them nothing but good fortune.

Repeatedly, I was struck by the dates in this book. This is our generation's *The Jungle* and it's shocking that these are details from the 90s and 00s, not some imagined past struggle. Listening to news stories in 2014 continue this saga make me hope for a triumphant sequel. Is optimism unrealistic? Reading this on kindle made accessing the "cast of characters" more difficult -- this is real life so has more folks than an Austen novel -- but also regularly had me exhausted for the lawyers, who along with two coal execs are the main characters in this true story.

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The Price of Justice: A True Story of Greed and Corruption Tom Gilmartin: The Man Who Brought

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