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In the Mail: Schools for Misrule -- The Problem with Entrenched Law School Liberalism

Today's mail brought my copy of Walter Olson's new book [Schools for Misrule: Legal Academia and an Overlawyered America](#). I'll be plunging in immediately and will report back soonest. In the meanwhile, here's what some of our friends are saying:

Ribstein:

Walter describes law schools as essentially the hatcheries of bad ideas that have led to the sort of excessive litigation that Olson has chronicled in his long-running blog, [Overlawyered.com](#). These include the undue expansion of tort law, class actions, courts running schools, new and potentially open-ended rights, international jurisdiction over U.S.-based legal disputes, the growth of the “new property, and institutional reform litigation.

The book deserves a lot of attention, particularly from law professors and their students as a source of critical perspective on trends in legal education. There is little doubt that the ideas Olson criticizes are hatched mainly in law schools rather than by practicing lawyers and judges, and have led to costly and questionable litigation. As Olson explains, the ideas gain power from legal academics' supposed independence (though they are amply paid for their opinions and law schools have been the beneficiaries of litigation and trial lawyers), and their publication in elite law reviews and influential casebooks.

Stoll:

Of all the possible explanations for Barack Obama, one of the most intriguing is that, like Bill Clinton before him, he was both a law school graduate and a law school professor.

As such, Walter Olson explains in his new book, [Schools for Misrule: Legal Academia and an Overlawyered America](#), he was subjected to an environment of overwhelming leftism.

Reynolds:

| Worth reading

Frum:

From Barack Obama (Harvard and Chicago) to Bill and Hillary Clinton (Yale), many of our current national leaders emerged from the rarefied air of the nation's top law schools. The ideas taught there in one generation often shape national policy in the next.

The trouble is, Walter Olson reveals in *Schools for Misrule*, our elite law schools keep churning out ideas that are catastrophically bad for America. From class action lawsuits that promote the right to sue anyone over anything, to court orders mandating the mass release of prison inmates; from the movement for slavery reparations, to court takeovers of school funding—all of these appalling ideas were hatched in legal academia. And the worst is yet to come. A fast-rising movement in law schools demands that sovereignty over U.S. legal disputes be handed over to international law and transnational courts.

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In the Mail: Schools for Misrule -- The ...

It is not by coincidence, Olson argues, that these bad ideas all tend to confer more power on the law schools' own graduates. In the overlawyered society that results, they are the ones who become the real rulers.



[Schools for Misrule](#)

Walter Olson

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