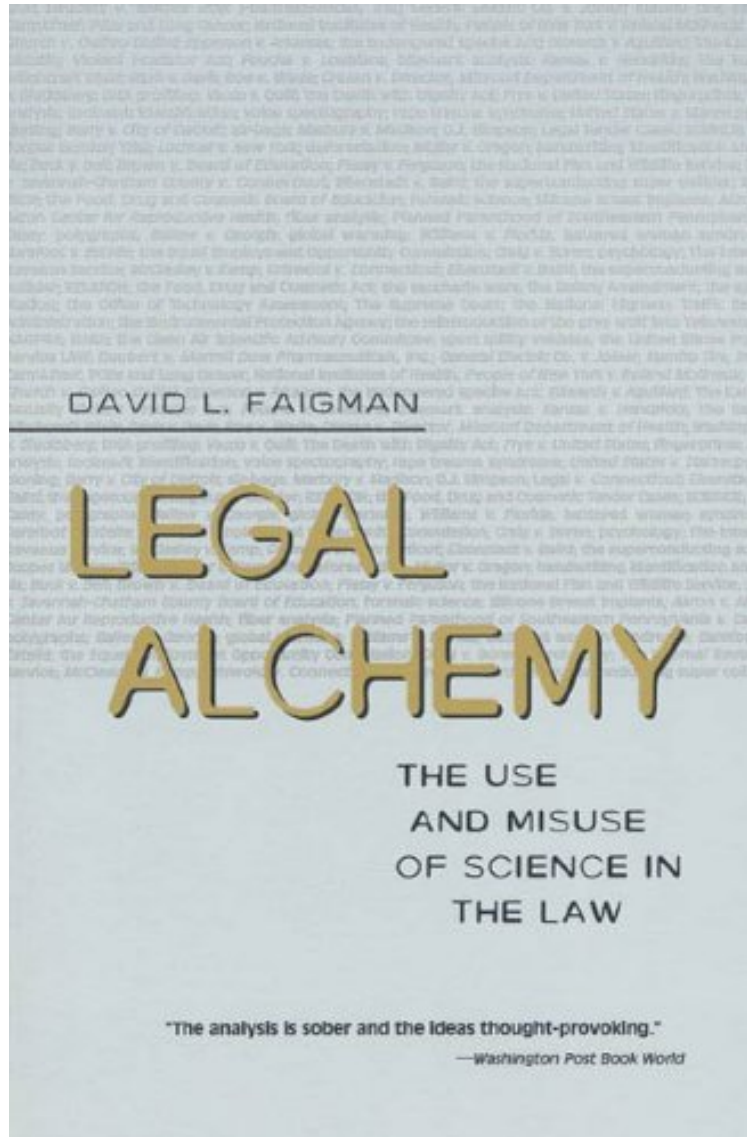


# Legal Alchemy: The Use and Misuse of Science in the Law

Von David L. Faigman

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**Von David L. Faigman : Legal Alchemy: The Use and Misuse of Science in the Law** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Legal Alchemy: The Use and Misuse of Science in the Law:

Kundenrezensionen Hilfreichste Kundenrezensionen 0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Excellent Discussion of Science and Law for the Layperson Von Ein Kunde Legal Alchemy is a nicely written and accurate description of the difficulties lawmakers face when judging science. In my twenty years experience writing

and teaching about the use of science, particularly statistics, in law, I have never read such an engaging, thorough discussion of how the lawmakers turn scientific dross into gold and scientific gold into legal dross. This book is perfect for the layperson interested in the use of science in law. It contains innumerable examples of how scientific developments are treated in law and policy and discussion of all of the most important legal cases dealing with scientific evidence. Perhaps best of all, it contains Faigman's sound and well-reasoned judgments of various questions of scientific and legal policy. Legal Alchemy presents science and law at the perfect level for the intelligent lay person. I include judges, legislators, and lawyers in that group because, while knowledgeable about law, few know anything about science. To those lawmakers seeking a more detailed description of the science relevant to specific legal issues, I highly recommend another of Faigman's works, a multi-volume treatise titled MODERN SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE. As to the critical comments from a reviewer on May 4, 2000, I cannot imagine what was motivating that person. I find Faigman's understanding of science and statistics to be more than adequate to the task. Most of Faigman's discussion of statistics appears in Chapter III. He does not explain statistics the way one statistician would to another statistician, and the lay reader will be thankful. He does explain the methodology correctly and thoroughly. I see no grounds for complaint. One who doubts Faigman's understanding of science should consult MODERN SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE, mentioned in the previous paragraph.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. A lively look at what happens when law and science collide

Von Ein Kunde This book is what might result if you crossed a book by Stephen Jay Gould with a book like A Civil Action. Like Gould and Harr, this book takes an interesting topic that most of us would not otherwise know about, and provides a vivid and accessible picture of what is happening. To illustrate his theme that the law often is ill-equipped to assimilate scientific findings, Faigman uses topics like gray wolves, the space station and our beloved SUV's. For what at first might sound like a "heavy" topic, the book flows right along, nicely spiced with the author's wry observations. I'd recommend this book to anyone whatever their background -- lawyer, scientist or someone who simply is interested in hot social topics.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Superficial and sloppy scholarship

Von David Ozonoff This book promises much and delivers little. It is poorly edited (Pat Robertson becomes Pat Robinson, for example) and the lawyer author's understanding of science is wretchedly superficial and often plain wrong (he doesn't understand statistics, for example). This is especially amusing, as one of his points is the suspect understanding of science by most lawyers (I guess he would know). Faigman's view of science is of the 9th grade highschool variety. There are many more sophisticated views available. This is a wasted opportunity. Don't waste your money along with it.

Kurzbeschreibung Is scientific information misused by this country's court system and lawmakers? Today more than ever before, lawyers, politicians, and government administrators are forced to wrestle with scientific research and to employ scientific thinking. The results are often less than enlightened. In Legal Alchemy, David Faigman explores the ways the American legal system incorporates scientific knowledge into its decision making. Praised by both legal and scientific communities when it first appeared in hardcover, Legal Alchemy shows how science has been used and misused in a variety of settings, including The Courtroom from the O. J. Simpson trial to the Dow Corning silicone breast implant lawsuit to landmark cases such as Roe v. Wade. The Legislature where Congress uses scientific information to help enact legislation about clean air, cloning, and government science projects like the space station and the superconducting super collider. Government Agencies who use science to determine policy on a variety of topics, from regulating sport utility vehicles to reintroducing gray wolves to Yellowstone National Park. As Faigman describes these and other important cases, he provides disturbing evidence that many judges, juries, and members of Congress simply don't understand the science behind their decisions. Finally, he offers suggestions on how the science and legal professions can overcome their miscommunication and work together more effectively.

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"Legal Alchemy" shows us what can go wrong and how justice can be frustrated when lawmakers and our legal system don't understand the scientific basis for many of our laws. David Faigman has written an important book." -- Vincent Bugliosi, prosecutor, author of "Helter Skelter" and "Outrage--The Five Reasons O.J. Simpson Got Away With Murder" "A cogent argument for lawyers, judges, and legislators to become 'sophisticated consumers of science' so that they can do their jobs with the expertise required in this increasingly technological world." -- "Christian Science Monitor" "Faigman prefers to teach, explaining why science and law don't always dovetail and showing how they can work better together . . . . The analysis is sober and the ideas thought-provoking." -- "Washington Post Book World" "The title may seem to promise a rant against 'junk science,' but although disapproving of government misunderstanding and misuse of science, the author delivers a much more thoughtful book." -- "National Law Journal" "If you have ever been or plan to be an expert witness, this book is a must read . . . . If you are ever involved in a lawsuit arguing points of science or engineering, you need to prepare by reading this book. Even if you plan to be involved, you must read this book, to ensure you are grounded enough in the frailties of a legal system that doesn't really understand science and is absolutely leery of scientists." -- "American Scientist" "A gripping account of the stormy relationship between law and science. People in black robes look warily when people

in white lab coats enter the courtroom. Faigman's clear-eyed and level-headed book shows us how right judges are to be concerned and how much scientists (at least some of them) can offer the law."--John Monahan, Doherty Professor of Law, University of Virginia "Starting with an examination of the interrelationships between science, law and religion, Faigman's book asks: Is scientific information misused by this country's court system and lawmakers? Today more than ever before, lawyers, politicians, and government administrators are forced to wrestle with scientific research and to employ scientific thinking. The results are often less than enlightened. In *Legal Alchemy*, David Faigman explores the ways the American legal system incorporates scientific knowledge into its decision making. Praised by both legal and scientific communities when it first appeared in hardcover, *Legal Alchemy* shows how science has been used and misused in a variety of settings, including the courtroom from the O. J. Simpson trial to the Dow Corning silicone breast implant lawsuit to landmark cases such as *Roe v. Wade*. The legislature where Congress uses scientific information to help enact legislation about clean air, cloning, and government science projects like the space station and the superconducting super collider. Government agencies who use science to determine policy on a variety of topics, from regulating sport utility vehicles to reintroducing gray wolves to Yellowstone National Park. As Faigman describes these and other important cases, he provides disturbing evidence that many judges, juries, and members of Congress simply don't understand the science behind their decisions. Finally, he offers suggestions on how the science and legal professions can overcome their miscommunication and work together more effectively.