



BIGLAW

Lindsay Cameron

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Harper's Bazaar Must-Read

The Devil Wears Prada meets One L, BIGLAW provides an insider's view of the cut-throat world of big New York law firms.

Mackenzie Corbett has always dreamed of living in New York City. Now, almost two years into her job as an associate at a premier Manhattan law firm, she's living her fantasy--big salary, high profile deals, cute boyfriend, designer bag on her arm. The giant bags under her eyes from lack of sleep don't fit into the fantasy, though. To make matters worse, she's being tormented by a bitter, bitchy senior associate, her cute boyfriend is annoyed she never has time for him, and now she's stuck on the deal from hell with a partner whose biggest claim to fame is throwing a stapler at a cleaning lady because she touched his ficus plant.

With the opportunity to secure a prestigious secondment on line, the overachiever in her is determined to endure whatever it takes to close the biggest deal in the firm's history. But when Mackenzie finds herself the focus of a devastating investigation her dream job begins spiraling into a nightmare.

In this pitch perfect, frightening accurate novel, Lindsay Cameron throws back the curtain to this intriguing world exposing the truth about life in Biglaw.

BIGLAW Details

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Author : Lindsay Cameron

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From Reader Review BIGLAW for online ebook

Ozma says

As a Biglaw survivor myself (barely), I really enjoyed this novel, which is part of a new trend in sophisticated chick-lit: the law firm experience. A similar novel is "The Partner Track", which I also enjoyed. I think I mostly enjoyed this novel and "The Partner Track" because it reassured me in my decision not to be in Biglaw! One forgets how ridiculous the requirements, politics, and hours are, and these novels are great reminders! This one went into even more detail, describing days without showers or even going home, hoarding of snacks in one's office, the abusive use of Seamless/take out ordering to increase one's stockpile of snacks, days without a proper meal, ignoring family and friends to do this one last really critical work thing, trying to fax a 100 page document out on Christmas Eve...I also enjoyed reading about life in New York City; however, there isn't much, but it's still fun to read about cabs, doormen, and the subway. I think a non-Biglaw survivor could also still enjoy this novel just because they would be shocked at how ridiculous the lifestyle is. Although there is a plot, and it is a good one, and, to some degree, it's easy to identify the villains (no major surprises), the real joy of this novel is to read of the horrific life of Biglaw associates. In a way, the book depressed me a little bit because I wondered if I had read this novel before if I would have done things differently. When I joined Biglaw, I didn't know what I was getting into, and I think this novel would have prepared me a lot better! I am glad to see that stories are being written about this so the word gets out. There has been shroud of secrecy around these things, and I'm glad it's ending.

Gordon says

An engrossing insider's peek into the life behind the closed doors of an elite Manhattan law firm! I just finished my advance review copy of Lindsay Cameron's debut novel BIGLAW and I loved it! Cameron has written a fast paced, laugh out loud novel that will be enjoyable not only to lawyers (and people who love/tolerate them), but to anyone who just enjoys a great story and funny, well-developed characters. Cameron has a great ability to capture life in New York with fast paced and witty conversation and banter. It left me in stitches as I raced through the pages. The pacing in this book is excellent, I was gripped by her plot and loved the main character who I found relatable and endearing. While I would suggest this is required reading for anyone in, or considering, a career as a lawyer or working in a big law firm – you certainly don't have to be a lawyer to enjoy this book. Overall, I highly recommended BIGLAW: hilarious dialogue and lightning quick plot twists, great stuff!

Michelle says

You can see this full review and more at Book Briefs: <http://bookbriefs.net>

BIGLAW is a hilarious book that will appeal to lawyers and non-lawyers alike. It reminded me a bit of Kate's Escape from the Billable Hour by Petula Parker, and I liked this book for the same reason's that I loved Kate's "Sanity Break"- it is freakin' hilarious. and BIGLAW plays off of enough truth to make it even funnier. I am not from the BIGLAW world (I am much happier at my smaller boutique firm), but I did spend a summer at BIGLAW so I certainly know a lot of the ins and outs, and some of my peers have filled in the rest of associate life for me. And Mackenzie works in a New York firm in the Corporate Law department, which can be extra demanding.

BIGLAW is told from female associate, Makenzie's point of view. Mackenzie is a super bright, super hard

working attorney that is doing just about everything to impress the partners at her firm. She has to if she wants to move up in the ranks, after all. When she was describing all of the "perks" that the office has to make life comfortable I couldn't help but snicker. They all but stick a sign on your office door saying YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO LEAVE. I think some of the details are exaggerated for the effect of the story, but many of the details ring true to some degree.

BIGLAW will have you cringing, laughing and sympathizing right along side with Mackenzie. I think as an attorney I got an extra kick out of this story, but Lindsay Cameron has a real gift for comedic writing. Readers, no matter their profession, will find BIGLAW enjoyable. I went through the gamut of emotions as I put myself in Mackenzie's shoes. I rejoiced when she got very rare "good job", I seethed whenever she has to deal with a few choice people, and I wanted her tell off a partner or two on more occasions than I care to count. While I do think that Attorney's will derive a little more humor and a little more sick satisfaction out of BIGLAW, this is a book that I would recommend to everyone looking to feel a little bit better about their job. Or looking for a good laugh in a book with smart and witty dialogue.

P.S. I thought it was hilarious that Mackenzie didn't think her boyfriend would understand the stress and pressures of her job as well as her, because even though he is an attorney at the same firm as her, he works in the Trust department which is not as high pressure as the corporate department. I guess that means I made a good choice as a Trust and Estate Planning attorney. ;)

This review was originally posted on Book Briefs

Laurie Buchanan says

Written in the first person, author Lindsay Cameron shoehorns the reader smack-dab into the stylish—if uncomfortable—footwear of a young, female attorney climbing the corporate ladder in a cutthroat firm where verbal disembowelments and weekly bloodbaths from senior partners are the norm.

So well written, you feel sweat dripping from your brow and ulcers forming in your gut as you race hell-bent for leather against the clock with unreasonable—everything is due NOW!—deadlines. A debut novel with white-knuckled plot twists, Lindsay Cameron is an author to keep your eye on!

Jennifer says

This novel hits all the emotions for me. I was laughing, I was angry, and I was worried for the main character, Mackenzie.

Ms. Cameron has a flair for writing. I truly felt like I was in the middle of a Biglaw tsunami. The characters hit their marks with their quirks. Mackenzie loses her way only to find it again, with battle wounds along the way.

I received this book from BookSparks as part of their Fall University challenge.

Lian Dolan says

Really a 3.5 stars-- because there is some fun writing, sharp observations and a couple of dead-on secondary characters who get all the good lines. If you are a lawyer or wanna be lawyer, this book is probably a 5 star for you. And if you are fascinated by the inside workings of a big city corporate law department, you'll give it a 4. But for me, the 'world' of BigLaw got a little tedious. I have no doubt that the writer nailed life in a big NYC law firm- from the long hours to the sexist language to the awful bosses to the wild mini bar expenditures. But by page 200, I wanted to scream, "We get it already. You haven't showered in 4 days. Just quit and put us out of our misery!" The big difference between BigLaw and Prada, is that lawyers make a boatload of money while billing clients for every second they spend in the shower thinking about the case, while the young women at magazines will never make a lot of money. So my sympathy for our hero, Junior Associate Lawyer Mac, wore thin. The plot was telegraphed pretty early on and the boyfriend character was one dimensional. But I hope the writer has another book in her where she can get away from writing just about a place and dig into her characters a bit more.

Ronya says

The world of "biglaw" is always fascinating to me. This story was filled with the usual fictional law firm trials and tribulations--overworked associates, demanding partners, big deals, trashy secretaries that save the day...I can't say that it wasn't entertaining. Good, though? That's debatable. I knew what was going to happen really early on and felt no vindication when all was revealed. Ending was dumb. Most characters weren't people with whom you'd want to spend any time.

Amguzman says

As a corporate lawyer reading this book, I wonder why I didn't try harder to get over my aversion to blood and go to med school instead. For non-lawyers who read this book, you will feel validated for having done something else with your life.

"BigLaw" captures the essence of working in the corporate department of a large New York law firm and the 24/7 demands that permeate the culture thanks to modern technology. Proving that "truth is stranger than fiction", the plot points in the novel which seem the most ridiculous and exaggerated are, sadly, the ones which are the most real. Ask any lawyer who works or worked in the BigLaw trenches and s/he will have very similar tales to those in the novel.

Mackenzie is a relatable protagonist who makes the same excuses many lawyers use on their significant others, friends and family members when cutting short dinners, canceling plans at the last minute and bowing out of important events. Having done all of these things personally, I can say that her overwhelming feelings of both anxiety and guilt are perfectly reflected in the story.

Anyone who has wondered why a lawyer would leave a lucrative career at a law firm to do something else can find some of those answers in "BigLaw." Great read.

Jes says

Loved this sharp and witty women's fiction expose of life as an associate in a big corporate NYC law firm. Reminiscent of the Devil Wear's Prada (and in some ways, I Don't Know How She Does It) Cameron pulls back the curtain on BigLaw in a highly readable novel with plenty of laughs, cringes, and relatable characters. Painfully true in its rendition, as unbelievable as it seems, I think lawyers (and friends and relatives of them) will enjoy it and law students should take notes! (I'm a lawyer myself and spent a few years in the big firm grind.) But I think this book also has broader applicability and appeal, with its sharp observations on women working in male dominated fields and starting out in any demanding profession. The ending is tied up a little quickly, I wish it had been longer, and fairly predictable - but still satisfying and feel-good. Cameron's voice and writing bring the perfect tone and hook, such that I eagerly sped through this. Fun and impressive debut!

Debi Lantzer says

No big surprise to those who know me personally - I work for lawyers. I've worked for lawyers for about 30 years now. I've worked for sole practitioners in the suburbs and I've worked for larger firms "downtown" in big cities, but I've never worked for a law firm quite like the one portrayed in Lindsay Cameron's new book, BIGLAW!

I will say though that I could relate - I can relate to the stress, the feeling of being overworked but not wanting to let anyone down, of being replaced overnight. Most of all I can relate to the atmosphere of a law firm like the one in this book - people's quirks, the unbelievable personalities, the passive/aggressive behaviors, the office gossip and romance... I've seen it all and I can honestly say BIGLAW touched on most of those crazy situations.

BIGLAW is a great book - fast paced with a very likable main character who suffers the wrath of the not-so-likeable people that touch her life. I commend Ms. Cameron on her writing skills because I really breezed right through the book and enjoyed the story as if I were watching a movie instead. I read the book in two days - two weekdays after putting in over 8 hours a day at the law firm too!

I watched law clerks "grow up", finish school and become associates only to be drained of their every waking moment to meet the needs of the partners they were assigned to at the firm. Being taken advantage of until the day they might get an office of their own. I loved how Ms. Cameron's book shared the inner workings of this chain of events in the larger firms.

You can honestly tell she lived the experience of which she writes. In fact, I learned Lindsay Cameron worked at a big law firm, Schulte Roth & Zabel, in Manhattan. Within a year, she quit her job and began working on this book. Rumor has it that the story has been optioned for a TV show or film by Paramount Pictures.

"The book is definitely fiction, it's not a memoir, but there are characters and circumstances that are based on my own experience with some poetic license thrown in," Cameron said.

I can tell you this - anyone who has wondered why a lawyer would leave a lucrative career at a law firm to do something else can find some of those answers in BIGLAW. The main character, Mackenzie Corbett, clearly worked very hard to get where she's at. She's an associate at a high-profile law firm, but the demands of being an associate wreak havoc with her social life. She's having boyfriend issues, she can barely catch face time with her friends and her family is worried that she's in trouble just because she dashes out on Christmas

Day to fax a document to a partner of the firm. When Mackenzie realizes how much she is sacrificing, she starts realizing the stresses of the boys club at the office and the double standards she continues to face, even when her mentor is another woman!

Mackenzie's life continues to get more and more stressed, her life starts to fall apart and to ice her cake, she gets called into a meeting with federal investigators. She finally stands up for herself, calls out her enemies, receives her reward for plowing through, and decides to walk away instead. The plot is hilarious, the dialogue is great and the pace of the story is lightning quick with lots of twists. Overall BIGLAW is a great read that I really enjoyed. There weren't any slow spots in the story, it just kept going from cover to cover. I could not put the book down and read through the night --- and really paid the price the next day at work!

Serena Palumbo says

I read the advance copy of the book and enjoyed it immensely. Having worked in 2 big law firms, I can relate to the main character and have experienced first hand how bizarre it can be. Being an attorney in NYC is not like Ally Mcbeals and Miranda from SATC. It is competitive and requires thick skin. This book is right on point under this respect. It also has a very empowering message because there is no knight in the shining armor and the main character needs to figure out a way out of a really complicated situation on her own.

Jay says

Although I never worked at a large law firm, I worked at a mid-size firm with a Napoleon complex, so I got treated as though I worked in Big Law but without the pay to salve my wounds. So, all the outlandish things Mackenzie experiences were not all that outlandish to me. In fact, at one point I started to get PTSD as flashbacks of getting yelled at ran through my head. So on the one hand, this was a hard book to enjoy, but on the other, in case you were wondering, it's pretty true to life.

This book falls into my personal category of "sure you can write a book about what you've lived through, but do you have another book in you", which is maybe unfair at this point since this is Lindsay Cameron's only book. But there's a lot of these roman a clefs where the protag has an insane job that no one would believe, does something to get herself fired, and then ends up sitting in the sunshine, a happier, more calm, zen version of themselves. Inevitably, the second book, if there even is a second book, is a snore. So I guess what I'm saying is, I liked this, and I'd be interested in seeing what else Cameron has in her, but I'm also going to manage my expectations.

Patrycja says

Actually I give it 4 and half star ;-)

The novel is an insider to law offices in New York.

After I finished it I am realizing how much I don't want to work for huge corporations and I promised myself I will never become a robot who work her ass of no matter what and let others to treat me like sh*t...(- sorry for small digression.

Because this is what a main character went through while working for a big law company. Giving up her life Mackenzie tried to work hard to success. At the end she asked the question: Are those sacrifices really worth

it?

I love the writing style of the author. The novel is written well and it reads fast.

Brandice says

BigLaw is the story of Mackenzie Corbett, an associate in the corporate department of a large law firm, based in New York City. I'm not an attorney but work in the legal industry and some of the aspects of the professional life described are realistic.

The plot in *BigLaw* became pretty obvious and predictable early on, however, I still was enjoying the story, until it became extremely cheesy for a portion. The ending was fine but I didn't think this was anything special or novel - a quick, fairly enjoyable story about working in an industry known for its grind, and questioning what you really want out of your career, regardless of what industry you're in.

Lee Kelly says

As someone who worked in one of these "big law" soul-crushing New York firms, this was mandatory reading. Lindsay Cameron captured the frustration and absurdity of that time of my life perfectly, and it actually made my stomach churn reading certain parts that were too reminiscent.
