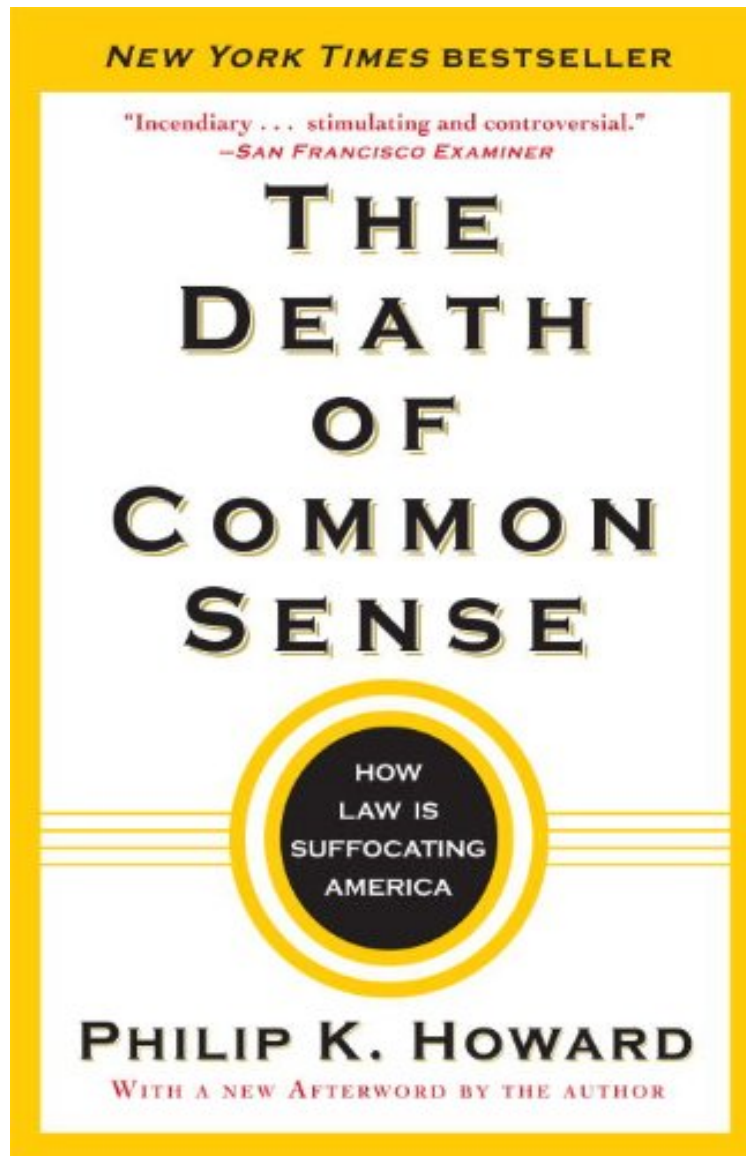


(Read ebook) The Death of Common Sense: How Law Is Suffocating America

The Death of Common Sense: How Law Is Suffocating America

Von Philip K. Howard

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Von Philip K. Howard : The Death of Common Sense: How Law Is Suffocating America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Death of Common Sense: How Law Is Suffocating America:

KundenrezensionenHilfreichste Kundenrezensionen0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Orwell was just a few years earlyVon Steven FantinaNew York City laws forbidding Mother Theresa from opening a two-

story homeless shelter unless she installs an elevator. A 33 page manual describing the qualifications and uses of a hammer. Contract bidding procedures that unintentionally but blatantly encourage corruption. These snippets sound like lines from a Letterman or Leno monologue, but discouragingly they are all actual government dictates documented in this chilling expose. Phillip Howard does an admirable job of identifying the consequences when good-hearted bureaucrats create well-intentioned regulations, and government services get caught in a stranglehold. Perhaps even more bilious than these splenetic monuments to red tape, are the huge work forces of administrators who are imprisoned by this uncontrollable system. Howard employs some macabre humor in redacting the plight of one troublesome government employee who purchased a lawn mower with his own money rather than navigate the labyrinth of paperwork necessary to order a replacement. For this breach of procedure, he earned a formal demerit. Although the subject matter is serious and in deed frequently depressing, Howard often utilizes jocular techniques to make his point. His step by step specifications of NYC's contract bidding ritual would be the envy of any stand-up comic. Unfortunately, the laughing stops upon the realization that this vapid inefficiency is pandemic throughout all levels of our government. It's scary to see just how big Big Brother has become.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. Useful arguments, but uneven in style

Von D. Brady I agree with the reviewer who concluded that this book is much too long; Howard would have more compelling if he had prepared this as a (long) magazine article. In terms of style, the book is uneven and distracting. Howard overloads the book with anecdote after anecdote of bureaucratic bungling; between the anecdotes are interspersed quotations and the author's somewhat ponderous narrative. Despite the style problems and the excessive length, Howard makes some highly compelling points. He has broken down his subject into three discrete governmental problems, nicely separated into distinct chapters. The first main chapter is about the 'bureaucrat as bull in a china shop' and government employees' inability to use common sense. This is the weakest chapter- even if all of the author's anecdotes are true, he gives no indication whether bureaucrats act like this all the time, half the time, or 1% of the time. One suspects that there are some dedicated government employees out there who occasionally (maybe frequently) display common sense, but Howard gives no inkling that such an employee exists. The second and third main chapters are more compelling, because these chapters deal with systemic problems with the USA government and the legal system. The second chapter concerns the mindless fascination the government has with process and procedure, a truly fascinating commentary on our sclerotic government. The root problem, as the author notes, is that, except at the highest levels of a government, no one is authorized to make a decision. Inevitably, government gets staffed with hacks and drones who are comfortable with that role. Clearly, government will not be 'reformed' until it can operate more like a business enterprise. The third main chapter concerns the proliferation of 'rights' in America. This chapter is likewise compelling; his discussion of the hundreds of billions that America has spent to accommodate the 'rights' of every perceived disadvantaged group in America is less shrill than other tracts on the topic, but still compelling. In general, a worthwhile and educational read.

0 von 0 Kunden fanden die folgende Rezension hilfreich. I laughed until I cried

Von Ein Kunde The utter inanity of Howard's explosive expose would, in the words of Mark Twain, make a dead man laugh. Then you consider the reality and one must weep. There are in fact many authors who have looked to the future and relayed the good news of an imminent utopia about to erupt in our midst, arriving at light speed on the winged feet of technology. Hold on Horatio. You forgot the Lawyers, the Media, and the Government. All three have a different plan. Virginia Postrel, Reg Whittaker, et al, are apparently blind to the visceral stupidity and craven corruption of the three amigos just mentioned. One author has not succumbed to the conventional idiocy that ignores Howard's reality. Jerry Furland, the author of "Transfer-the end of the beginning", stands in the vanguard of those who gladly shoulder the burden of scorn of the "progressive and oh so hip" crowd who despite every known attribute of Mankind, continue to insist that we can handle it. Well, I see little hope of that. People, to include me, generally suck. The Founding Fathers recognised that. Result: the U.S. Constitution. Howard shows us that despite the advantages of birth, Americans are intent on self-destruction and will pursue that goal amid general applause and approbation. Oh, Furland is not an intellectual per se. That is his strength. To be an intellectual, widely recognized as such, is to abandon all pretense of intellect. This Furland will hopefully never do. Great book Mr. Howard!

Kurzbeschreibung NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER We need a new idea of how to govern. The current system is broken. Law is supposed to be a framework for humans to make choices, not the replacement for free choice. So notes Philip K. Howard in the new Afterword to his explosive manifesto *The Death of Common Sense*. Here Howard offers nothing less than a fresh, lucid, practical operating system for modern democracy. America is drowning in law, lawsuits, and nearly endless red tape. Before acting or making a decision, we often abandon our best instincts. We pause, we worry, we equivocate, and then we divert our energy into trying to protect ourselves. Filled with one too many examples of bureaucratic overreach, *The Death of Common Sense* demonstrates how we and our country can at last get back on track.

From Library Journal The nuns of the Missionaries of Charity believed two abandoned buildings in New York City would make ideal homeless shelters. The city agreed and offered to sell the building for one dollar

each. Yet the shelter project faltered: the city's bureaucracy imposed such expensive remodeling requirements on the buildings that the shelter plans were scrapped. To Howard, an attorney practicing in New York City, this is but one of many examples of the law's suffocating Americans by extensive decrees on what may and may not be done. His book is truly a catalog of horror stories, actually quite engrossing and adding to the story of public inefficiencies chronicled by David Osborne's *Reinventing Government* (Addison-Wesley, 1992). What Howard does not do as well, however, is offer guidance on remedies. His answer seems to be that we should take personal responsibility, gather up our courage, and step out into the sunlight away from government's shadow. More highly recommended as a study of the negative impact of law is Walter K. Olson's *The Litigation Explosion* (LJ 2/15/91) even though its focus is on lawsuits and the courts. Jerry E. Stephens, U.S. Court of Appeals Lib., Oklahoma City Copyright 1995 Reed Business Information, Inc. *Pressestimmen* Incendiary . . . stimulating and controversial. San Francisco Examiner [Philip K.] Howard's argument is fresh, reflecting an impressive combination of wisdom, wry humor, and quiet passion. . . . When we think about reinventing government, it's a good place to start. The New York Times Book A valuable book . . . a call for personal responsibility and initiative in government. People The delights of this policy prose poem lie in its perfect details, its civilized tone, its sure sense of where the ill-made legal shoe pinches. The Wall Street Journal A brilliant diagnosis . . . forceful, trenchant, and eloquent. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Excellent. The Washington Post