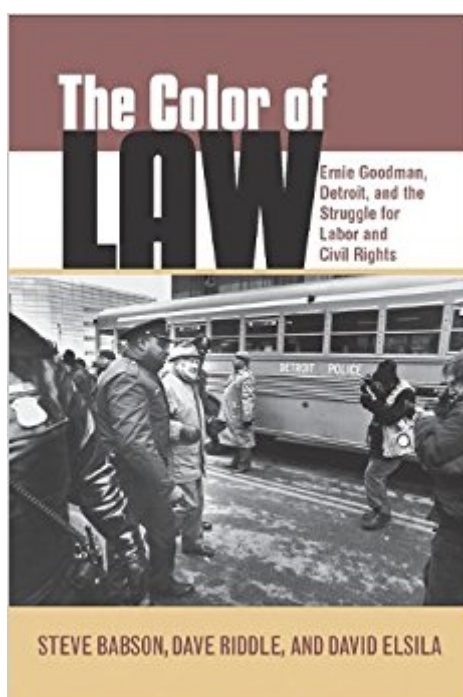


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# The Color Of Law: Ernie Goodman, Detroit, And The Struggle For Labor And Civil Rights (Great Lakes Books Series)



## Synopsis

In a working life that spanned half a century, Ernie Goodman was one of the nation's preeminent defense attorneys for workers and the militant poor. His remarkable career put him at the center of the struggle for social justice in the twentieth century, from the sit-down strikes of the 1930s to the Red Scare of the 1950s to the freedom struggles, anti-war demonstrations, and ghetto rebellions of the 1960s and 1970s. *The Color of Law: Ernie Goodman, Detroit, and the Struggle for Labor and Civil Rights* traces Goodman's journey through these tumultuous events and highlights the many moments when changing perceptions of social justice clashed with legal precedent. Authors Steve Babson, Dave Riddle, and David Elsila tell Goodman's life story, beginning with his formative years as the son of immigrant parents in Detroit's Jewish ghetto, to his early ambitions as a corporate lawyer, and his conversion to socialism and labor law during the Great Depression. From Detroit to Mississippi, Goodman saw police and other officials giving the "color of law" to actions that stifled freedom of speech and nullified the rights of workers and minorities. The authors highlight Goodman's landmark cases in defense of labor and civil rights and examine the complex relationships he developed along the way with individuals like Supreme Court Justice and former Michigan governor Frank Murphy, UAW president Walter Reuther, Detroit mayor Coleman Young, and congressman George Crockett. Drawing from a rich collection of letters, oral histories, court records, and press accounts, the authors re-create the compelling story of Goodman's life. *The Color of Law* demonstrates that the abuse of power is non-partisan and that individuals who oppose injustice can change the course of events. For additional information, reviews, photos, and events, please see [erniegoodman.com](http://erniegoodman.com).

## Book Information

Series: Great Lakes Books Series

Hardcover: 592 pages

Publisher: Wayne State University Press (October 6, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0814334962

ISBN-13: 978-0814334966

Product Dimensions: 6 x 1.8 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 2.4 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 5.0 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (2 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #278,349 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #30 in [Books > Law >](#)

Administrative Law > Civil Law #201 in Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Professionals & Academics > Lawyers & Judges #646 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Specific Topics > Civil Rights & Liberties

## Customer Reviews

The Color of Law: Ernie Goodman, Detroit, and the Struggle for Labor and Civil Rights is the in-depth biography of one of America's most dedicated defense attorneys in service to workers and the militant poor. His career involved him in the crux of social justice issues, from the sit-down strikes of the 1930s to the Red Scare of the 1950s to the anti-war demonstrations and ghetto uprisings of the 1960s and 1970s. He labored tirelessly in cases where legal precedents clashed with evolving notions of social justice, serving as an inspiration to all who wished to fight for a better world. The Color of Law spares no detail in its intimate portrayal of a real-life hero of the courtroom, and is a worthy addition to college and public library biography shelves.

With a lot of current talk about liberty and freedom, it is essential to note how difficult the struggle for civil rights and labor were in our father's lifetime. The Color of Law highlights how dangerous that was, how the government ignores basic precepts of law (if allowed) and how those issues bear upon today's political climate. The cries of "communist", "alien" and "anti-American" should be seen today in reflection of how they were used yesterday as a bludgeon against human progress. Until reading this book I was generally unaware of how much the National Lawyers Guild, Goodman, Crockett, Eden and Robb and other lawyers in Detroit contributed to the improvement of the rest of the nation.

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