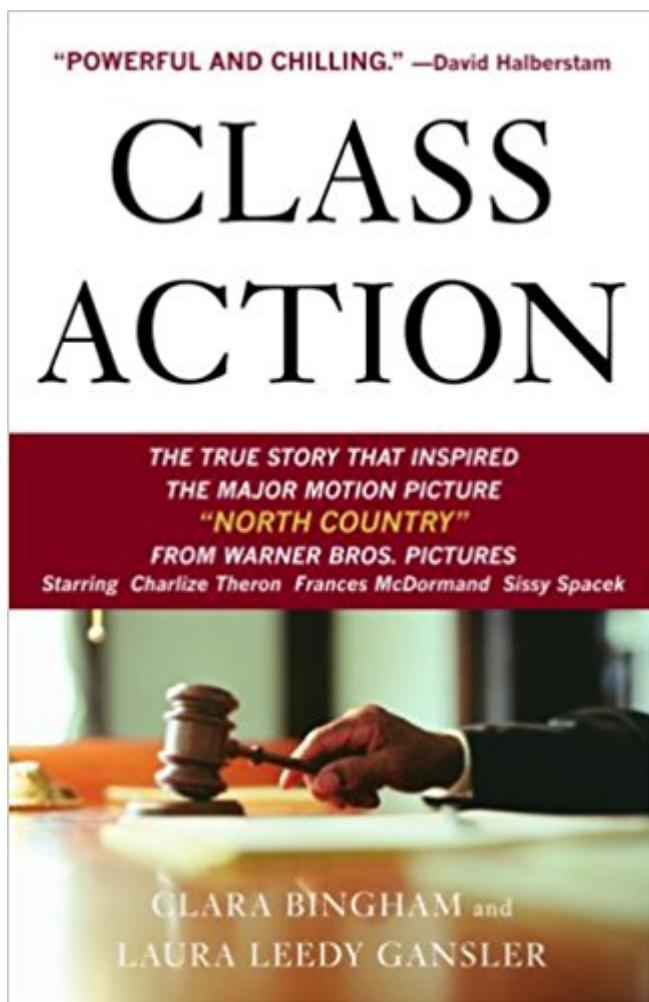


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# Class Action: The Landmark Case That Changed Sexual Harassment Law



## **Synopsis**

The true story of Lois Jenson, a petite single mother, who was among the first women hired by a northern Minnesota iron mine in 1975. In this brutal workplace, female miners were relentlessly threatened with pornographic graffiti, denigrating language, stalking, and physical assaults. Terrified of losing their jobs, the women kept their problems largely to themselves until Lois, devastated by the abuse, found the courage to file a complaint against the company in 1984. Despite all of the obstacles the legal system threw at them, Lois and her fellow plaintiffs enlisted the aid of a dedicated team of lawyers and ultimately prevailed. Weaving personal stories with legal drama, *Class Action* shows how these terrifically brave women made history, although not without enormous personal cost. Told at a thriller's pace, this is the story of how one woman pioneered and won the first sexual harassment class action suit in the United States, a legal milestone that immeasurably improved working conditions for American women.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

In 1997, in reversing a lower court decision, federal appellate Judge Donald Lay wrote in a sexual-harassment class-action lawsuit, *Jenson v. Eveleth*, "The emotional harm, brought about by this record of human indecency, sought to destroy the human psyche as well as the human spirit.... The humiliation and degradation suffered by these women is irreparable." Journalist Bingham's (*Women on the Hill: Challenging the Culture of Congress*) and attorney Gansler's deeply felt and disturbing narrative is the story of what informed Judge Lay's decision. In 1975, Lois Jenson became one of the first women to work in the iron mines of Minnesota and the lead plaintiff in the

lawsuit. Eveleth Mines was Jenson's employer. The center of the story is the 25-year ordeal Jenson and other women miners underwent: the harshness and callousness of the abuse directed at the women in the uncivilized and misogynist atmosphere of the mine will outrage readers. The equally brutal treatment class members received in the civilized venue of the federal court system, especially by the lawyers for Eveleth, will shock them. The matter-of-fact description of Eveleth's lawyers' assault on Jenson's character during a deposition that inquired about the most intimate details of her life has tremendous immediacy. Because of the personal price the plaintiffs pay, and despite the success of the litigation, this account falls somewhere between a cautionary tale about the dangers facing those who challenge entrenched institutions and a bittersweet celebration of the ultimate effectiveness of the justice system. Copyright 2002 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

--This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

A collaboration between a journalist and a lawyer, this volume describes in elaborate detail the tortuous path of the first class-action sexual harassment lawsuit, *Jenson v. Eveleth Mines*. In 1975, the Minnesota mine hired its first four women as the result of a consent decree; Lois Jenson took one of the jobs. Subjected to disgusting and relentless sexual harassment, Jenson went in turn to the company, the union, the state department of human rights, and finally, in 1988, to private counsel. With Title VII expert Paul Sprenger at the helm, the case took another 11 years, as the company's attorneys waged an intense "nuts and sluts" defense, a strategy that cost the mine \$15 million. Although ultimately vindicated, the complainants suffered not only from harassment but from the brutalizing process of the litigation. Jenson herself became disabled by stress from the harassment, the hostility of female co-workers, the length of the legal process, and the invasive interrogations connected with the claim for damages. Excessive detail, compelling though it is, diminishes the book's utility. Recommended for large public and academic libraries. Cynthia Harrison, George Washington Univ., Washington, DC Copyright 2002 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Audio CD edition.

Excellent, captivating novel which I purchased in order to complete my final project, when I began reading from it, I just kept going and going, because of the adventures and the journey the protagonists go through. As I was taking a course on Sexuality & Gender as a Psychology course, many topics came about expounding upon the themes of sexuality and harassment of the females in the work place. The author interestingly goes further expounding upon the numerous settings and individual backgrounds to describe how the harassment would occur to the women, especially as

they entered upon the masculine dominated arenas and became "gender vanguards". The author also captures very meticulously portrays the era of the mid nineteenth century where this occurs.

Class Action is one of the best books I have ever read. I simply could not put it down once I started reading it. The story, itself, is gripping. If this were a work of fiction, it would stretch the imagination to believe that such things could happen. The fact that this is a true story just stuns the reader to the depth of the soul. But, beyond the nature of the story, is the excellent writing. It is as engrossing as the best novel - cohesive, fast paced & intelligible. There is just enough legal background and explanation given to make the events understandable to the lay person without making the book a lesson in Civil Procedure. I cannot recommend this book too highly. Thank you to the authors for bringing this story to the public in such an empathetic and understandable way, and to the women of the story who changed the lives of all human beings for the better.

Extremely well written that it provides a historical record. We forget how far we've come and those who fought before us.

Very interesting topic. The women who pioneered equal rights for women in the work place had a very tough road. The book was good but way too much detail and repetitive.

Bought the book after seeing the movie - the movie vastly oversimplified, but I guess that was to be expected. It paints a vivid picture of the community and the bleak picture of the lengthy trial. The origins of equal rights were less obvious at the beginning than I have expected them to be.

This is a great read, a page turner, and heartbreakingly sad saga of women's endurance and sacrifice.

Love it!

AWESOME

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