



DOROTHY LEEDS  
IN

GOOD LESSONS FROM  
**BAD WOMEN**

A DEVILISHLY FUNNY  
ONE-WOMAN SHOW



# GOOD LESSONS FROM **BAD WOMEN**

## PLAY SYNOPSIS

***Good Lessons from Bad Women*** is a devilishly funny one-woman show about flamboyant author Dorothy Leeds and a collection of infamous women in history. Celebrating her best selling book, “Good Lessons from Bad Women” Dorothy takes her book-signing audience on an extended look at her life.

From childhood to the current day, Dorothy illustrates how “bad” women such as Eve, Mrs. “Machine Gun” Kelly, Emperor Wu, Elizabeth Freeman and Mae West helped shape her life as an activist, entrepreneur, author and speaker. She does so by becoming each woman, taking her audience through different eras, backgrounds and cultures and sharing important lessons learned the hard way.

Having been tortured by the goodness of Eleanor Roosevelt throughout her life, Dorothy continues her battle with the virtuous Eleanor until Mrs. Roosevelt makes a surprise appearance, shaking up everything Dorothy thought was good about being bad.

Funny, irreverent and thought-provoking, ***Good Lessons from Bad Women*** clearly proves that although we may value the good...we find the bad irresistible!

**PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS:** ***Good Lessons from Bad Women*** can be performed with a simple setting consisting of three tables used for costume changes. A basic lighting plot and music CD are also included. The show is designed to play in a variety of spaces, from classrooms to theatres.



**A DEVILISHLY FUNNY ONE-WOMAN SHOW**

**SCENE BY SCENE - 77 Minutes**

**PRELUDE**

As our leading lady Dorothy takes the stage, we come to know this rebellious, spirited woman-- a good girl who longs to be a bad girl. In a constant battle with the goodness of her mother and Eleanor Roosevelt, Dorothy reveals how six famous "bad women" from history helped shape her life while on the most difficult journey of all-- self acceptance. By becoming each woman, Dorothy invites her audience travel with her through different eras, backgrounds, cultures and adventures, sharing lessons learned the hard way.



**EVE - IN THE GARDEN**

Dorothy invites us to "Go as far back as we can", on an odyssey through time to meet her unlikely role models, all of whom are historically accurate... with the exception of our first character. **Eve** is the original valley girl. Why did she eat the apple? Why not? She was bored! Adam was boring! All he did was tend the garden and name things. She made a choice and she was the first person to discover love, sex and consequences. Her epiphany is as great as the Grand Canyon.



**MRS. "MACHINE GUN" KELLY- AT A PRESS CONFERENCE**

Next we meet **Mrs. "Machine Gun Kelly"** the original image builder, in her glory as she presides over her own press conference. One tough lady, this strong, fast-talking and domineering woman has a huge soft spot for her husband, whom she has dubbed George "Machine Gun" Kelly. Capitalizing on their passionate love for each other, she is able to turn him against his mild, meek, pacifist nature, into a gun-toting bank robber. Was she behind George's infamous crime spree? Did she really get away with the murder of that rotten, two-timing Charlie Thorne? Kathryn Kelly is the originator of the philosophy that there is no such thing as bad publicity and modesty is an overrated virtue. Toot your own horn!



**EMPEROR WU - HOLDING COURT IN HER PALACE**

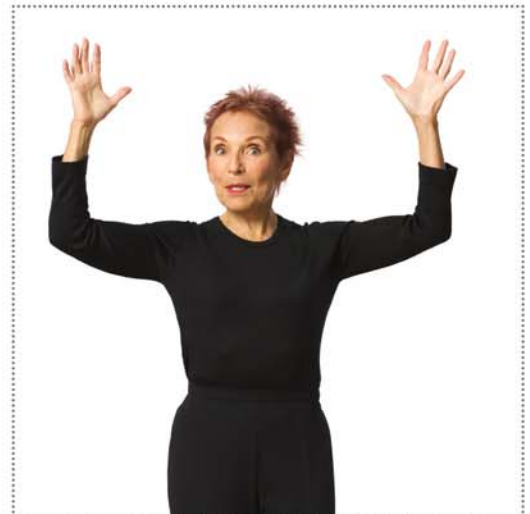
**Wu Chao** interrupts her meditations with imperious glances and a dramatic flourish of her fan. She describes her secretive and well-planned rise to power during the Tang Dynasty and how she became China's only female emperor. Wu is charming, sexual and seemingly shy, yet ruthless and unapologetic – a complex and enchanting woman who clearly knows the rules of the game. She inspires us to be fully prepared. Only then can you take advantage of all opportunities!

**ELIZABETH FREEMAN - AT A FAMILY REUNION**

In today's world, **Elizabeth Freeman** would be considered a hero—but back in the 1700's she was definitely a bad girl. Defying a harsh and physically abusive mistress, she actually sued for her freedom from slavery and won! This amazing woman dealt more than admirably with horrific circumstances as she forged her way along an incredible path to freedom. She demonstrates for us that no matter how difficult the circumstance, fight for your independence and your beliefs!

**MAE WEST - KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT A CONVENTION**

No play about bad women would be complete without the incomparable **Mae West**. Dorothy invites Mae to share her story with the "Sex and the City" generation and theatrically becomes Mae by donning her feather boa and claiming she will only speak if she is "allowed to smoke - inside." In her own sexy vernacular and while teasing and tempting the audience, Mae shares such wonderful lines as, "Personally, I like two kinds of men, domestic and foreign." And, "My mother always taught me too much of a good thing could be...wonderful." Mae seductively proves that it is possible, and even desirable, to live without guilt.



## ANNE BONNEY - IN THE COURTROOM

It is hard to believe that **Anne Bonney**, the soft-spoken, jury-charming Southerner we meet in a courtroom at the beginning of her trial could also be a pillaging, murderous, nymphomaniacal pirate. But she is indeed multifaceted--stunning, brave, smart, daring, sexy and more. She takes us on her exciting, breathless journey through the lawless, lewd, and lustful world of the 18th century pirate. We can't help but root for her during her duel with her rival. Can she really get away with murder, mayhem, and piracy? How far will Southern charm take her? She joyfully and passionately demonstrates that if you hate the hypocrites, live with gusto and without fear, you'll definitely have one heckuva life!



## ELEANOR ROOSEVELT - TO DOROTHY AND HER ADORING PUBLIC

Arguing with **Eleanor Roosevelt** through the play, Dorothy transforms into the woman herself! As Eleanor, she relates the sad, courageous and moving story of how she became Mrs. Roosevelt – much heralded First Lady, champion of the underdog, hero to the downtrodden. Although Dorothy's mother—and the world—saw Mrs. Roosevelt as the Greatest Lady ever, Eleanor's own sense of herself was that she, too, was bad. Why?? You'll have to see the play to find out! Mrs. Roosevelt's sage advice? "No one can make you feel inferior without your consent."



## EPILOGUE

The tales have been told. Many dimensions of good and bad have been explored. Hopefully, the lessons have been learned. As our celebration comes to a close, Dorothy heeds the advice of Eleanor who famously said, "We are all so marvelously varied yet fundamentally similar. No one is entirely good or bad." Perhaps pushing the envelope, Dorothy offers her audience a taste of Eve's apple. Like life itself, it is there for the taking ...will you take a bite?



## OUTREACH: MASTER CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Dorothy offers much more than just a performance. Her outreach to the community is impressive. Many presenters take advantage of her multi-faceted background, tapping into her theatrical, writing and business talents. She provides many varied, participative and enlightening master classes and workshops for students, inner city youth organizations, battered women's shelters, hospitals, libraries, community colleges, healthcare/eldercare professionals and universities. Her programs range from one hour up to two days. Here are some examples:

### WRITING & PERFORMING YOUR OWN ONE-PERSON PLAY

Just as everyone has a novel inside, every performer has a one-person play. Often the difficulty is how to get started. The most common first play or novel is autobiographical. It is always easiest to work with material you know best. In this inter-active, hands-on workshop, participants will craft/work with a short 3-5 minute play, complete with exposition, character development, conflict and resolution. Participants will perform their play and receive feedback.

### CREATING AND PERFORMING MULTIPLE CHARACTERS

It is difficult enough to perform one character well. In the theatre, the ultimate challenge is the one-person play with multiple characters. One of the most prevalent mistakes is focusing on the voice and accent but overlooking character development. This workshop will help participants focus on the inner life of each character. What is their relationship to themselves, to the audience, to each other and the situations they face? Through improvisation and demonstration, learn to forge strong and memorable moments for each character and the audience.

### MARKET YOURSELF: THE ULTIMATE JOB SEEKERS GUIDE

Job seekers of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, whether seeking full or part-time work in any field of endeavor – will have to become “career entrepreneurs,” treating themselves as if they were a small business and using all the sales and marketing techniques any small business needs to survive. Unfortunately, these skills are rarely taught. How can you get an employer's attention, stand out from the crowd, and get the job offers you really want? The one common trait of all successful job seekers is their ability to sell and market themselves.

### THE POWER OF QUESTIONS: ACTIVATE YOUR POTENTIAL

Do you feel in your heart that you can do more and be more, professionally and personally? All it takes is asking the right questions and acting on the answers. Tap into the power of questions. Think more productively, lead with confidence, persuade with ease, initiate and manage change, make better decisions and improve all your relationships. Wouldn't it be wonderful to avoid mistakes and misunderstandings, get the right information the first time, gain greater control and become a quality listener?

### SO YOU WANT TO WRITE A BOOK?

Although they keep telling us books are becoming extinct, everyone Leeds speaks to each year (and that's a lot of people!) wants to write a book. Using her experience (twelve books and several in print for over ten years, three five star winners on Amazon) and using advice of other successful authors/editors, she will share how to write a saleable book proposal, get it to the right people, get an agent, cope with editors and market your book so it gets read and publicized.

**Other programs include:** Selling Yourself, Your Productions, Your Ideas; How to be a Dynamic Speaker and Workshop Leader; Assertiveness Training, Coaching-Training-Mentoring; Smart Questions: The Essential Strategy for Successful Managers.



## SELECTED PERFORMANCES / WORKSHOPS / LECTURES

Dorothy Leeds has graced the stage worldwide from North America to Botswana with stops in Mexico, London, Malaysia, Bhutan, Singapore, and Egypt.

The following are selected engagements spanning her thirty years of performing, authoring, and keynoting:

Adelphi University	Garden City, NY
Belmont University	Nashville, TN
Bronx Library Center	Bronx, NY
Centennial Theatre	Colorado Springs, CO
Clemson University	Clemson, SC
Eastern Connecticut State University	Willimantic, CN
Harper Community College	Palatine, IL
Husson College	Bangor, ME
Lakeland Community College	Kirtland, OH
Metropolitan Museum of Art	New York, NY
Michigan Union Theatre, University of Michigan	Ann Arbor, MI
National Theatre	Washington, DC
Nederlander Theatre	Detroit, MI
Northwestern University	Evanston, IL
Paper Mill Playhouse	Millburn, NJ
Pikes Peak Community College	Colorado Springs, CO
Royal Alexander Theatre	Toronto, ON Canada
San Antonio College	San Antonio, TX
Schubert Theatre	Boston, MA
Smoot Theatre	Parkersburg, WV
Tappan Zee Playhouse	Nyack, NY
The Enoch Pratt Free Library	Baltimore, MD
The New York Public Library	New York, NY
University of Florida	Gainesville, FL
University of Texas	Austin, TX
University of Wisconsin, Union Theatre	Madison, WI
University of Wisconsin	Oshkosh, WI

Dorothy has also appeared at Barnes & Noble and Borders bookstores in Atlanta, Phoenix, Scottsdale, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, New York City, Trenton, Newark, Philadelphia, Dallas, Fort Worth, Chicago, Baltimore, Detroit, Danbury, Hartford, New Haven, Columbus, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Arlington, Palm Springs, San Diego, Denver, Colorado Springs, and Washington, DC.

Through her corporate presentations at many of the world's top organizations, Dorothy is committed to empowering people to fulfill their highest potential. Her client list includes: Pfizer, Merrill Lynch, Conde Nast, Hearst, Verizon, Boeing, IBM, Merck, Wharton School of business, The CIA, AMA, IRS, and All State.



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"Dorothy Leeds received a rousing standing ovation from 500 women (and men). A wonderful blend of the historical and the fanciful."

- Sally Kranz, Program Director, General Federation of Women's Clubs

"Our audience was so appreciative of the performance that they leapt to their feet with applause to express their enjoyment."

-Susan Zelenka, Bookings Manager, Ruth Eckerd Hall

**"Leeds inspires and entertains."**  
- *The New York Times*

**"Swashbuckling! Thrilling!"**  
- *USA Today*

"This evening of theatre was such a big hit, I got several new subscriptions"

-Mark Kirby, Coordinator, Levy Performing Arts Center

"I would bring Dorothy back to the Smoot."

- Felice Jorgeson, Artistic Director, Smoot Theater

**"Impressive in its insights."**  
- *Michael Bloomberg, CEO*  
*Bloomberg News*

"Leeds' portrayal of these historic women was extraordinary. An energetic and exciting performance."

- Gloria Lane, Coordinator, Lakeland Community College

"Dorothy's terrific performance was the highlight at this year's Women's History symposium- it was the largest turnout we've had."

- Kathleen Walker, Brookhaven National Laboratories

**"Catch a rising star!"**  
- *Cosmopolitan*

"I have never seen such a display of personalities-- held together by such an adhesive talent. My eyes and ears were engaged until the curtain-call. Dorothy challenges the mind and the heart."

- Tron Simpson, Program Director, KCMN/KCBR Colorado Springs/Denver

"Leeds has impressive versatility as an actress. For an entertaining and well-performed play, invite Dorothy Leeds."

- Liz Cannon, Director,  
University of Wisconsin  
Women's Center



## THE STORIES WE NEVER HEAR!

Was Mae West the role model  
for "Sex and the City"?



Did China's first female Emperor  
sleep her way to the top?

What makes a well-bred woman a pillaging pirate?



Was Mrs. Machine Gun Kelly  
a straight shooter or did she  
hype her husband into the  
outlaw hall of shame?



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