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# Jed Rakoff: Only the "Relatively Rich" Can Afford to Hire a Lawyer

Judge Rakoff, in his Learned Hand Award speech at the Federal Bar Council's Law Day dinner, said: We cannot blind ourselves to the failure of our profession to provide affordable legal services to what is probably a majority of our fellow Americans. What is needed is a global solution.

By **Jed Rakoff** | May 03, 2018 at 03:20 PM

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Judge Rakoff speaks at the Federal Bar Council Law Day Dinner. Photo: Jack McCoy

*Editor's Note: U.S. District Judge Jed Rakoff of the Southern District of New York received the Learned Hand Medal for Excellence in Federal Jurisprudence at the Federal Bar Council's Law Day dinner Wednesday night at the Grand Hyatt New York. He used the occasion to ask the guests to find a way to make legal services more affordable. The New York Law Journal is running his remarks on that in their entirety.*

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It's only the latest role for the well-respected litigator, who's worked in state, district and U.S. attorney offices, and operated in local courts in Brooklyn as well as appearing before the U.S. Supreme Court some 20 times.



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**NY's High Court Declines to Take Up Appeal on Habeas Denial for 2 Chimps**  
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The New York Court of Appeals denied leave to appeal in two cases over chimpanzees being held in cages by owners upstate, which leaves the lower appellate court's ruling in place. But Judge Fahey took the opportunity to criticize the First Department's reasoning in finding that a chimp cannot be defined as a person and thus is not entitled to habeas relief.

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