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Class of 1982 Fifteen Year Report Alumni Comments

University of Michigan Law School

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CLASS OF 1982, RESPONSES TO QUESTION F.: "WE WOULD LIKE YOUR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS OF ANY SORT ABOUT LIFE OR LAW SCHOOL."

After a two-year judicial clerkship, I have practiced in the same large firm for 13 years. I work with a group of talented and congenial people, the work is intellectually interesting, and I make a very comfortable living.

As I contemplate doing the same work for another 15-20 years, though, I find myself facing two significant challenges. The first is a function of the time demands of the job – I have three children who are rapidly growing up, and I value my time with them above everything. It is consistently difficult to draw a comfortable boundary around the time I commit to the firm so that I can give them the time I want to give. I do know that I don't want to look back 10 years from now, once they've grown, and regret that I missed out on their growing up.

Second, I find as time goes by an increasing sense of doubt that what I'm doing makes much of a positive contribution to society. I now feel comfortable that I've learned the "craft" involved, but I increasingly question the value of what I'm doing, particularly in litigation. I also find as time goes by that no matter how financially rewarding the work is, I need to find a way to make it personally rewarding to stay in it for the long haul.

I believe I received a wonderful education at U of M Law School – one that has served me well, even though I am currently not practicing law.

As a lead negotiator for the United States on trade issues, my legal training has been instrumental in my effectiveness at crafting compromises and at making sure that the oral agreements reached are accurately reflected in writing.

I think the law school would do its students a great service if it promoted the idea that career success is broader than just making partner in a big corporate law firm.

1) There are other advanced study opportunities after law school besides clerkships. I got a fellowship to study foreign law, which I would encourage for anyone interested in an international practice. Just ask the foreign students who study at Michigan.

2) a) I encourage people:

- 1- to set job-related lifestyle goals/criteria from the outset (i.e. what office setting and personal interaction preferences makes a person enjoy going to work);
- 2- to evaluate their jobs in relation to those goals/criteria on a regular basis;
- 3- to adjust the goals as necessary; and
- 4- to challenge their employers and to change jobs if the goals/criteria are

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not met. You get more respect for identifying and pursuing goals than going with the flow.

b) I also encourage people to identify one or more mentors as they progress in their professional lives. In some cases, this means to let someone be a mentor – many times, there are people out there who are interested and willing advisors. I believe this is particularly important at the outset of one's professional career and again around 10-15 years out of law school, especially for young law firm partners, who achieved an objective goal but who can get easily lost again in partnership politics unless they set new criteria for their work life. Many end up very unhappy because it is hard to come up with new goals/objectives for their jobs.

Law school was mostly a pretty miserable experience for me. I wanted to become a lawyer so I stuck with the process.

Many of the professors were obviously prejudiced against my gender and race.

The administration as a whole was much more sensitive than the individual instructors to the plight and discomfort of the minority students. GOD BLESS SUE EKLUND!

The best part about law school was 1) graduating; 2) finally paying off the student loans.

P.S. I didn't even know about taking the Bar until I overheard some other first year students talking about it!!! (That's the Truth!)

I am grateful to the University of Michigan and the Law School for the education and the high standards and goals which it has inspired in me.

Trying to learn how to practice law in law school is like trying to learn how to play chess without a chess board, chess men, and without actually playing the game. More practice-oriented instruction is needed to complement the substantive training.

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#9 - Law practice is so demanding it interferes with family life, which is the source of dissatisfaction.

#E10b - I was once refused a volunteer position on a local bar committee because, I was told, they wanted a woman lawyer to fill it.

I run a business and use my law training every day. It is instrumental, but I might have been better served by an MBA.

I had no idea I would dislike law practice as much as I did. I am lucky to have found something I have great passion for – building a business.

I practiced law for 5 years (1982-87) and never enjoyed it for one day – but at least I never had any regrets about learning. I struggled for many years in business before becoming successful. Not only was the struggle worth it, I couldn't do it any other way – I don't spend much time worrying about yesterday or what I could have done.

I have very positive feelings about Michigan Law School (but no fond feelings for lawyers).

1) The most difficult part of my life is balancing the demands of work with family life.

2) There is a lot of pressure to develop clients to remain competitive within a law firm. It makes the practice less desirable and less fun. Fortunately I have had success with client development but I feel resentment from my partners at compensation time.

3) The practice of law has become less of a profession and too much of a business. (See #2).

4) There is a tremendous pressure from clients to keep fees at unrealistically low levels. As lawyers who compete for clients by price, we are our own worst enemies because we generally are notoriously bad business people – otherwise we would have gone to business school.

5) I am frustrated by the lack of entrepreneurial opportunities – a private practice.

6) I love having attended the U of M Law School. It gives me a lot of credibility and has opened many doors for me.

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Ten years ago when I did this survey, I was very overwhelmed trying to please senior partners at a 25 attorney firm while, at the same time, trying to raise two small children with my attorney-husband. I am now much more content having established my own firm where I make less money but have the time I need to devote to my family and volunteer activities, which are an important adjunct to our family life. By working in my own firm with a more limited schedule, I am able to take care of my aging mother and growing children as necessary without having to worry about "the almighty billable hour." My only "partner" is my husband and I believe we have struck a good balance between career and family life. No one ever dies saying, "I wish I had spent more time at the office," and I think I learned that early on. Our family has benefitted from my time, if not my money, that I have been able to devote to taking care of the family. My career is secondary and I prefer it that way.

As to law school, the University of Michigan is still a powerful degree even after 15 years. Clients and other professionals are impressed when I tell them I did both my undergraduate and law studies at U of M. I even had an older client recently that told me she felt much more comfortable with me just having known that I went to Michigan Law School.

Everyone has more choices than they dare to believe.

I graduated from law school in 1982, so things may be different today, but I have always thought the law school could have done a better job of acquainting its students with the range of employment opportunities available to lawyers. When I was in law school, my impression was that there were basically three employment options: 1) large law firms in large cities; 2) federal appellate court clerkships; and 3) legal services clinics.

Law students need to understand that the practice of law is a business, and at some

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time in their careers they will be asked to generate clients. The sooner this requirement is recognized, the sooner it can be acted upon, and the sooner the law student will succeed (if making money and becoming a partner in a big law firm is the measure of success).

This means that the practice of law is *more than* billing hours. It includes non-billable, perhaps not "first choice" activities: educating yourself to become an expert in what you do, serving on bar committees, writing articles, giving speeches, teaching, doing community service and charity work, participating in firm management.

The end result of doing these "extra" things is firm and community recognition and impact, financial success, and *control* (at least professionally) over your life (if you work for your clients you can do it like you wish). You can also help others succeed.

Doing the "extra" things means you'll need to work even harder at the most important life choices – marriage, children, and health. The thing to remember is that if you're organized, committed, and hard working, *you can do it all*. If you can approach it all with a positive attitude, don't complain but instead be a team player who seeks solutions to problems, *you can do it all* – and be happy doing it!!

I hated law school. I felt it was stuffy and extremely limited. There was little room for creativity. In my profession, creativity and an intense desire to help my clients has been what has allowed me to be more successful than my peers. I feel that the Clinical Law Program was extremely useful to me in reassuring me that these values really would matter. I hear about attorneys with bad ethics. I believe that all law students should be required to help "the little guy" in a clinical law type format for *1 year* before being allowed to graduate. This would let the students know what type of person is needed in the profession and expose them to the side of life many of them will never experience once they go to work for large corporate firms.

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1) I remember during orientation of law school someone remarked (from the faculty) that each new student had been at the top of his/her college and would, for the next 3 years, no longer feel as if he/she was still at the top because not everyone can continue to be #1. But, said the speaker, once out of law school, confidence regained, we would again rise to the top and the education and reputation of the school would assist us in that ascension. That is largely true but equally true is that the lawyers I see who are most successful (e.g. substantively smart but also good, respected lawyers) have personality traits which law school has little impact on – gregarious, honest, affable, responsive, organized, compassionate, etc. I have seen many really smart lawyers who are lacking in people skills and, as a result, are ineffective problem solvers. Excelling in law school is thus not necessarily a measure of predictor of "success" as a lawyer.

Right now I am too busy to comment. Perhaps after the new year I can provide some addition comments.

Go Blue....Win the Rose Bowl!!!

I enjoyed law school, but I enjoy practicing law even more. I have practiced law at the same firm since graduation and I am glad that I chose to stay.

Practicing law has allowed me to be very active in the community and community work has been very satisfying for me.

I would not go into litigation. I would do tax work or corporate law. I wish I had understood when I was in law school how hard it would be to litigate and have children.

The profession has been corrupted by greed (yet, without greed we wouldn't have jobs!). So has society. Within actual practice, operation by rote is too prevalent (and

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generally preferred!) And too few practitioners and clients appreciate quality. We practice on Earth, not in heaven. (God might be a difficult client anyway -- if he required representation.)

Compared with coal miners, "streetwise" vendors, Nike's child laborers, mesmerized postal workers, rogue cops and drug dealers, alienated/frustrated musicians, curriculum bound classroom conductors ("teachers"), and most other jobs, "professions," our situation is not too bad (and few of us are perfect either).

The education at Michigan was exemplary. I would change only the degree to which it emphasized the practical integration of lawyering and the real world.

I would not replace any of the academic requirements or offerings but would add more clinics and practitioners in the following areas:

- mediation
- ADR alternative dispute resolution
- criminal trials
- family law

I choose to work in Labor Relations administratively and although 50% of my colleagues are attorneys, it is not a position which requires one to be Bar admitted. In labor law, by the time any matter must be handled by counsel, it is well beyond the point where the real parties can resolve matters practically.

My comments about law school education are aimed at educating lawyers so they have more opportunities to assist the parties to any dispute to resolve the matters, not only between themselves, but also without the necessity of resorting to adversarial forums.

Without those skills above being developed, lawyers will continue to be marginalized in the area of real problem solutions.

I am not sure what I expected my legal career to be like, but I am surprised in many respects as to how things turned out.

1) My salary is great. I am paid so much more than I am worth, it's unbelievable. This is a good thing for me, but must be bad for society!!

2) Law firms employ/are owned by some of the most dishonest/biased people I know. While women may have made some strides in terms of career advancement, how

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many of those women also have husbands and young children? I'd bet very few. Most senior lawyers I know are anti-family and resent moms that want to work full time. I was warned by one partner recently not to say I was pleased personally that a business trip of mine was postponed -- from a day my house flooded, two of my kids were sick, and my husband had a late meeting -- to a more convenient time, or I would be labeled "not committed." I have also been told I can't be put up for partner because I lack partnership "presence," yet I am the only attorney in my department that handles multi-billion dollar deals without help from anyone else in my group.

3) Lawyers who succeed generally verify the adage, it's not what you know, it's who you know. If you can shmooze and sound confident no matter how wrong you are, you'll do fine.

4) Practicing law (at least where you earn enough to cover child care) and spending a couple weekdays at home do not mix.

I tell my daughter to be a doctor.

Enjoyed law school – great experience and training for both my private practice experience and business experience. Life style is balanced. Work hours 7:00 - 5:30, weekends rare. Compensation good. Current position has lost some challenge. Would whole heartedly go back to law school and recommend it as great training.

Michigan prepared me to work in a big law firm for big bucks representing corporate America. I hated it. The atmosphere was sexist, competitive and focused solely on money and power. I had to find my own way to a satisfying practice in environmental law for which I had no training previously. I was lucky.

My memories of Michigan Law School are that it was sexist, competitive and focused solely on money, power or intellectual game-playing. If you want to just send students out to make dollars – then don't change a thing. Even this survey is steeped in all those values – by the questions you ask and all the questions you don't.

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Don't waste the pain.

I have started a publishing company which in combination with a part time law practice is much more satisfying than the full time practice of law. The ethics, credibility, time, and stress involved with full time law practice is not, to me, worth it. Thanks for the book mark!

Law school was not a happy experience for me. This was due in part to my personal circumstances at the time, but also due to the environment at the school. The work load was very demanding, and I also felt the Socratic method made the material more baffling (than it had to be). There was a lot of stress – much of it caused by the fear that I had made a mistake in coming to Michigan Law School. After we were familiar with basic principles, the latter portion of our education was boring and a waste of time.

I am not alone in feeling this way. Although the exact reasons may be different, most of my law school friends do not have fond memories of Ann Arbor. My wife – also a U of M grad, but not from the law school – wanted to return for my 15th reunion. I told her I would go if some of my friends did, too. I couldn't bait any of them to attend, and I didn't either.

Perhaps I had a particularly misanthropic group of friends. I don't know whether graduates of other law schools are more warm and fuzzy about their legal educations. But I know that I do not have a positive recollection of Law School (other than L. Hart Wright, who I felt was the best teacher I ever had). I made some great friends. I was strengthened by the fact that I had weathered a very difficult 3 years in Ann Arbor. But I have found the practice of law far more enjoyable than Law School. Maybe if I had been exposed to the practice – the real practice of law – during the time I was enduring law school, it would have been more meaningful to me (I believe medical students have more exposure to medicine than we did to law). I am more interested in the flesh and blood of the law – counseling people and guiding them through their problems – than I am in the stuff of law school, the legal principles. It helped me a lot to have a client and a goal when I read the law. That I got in practice, not Law School.

We used to joke that we wished we had bypassed Law School and just taken the Bar Review course. That is an oversimplification. But I think you could shorten the classroom portion of law school and expand the "clinical" side and produce a better legal

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education. I also think Law School could be shorter – 2 years? I also think you might have a happier group of alumni, i.e., more graduates with a pleasant recollection of Law School.

Recently changed jobs to work for investment services firm. Left private practice in large law firm.

I found Law School an exciting and challenging environment, and found Michigan Law School in particular a wonderful place to study. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to attend.

I did not go to law school with the intention of becoming a practicing lawyer. But the financial incentives and ready availability of jobs with private firms – especially the large firms in the big cities – make that the path of least resistance. For many people, that is a good training ground and a sensible place to go after law school. However, I think I would have benefitted from exposure to a broader spectrum of opportunities that I think is available to Michigan grads. Students need to be encouraged to look more aggressively for positions in different settings because once you have started down the path with private firms, it becomes increasingly difficult to find your way into something different. I think there are a lot of talented lawyers in large firms who would love to try something different – but have waited too long to make a move. They are then stuck with a law firm – prevented from moving because of the reluctance to take financial/personal risks later in their careers.

1) Why are you so concerned with race/gender issues? People should be appreciated for who they are and what they do. I'm not concerned with "diversity" or "proportionality" for its own sake.

2) Political views – skeptical about government, concerned about social welfare, conservative about taxes and governmental spending (we have too much of both).

3) Item D3b – would go to law school again for the education, but question whether I would practice law in private firm.

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It's too bad that because I was so "good" I couldn't seem to work part time. Nobody in the firm tried to facilitate it, even though they allowed it. A truly part time situation might have allowed me to keep working, instead of quitting altogether.

My law license is still handy. It gives me credibility in my other work.

I think it was highly unfortunate that while in law school, any clinical experience was looked down on – thus I learned nothing about the practical aspects of practicing law or the importance of salesmanship/obtaining clients and having successful relationships with them. My clerkship at a large DC firm, was an endless succession of parties – I think I spent 4 weeks on a single memo but nonetheless was offered a job.

I wish a practical course on practicing law had been *required* – the nuts and bolts of working with clients, billing, professional activities – especially for those of us who weren't lucky enough to have parents or other family members practicing law.

However, U of M was a wonderfully intellectual experience – I felt challenged as never before, and made many lifelong friends.

Law school was a poor preparation for life as an attorney: the workload, the stress, and especially the intellectual and personal dishonesty. And of course there are the judges which vary from intelligent and concerned to slow and lazy. It was an amazingly unsatisfying field to be engaged in.

Michigan would do good to focus on more writing, more "real-life" ethical issues, and more discussion of cutting edge legal and ethical issues. Also more practical issues – required moot courts where you learn about writing persuasive briefs and arguing in court; time in trust and estates where you learn about helping a person achieve objectives for an estate plan.

Finally, especially in light of the large number of attorneys changing professions, discuss more about how law can be used in other fields.

I am in my fourth position post-law school. My experience has included in-house, medium firm and large firm. At this stage of my career, I am satisfied with my career and

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work-life balance. I believe that with time, one learns what they really like (and perhaps dislike) about the practice of law. I have learned that the working environment one practices in can make all the difference in the world in both the enjoyment and fulfillment emanating from the practice of law.

A real challenge today is coping with the rapidly changing corporate world and the need to stay flexible in one's practice. I feel that it is important to build a strong skill set of fundamentals and a specialty or sub-specialties. In this way, an attorney creates and retains marketability to manage the rapidly changing work environment.

I loved attending the University of Michigan Law School. The faculty ranged from good to excellent. The student body was friendly, and we always had Dean Sue to lift our spirits.

I was intellectually stimulated, madly in love with my husband, and had good friends, what more can one ask for?

Obviously, I am disappointed with how my legal career has evolved and the practice of law in general. Luckily, my legal training has sharpened my mind and has given me skills that I suspect will be transferable to other careers.

Law school – I taught appellate advocacy this semester and sure wish I'd had something like it at Michigan!

I retired from law when I had my first child in 1985. I have three children. I have worked as a volunteer many, many hours for the various nursery schools and elementary schools my children attended (all private schools which encourage parental involvement) and attend. My children are all very busy and involved and I am the one who gets them to where they need to be. I have been a very involved, "hands-on" mom. Now, my youngest child is in kindergarten and I have time on my hands for the first time in 12 years. I am contemplating taking the Bar Exam in my current state and starting a legal career all over again. Family law is an area which I may consider. (My short-lived legal career was in

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real estate law.)

The school should continue to *resist* the temptation to become more vocational – learning how to think/analyze is more important than “learning the law” specifically. I enjoyed the *non-vocational* aspects of law school the most.

I went on to get a library science degree at the [university name] after law school and they did a much better job in their law school placement office listing on bulletin boards alternatives to large law firm law practices. I remember feeling very betrayed by the UM office after reading all the postings connected to the law (but not large law firm jobs), alternatives that their placement office listed.

I have heard it said that the goal of most lawyers is to become an ex-lawyer. Regrettably, that is my experience as well.

After my clerkship, I went to work for a typical defense oriented law firm as an associate. After 1-1/2 years, I left to join a spin-off from a big firm. I was made a partner in that second firm in 1989.

In 1994, I was offered a chance to join a new insurance company as chief legal officer. In March 1997, the guy who hired me retired, so I am now President of the company.

While I miss my former law cohorts, I don't miss the practice of law one bit. I was working insane hours, but increasingly deriving no satisfaction from the practice of law. In particular, I came to loathe other lawyers who in my view increasingly believe that “anything goes,” including some really outrageous things.

My new career as a businessman affords an opportunity for a balance life that law practice simply does not permit. I am much more satisfied with my work and my

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professional life.

I would not recommend private law practice to a young attorney. It is a really rotten way to make a living.

I enjoy life in a corporate law department where I am valued for my ability to problem solve and the quality of my advice, rather than the quantity of hours – as was the case in the large law firm.

I'm an academic. When I went to law school, I didn't plan to be one, and I'm not sure I'd have gone if I had. But it has helped. It helped me to get a job and the training helps on the job.

I remain extremely grateful for the opportunity to attend the University of Michigan Law School. In my financial struggle to establish my family and my own law firm, I have contributed less to the school than I wanted to give.

In the years to come, I hope to express my appreciation in more ways.

Law school should be 2 rather than 3 years.

All students – or at least those heading toward a business law career – should be required to take a full semester corporate finance class so they have some sense of the financial context of their activities.

Law students should get more training in performing on teams – as distinguished from *individual* performance.

Overall, there should be more focus on practical problem solving. Consider more of a business school style case study method, looking at actual real life problems and real life solutions – not just abstract analysis.

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Law school was a very tough experience for me but it prepared me exceptionally well for my career.

The law is interesting, but the practice of law in today's environment is unbelievably stressful. Plain old good lawyering is no longer valued. All that matters is how much you bill and what your client-getting prospects are. (Provided, of course, that you never get anything wrong. There is zero tolerance for error in the law.)

A comment about recent news on the lawsuit against UM Law re: admissions: Whether affirmative action and/or preferential treatment of certain minorities is good public policy or not, the Law School will lose all credibility re: its mission to teach an ethical practice of law if it is not HONEST about what it is doing. If the grid system you use is more than just a favorable factor for certain minorities, and in fact is the key factor in admitting a minority whose GPA and LSAT are lower than a non-minority, ADMIT IT and make your case for why you are doing so. It will be very embarrassing to the Law School and its Alumni if the lawsuit brings out facts that makes the school's denial clearly false.

Finally, as to the policy question – How can it be just to reject a white or Asian student who grew up in a household with one alcoholic parent; a household where the student received little support from family in his or her studies; where, in short, the student struggled against severe odds to succeed? To reject that student on the basis of race is certainly a violation of that individual's liberty and, absent an amendment to the US Constitution, that would make preference a public policy that has support in the Constitution, it is a violation of the Constitution. Finally, the ethics of making a disadvantaged white student pay for the sins of his forebears, is certainly worth a hard look.

It has been surprisingly difficult for me to find a position/career path that feels completely "authentic" to me. I believe I have above average analytical, speaking, writing,

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and interpersonal skills, and have achieved "success" in my career by most objective measures. Yet I feel I have never really found a job in which I feel completely "at home;" I feel as if I continue to search for this.

I have been astounded over the past 15 years to discover how stressful the practice of law is, and how little control over their lives lawyers really have. I became a lawyer because I saw it as a sure path to autonomy, independence, control; this has turned out not to be true.

I have had an extremely difficult time figuring out how to balance "work and life." I got married very late (age 36) and am now confronting the possibility that I may be unable to have children. I feel burned out and exhausted and frustrated by my inability to achieve a comfortable balance.

I am glad to see that the Law School has "beefed-up" its writing and advocacy program. This was the only serious hole in my U of Michigan Law School education.

I lost my wife about three months ago so my answers and future are a bit in flux.

My top priority is my care for three children (ages: 5, 10, 13) and an elderly father whom we are moving in with us. I would *love* some career and intellectual fulfillment, but the practice of law *per se* in a large (or small) private law firm is not the answer. I don't know how best to utilize my degree and talents in the law field (perhaps legal librarian, etc). But, I would really like a truly part time job that doesn't conflict with my responsibilities to my family. I would not be adverse to using the degree in a non-legal field, where the law background would be helpful.

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I felt very marginalized in law school. As a female, as someone from a lower-middle class background, as someone who didn't "know the ropes", I felt ignored by instructors and administrators. As a teacher whose curriculum involves looking at educational systems, I wish the law school had been more responsive to needs of students who didn't even know "the questions to ask." E.g., how does one decide what area of law to work in? What is actual practice really like? What are job opportunities /quality of life at various kinds of legal settings? What kinds of non-legal aspects of a job should one consider; how does one begin to evaluate that? What are the possibilities/opportunities in non-traditional jobs that could utilize a legal career? What are the *very real* opportunities for part-time work that truly is part-time and could be continued while other demands (e.g. family) take precedence or at least equal importance? Lots of real-life questions/concerns that I think were *very* inadequately addressed. Undergrad did nothing to prepare students for what to expect in professions that required additional education like law or medicine. These institutions should provide that information to students and NOT assume that they know by intuition or through family connections.

Law school does very little to prepare one for the actual practice of law. It is overly theoretical and lacks training in advocacy. While law school is not a "vocational" school in the old fashion sense, I feel that it has a basic hostility to the real practice of law. As a result most young lawyers must be retrained by law firms or businesses or (worst of all) trial and error at the expense of their clients. Why is this necessary? What is the reason? The academic arrogance of our intellectually "superior" professors perhaps? Who knows? Why can't law school form its curriculum to give a better understanding of what it means to represent a client as advisor and advocate? It's not all research, detached analysis and issue spotting. That's a small part of the practice of law but totally dominates law school. This is not directed at U of M Law School – this is a nationwide problem.

Being a lawyer is much more enjoyable than I thought it would be. I feel no need to retire because I'll keep doing this as long as someone wants me to.

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1) To be quite frank, I viewed (and still do view) law school as a necessary evil which had to be tolerated in order to obtain a license to practice law in a field which I view as important to society. With the exception of a few professors, such as John Jackson, Jerry Israel, Yale Kamisar, J.J. White and Douglas Kahn, I viewed most of the faculty as lost in the ivory tower, with little of practical benefit to offer. Holmes was right – law is not theory, it is experience. At least during the time period in which I kept track of such matters (which has ended, I admit), the law school had a track record of hiring faculty who were long on pure academic credentials and short on experience. One wonders how such faculty possess *credibility* to access the practical, real-work effects of their written proposals/opinions.

2) Although admittedly a moderately conservative person, I think it fair to say that the law faculty, overall, preaches a left-liberal orthodoxy masquerading as academic or intellectual inquiry. Perversely, for an institution supposedly dedicated to the discovery of truth (although I suspect many on the faculty would, like Pilate, scoff that truth has no meaning), the faculty appears more dedicated to indoctrinating students in that liberal orthodoxy than in investigating its validity. The irony is indeed rich. The faculty (properly) encourage students to question conservative or more traditional systems of thought; post-1960's liberalism, however, is never to be questioned, as some of my colleagues discovered during first-year classes. Although the University of Michigan law faculty is hardly alone among elite law faculty in this regard, such elite faculty, in my view, ill serve society by promoting as gospel a philosophy that subordinates virtually all community claims to individual ones. While no one desires a right-wing oligarchy, an alleged "community" composed of atomized individuals recognizing no authority other than assertion of personal rights claims is much closer to the Hobbesian War of all against all.

3) Although the law school actively promoted career choices in fields as disparate as large law firms (witness the annual interviewing process) and "public interest" (as defined from the left-liberal viewpoint) while I was in law school, it did absolutely nothing to promote or provide information about government service. Banning the FBI from recruiting, however, apparently was popular after I graduated – even though an institution, like the FBI, would have to *recruit* minorities to solve a discrimination problem.

4) There is no room to discuss the infamous University "speech code" which Judge Cohn struck down as unconstitutional after I graduated, a perfect example of what happens when a public institution decides to enforce liberal orthodoxy.

The good news is that the above remarks probably could have been directed to any of the "top ten" law schools. The bad news is that I have been disenchanting with the University of Michigan Law School since graduation and see no reason to re-evaluate that opinion. My decision not to contribute financially to the law school and not to attend various alumni functions has been quite deliberate.

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It is my strong belief that the extreme stress that first year law students are under is completely unwarranted and not helpful in any way in training students to be lawyers.

The reliance on one final exam to determine one's grade is absurd and puts unnecessary stress on particularly first year students. My suggestion would be to require tests to be given throughout the semester and have those tests count for part of one's grade. This would allow students to see how they are doing during the semester and allow them to make adjustments or improvements in learning the material. It would also take some pressure off the final exam.

I also feel the Socratic method has limited usefulness and is/was used by some professors to terrorize their students.

- 1) Law school should be two years.
- 2) Law school faculty are all too self-important compared with actual importance.

I stopped practicing law in 1991 (after nine years) expecting that after a short break, I would go into another field. I found the practice of law boring and extremely difficult to balance with my husband's career and our children. Since 1991, we have lived in Israel, had a third child, I ran for state representative and I volunteer as a mediator and conflict management consultant. I have not yet felt inspired to re-enter the work force! I think the law was a poor choice for me, although I was pretty good at it. My oldest son talks about being a lawyer and I don't encourage him at all.

I liked Jeff Lehman's essay about affirmative action in the current law school magazine.

The law school magazine doesn't have nearly enough material reporting on activities of classmates.

I was surprised by how little interesting stuff was provided by faculty at the 10th

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reunion – if I didn't care about sports, there was little reason to return unless certain friends were present.

The practice of law is much more stimulating than I expected, or than law school seemed.

I basically enjoyed my law school years very much.

I recall my UM law student years as among the most enjoyable intellectual experiences of my life. Also, the mentor I acquired on the faculty has had an enormous impact on my career opportunities and choices.

I'd advise UM Law to resist pressures to turn out skilled practitioners at the expense of good thinkers and writers.

I now value law school primarily for the friends I made there. My law school training and education has been a benefit to me in my career as a venture capitalist, although law school was by no means necessary.

From an intellectual standpoint, the first year of law school was very stimulating. There was a drop-off from there, and I did not think the third year was beneficial other than from a social standpoint. Overall, however, I was very glad I went to law school, and especially U of M Law School.

Currently, although I officially practice "part-time," I really am working very little while I raise my family. I enjoy practicing law, but feel that I cannot be as committed to it as I want to be while my children are still young. I have many (female) friends who are doctors. For the most part, many of them have been able to work out part-time arrangements which give them a good income, some career satisfaction, and time for their families. Such is the nature of the medical profession. However, the legal profession does not lend itself readily to such situations.

I don't regret attending law school. It was valuable training that has served me well. I just feel that I'm in a stage of life where my priorities are different. As you can tell

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by this essay, the balance between a professional career and a personal life is a topic that I think about a great deal.

It was always my intention to go to Law School and get a legal education. It was not my intention to practice law but rather to use the education in the business setting.

I believe that tremendous tensions, conflicts and pressures exist in the legal profession with respect to balancing family life (mostly kids) and career demands. (Mostly in law firms but also in-house.) The fortunate few (like me) have achieved a happy balance between the two. Most have not. This is an ongoing challenge for the legal profession.

Law school was a difficult experience for me for personal reasons – and because of my uncertainty that I wanted to be a lawyer. But here I am, fifteen years later, making the best of it. I wish I had been more excited about law school. I should have made more of a rich intellectual opportunity.

I didn't find my law school classmates to be of the same open-minded questioning spirit as my undergraduate classmates. Law school was disappointing to me in that respect and I found it wanting socially.

I found law school intellectually challenging, but usually not intellectually exciting. I view that as a necessary evil, for learning a trade. I have found law practice both intellectually challenging and exciting, though the excitement probably comes more from the emotional aspects of client service and job performance pressures. So although I remember the schooling aspect of law school as a bit dry compared to the liberal arts phase of my education, I think Michigan did a good job. There are many professors that I appreciate for working hard to do a good job.

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I could have been given some useful guidance on corporate and securities law. It was too intellectual and not practical. You could have really told me what a New York City law firm was really like. All attorneys should be required to take some basic accounting and financial courses.
