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Class of 1973 Five Year Report Alumni Comments, Part 3

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VIII. Special problems because of your sex.

Yes. Up until now I have been prohibited from doing cases on ships at sea (I am a Navy lawyer). The law and Navy seem to be changing on this score.

Yes. An initial reluctance to accept women in the labor law "fraternity",... especially in collective bargaining with the trades.

-----Yes

Yes. Labor law is a particularly male-dominated field. I have encountered a certain amount of scepticism.

No. None that I'm specifically aware of as it relates to me - However the statistics on women at Dept. of Justice, both overall and specifically in Freedom of Information Act work which I occasionally do, indicates discrimination does exist.

Yes. In past jobs, lack of understanding of interpersonal relations by immediate supervisors and in past job, non-promotion to full time quite possibly due to sex discrimination.

Yes. Difficulty of resolving the responsibilities and demands of motherhood with professional demands.

Yes. It's difficult to develop mentor relationship with the older male attorneys.

Yes. Occasional encounters of extremely sexist judges, including disparaging and patronizing remarks in open court.

No. I suppose I'm considered an oddity in some circles, but I don't believe I've been affected adversely in my practice.

Yes. When I was working I had some communications problems (lack of feedback and information needed to learn the non-legal aspects of my job) which were due to my sex in that I was working in an otherwise all-male office with no formal training program, and I was largely excluded from situations in which information was exchanged informally.

Yes. General bias against female professionals; general expectations that women lawyers "can't make the grade."

Yes. Exclusion from "Old Boy Network" of which most judges are members. Hostile &/or paternalistic attitudes from judges and older male opposing counsel. Some difficulty handling older male clients--has been a serious problem on some occasions. There are advantages as well however.

Yes. They have been solvable problems, however. The law firm was forced to devise a maternity leave policy and did so. After my pregnancy, the firm had three others all of which were satisfactorily and fairly accommodated by the policy. The continuing problem of competing home-career demands will never abate.

Yes. Lack of Bar inclusion of women in bar posts.

VIII. (2)

Yes. The usual petty bullshit. Specifically, an initial reluctance of judges and co-workers to take one seriously; often overcome by proving ability to do good work.

Yes. Other attorneys sometimes respond to my sex not ability. They will take my opinions less seriously and devalue my work.

No. Once you get ~~and~~ job and once you acquire clients, you have an excellent chance for success if you do good work. There can be real advantages in being a practicing attorney who is a woman in ~~xx~~ a world filled with male attorneys. (Bear in mind that my orientation is very positive, that I have been quite fortunate and that for 5 years before joining my present office I worked in two small general practices.)

Yes. After 5 years with a government agency, I have discovered that there are few barriers at the entry level but significant resistance to putting capable women in management positions.

Yes. Discrimination by private law firms has been pervasive. Salaries, I feel, with all prior employers, except one, have not equalled that of males with similar or less experience.

Yes. In private practice given less interesting/unimportant assignments, shunted ~~xxx~~ off to probate.

More difficulty in finding employment and getting salary commensurate with man of similar background. More difficulty in competing for promotions and positions involving decision-making. Initial trouble establishing credibility before sexist judges. No trouble with clients.