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Why Legal Education Is Failing Women

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Why Legal Education Is Failing Women

Sari Bashi[†] and Maryana Iskander^{††}

ABSTRACT. In this Article, Ms. Bashi and Ms. Iskander report and analyze the results of a comprehensive study of the way Yale Law School educates female and male students. This research is distinctive for its attention to faculty observations and its robust use of quantitative and qualitative data to map women's experiences throughout law school. The authors use in-depth interviews with faculty members, narrative and quantitative responses from a student survey, and class participation data to show that, despite similar entering credentials, female students at Yale Law School are underrepresented among participants in class discussions and among students who form professionally beneficial relationships with faculty members. The authors broaden the study beyond Yale to argue that (primarily male) law professors treat women differently from men and reward behaviors that are more likely to be displayed by men. The Article concludes with a series of recommendations and argues that, if law schools reconsider what values they cultivate and reward, they will provide a better education for women and men alike.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In 2001, for the first time in the history of the legal profession, American law schools admitted a J.D. class that was roughly equally divided between men and women.¹ After centuries of explicit exclusion, women now enjoy the same rights as men to enter the legal profession, and the two sexes are exercising this opportunity in equal numbers. Perhaps it is to be expected that the upper ranks of the legal profession—populated as they are by graduates of male-dominated law school classes—have made only limited progress in integrating women.² Is it merely a question of time before a new and fully integrated-by-sex generation of lawyers rises to the top of the profession, bringing gender equality to law firm partnerships, judicial chambers, law school faculties, and other jobs where legally-trained professionals cluster?

In this Article, we argue that the results of our intensive case study of the experience of women at Yale Law School indicate that it is *not* simply a question of time. Despite gender parity in entering J.D. classes, law schools are not adequately preparing female law students for success, particularly in the upper ranks. In order for women to integrate the top, as well as the bottom, rungs of the profession, law schools must make fundamental changes in the ways they teach students. As individuals, law school professors treat women differently from men, and as institutions, law schools cultivate and reward patterns of behavior that are more likely to be found among men than among

1. Jonathan D. Glater, *Women Are Close to Being Majority of Law Students*, N.Y. TIMES, Mar. 26, 2001, at A1. Women currently constitute about 48% of U.S. law students. ABA COMM'N ON WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION, CURRENT GLANCE OF WOMEN IN THE LAW (2002), available at <http://www.abanet.org/women/glance.pdf>.

2. See *infra* Part II.A. See also Richard K. Neumann, Jr., *Women in Legal Education: What the Statistics Show*, 50 J. LEGAL EDUC. 313, 322 (2000) (noting underrepresentation of women on law school faculties).

women, even though these behaviors do not necessarily reflect the skills students need to be good lawyers, judges, and legal academics.

We make no accusation of intentional discrimination. Law schools and the legal profession were built by men and for men; it would be remarkable, indeed, if they did not reflect preferences and tendencies associated with men. Factors beyond law school—pre-law school socialization, structural barriers within the legal profession, unequal distributions of domestic responsibilities, potentially “different” preferences and proclivities³—may exert disparate pressures on men and women and make it more difficult for women to achieve positions of power in law. The ways that law schools educate men and women, however, actively perpetuate and exacerbate the challenges women face prior and subsequent to their induction into the legal profession as law students. This Article focuses on how law schools are structured, evaluating the behaviors they cultivate and reward, and questions the desirability of that reward structure. Transforming law schools alone will not bring full integration to the legal profession, but absent such transformation, full integration is unlikely to take place.

Any inquiry into women’s success in law and law school must grapple with the continued significance accorded to standards of success that were created when women were excluded from the profession. An integrated profession would likely define success in ways that account for groups currently underrepresented, including women and members of ethnic and racial minority groups. We focus on the representation of women in traditional positions of power because women must attain those positions to change the profession and redefine its measures of success. While disproportionate representation in some areas of law⁴ may reflect women’s unfettered choices, persistent evidence of exclusion prevents us from accepting those choices as unconstrained. The reforms we suggest aim to remove obstacles to women’s success (as the legal profession currently defines success) while enabling women to alter the achievements that the profession values. Reforming legal pedagogy will not simply remove some of the barriers that women face in their first encounters with law—it will improve legal education for men and women alike.

Most of the data cited in this Article were collected as part of a study (“the Yale Study”) sponsored by the student group Yale Law Women (YLW) and coordinated by the authors, in which eighty students interviewed faculty

3. Some feminist theories postulate that men and women are “different,” either because they are socialized differently or because of biological essentialism. *See infra* text accompanying note 88. Our data show observed differences in the way men and women behave in law school. Some of these differences in behavior originate outside law school, but we take no position on their source. That discussion is beyond the scope of this Article, which focuses on how law schools respond to and cultivate those differences.

4. For example, women are twice as likely as men to enter public interest jobs upon graduation. *See* NALP, EMPLOYMENT PATTERNS—20-YEAR TRENDS—1982-2002, <http://www.nalp.org/content/index.php?pid=169> (last visited Nov. 14, 2006).

members, collected student responses to questions in an online survey, and recorded classroom participation by gender.⁵ We express our gratitude to the men and women, faculty and students, of Yale Law School who candidly and thoughtfully participated in this examination of the role of gender in legal education and faculty-student relations. Their observations and insights inform our arguments and the recommendations we offer to improve legal education.

Part II of this Article assesses women's performance in the American legal profession and then focuses on students at Yale Law School, the site of our in-depth institutional study. Part II shows that women and men enter Yale Law School with similar credentials, thereby locating subsequent performance differences in their experience of law school. This Part also explains why aspects of women's experiences at Yale Law School can be generalized to other law schools and to women's success in the profession. The findings reported from the Yale Study are consistent with the literature describing women's diminished experiences at a range of other law schools.⁶ Yale's particular emphasis on informal mentoring and networking also makes the Yale Law School experience especially useful in understanding workplace dynamics that may exclude female lawyers from informal networks. Part II concludes with an explanation of our methodology, including its strengths and shortcomings.

Part III reports our findings about men's and women's experiences of and performance in Yale Law School's classrooms. It demonstrates that women participate in class in disproportionately low numbers and experience stronger feelings of alienation from class and classroom discussions than do men. We argue that professors treat female students differently from male students in ways that impair women's engagement in classroom learning, and that professors are responsive to certain kinds of student behavior that are more likely to be displayed by men than women but that do not necessarily enhance learning or adequately reflect the skills that students need to become good lawyers. We analyze these skills in the context of a legal profession being transformed from one of adversarial competition to one in which negotiation,

5. We are particularly grateful to Willow Crystal for compiling the classroom participation data and to the following former students for their work interviewing faculty members, recording participation in class discussions, designing the student survey, and compiling the data into a report: Leslie Abrams, Kate Andrias, Aditi Bagchi, Evelyn Baltodano, Mark Barnett, Koren Bell, Jen Bird, Jeff Bowen, Kimberly Brayton, Liora Brener, Stephanie Brennan, Maura Carney, Jenny Chou, Joshua Civin, Naeemah Clark, Willow Crystal, Haninder Dhesi, Deborah Dinner, Derek Dorn, Rachel Farbiarz, Kathryn Goldberg, Aimee Hector, Alana Hoffman, Allison Hoffman, Angela Hooton, Jennifer Hunter, Michael Johnston, Sarah Jurgensen, Elizabeth Kendall, Cassidy Kesler, Kevin Kish, Sam Krasnow, Trevor Lain, Anna Levine, Heather Lewis, Susan Lin, Sarhana Livingston, Lisa Mahle, Tara Malloy, Meron Makonnen, Ashley McDonald, Anya McMurray, Avani Mehta, Ramit Mizrahi, Melissa Murray, Rajesh Nayak, Jamie O'Connell, Kimberley Pattillo, Heather Perry, Laura Provinzino, Fadia Rafeedie, Gowri Ramachandran, Daniel Reich, Daphna Renan, Anna Rich, Rebecca Richards, Nathalia Rivarola, Lisa Rubin, Sarah Russell, Reshma Saujani, Vanessa Schlueter, Amy Sepinwall, Sara Spalding, Elisabeth Steele, Julie Suk, Damali Taylor, and Shirley Udekwu.

6. See *infra* notes 14-19 and accompanying text.

collaboration, and mediation are necessary to make deals, settle cases, and resolve disputes, and we question whether law schools adequately value and reward the latter category of skills.

Part IV shows how female students' disproportionately low class participation feeds into attenuated out-of-class interactions with professors. We demonstrate that male students experience greater ease and success in developing professionally beneficial relationships with faculty members. At least some male faculty members, because of discomfort, inadequate mentoring models, and/or fear of impropriety, create distance from female students in ways that inhibit the transmission of professionally useful information and guidance. Lack of transparency about what is required to achieve high levels of success exacerbates the situation; such information is transmitted in informal interactions from which women are more likely to be excluded. Unsurprisingly, women pay the price for this distance through underrepresentation in areas where faculty advocacy, mentoring, and guidance are particularly important: legal publications and academia.

Part V urges law schools to reconsider what it is they value. We advocate structural changes, including investments in pedagogy, the promotion of transparency, and increases in faculty diversity, which will improve the law school experience for all students. The recommendations aim to help law schools realize their function as key institutions for moving the legal profession beyond numerical parity and toward real integration.

II. AMERICAN LEGAL EDUCATION AND YALE LAW SCHOOL

A. *Women's Performance: A National Perspective*

To provide context for the performance of male and female students at Yale Law School, we briefly survey women's performance nationally in various fields of law and law-related professions. The data show that men continue to dominate the upper levels of the legal profession. Women represent 19.8% of federal judges⁷ and 17.3% of law firm partners.⁸ They comprise one-third of law school faculty members, where they are concentrated in non-

7. Stephanie Goldberg & Jessica DuLong, *Federal Judgeships and the Gender vs. Ideology Debate*, PERSPECTIVES (ABA Comm'n on Women in the Profession, Chicago, Ill.), Summer 2002, at 10; see also ABA COMM'N ON WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION, *supra* note 1 (reporting that 26.3% of judges on state courts of last resort are women). The paucity of women on the bench makes it difficult to combat harmful stereotypes about women as lawyers and litigants, and even female judges experience gender-based discrimination. See Judith Resnik, *Asking About Gender in Courts*, 21 SIGNS 952, 957-58 (1996).

8. NALP, *Women and Attorneys of Color at Law Firms—2005*, <http://www.nalp.org/content/index.php?pid=387> (last visited Oct. 10, 2006). Women serve as general counsel for 13.7% of Fortune 500 companies. CATALYST, *WOMEN IN LAW: MAKING THE CASE* 7 (2001).

tenured positions,⁹ and one-third of candidates for law teaching jobs.¹⁰ They represent 15.1% of U.S. Senators and Congresspersons, groups dominated by law school graduates, and 22.8% of state legislators.¹¹

As women move up the ranks of the legal profession, their representation plummets. Most of the men and women currently leading the profession graduated from law school over the last three decades, when women's representation among American law students rose from 20% (1974-1975) to 40% (1985-1986) to 48% (2001-2002).¹² Yet, cohort by cohort, women's representation as judges, law firm partners, law school deans, and general counsels at Fortune 500 companies remains far below that of their graduating law school classes.¹³ The disparities begin early in the careers of men and women and persist beyond what law school enrollment would predict.

B. *Locating the Problem in Law School*

A significant body of literature has documented women's law school experiences and performance, emphasizing their participation in class and the grades they receive. A small but growing number of single-institution studies have used surveys of law students, qualitative interviews, and/or analyses of grades by gender to document how women experience and perform in law school.¹⁴ Following the completion of the Yale Study, Harvard Law School undertook a similarly designed study which included data about grades.¹⁵ Other studies have taken a broad, statistical look at women's experiences in law

9. ASS'N OF AM. LAW SCH., STATISTICAL REPORT ON LAW SCHOOL FACULTY AND CANDIDATES FOR LAW FACULTY POSITIONS 2 (2003) (reporting that, during the 2002-2003 academic year, 34.2% of all law school faculty were women, 25.2% of tenured professors were women, 15.5% of law school deans were women, and 46.9% of associate professors were women).

10. *Id.* at 10 (noting that, in 2002-2003, 32.7% of job candidates listed in the Faculty Appointments Register were women).

11. Rutgers Univ., Ctr. for Am. Women & Pol., Facts on Women Candidates and Elected Officials, <http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/Facts.html> (last visited Oct. 10, 2006).

12. Neumann, *supra* note 2, at 314; ABA COMM'N ON WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION, *supra* note 1.

13. *See supra* notes 8 and 9.

14. *See generally* WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT EXPERIENCES, HARVARD LAW SCH., STUDY ON WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES AT HARVARD LAW SCHOOL (Feb. 2004), available at www.law.harvard.edu/students/experiences; Taunya Lovell Banks, *Gender Bias in the Classroom*, 38 J. LEGAL EDUC. 137 (1988); Allison L. Bowers, *Women at the University of Texas School of Law: A Call for Action*, 9 TEX. J. WOMEN & L. 117 (2000); Celestial S.D. Cassman & Lisa R. Pruitt, *A Kinder, Gentler Law School? Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Legal Education at King Hall*, 38 U.C. DAVIS L. REV. 1209 (2005); Paula Gaber, "Just Trying to Be Human in This Place": *The Legal Education of Twenty Women*, 10 YALE J.L. & FEMINISM 165 (1998); Marsha Garrison et al., *Succeeding in Law School: A Comparison of Women's Experiences at Brooklyn Law School and the University of Pennsylvania*, 3 MICH. J. GENDER & L. 515 (1996); Lani Guinier et al., *Becoming Gentlemen: Women's Experiences at One Ivy League Law School*, 143 U. PA. L. REV. 1 (1994); Joan M. Krauskopf, *Touching the Elephant: Perceptions of Gender Issues in Nine Law Schools*, 44 J. LEGAL EDUC. 311, 314 (1994); Catherine Weiss & Louise Melling, *The Legal Education of Twenty Women*, 40 STAN. L. REV. 1299, 1310 (1988).

15. WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT EXPERIENCES, HARVARD LAW SCH., *supra* note 14.

school.¹⁶ Three findings form a background to our own empirical research: (1) female students participate in law school class discussions less than male students;¹⁷ (2) female students appear to earn lower grades than male students, at least at highly selective law schools;¹⁸ and (3) female students respond to law school by experiencing greater feelings of alienation and loss of confidence than male students.¹⁹

The locus of our study was Yale Law School, a small, highly selective institution that prides itself on collegiality and its role as a leader in the legal academy. The following sketch of the institution provides context for our findings.

Yale Law School has consistently been listed first in *U.S. News and World Report's* popular ranking of law schools.²⁰ From 2004 to 2006, Yale Law School (YLS) accepted 6.9% of J.D. applicants.²¹ The J.D. Class of 2004, whose members were first-year students at the time of the study, had a mean LSAT score of 171 out of 180 and a mean grade point average (GPA) of 3.85.²² The YLS faculty is small and homogeneous. In 2001-2002, 80% of the 63 full-time tenured faculty members were male and 89% were white.²³ The student-

16. ABA COMM'N ON WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION, DON'T JUST HEAR IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE: STUDYING GENDER QUESTIONS AT YOUR LAW SCHOOL 28-34 (1998); ABA COMM'N ON WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION, ELUSIVE EQUALITY: THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN IN LEGAL EDUCATION (1996) (describing surveys of students and grade analysis); LINDA F. WIGHTMAN, WOMEN IN LEGAL EDUCATION: A COMPARISON OF THE LAW SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND LAW SCHOOL EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN AND MEN 11 (1996); Neumann, *supra* note 2, at 322.

17. Banks, *supra* note 14; Bowers, *supra* note 14; Guinier et al., *supra* note 14; Krauskopf, *supra* note 14, at 314; Janet Taber et al., *Gender, Legal Education, and the Legal Profession: An Empirical Study of Stanford Law Students and Graduates*, 40 STAN. L. REV. 1209, 1239-40 (1988); Weiss & Melling, *supra* note 14.

18. WORKING GROUP ON STUDENT EXPERIENCES, HARVARD LAW SCH., *supra* note 14; Cassman & Pruitt, *supra* note 14 (noting that women under-perform slightly); Guinier et al., *supra* note 14; Neumann, *supra* note 2, at 313; *cf.* Garrison, *supra* note 14 (finding no discrepancy in grades earned by male and female students at Brooklyn Law School).

19. ABA COMM'N ON WOMEN IN THE PROFESSION, ELUSIVE EQUALITY, *supra* note 16; Gaber, *supra* note 14; Guinier et al., *supra* note 14; Krauskopf, *supra* note 14, at 326; Weiss & Melling, *supra* note 14, at 1313.

20. See, e.g., *America's Best Graduate Schools 2007: Top Law Schools*, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REP., http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/grad/rankings/law/brief/lawrank_brief.php (last visited Nov. 6, 2006); see also George L. Priest, *Reexamining the Market for Judicial Clerks and Other Assortative Matching Markets*, 22 YALE J. ON REG. 123, 179 & n.252 (2005) (noting that Yale was ranked first in 2000 and that the *U.S. News & World Report* ranking of law schools has been "quite stable over the past decade"); Note, *Making Docile Lawyers: An Essay on the Pacification of Law Students*, 111 HARV. L. REV. 2027, 2027 (1998).

21. *Summary of Yale Law School Applicants in 2004, 2005, and 2006*, YALE LAW SCHOOL J.D. PROGRAM 2006-2007 (Yale Law School, New Haven, Conn.), 2006, at 12.

22. Memorandum from the Yale Law School Admissions Office (on file with the authors).

23. See, YALE LAW SCH., YALE LAW SCHOOL FACEBOOK, 2001-2002 (2001). Minority faculty members included three African-American men, two Asian-American men, and two Asian-American women. Five junior tenure-track faculty members who taught that year included three white men, one white woman, and one Asian-American man.

faculty ratio is now 7.8 to 1.²⁴ As of October 1, 2001, 634 students were enrolled, of whom 47% were women and 53% were men.²⁵

As a general matter, graduates of YLS enjoy substantial professional opportunities. Upon graduation, 97% of the Class of 2001 reported having a job.²⁶ Of these students, 44% obtained judicial clerkships immediately upon graduation, 33% worked for law firms, and the remainder found employment in the private, non-profit, governmental, or academic sectors.²⁷

Yale Law School de-emphasizes traditional benchmarks by using a non-traditional grading system. All classes are credit/fail during the first term.²⁸ In subsequent terms, students receive grades of honors, pass, low pass, or fail, with credit/fail options available or required for some classes.²⁹ Class rank is not computed.³⁰ Thus, Yale Law School shares key characteristics with post-law school work environments, in which interpersonal relationships, informal evaluations, and networking are important tools for advancement.

At least on paper, men and women enter Yale Law School on equal footing, displaying no meaningful difference in performance as measured by five pre-law school credentials: (1) undergraduate GPA and average LSAT score; (2) selectivity of undergraduate institution; (3) undergraduate major; (4) time between undergraduate degree and law school; and (5) graduate degrees.

We analyzed average LSAT scores and average undergraduate GPAs for men and women in the graduating class of 2004. Among this group, which accounts for approximately 37% of the student respondents in the YLW survey, the average undergraduate GPA among men was 3.87 (with a range of 3.27 to 4.22) and the average LSAT was 171.³¹ Female students had slightly lower but similar numbers: the average undergraduate GPA for women was 3.82 (with a range of 3.12 to 4.11) and the average LSAT score was 170. While we were unable to access LSAT scores and undergraduate GPAs for the YLS classes of 2002 and 2003, national statistics show no significant difference between the undergraduate GPA and LSAT scores of male and female law school applicants.³²

24. ABA, OFFICIAL GUIDE TO ABA-APPROVED LAW SCHOOLS, 2007 EDITION 828 (2006).

25. YALE LAW SCH., *supra* note 23. Of those, 588 were J.D. candidates, including 187 1L's (48% women, 52% men), 205 2L's (52% women, 48% men), and 196 3L's (44% women, 56% men).

26. *First Job After Yale Law School Graduation*, INTRODUCTION TO CAREER DEVELOPMENT (Career Dev. Office, Yale Law Sch., New Haven, Conn.), July 17, 2002, at 39.

27. *Id.*

28. YALE UNIV., BULLETIN, SER. 102, NO. 8, YALE LAW SCHOOL, 2006-2007, at 85 (2006), available at <http://www.yale.edu/bulletin/pdf/files/law.pdf>.

29. *Id.*

30. *Id.*

31. LSAT scores are scaled between 120 and 180.

32. For the law school admissions cycle 2000-2001, women had an average undergraduate GPA of 3.21, compared to an average of 3.12 for men. Women had an average LSAT score of 150.7, compared to an average score of 152.2 for men. Kenneth Kleinrock, Trustee, Law Sch. Admission Council, Presentation at the New York University Conference Paths to Success: The Diversification of Voice and Style in Law School and the Legal Profession (Feb. 27, 2003).

Nationally, it has been shown that the similarity in undergraduate GPAs among female and male law students reflects similar performance in similar majors.³³ The data on Yale Law School students show that similar undergraduate GPAs are earned in similar majors.³⁴

Female and male students also appear to come from similarly selective undergraduate institutions. We found that 42% of male students and 42% of female students attended the same eight highly selective undergraduate institutions,³⁵ and we were not able to discern gender-related differences in the selectivity of the undergraduate institutions that accounted for the rest of the student body.

Male and female students also do not differ significantly in the amount of time they took between completing college and starting law school. A majority of Yale Law School students enter law school within five years of their graduation from college. Of these students, women wait 1.48 years on average, while men wait 1.38 years on average. Men are more likely to be in the small minority of students who begin law school more than five years after graduating from college.³⁶

Approximately 15% of students (86 J.D. candidates in the classes of 2002, 2003, and 2004) reported obtaining at least one graduate degree prior to their law school matriculation.³⁷ Nearly equal numbers of male and female students obtained graduate degrees as a percentage of overall students, though men were more likely to have doctoral degrees. Eleven percent of women and 12% of men report obtaining a master's degree, while 2% of women and 4% of men report obtaining a doctoral degree prior to law school.³⁸

To the extent that minor differences exist in the pre-law school credentials of male and female law students, we conclude that they are insufficient to account for the performance disparities observed by the study. Indeed, some

33. WIGHTMAN, *supra* note 16, at 17. Wightman found that, nationally, female law students outscored male law students in every undergraduate major except for engineering, in which the scores were a virtual tie. She also found that female students had somewhat higher undergraduate GPAs than men, a finding not replicated in our analysis of Yale Law School's Class of 2004.

34. The five most popular undergraduate majors for male and female students at Yale Law School are identical—political science or politics, history, English, philosophy, and economics—and they account for 54% of all majors for women and 57% of all majors for men. See Appendix A for a table summarizing the data.

35. See Appendix A. Our discussion of selectivity is based upon *U.S. News and World Report's* college rankings. *America's Best Colleges 2007: National Universities: Top Schools*, U.S. NEWS & WORLD REP., http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/rankings/brief/t1natudoc_brief.php (last visited Nov. 5, 2006). The rankings are just one (controverted) measure of a school's selectivity and rigor. We requested from the Law School Admission Council the three-year average LSAT/GPA for law school applicants from each undergraduate institution but were denied access to this non-public information.

36. See Appendix A.

37. YALE LAW SCH., *supra* note 23.

38. *Id.* A doctoral degree is a useful credential for students who wish to enter legal academia, and there may be a correlation between interest in legal academia and having obtained a doctoral degree in another field.

female student survey respondents used their narrative answers to report that their experience of disappointment and frustration was specific to law school and had not been part of their undergraduate experience.³⁹

C. The Relevance of Women's Experiences at Yale Law School

The findings we report are a specific incarnation of a general, widely reported phenomenon, in which women withdraw from and under-perform in law school—and subsequently in their legal careers. Of course, in-class and out-of-class dynamics vary in each law school, and we will address the limitations of our methodology in Part II.D. Our findings about women at Yale Law School, however—lower levels of class participation, reports of increased dissatisfaction with law school, underrepresentation in *The Yale Law Journal*, exclusion from informal networks—have been observed nationally, in both law schools and in legal workplaces.⁴⁰ Like women at other law schools, women at Yale Law School report less engagement when they speak up in class, visit a professor's office, or seek out a faculty mentor than their male peers. This is true irrespective of the achievement metrics—grades, law review membership, clerkships, or offers from law firms—valued at a particular law school. Keeping in mind the peculiarities of any single institution, we use the detailed analysis of a single institution, together with the findings of other researchers, to arrive at broad-based conclusions and recommendations for improving legal education beyond Yale.

The Yale Study also holds lessons for understanding the trajectory of women's success in the profession after law school. Yale's informal, relationship-driven networks replicate the informal mentoring networks so crucial to workplace success.⁴¹ Yale's small size offers opportunities for informal instruction, collaborative work, professional development, and mentoring. These activities often grow from personal relationships that students build with faculty members. Analyzing these dynamics at Yale Law School, with attention to the differential success women experience in informal relationship-building, networking, and mentoring, provides useful insights into similar dynamics that exist at law firms and other legal work environments.

39. To preserve confidentiality and anonymity, student and faculty responses gathered as part of the Yale Study have not been individually cited. See *infra* note 44.

40. See sources cited *supra* note 14 (describing law school studies) and *infra* note 104 and accompanying text (describing a study of legal workplaces).

41. See *infra* note 104 and accompanying text for a description of women's exclusion from informal professional networks.