



# HARVARD LAW SCHOOL PROGRAM ON THE LEGAL PROFESSION

## C55 SURVEY RESULTS

October 20, 2008

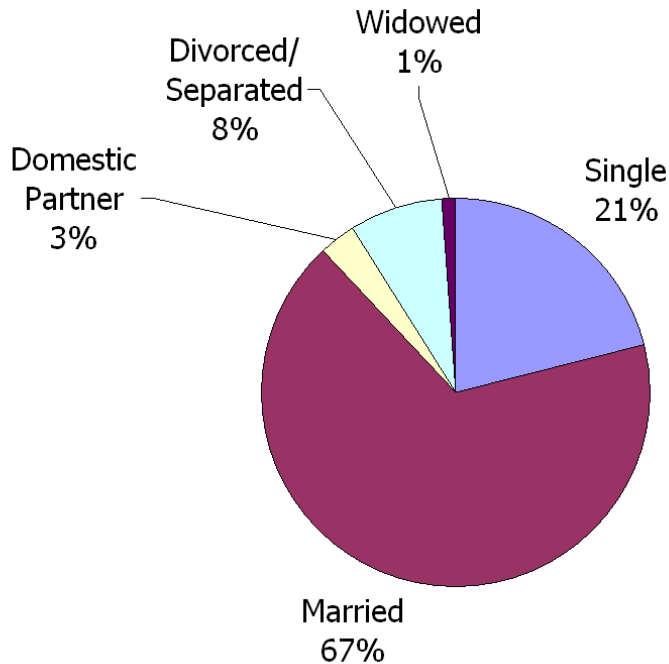
We thank all respondents for their participation in this survey.

## About the Survey

The "C-55 Survey" of female Harvard Law School Graduates was conducted by the HLS Program on the Legal Profession over a three month period from July - September 2008. A total of 1,855 alumnae responded to the online survey. While the responses set out below are not representative of all female HLS graduates, they provide an interesting snapshot of HLS women's lives and careers.

### I. Demographic Information

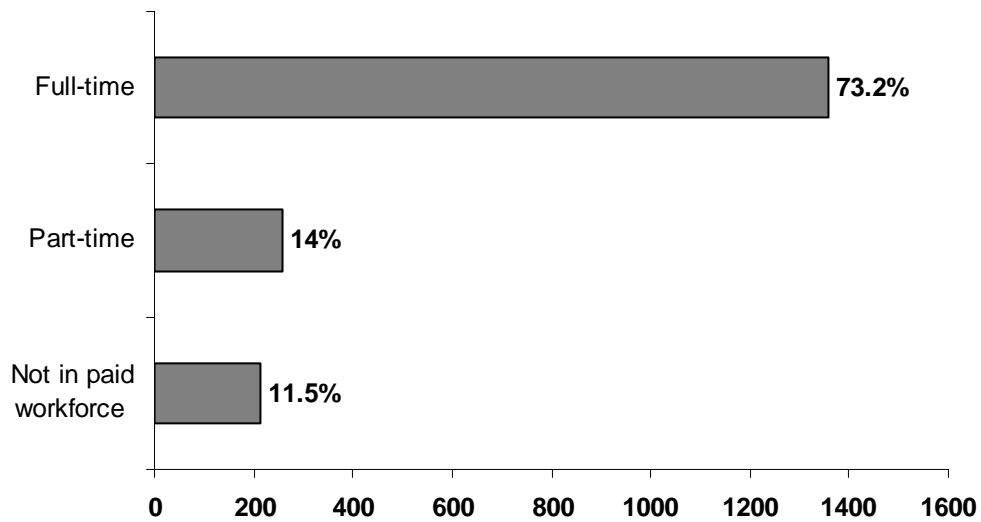
Q1(a): What is your marital status?



**Q1(b): Number of Children (including stepchildren if you view yourself as filling a parental role)**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
None	35.7%	662
One	15.7%	291
Two	31.2%	578
Three	13.7%	254
Four	2.2%	41
More than four	1.6%	29
<i>answered question</i>		1855
<i>skipped question</i>		0

**Q1(c): Are you currently engaged in paying work?**



## II. Questions addressed to respondents who are currently working full-or part-time in the paid workforce

### Q2: How long have you been employed by your current employer?

Answer Options	Response Average	Response Total	Response Count
Years:	12.40	18357	1480
Months:	5.50	5742	1045
<i>answered question</i>			1577
<i>skipped question</i>			278

### Q3: What is your current occupation?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Private Law Firm	38.9%	614
Contract Lawyer	1.4%	22
Business – Non-Legal Position	5.2%	82
In-House Counsel – Business	8.6%	136
In-House Counsel – Nonprofit	1.4%	22
Judiciary, United States	4.1%	65
Judiciary, International and Foreign (other than U.S.)	0.3%	4
Government Lawyer	9.9%	156
Public Service (including public service lawyer, except for government lawyer)	4.8%	76
Arts, Entertainment, Journalism	1.8%	28
Law Teaching and/or Scholarship	11.8%	186
Political Office Holder	0.1%	2
Other Legal Employment	3.5%	55
Other Non-Legal Employment	8.2%	129
<i>answered question</i>		1577
<i>skipped question</i>		278

**Q4: For respondents in law firms, please select the approximate number of lawyers at your firm:**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1-20	23.2%	142
21-100	12.1%	74
101-250	11.3%	69
250	53.4%	327
	<i>answered question</i>	612
	<i>skipped question</i>	1243

**Q5: If you have spent more than six months outside the paid workforce since law school graduation, please specify:**

**Q5(a): The total amount of time out of the paid workforce:**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Between six months and one year	15.2%	235
1-3 years	10.2%	158
3-5 years	4.1%	64
5-10 years	1.9%	30
More than 10 years	1.2%	19
I have not taken time out of the workplace	67.3%	1042
	<i>answered question</i>	1548
	<i>skipped question</i>	307

**Q5(b): The primary reason(s) you took time out of the paid workforce (in order of importance, from "1," most important, to "9," least important):**

Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
Child rearing	1.52	353
Public service or other volunteer work	3.26	64
Pursuing further education	2.69	65
Exploring or pursuing other interests	2.79	103
Care of family members other than children (e.g. parents)	3.17	35
Illness (self or others)	2.87	45
Lack of satisfaction with employment opportunities	2.91	94
Retired	4.17	12
Other	2.22	96
	<i>answered question</i>	509
	<i>skipped question</i>	1346

**III. Questions addressed to respondents  
who are not presently working in the paid workforce**

**Q6: Please specify the total amount of time you have spent out of the workforce since law school graduation:**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than six months	5.3%	11
Between six months and one year	5.3%	11
1-3 years	9.7%	20
3-5 years	20.4%	42
5-10 years	22.8%	47
More than 10 years	36.4%	75
<i>answered question</i>		206
<i>skipped question</i>		1649

**Q7: What is/are the primary reason(s) you are not currently engaged in paying work (in order of importance, from "1," most important, to "9," least important):**

Answer Options	Rating Average	Response Count
Child rearing	2.08	124
Public service or other volunteer work	3.19	77
Pursuing further education	3.55	38
Exploring or pursuing other interests	2.93	75
Care of family members other than children (e.g. parents)	3.90	20
Illness (self or others)	4.86	22
Lack of satisfaction with employment opportunities	3.54	74
Retired	2.38	53
Other	3.37	38
<i>answered question</i>		206
<i>skipped question</i>		1649

**Q8: Do you plan to return to the paid workforce?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	38.8%	80
No	21.8%	45
Not sure	39.3%	81
	<i>answered question</i>	206
	<i>skipped question</i>	1649

**Q9: If you would like to return to the paid workforce, how optimistic are you about your chances of finding satisfying employment?**

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Very optimistic	13.1%	23
Optimistic	24.6%	43
Not sure	33.7%	59
Pessimistic	20.0%	35
Very pessimistic	8.6%	15
	<i>answered question</i>	175
	<i>skipped question</i>	1680

## **IV. Further Investigation The Harvard Law School Career Study**

In order to deepen our understanding of the careers of all Harvard Law School graduates and further explore issues relating to gender and work/life balance, the Program on the Legal Profession is pleased to announce the launch of the Harvard Law School Career Study.

The HLS Career Study is the Program's latest effort to empirically study the legal profession in order to expand and deepen the overall understanding of lawyers and their careers. Important issues the study will evaluate include patterns of significant investments in work at various stages of legal careers and whether (and why) personal and professional transition patterns vary for women and men. The study also aims to understand the impact of globalized social and economic relations on matters such as legal practice settings, client relationships, and the training and development of lawyers.

The HLS Career Study also analyzes the career trajectories of HLS graduates by systematically documenting and comparing the careers of alumni at various points in time. Through a detailed analysis of where, when, and how career trajectories converge and diverge, the project will help to identify the factors most significant in generating these changes. Specifically, it will isolate and quantify the extent to which preferences, social attitudes, and institutional structures impact career choices, opportunities for advancement, quality of life issues, and myriad other factors. Ultimately the research will enable the Program to develop meaningful strategies for reform.

In the coming months, we will send out detailed surveys to all graduates (male and female) from multiple JD classes across several decades. The surveys will cover a broad range of topics about the careers of HLS graduates and will enable Program researchers to:

1. Develop a coherent body of empirical data on the professional trajectories of HLS graduates at different stages of their legal careers, together with comparative information on how career paths differ (or not) for graduates with different racial, gender, and personal characteristics;
2. Compare and identify the critical factors that account for career success, upward mobility, and economic progress within the legal profession; and
3. Ascertain the extent to which careers are impacted by institutional biases that deny equal opportunities to compete and excel, versus being the product of freely-made personal decisions to pursue other lifestyle goals or professional ends.

We anticipate that the HLS Career Study will yield the following interconnected benefits:

1. A series of comprehensive reports to be widely distributed in both academic and professional circles about the careers of the law school's graduates and how their careers are similar to or different from graduates from other schools;
2. New courses and teaching materials that will focus attention on the complex ways in which issues such as gender, race, and other personal characteristics continue to affect legal careers and that will better prepare the next generation of HLS students to meet these challenges;
3. New Executive Education courses that focus specifically on issues of work-life balance and non-traditional career paths, such as the challenges of "off-ramping" and re-entering the workforce after an extended absence;
4. A series of "best practices" and other reform proposals that will encourage employers, law schools, government officials, bar associations, and other stakeholders to develop policies and practices grounded in empirical data that will better serve the interests and needs of both institutions and individuals and allow for a better integration of work and family life; and
5. Opportunities for networking, discussion, and community building among HLS alumni, current students, and law school faculty and administrators.