

HAVE THERE BEEN SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN THE CAREER ASPIRATIONS AND OCCUPATIONAL CHOICES OF LAW SCHOOL GRADUATES IN THE 1960's?

RITA J. SIMON, FRANK KOZIOL, NANCY JOSLYN

University of Illinois

When Ralph Nader addressed the 35th Annual Meeting of the State Bar of Michigan in September 1970, he said, "Anybody who talks to law students today sees a tremendous difference between their concepts, aspirations, and indignation levels and the law students of yesteryear." Nader's views on this occasion have been shared by other members of the bench and bar as well as by social and political commentators whose opinions appear regularly in the mass media. They claim that one of the by-products of the social turmoil and the subsequent new politics that emerged at the end of the sixties was a shift by a large proportion of the recent law graduates into careers that involved protection of civil rights and civil liberties, defense of indigents, protection of consumers, and affiliation with inner city citizens' groups that seek basic changes in welfare policies, taxation, housing, and so forth. For a fuller discussion of this issue by members of the legal profession, see *Yale Law Journal* (1970), McGovagle (1970), and Riley (1970).

But this view that a large proportion of the law graduates of the 1960's were seeking different careers and professional rewards than were graduates of a prior decade is not universally shared. There are those who claim that the visibility of some young lawyers, such as Ralph Nader and those working with him, represent only a tiny and insignificant proportion of the recent law graduates and that a broad survey of the career choices of graduates of the sixties would reveal that there have not been any major changes in their professional aspirations and occupational choices. They believe that, on the whole, the graduates of the sixties sought the same kinds of positions and practices within the profession for which graduates of the previous decades had opted and that, indeed, no revolutionary or widespread changes have occurred among the newest members of the profession.¹

A variation of this latter position is that while there has been no massive switch in career choices, a small proportion of the graduates of the sixties in contrast to prior decades, have opted for careers with deprived and have-not groups,

especially those living in the inner city of large metropolitan areas. They claim that while the proportion is small, it is having a noticeable and significant impact on the profession because the best, or the most promising, of the graduates of the law schools with the highest reputations are those who are being siphoned off into "public interest" law at the highest rate. The most prestigious of the large Wall Street and La Salle Street firms, who traditionally have had their pick of law review staffs from the best law schools, are complaining that they do not have as select a group from which to choose.

The purpose of our survey was to find out which of these views are most consistent with the facts: (1) that there have been no widespread changes in career aspirations and choices between the sixties and an earlier period; (2) that there have been small but significant changes among a select group of graduates who had in the past competed for jobs in the most prestigious law firms in the country; or (3) that there have been major and widespread changes throughout the profession. The next section describes how we subjected these different views to empirical test.

Sample and Method

Graduates of the law schools of the University of Chicago, a private, nationally oriented law school, and of the University of Illinois, the state university law school, provided the sample frame for our survey. With the cooperation of the registrars at each of these schools we arranged to have questionnaires mailed to the following categories of graduates.² For the University of Chicago, the sample frame was persons who graduated in 1951, '53, '55, '57, '59, '61, '63, '65, '67, '69. For the University of Illinois, persons who graduated in the following years were eligible to receive questionnaires: 1950, '52, '54, '56, '58, '60, '62, '64, '66, '68. Within each year, names were selected in the following manner. At the University of Chicago everyone who ranked in the top and bottom 20 percents and every third name in the middle 60 percent of each class was sent a questionnaire. At the University of Illinois, everyone who ranked in the top 12 percent, every second name in the bottom 25 percent, and every fourth name in the middle 63 percent was mailed a questionnaire. In total, 537 questionnaires were sent to University of Chicago alumni and 367 to University of Illinois graduates.

Considering that it was a mail survey with no follow-up letters or phone calls, the rate of return, 51 percent for the University of Chicago graduates and 52 percent for the University of Illinois, was quite good. Among the University of Illinois graduates there was no difference in the rate of return by class ranking; but among University of Chicago graduates

44 percent of those who ranked in the bottom fifth of their class filled out and returned the questionnaire compared to 57 and 54 percents of those in the top and middle sections of their classes.

The questionnaire had three major sections. The first contained items concerning the respondents' background including marital status, number of children, the undergraduate college or university attended, and parents' education and occupation. The respondents were also asked how they financed their legal education. The second section focused on the respondents' occupational histories. Information was requested about type and place of work, title of position, and size of institution for every job held since graduation from law school. Respondents were also asked whether in addition to their regular job they engaged in any other type of legal work for which they may or may not receive compensation (such as service as an ACLU attorney). The last section asked respondents to describe organizations to which they belong, professional and otherwise, articles or books they may have published, public offices they sought or held.

Findings

In reporting the findings from this survey the major questions that we shall answer are the following: Have there been widespread and significant changes in the career patterns of law students who graduated in the sixties as opposed to those who graduated in the fifties? We assume that students who graduate in the top 20 or 12 percent of their classes have a wider range of career choices than those who do not rank as high. The second question then is: Are students who graduate in the top 20 or so percent of their class more likely to seek out a public interest law career than those whose standing is not as high? The third question concerns the effect on career choices of the quality or reputation of the law school attended by the respondent: Is attendance at a private, more elitist, more nationally orientated law school more likely to direct careers to public interest law than attendance at a state university?

Background Characteristics

The demographic characteristics of the University of Chicago and the University of Illinois respondents differed hardly at all. At the time of the survey, over 80 percent of the respondents in both groups were married. The average number of children among those who graduated in the 1950's was three; among those who graduated in the sixties, it was two. There was a greater tendency for University of Illinois graduates to marry before they started law school than there was for Uni-

versity of Chicago graduates, who were more likely to marry after they had entered law school (34 percent compared to 18 percent).

Both schools showed an increase from the fifties to the sixties in the proportion of students who grew up in suburban areas rather than in rural communities or urban centers (Illinois from 26 to 37 percent; Chicago from 26 to 44 percent). At the University of Chicago, this increase in students from the suburbs was at the cost of both urban and rural applicants. At the University of Illinois, those in the top 12 percent in the 1960's were more likely to come from urban centers than in the previous decade.

Among University of Chicago graduates there was a greater likelihood that those in the top portion of their graduating class had fathers who were either lawyers or engaged in other professional work (46 percent compared to 32 percent). Among University of Illinois graduates there was no difference in the occupational backgrounds of the fathers by the students' class ranking. Fathers' and mothers' education and mothers' occupation did not differ to any significant degree by any of the factors for which we controlled.

The University of Chicago and the University of Illinois graduates did differ in where they had done their undergraduate work. The University of Chicago graduates were much more likely to have gone to elite private colleges or Ivy League schools than were University of Illinois graduates (49 percent compared to 17 percent). In the 1960's both schools recruited fewer of their own alumni than in the previous decade (Chicago 10 percent compared to 30 percent; Illinois 49 percent compared to 67 percent). This trend was especially marked among respondents in the top portion of their class at the University of Chicago and among the middle and bottom portions at the University of Illinois.

The most typical pattern, and one that was followed by over 75 percent of all the respondents from both schools, was to enter law school immediately after graduation. The Korean War in the first part of the 1950's interrupted this pattern to some extent.

We were particularly interested in how respondents financed their law school education because we thought that students who borrowed money in order to go to school or whose spouses were working to put them through law school would feel more pressure to take a well paying and therefore more conventional job as soon as they could and would feel they had less choice about working in areas with greater social commitment, whatever their political beliefs or attitudes. On

the other hand, respondents who were on scholarships or whose parents were supporting them might feel less restricted in the career opportunities they would or could consider. An examination of the distribution of responses showed noticeable differences between the two schools. The University of Illinois respondents were more likely to have their spouses' earnings plus their own part time and summer jobs see them through law school (Illinois 60 percent compared to Chicago 36 percent); the University of Chicago respondents were more likely to be on scholarships or dependent on their parents for financial aid (Chicago 63 percent compared to Illinois 39 percent).

In the 1960's the University of Illinois students in the top percentiles were more likely to be on scholarships or to have their spouses working than were those in the middle and bottom 20 percent who were more likely to receive help from their parents. In the 1960's, University of Chicago respondents who ranked in the bottom 20 percent were much less likely to receive scholarships than students in similar positions in the previous decade.

On the basis of these responses, we expected: (1) University of Illinois respondents would be more likely than University of Chicago graduates to work in more conventional legal settings and to do so in their first job; and (2) that University of Chicago graduates, especially those in the top and middle percentiles, would be the ones least likely to seek a conventional legal career.

Occupational History

We looked first at the relative stability of the respondents in the different categories and noted that there were no differences by school or class standing. The average number of jobs held by those who graduated in the 1950's was 3.1; by those who graduated in the 1960's it was 2.4. Over half of the respondents said they worked between one and three years at their first job. Among those who held more than one job, between one and three years was the average length of time most of them remained in their second position.

The most important, and perhaps the most surprising, finding of our study is how similar, how lacking in change the career choices of law graduates have been over time. Among every category, the modal choice is the traditional one—practicing law in a private firm.³ Among University of Chicago respondents who graduated in the top 20 percent of their class (in other words, respondents who presumably had the broadest opportunities, the greatest number of career choices at their disposal), at least three quarters in the last two decades

chose a clerkship or a job in a large private law firm for their first job. The only difference over time that emerges among this select group of respondents, and it does not involve a large number of them, is that in the sixties 17 percent opted to become law professors compared to 3 percent in the fifties. The increase in the proportion of law professors was accompanied by a decline in the percentage who served as law clerks. None of the respondents in this select category chose as their first job, work with civil rights or civil liberties organizations, any kind of legal aid work, or work with citizens' groups for consumer protection, against pollution, etc. Also, none opted to do non-law work. The decision to seek a job in which one did not work as a lawyer was more frequently made by University of Illinois respondents as a whole, and by University of Chicago respondents in the bottom 20th percentile of their class.

TABLE 1: FIRST JOB BY LAW SCHOOL, CLASS STANDING AND DECADE OF GRADUATION*

First Job	University of Chicago						University of Illinois					
	Top		Middle		Bottom		Top		Middle		Bottom	
	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's
	(In Percent)											
Law clerk	32	14	13	7	0	10	0	3	0	0	5	2
Private law practice	52	61	50	57	26	44	58	48	50	56	50	40
Gov't agency	3	4	13	7	7	6	8	9	8	7	5	15
Professional or trade organization	7	1	7	9	15	10	4	14		10	5	8
Law professor	3	16	3	5	4	0	8	9	0	2	5	0
States attorney or district attorney	0	0	0	3	0	6	4	0	0	10	5	2
Legal Aid service	0	0	0	3	0	4	0	8	0	0	0	2
Civil liberties/civil rights	0	0	0	0	0	2	4	0	0	0	0	0
Not working as lawyer	0	0	7	7	41	14	15	9	35	12	9	18
Other	3	3	4	3	7	2	0	0	7	2	16	12
No answer	0	1	3	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	31	71	30	67	27	50	26	35	26	41	22	40

* Year of graduation was categorized initially as follows: 1950-55 = 1; 1956-59 = 2; 1960-4 = 3; 1965-69 = 4. But given the small frequency in each category and because we had no hypotheses based on the specific year of graduation in the 1950's, we merged the entire decade so that groups "1" and "2" became group 1. The sample size also suggested merger of groups "3" and "4", even though our hypothesis was that if there was a tendency for graduates in the 1960's to seek different types of careers, that tendency would be more prominent later in the decade. In the text, if it is appropriate we discuss at what period in the decade the change occurred.

Among all the respondents, the choices made for second

jobs did not differ to any significant extent from those made for first jobs, except, of course, for a decline in the percentage who served as law clerks (traditionally a job one is offered right after graduation from law school).⁴ We saw no shift toward public interest law among respondents who graduated at the top of their class from the University of Chicago in the 1960's after they had taken a more traditional type job in order "to get their feet wet" or "for practical experience." Four percent did go into legal aid, and an additional 4 percent no longer practiced law. But these shifts came from those who had clerked in their first year or so out of law school, not from those who were in private practice. Among the University of Illinois graduates, the shifts were, if anything, even smaller and those that did occur were not toward public interest law.⁵

When we compared the sizes and types of institutions in which respondents worked, the most noticeable differences (and they appeared in the first job) were between the students who graduated in the 1960's as opposed to the fifties and especially among those who graduated at the top of their classes. There was a much greater likelihood for the top students in the 1960's to enter large law firms (more than 25 members)

TABLE 2: TYPE AND SIZE OF INSTITUTION FOR FIRST JOB BY LAW SCHOOL, CLASS STANDING AND DECADE OF GRADUATION

Type and Size of Institution (First Job)	University of Chicago						University of Illinois					
	Top		Middle		Bottom		Top		Middle		Bottom	
	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's
	(In Percent)											
Clerkship	32	14	13	7	0	10	0	3	4	0	5	0
Solo practitioner	0	0	3	3	4	2	4	0	4	0	5	0
Small law firm	13	3	34	20	19	19	38	6	38	4	27	38
Medium size law firm	23	7	7	16	0	8	4	9	4	7	5	5
Large law firm	16	51	7	20	4	17	8	37	0	5	0	0
Professional trade or labor organization	3	3	3	7	4	8	0	0	0	0	0	2
University	2	14	3	4	4	2	8	11	0	0	0	0
Gov't agency	9	8	20	12	24	12	1	9	15	27	31	20
Private non-law business	2	0	10	4	37	6	8	20	27	12	13	23
Legal aid/civil right/civil liberties	0	0	0	2	0	8	4	3	0	0	5	5
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
No answer	0	0	0	5	4	6	11	2	8	5	9	7
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	31	71	30	67	27	50	26	35	26	41	22	40

than for top students in the 1950's, or for students who graduated in the middle or near the bottom of their classes in either decade. In the 1950's there was little relationship between class ranking and size of law firm in the first job. This pattern held for graduates of both law schools.

As the data in Table 2 also show, less than 3 percent of all the respondents in either decade became solo practitioners in their first or subsequent jobs. Middle and lower ranking graduates, particularly from the University of Illinois, were more likely to have jobs with various types of government agencies, including states attorneys' and district attorneys' offices, than were higher ranking graduates.

The same patterns prevailed among those who held more than one job; the higher the ranking the more likely the respondent was to work in larger firms or to work at universities. Time emphasized, rather than diminished, those tendencies. Choices for second jobs did show a slight, in absolute numbers tiny, shift toward legal aid, civil liberties types of jobs among the top graduates of the University of Chicago. The percentage moved from zero to 5 and 10 percents.

The title or position that a respondent holds in a firm or any other place of work is of course dependent on the size, quality and type of institution it is. Having found that University of Chicago graduates and especially those who graduated at the top of their classes were more likely to work in large law firms, it is not surprising that fewer of them made "partner" in their first job. The basic pattern that emerges is that less than 10 percent of all the respondents are or became partners in their first job. The percentage that did, declined from the fifties to the sixties. Among this small group, University of Illinois graduates are more likely to become partners in their first job than are University of Chicago graduates; and respondents in both schools who graduated in the middle or toward the bottom of their classes are more likely to become partners than are those who graduated toward the top of their class. But respondents at the top of their classes are more likely to start out as associates as opposed to assistants than are middle and bottom ranking respondents.

Another pattern shown in Table 3 is the greater likelihood of University of Illinois graduates and bottom ranking University of Chicago graduates to have specialties within the law and thus to be somewhat outside the formal hierarchy in which one starts as an assistant, moves to the title of associate, and finally becomes a junior and then a senior partner.

By the time of the second job, a good deal of the difference by class ranking as to who became partners decreased, but

TABLE 3: TITLE OR POSITION IN FIRST JOB BY LAW SCHOOL, CLASS STANDING AND DECADE OF GRADUATION

Title or Position in First Job	University of Chicago						University of Illinois					
	Top		Middle		Bottom		Top		Middle		Bottom	
	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's
	(In Percent)											
Assistant or clerk	39	26	37	40	8	16	23	23	31	27	45	40
Associate	42	52	20	41	28	40	46	57	31	41	23	28
Partner or head	3	1	20	1	7	6	11	0	15	10	18	18
Specialist	0	0	0	2	11	8	4	9	8	20	5	7
Other	13	18	20	15	35	24	11	11	8	0	5	2
No answer	3	3	3	1	11	6	4	0	7	2	5	4
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	31	71	30	67	27	50	26	35	26	41	22	40

there were still fewer "partners" reported among University of Chicago and top ranking University of Illinois graduates than among middle and bottom ranking University of Illinois graduates.

Over 80 percent of all the respondents said that they did not receive compensation for any part time legal work. There was no difference in the level of response by law school, rank in class, or year of graduation. The small proportion who said they did, usually cited private individuals or the courts as their sources.

The average number of times respondents reported serving as court appointed attorneys for indigent clients in the 1950's ranged from 2.7 reported by respondents in the bottom percentiles at the Universities of Chicago and Illinois to 3.3 reported by University of Chicago middle ranking respondents. In the 1960's the spread was not much larger—from 2.8 reported by middle ranking University of Illinois respondents to 3.6 reported by bottom ranking respondents at the same university. It is worth noting that a greater proportion of the University of Chicago respondents held the types of positions that made them more eligible for appointment than did University of Illinois respondents, given the greater proportion of the latter who were no longer working as lawyers. But our data do not show any noticeable differences by law school.

Approximately 90 percent of all the respondents said they belong to at least one professional organization. The average number reported was 2.8. Neither time, nor class ranking nor law school influenced this pattern. Most of the respondents in all the categories said they limited their professional membership to local, state, and/or federal bar associations and legal specialty groups, such as the Trial Lawyers Association. But as the data in Table 4 indicate, there is a difference by category

in the percentage who said they belong to groups whose purpose was legal reform or legal assistance. University of Chicago respondents who graduated at the top and in the middle of their classes in the 1960's were almost twice as likely to belong to such groups as were respondents who graduated in the 1950's, irrespective of their class ranking.

TABLE 4: MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS BY LAW SCHOOL, CLASS STANDING AND DECADE OF GRADUATION

Professional Organization	University of Chicago						University of Illinois					
	Top		Middle		Bottom		Top		Middle		Bottom	
	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's
	(In Percent)											
Bar	75	56	57	60	74	64	69	69	78	78	59	68
Reform or assistance	19	34	13	31	7	16	19	14	11	12	5	22
No answer	6	10	30	9	19	20	12	17	11	10	36	10
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	31	71	30	67	27	50	26	35	26	41	22	40

University of Illinois respondents reported membership in legal reform and assistance organizations at about the same proportions as the bottom ranking University of Chicago respondents. Graduation in the 1960's as opposed to the fifties was not important.

When the graduates were asked about their level of activity in the various professional organizations to which they belong, the responses indicated that professional seniority as measured by year of graduation was the most important factor in determining the number of offices held, the number of committees served on, etc. The differences produced by school or class rankings are negligible.

Year of graduation and class ranking affected the number of non-professional organizations, *i.e.*, fraternal, civic, religious groups to which respondents said they belonged. Those who graduated in the 1960's belonged to fewer such organizations than did those who graduated in the fifties (1.6 compared to 2.7). Those who graduated in the 1960's at the top of their classes were less likely to belong to such groups than were those who graduated in the middle or toward the bottom of their classes (1.2 compared to 2.0).

We explain these two patterns by the fact that the older an adult is, the more likely he is to have deeper roots in the community in which he lives for all sorts of reasons; his children, his wife, his business, all direct him toward joining various groups. But the difference by class ranking for the same time period may mean that something else is also going on. The something else may indicate a moving away from or a disaffection on the part of some small proportion of the suc-

cessful young lawyers from "establishment-type" or "traditional good citizen groups" to public interest concerns.

The last two topics on the questionnaire concerned any writing for publication the respondents may have done since graduation and their experiences running for and holding public office. Overall, none of the groups published much. University of Chicago graduates published more than University of Illinois graduates (.8 compared to .2) and those at the top of their class published slightly more than those closer to the bottom (.7 compared to .3). But graduates of the 1960's show no greater inclination toward publishing than do those who graduated a decade earlier.⁶

Neither law school, nor class ranking, nor year of graduation had any noticeable effect on the likelihood that a respondent would seek public office.⁷

TABLE 5: PUBLIC OFFICES HELD OR SOUGHT BY LAW SCHOOL, CLASS STANDING AND DECADE OF GRADUATION

Public Office	University of Chicago						University of Illinois					
	Top		Middle		Bottom		Top		Middle		Bottom	
	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's
	(In Percent)											
Never ran	81	85	67	78	67	86	69	86	65	71	63	80
Ran for local office	16	4	13	9	11	6	23	3	23	19	27	8
Ran for federal or state office	0	0	10	1	11	0	8	0	4	0	5	2
No answer	3	11	10	12	11	8	0	11	8	10	5	10
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	31	71	30	67	27	50	26	35	26	41	22	40

The final item on the questionnaire asked respondents to describe the two or three most satisfying legal experiences they have had since graduating from law school. About 75 percent of the respondents described at least one such experience. Those who did not could not be distinguished by the law school they attended, their class ranking or their year of graduation. One interesting pattern that emerged from the responses was the decline in the proportion of respondents in the 1960's who mentioned purely "professional" experiences. Purely professional experiences were interpreted as winning a case, receiving a promotion, achieving recognition from one's colleagues for a job well done. The "other" experiences involved work with deprived groups, consumer organizations, legal aid, etc. The data in Table 6 show that the proportion of "other" or not purely professional experiences reported, increased at about the same rate from the 1950's to the 1960's among respondents in every category.

TABLE 6: TYPES OF SATISFYING EXPERIENCES BY LAW SCHOOL, CLASS STANDING AND DECADE OF GRADUATION

Satisfying Experiences	University of Chicago						University of Illinois					
	Top		Middle		Bottom		Top		Middle		Bottom	
	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's	50's	60's
	(In Percent)											
Purely professional	68	47	40	34	41	36	54	31	50	51	55	35
Others	19	25	33	42	33	40	27	43	15	20	18	43
No answer	13	28	27	24	26	24	19	26	35	29	27	22
TOTAL	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
N =	31	71	30	67	27	50	26	35	26	41	22	40

These data suggest that graduates in the 1960's may have come to appreciate or recognize the importance of the not purely professional aspects of their job and to derive gratification from work with groups and for causes that had been less popular a decade earlier. In this sense, there has been a shift in emphasis from the fifties to the sixties; and that shift has affected a wide segment of lawyers. It has not been limited to or even concentrated among any one segment of the recent members of the bar.⁸

Concluding Remarks

We return to the questions posed initially: Have there been widespread changes in the career aspirations and occupational choices of graduates in the 1960's in contrast to the 1950's? If changes did occur, have they been concentrated among a select group of graduates of the sixties?

The results show that a negative answer to the first question comes closest to describing reality in so far as our data permit an accurate reconstruction of the two decades—especially on such structural characteristics as type of practice, size of firm, etc. We did find that top and middle ranking graduates of the University of Chicago in the 1960's were more likely to belong to groups whose purpose was legal reform and assistance; and that 1960's graduates were more likely than those who graduated in the fifties to describe satisfying legal experiences that were not purely professional.

It might be that if we had tested from more than two law schools, located as they are in one state, different patterns might have emerged. Perhaps the graduates of Yale or Harvard, or other nationally oriented, elite law schools would have provided a different set of responses. Perhaps also the University of Illinois is not a typical state university. But we think that one should be able to generalize from the two law schools selected.⁹

Another factor to consider: There may not be much of a market for the practice of public interest law and therefore the slight shifts shown in our data may be "all that the traffic

can bear." What does seem clear is that, for whatever the reasons, there have not been widespread shifts in career choices among law graduates in the 1960's. Furthermore, when shifts have occurred, it has not been the top ranking graduates of the more prestigious law schools that have monopolized the "public interest" jobs. If anything, our data show that these respondents, *i.e.*, those who graduated in the top 20 percent of their classes, were more likely, in the sixties, to seek conventional legal careers in large law firms than were their counterparts in the fifties.

We conclude with an observation that Derek Bok made about the career choices of recent Harvard law graduates.¹⁰

Despite the sincere interest of many students in social service and the advocacy of unpopular causes, the alternatives to the law firm are unlikely to attract them in the end. They will find the pay too low in legal assistance offices, and the work often dull and frustrating. Public interest law firms offer brighter prospects for exciting, challenging work, but the outlook is bleak for finding financing for more than a handful of such positions. Government jobs can provide rewarding, challenging work for a time, but I doubt that students today will be more tolerant of the familiar aspects of government service that have traditionally caused most of our graduates to enter private law.

FOOTNOTES

- ¹ Even Ralph Nader has expressed skepticism. In a lecture at Harvard Law School, Nader asked the audience how many were interested in public interest law. About 90% of the audience stood up. He then asked how many would be interested if the salary were \$12,000 per year; a few sat down. At \$10,000, \$8,000, and \$7,000 increasing numbers sat down. By the time he reached \$4,000 two students remained standing. "That's right, gentlemen," Nader sneered, "your convictions are entirely a matter of price" (79 Yale Law Journal 1140, fn. 110).
- ² The authors of the study did not mail the questionnaires, nor did we at any time have access to the class rankings. Personnel at both law schools, following the criteria we established, drew the sample and mailed the questionnaires for us. They then provided us with a tally of the number of questionnaires that had been mailed for each year and within each ranking.
- ³ The only exceptions to that are the "University of Chicago, 1950" graduates in the bottom 20 percent. Forty-one percent of them opted not to work as lawyers for their first job.
- ⁴ We have job histories for as many as six positions, but by the time we examined the pattern for the third job we lost over 60 percent of the respondents who had graduated in the 1960's because they did not have more than two jobs. A scanning of the responses of those who did, did not reveal any noticeable shifts within any of the categories.
- ⁵ In a recent survey (April 1971) of 360 law students enrolled in the six Chicago law schools concerning their career expectations the authors concluded: "Generally in view of the sharp decrease as the years pass in the percentages of those students who would do legal aid or public defender work, we may conclude that there is little evidence to support a belief in the existence of a significant number of law students who together will constitute a new breed of lawyer" (67 Northwestern Law Review 628).
- ⁶ The publications included are only those that have been done since graduation. Any writing that may have been done as a student for law reviews are not included.
- ⁷ We assume that respondents who did not answer, never ran for public office.

- ⁸ A possible alternative explanation for the data in Table 6 is that the responses reflect time out of law school; and that if the 1960's alumni were queried ten years hence, their responses at that time would be similar to those reported by the 1950's alumni.
- ⁹ To those who say, but the differences occurred only in the latter part of the 1960's and treating the entire decade as an undifferentiated category did not allow them to surface, we answer that we made a year by year analysis and no significant changes were observed that would cause us to restate these conclusions.
- ¹⁰ The comment was made in a speech by Dean Bok before the Harvard Alumni Association dinner at the American Bar Association Convention in St. Louis on August 11, 1970.

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