

The Lady & The Law School: In the 1800's men studied law under the supervision of a practicing attorney or attended law school. Men did not admit women to their law schools albeit some male lawyers did accept women to study law in their private practices.

In 1855 Myra Bradwell began her law studies under a practicing attorney, her husband, and apprenticed in his law practice, as well.

In 1861 Bradwell co-authored the Illinois Married Women's Property Act.

In 1868 Bradwell founded the *Chicago Legal News*.

In 1869 Lemma Barkaloo became the first woman in America admitted to law school at Washington University in St. Louis.

In 1870 Ada Kepley became the first woman in America to graduate with a formal law degree from Union College of Law, now Northwestern University in Chicago.

In 1870 the U.S. census notes five (5) women lawyers.

In 1873 Bradwell was denied access to the Illinois State Bar because she was a woman, though she had passed the bar exam with honors. The U. S. Supreme Court upheld the Illinois Supreme Court decision.

In 1886 Alice R. Jordon Blake, using only her initials, was accepted at Yale Law School. Her gender discovered, she argued, "there isn't a thing in your catalogue that bars women." That year Yale included the words: "It is to be understood that the courses of instruction are open to the male sex only." No other woman would graduate Yale Law School for 74 years.

In 1898 African American attorney Lutie A Lytle became the first female law professor in the world when she joined the faculty of Central Tennessee College of Law.

In 1898 Ellen Spencer Mussey and Emma Gillett founded Washington College of Law in the District as coed specifically for women rejected by law schools. It is now American University.

In 1900 the U.S. census notes 1,010 women lawyers.

In 1919 Yale Law School admits women students.

In 1919 Barbara Armstrong became the first woman appointed to a tenure-track position at an accredited law school, the University of California at Berkeley.

In 1938 Pauli Murray's rejection letter from the University of North Carolina Law School read, "Members of your race are not admitted to the University." At Howard University Law School, where she was the only female in her class, her professor said in his opening remarks the first day, that he really didn't know why women came to law school, but since they were there, the men would have to put up with them. Murray graduated first in his/her class.

In 1944 Murray's rejection letter for an advanced degree program at Harvard Law School read: "Your picture and the salutation on your college transcript indicate that you are not of the sex entitled to be admitted to Harvard Law School."

In 1946 Sandra Day O'Connor, well aware she might not be accepted because she was a woman, was admitted to Stanford. She completed a dual-degree, seven-year program in six years receiving a bachelor's in economics in 1950 and a law degree in 1952. She graduated third in her class, but could not get a job as a lawyer because of her gender. She was offered a position as a legal secretary, which did not match her education, training, or ability. She did not accept this position.

In 1948 Patsy Mink, with dual bachelor's degrees in zoology and chemistry, applied to twenty med schools. None accepted women. Judging the judicial process was needed to adjudicate this gender injustice, Mink decided to attend law school. She applied to the University of Chicago Law School that had admitted women from its inception in 1902 and obtained her J. D. in 1951, the only woman in her graduating class. Unable to find employment in the legal field, she did odd jobs and worked in the Law School's library before starting her own law firm.

In 1950 Harvard Law School opened to women and fourteen joined the class of 520 men. They were invited to speak only on "Ladies Day," a single class that met once each month, they were allowed to eat in the graduate cafeteria, and one ladies room was added in the basement of Austin Hall. Dorms opened to women eight years later.

In 1954 Ruth Bader Ginsburg entered Harvard Law School as one of nine women in a class over 500. Of these women Dean Erwin Griswold asked what it felt like to occupy places that could have gone to deserving men. When her husband joined a law firm in New York, Ginsberg transferred to Columbia Law School where she graduated first in her 1959 class. No law firm offered her a job.

In 1960 Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter was asked to consider hiring Ginsburg as one of his law clerks. He refused to interview her acknowledging he was just not ready to hire a woman. Ginsburg taught at Rutgers and Columbia.

In 1960 the U.S. census notes 7,000 women lawyers.

In the 1960's, during her early days of law school at Northwestern University, current U. S. House Representative Judy Biggert (R-Illinois) said she was told that she was a student by mistake—a man should have been in her seat.

In 1965 Mink became the first female minority elected to the U.S. House of Representatives (D-Hawaii).

In 1969 the first “Women and the Law” courses in the country were taught at NYU Law School in the fall semester and at Yale the following spring semester.

In 1970 the U.S. census notes 13,000 women lawyers.

In 1970 Ginsburg co-founded the “Women's Rights Law Reporter,” the first law journal to focus exclusively on women's rights.

In 1972 Mink co-authored Title IX with U.S. House Representative Edith Green (D-Oregon).

In 1974 “Sex-Based Discrimination,” co-authored by Ginsburg, Kenneth M. Davidson, and Herma Hill Kay, was published as the first law school casebook addressing the topic.

In 1976 Sonia Sotomayor entered Yale Law School on a scholarship. A prominent law firm suggested she was only at Yale via affirmative action. She sued the firm apologized.

In 1978 *Duren v. Missouri*, Ginsburg argued that optional jury duty was a message that women's service was unnecessary to important government functions. At the end of Ginsburg's oral presentation then-Associate Justice William Rehnquist asked Ginsburg, "You won't settle for putting Susan B. Anthony on the new dollar, then?"

In 1980 the U.S. census notes 62,000 women lawyers.

In 1981 O'Connor became the 102nd, first female, U.S. Supreme Court Justice (101 men).

In 1993 Ginsburg became the 107th, second female, U.S. Supreme Court Justice (105).

In 2009 Sotomayor became the 111th, third female, U.S. Supreme Court Justice (108).

In 2009 the U.S. census notes 333,000 women lawyers.

Incalculable evidence notes a history of law sense linked to The Lady & The Law School.

Sources: *Women in law*, Cynthia Fuchs Epstein;
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