



# STATE BAR OF TEXAS

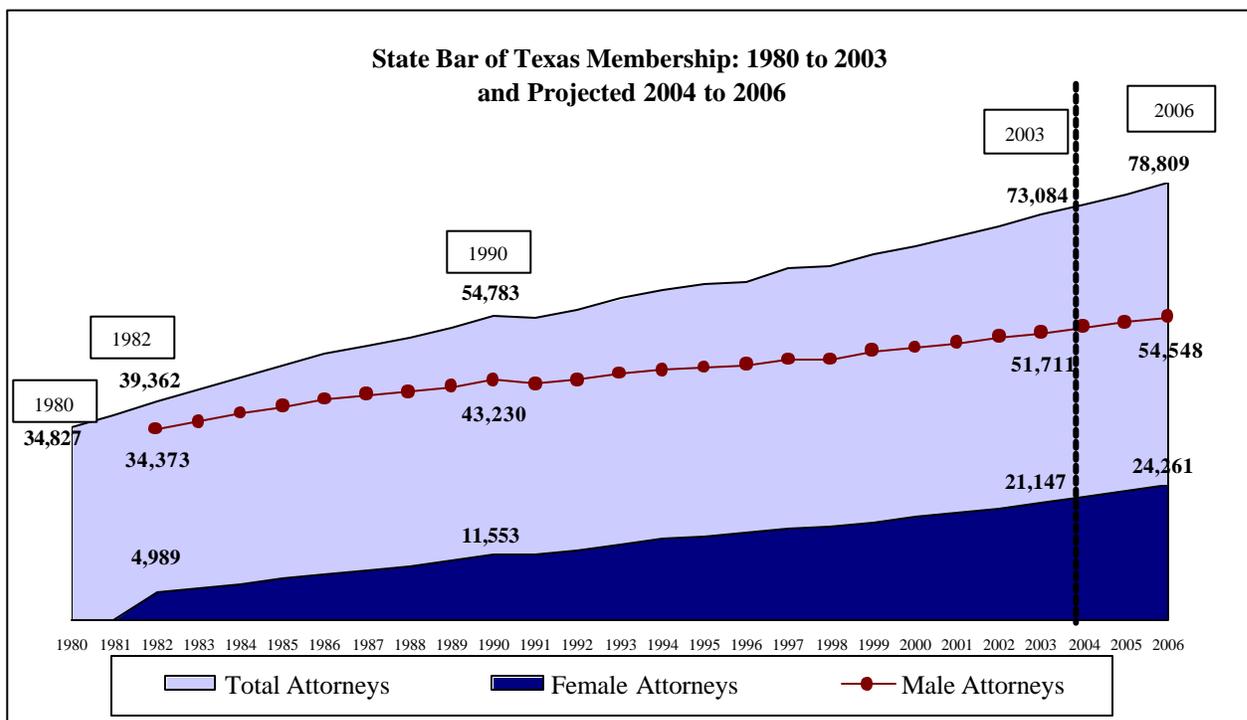
## DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

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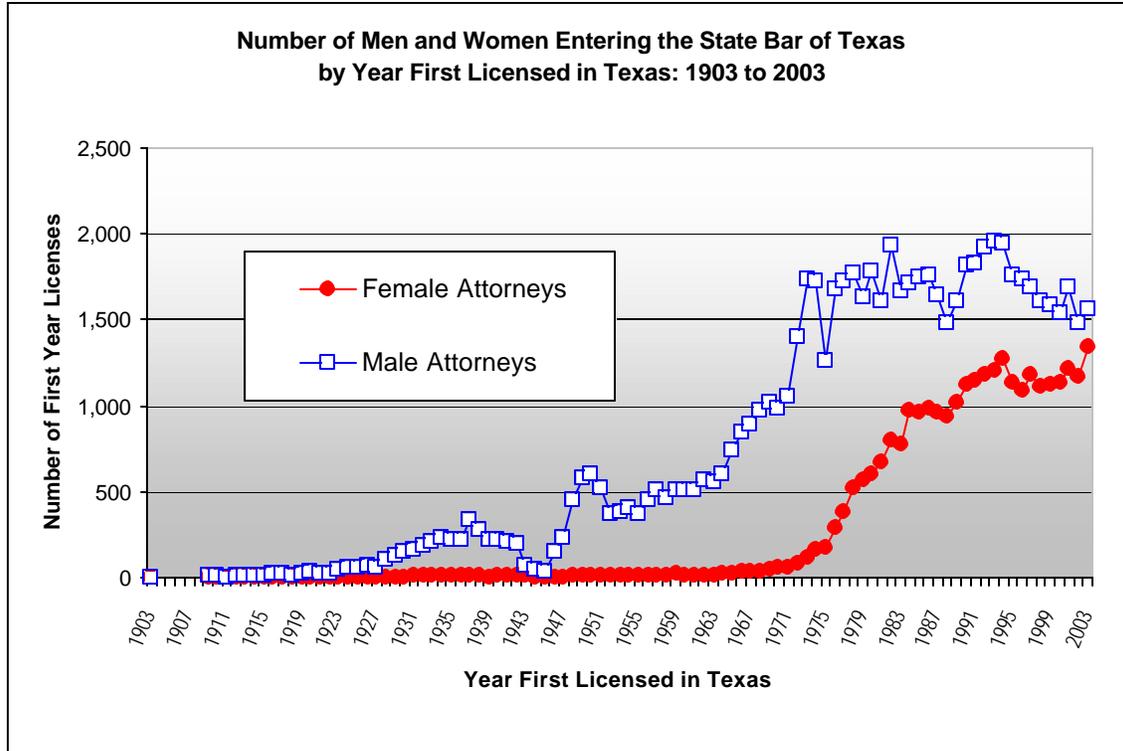
### Annual Report on the Status of Women in the State Bar of Texas (2003-2004)<sup>1</sup>

by Nils Greger Olsson, Ph.D. and Greg Hammond, B.A.

The number of women attorneys licensed in Texas increased by more than 300 percent from 1982<sup>2</sup> to 2003. In 1982 there were fewer than 5,000 female attorneys (13 percent of the State Bar membership), while the 2003 total is 21,147 (29 percent of the membership). During this same time, the number of male attorneys licensed in Texas grew by 50 percent. The rate of increase over the past five years has averaged 4.7% annually for women and 1.7% annually for men. If these two trends for male and women attorneys continue, women attorneys will account for 31 percent of all State Bar of Texas members by the year 2006.<sup>3</sup> The long-term forecast is that *if* these two trends remain the same, by the year 2030, women will represent 50% of the State Bar of Texas. Note that the forecast of *when* this will occur is imprecise, given the long-term nature of the prediction. However, *that* it will occur is also supported by two other sources of evidence. First, women already comprise 48 percent of students at Texas law schools.<sup>4</sup>



The second source of supporting evidence for women attaining parity in the State Bar of Texas is seen in the following graph. The graph below shows the trend from 1903 to 2003 in the number of men and the number of women by the year they were first licensed to practice law in Texas.

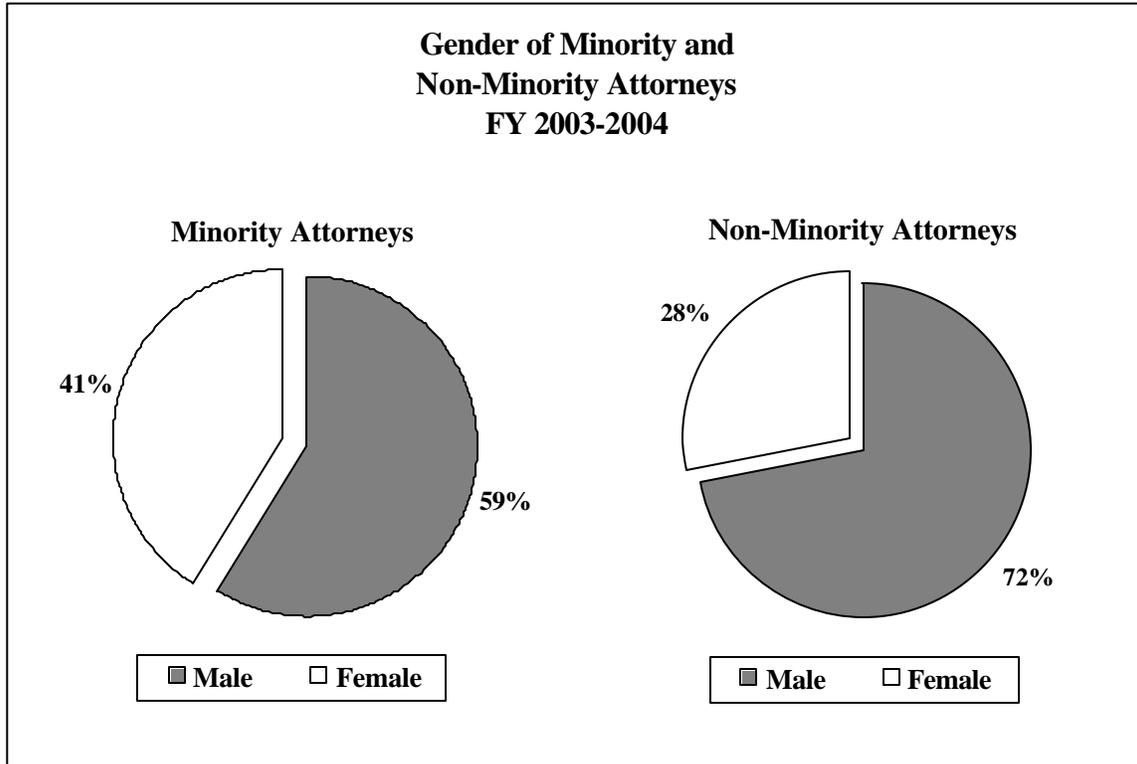


As can be seen, women are getting close to parity with men, when we look at members in their first year of Texas licensure. As of 2003, 46% of those receiving their first year Texas attorney license are women.

While women have significantly increased their representation in the Texas legal profession, the percentage of current female Bar members is still lower than the proportion of females in the general Texas population (50 percent)<sup>5</sup> and in the Texas work force (45 percent).<sup>6</sup> Women, however, account for a larger percentage of Texas attorneys (29 percent) than they do of Texas physicians (23 percent).<sup>7</sup>

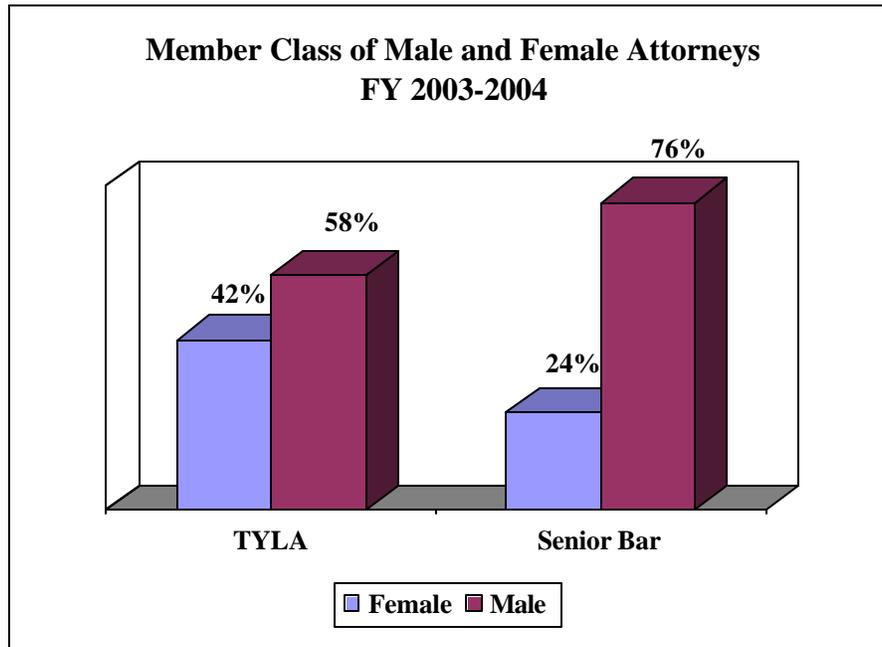
### Race/Ethnicity of Women Attorneys<sup>8</sup>

Women represent a larger proportion of minority attorneys than non-minority lawyers in Texas. Overall, 41 percent of minority attorneys are women, compared with 28 percent of Caucasian/Anglo attorneys. Fifty-one percent of African-American/Black and 49 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander attorneys are female, as are approximately one-third of both Hispanic/Latino and Native American Indian attorneys.



### Age and Years Licensed

Overall, female lawyers in Texas are younger and have been licensed for fewer years than male attorneys.<sup>9</sup> While the median age of male attorneys is 48 and the median years licensed is 19, the typical female attorney is 41 years old and has been licensed for 11 years. The comparative youth of female attorneys is reflected in the membership of the Texas Young Lawyers Association (TYLA)—women represent 42 percent of the TYLA membership, and 42 percent of all women attorneys in Texas are TYLA members.<sup>10</sup> Women comprise 45 percent of the Bar’s newest members—those licensed two years or fewer—but only seven percent of attorneys licensed more than 25 years.



### Geographic Location of Women Attorneys<sup>11</sup>

Ninety-six percent of in-state Bar members, regardless of gender, are located in a metropolitan county,<sup>12</sup> and nearly three-quarters (73 percent) reside in one of five Texas counties: Bexar, Dallas, Harris, Tarrant, and Travis. Women are even more concentrated in these counties than men, with 78 percent of in-state female attorneys (compared with 72 percent of male attorneys) living or working in one of them. The Travis County Bar District has the highest proportion of women lawyers of any State Bar District (35 percent of the attorneys are female), while counties in East Texas Bar District (17 percent) and the Panhandle Bar District (19 percent) have the lowest percentages.

### Occupational Settings and Law Firm Size<sup>13</sup>

Women attorneys are less likely than men to work in private law practice—57 percent of female lawyers, compared with 71 percent of male lawyers, are private practitioners. Conversely, a higher percentage of women than men are employed as government attorneys (17 percent of female lawyers, compared with eight percent of males) and as in-house counsel (11 percent compared with nine percent).

The median law firm size for both male and female private practitioners is four attorneys, and almost equal percentages of men and women work as sole practitioners (37 and 33 percent respectively). Women, however, are more likely than men to work at the state’s largest law firms—22 percent of women, compared with 17 percent of men, work in firms with 60 or more lawyers.

**Primary Occupation and Gender FY 2003-2004**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Male Attorneys (N= 51,711)</b>	<b>Female Attorneys (N= 21,147)</b>
<b>Private Practice</b>	71%	57%
<b>Government</b>	8%	17%
<b>Judiciary</b>	2%	2%
<b>Law Faculty</b>	1%	1%
<b>In-House Counsel</b>	9%	11%
<b>Other Law-Related</b>	2%	5%
<b>Non-Law-Related</b>	3%	3%
<b>Retired/Not Working</b>	3%	1%

**Texas Law School Enrollment<sup>14</sup>**

Between academic years 1992-93 and 2003-04, the proportion of women among Texas law students increased from 41 to 48 percent. Texas Wesleyan University had the highest percentage of female students in 2003-2004 (52 percent, followed closely by the University of Houston (50 percent) and Texas Southern University (49 percent).

**Participation in State Bar Sections and Bar Leadership**

Comparable percentages of male and female attorneys—41 and 40 percent, respectively—are members of at least one of the Bar’s voluntary area-of-interest sections. The law sections with the highest proportions of female members are Women and the Law (97 percent), Animal Law (56 percent), African-American Lawyers (50 percent), Juvenile Law (47 percent), Government Lawyers (42 percent), and Family Law (41 percent). Women are least likely to be members of the Military Law (13 percent), James C. Watson Inn (12 percent), Oil, Gas and Energy Resources Law (13 percent), Aviation Law (12 percent), and Consumer Law (14 percent) sections.

Female attorneys represent 30 percent of the 30 elected members of the 2003-2004 State Bar Board of Directors and 33 percent of the 40 voting members. The 2003-2004 TYLA Board of Directors has a somewhat higher percentage of female representation—35 percent of the elected members and 39 percent of the voting members are women.

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<sup>1</sup> Texas attorney data in this report is based on the State Bar of Texas membership records, December 2003. Unless otherwise noted, all figures refer to active State Bar members. Some figures are estimates, as not all information is known for every active attorney.

<sup>2</sup> Information on gender and yearly membership status in the State Bar of Texas is not available prior to 1982. Therefore, it is not possible to create “snapshots” of what the active bar membership was in each of those prior years.

<sup>3</sup> A logarithmic growth model was used to make the projections. This model assumes a constant rate of growth for the years 2004-2006 based on the average annual growth rate in the female State Bar membership from 1998 to 2003 (4.69 percent). The average annual growth rate for total membership for the same time period was 2.55 percent, and the rate for male State Bar membership was 1.73 percent. A longer-term forecast assuming the same trend rates was made to project when female State Bar membership would reach the point of 50 percent of the total State Bar of Texas membership. It is forecast that year will be 2030, with the likelihood that prediction is off by one or more years, given the long-range nature of the forecast.

<sup>4</sup> National Association for Law Placement, *2004-2005 National Directory of Law Schools*. Data reported for the 2003-2004 school year.

<sup>5</sup> Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer Texas. *Population Projections Program: Post 2000 Census Population Projections, Migration Scenario 0.5 (online)*, <http://txsdc.tamu.edu/>, San Antonio, TX: Texas State Data Center and Office of the State Demographer, Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research, University of Texas at San Antonio, June 8, 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics, U. S. Department of Labor, <http://www.bls.gov/opub/gp/gpsec2.htm> (Table 12). This statistic is for the latest year available, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> Texas State Board of Medical Examiners. Figures based on active practicing physicians licensed in Texas, February 2003, <http://www.tsbme.state.tx.us/demo/docs/d2003/0103/gender.htm>

<sup>8</sup> Race/ethnicity was known for 95 percent of the active Bar membership in December 2003.

<sup>9</sup> Based on year first licensed in any jurisdiction.

<sup>10</sup> The Texas Young Lawyers Association (TYLA) consists of all attorneys licensed in Texas who are 36 years or younger as of June 1 of each year, or attorneys within their initial 36-month licensing period as of June 1. The Senior Bar consists of all attorneys who are not members of TYLA.

<sup>11</sup> Bar geography, such as county membership and district memberships, is based on members' official address. Starting in 2003, bar members' official address is their work address; if work address is unavailable, home address is used.

<sup>12</sup> Seventy-seven out of 254 Texas counties are classified by the U.S. Department of Commerce as components of a metropolitan area. US Department of the Census Bureau. Metropolitan and Micropolitan Statistical Areas (online), <http://www.census.gov/population/www/estimates/metroarea.html> . As per OMB Bulletin No 03-04, June 6, 2003.

<sup>13</sup> Occupation and law firm size figures are estimates as these demographics are unknown for some attorneys. Law firm size figures are for private practitioners only.

<sup>14</sup> *2004-2005 National Directory of Law Schools*, which reports data for 2003-2004. Data on gender were not available for South Texas College of Law for 2003-2004.