

Becoming A Lawyer



Women Have More Instinct For Justice Than Men

Miss Fadia Ghanem is a 23 year old law trainee in a Beirut law firm. She graduated from the Law School of the Lebanese University on December 4, 1989

We interviewed Miss Fadia Nimr Ghanem as a young female law trainee in her office. Miss Ghanem has an earnest ambition to become a lawyer. She feels that being a female is an asset rather than a disadvantage, both in terms of her working abilities and the growing encouragement that society gives women nowadays.

Q. did you choose to become a lawyer?

A. I have always wanted to study law. I feel that I can achieve self-fulfillment.

Q. Who supported you financially and psychologically?

A. Both my father and my mother encouraged me to study law. My mother would stay up at night to help me and my brothers with our studies. My father was convinced that I would succeed in law judging from his knowledge of the profession since he himself is a Notary Public.

Q. Did you encounter any discouragement from other people around you because of your sex?

A. No, we are in an era of progress in which women are succeeding just like men, if not more. Even at work,

we get more encouragement than our male colleagues because we have more instinct for justice than men.

Q. Did your professors treat you differently from your male colleagues?

A. No, treatment was not based on sex differentiation. It was rather based on mutual respect and the extent to which we took our studies seriously.

Q. Which area of the law do you wish to specialize in?

A. As soon as I get the chance I plan to continue my studies to become a Notary Public. Female public notaries are very rare in Lebanon.

Q. Did you ever consider a profession other than the law?

A. Law was always my first choice. At one point, I thought of studying political science in order to become an ambassador. At that time I was very impressed by a friend, Mrs. Lina Bazzi, who was appointed to represent Lebanon in one of the Emirates of the Gulf.

Q. Are there any branches of the law that you consider to be "areas of concentration for women"?

A. Not particularly. It is a matter of preference that has nothing to do with sex-roles. Personally, I don't like criminal law. I prefer commercial law.

Q. How many females graduated in your class? compared to the males?

A. I think that they were equal. However, I remember that during the first three years of law school, the number of girls who attended classes was greater than the number of boys. Eventually, a lot of students, both male and female, drop out for various reasons. By the fourth and last year, the remaining boys realize the importance of graduation and therefore make extra efforts and work as hard as the girls.

Q. In your opinion, does the Lebanese Law give women their due rights?

A. Well, the laws date back to 1943. They represent the society of that time. Now, society has changed. People are more aware of the intelligence and abilities of women. Therefore, I think that some laws must be updated accordingly. For instance, working facilities for women are restricted once they get married. It is a shame that a country like Lebanon, with its liberal society, decrees that women should obtain permission from their husbands in order to work.