

# The Lawyer Bubble: A Profession In Crisis - Steven J. Harper

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Too many American lawyers are miserable. Though they have chosen a profession that often makes them wealthy and respected, they have high rates of depression and suicide, and the majority of practicing lawyers would counsel young people to choose a different career path. The Great Recession has only worsened matters, as more and more of those young people decide to wait out the bad economy in law school, only to end up competing for a shrinking number of available jobs. Meanwhile, those who are able to get the elusive job in the big firm find that professional values have been sacrificed to short-term metrics. In *The Lawyer Bubble*, Steven J. Harper explores how the legal profession came to this sorry state. He investigates the troubling mismatch between the number of lawyers produced and the number of law jobs available, skyrocketing rates of attorney dissatisfaction, and an overall sense that what once made the law a unique vocation is disappearing. He outlines how this much-discussed crisis germinated with the U.S News rankings obsession, the rapid growth in law school tuition, and the use of short-term business school-type metrics to measure success in firms all of which have intensified during the Great Recession. As Harper reveals, the numbers are as astonishing as they are disheartening. Though the Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that only 73,600 legal jobs will be created this decade, 50,000 law students graduate each year, and 85% of them graduate with around \$100,000 in debt. Among those lucky enough to find a job that requires a JD, only one in ten will end up working for the sort of six-figure salary necessary to begin paying off that debt. Among those lucky few, even fewer will achieve equity partnerships, which are more and more out of reach as current partners work to increase the ratio of associates to partners in their firms. The game is rigged, yet eager hordes of bright young people continue to step over each other in order to get at jobs with high rates of depression, life-consuming hours, and not as sure a guarantee of financial stability as they expect. No one within the system has any incentive to buck it, and as a once-respected profession devolves into just another business, life is going to become ever more miserable for the vast majority of law students and lawyers. In this meticulously researched and passionately argued book, Harper exposes the dirty secrets of the laws

increasingly troubled state in profoundly troubled times. The Lawyer Bubble is essential reading not just for lawyers and people who want to be lawyers, but for anyone who wants to understand how a once highly respected profession went so wrong, and how it can be restored to its former glory. Author: Harper, Steven J. Publisher: Basic Books Illustration: N Language: ENG Title: The Lawyer Bubble: A Profession in Crisis Pages: 00272 (Encrypted EPUB) On Sale: 2013-04-02 SKU-13/ISBN: 9780465058778 Age: 18-UP Reading Level: 13-UP Lib Category: Practice of law - United States Lib Category: Law firms - United States Category: Law : Ethics & Professional Responsibility Category: Law : Legal Education Category: Law : Legal Profession

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