

Vying for the Lead in the Boys' Club: Understanding the Gender Gap in Multidistrict Leadership Appointments

March 20, 2017 by tub51301

March 20, 2017

The gender gap in the legal profession has been researched and commented upon at length. Female lawyers earn less than their male counterparts, hold fewer leadership positions, and serve as lead counsel in litigation less often. While the gender gap is well documented, research has not yet specifically identified the extent of the gender gap in court-appointed leadership in multidistrict litigation. Multidistrict litigation (MDL) is a federal statutory mechanism that consolidates complex civil litigation cases and transfers the consolidated matter to one federal district judge for pretrial proceedings, accounting for 36 percent of all federal litigation. The transferee judge then appoints leadership counsel for the consolidated cases in a myriad of ways. While it is widely acknowledged by practitioners that a serious gender gap exists in MDL leadership appointment, research has not yet quantified the discrepancy across all types of MDLs, or the ways in which the varied procedural and cultural factors contribute to this discrepancy.

Dana Alvaré's study *Vying for the Lead in the Boys Club: Understanding the Gender Gap in Multidistrict Leadership Appointments*, examines MDL dockets over the last five years and quantifies the current rate of disparity in leadership appointments. She identifies which, if any, case factors that correlate with these rates, and lays the groundwork for future exploration of the contributing factors to the discrepancy.

[+ DOWNLOAD THE STUDY](#)



Dana Alvaré is a Research Fellow for the Women in Legal Leadership Project, which is a Dean's Special Project of the Sheller Center for Social Justice at Temple University's Beasley School of Law. Dana is a lawyer and doctoral candidate in sociology of gender and law at the University of Delaware where her research focuses on law and society, specifically gender in the legal profession. She teaches sociology courses at both Temple University and the University of Delaware. Prior to her work in academia, Dana practiced land use and municipal law in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Email her at Dana.Alvare@temple.edu.



Professor Jaya Ramji-Nogales specializes in immigration law, international law, procedure and process. She currently teaches civil procedure, evidence, gender and migration, and refugee law and policy. Professor Ramji-Nogales' research areas include empirical assessment of asylum adjudication, international and comparative migration law, and transitional justice. She is the faculty advisor to the Women in Legal Leadership Project.

■ Uncategorized

◆ MDL Study, Women in Legal Leadership Project

Coverage

The National Law Journal

'Boys' Network Slowly Making Room for Gender Diversity in MDL Leadership

May 29, 2018

Bloomberg Law

Women See No Gains as Plaintiffs-Side Complex Case Leaders

May 21, 2018

Above the Law

Calling Out The Boys' Club

April 11, 2017

Law360

Female Lawyers Are Still Struggling To Land Lead MDL Roles

March 17, 2017

ABA Journal

Female First-Chairs: Firm's founders chip away at male litigation domination

March 1, 2017

ABA Perspectives

The Commission Reports and Judges Listen

Vol 25 No 1 (Winter 2017)

Bloomberg Law

More Women Plaintiff Lawyers Becoming Complex Litigation Leaders

January 16, 2017

The Legal Intelligencer

In 'Extremely Rare' Move, Two Women Appointed to Lead Antitrust MDL

November 30, 2016

The Legal Intelligencer

MDL Gender Issues Coming Under Scrutiny

March 28, 2016

Stephen and Sandra Sheller Center for Social Justice

1719 North Broad Street, Room 411

Philadelphia, PA 19122

(215) 204-8800

shellercenter@temple.edu

Find us on 

[Temple Law School](#)

[Temple University](#)

[Accessibility](#)

[Contact Temple Law](#)

© 2015 Temple University Beasley School of Law. 1719 North Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19122