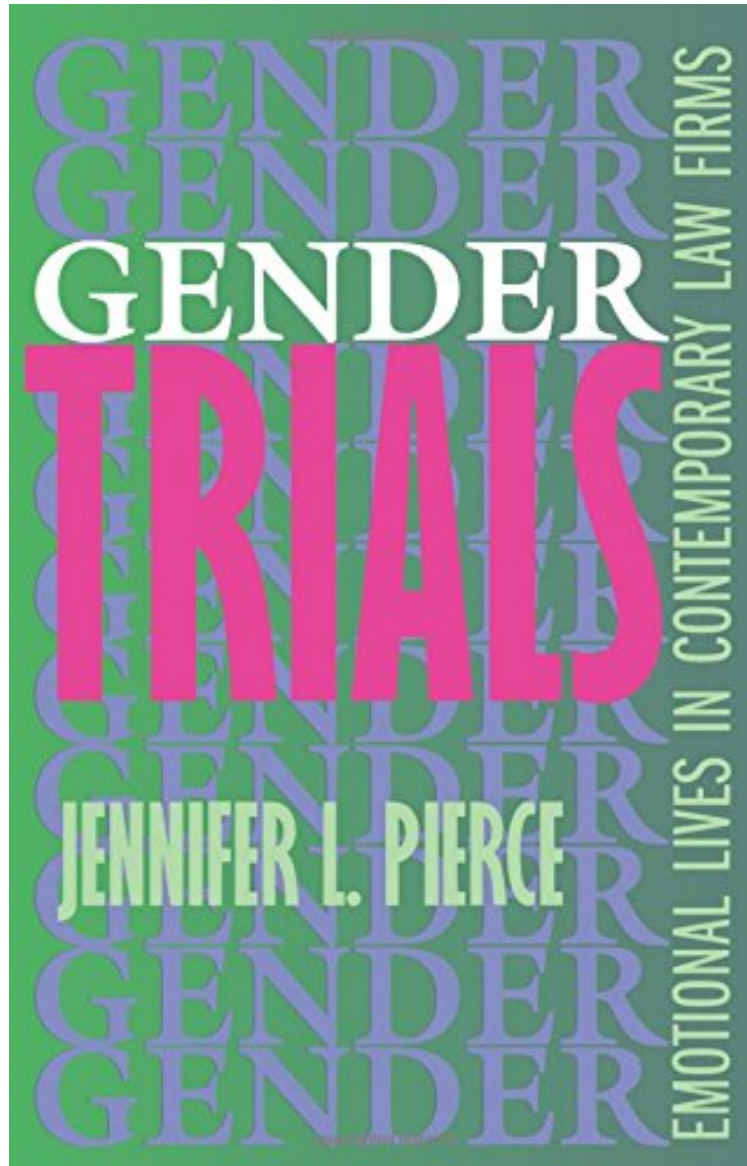


Gender Trials: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms

Jennifer L. Pierce

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Jennifer L. Pierce : Gender Trials: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Gender Trials: Emotional Lives in Contemporary Law Firms:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great workBy TimothyArcherThis book is a fantastic exemplar of social science research. Even if you are not interested in workplace or gender studies, it is still an excellent guide for

how to conduct sociological studies in general. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. This is a valuable resource for any woman in C.J. By A Customer GENDER TRIALS offers secretaries, paralegals, and lawyers a new "take" on relationships in the courtroom, the office, and the break room. Pierce's use of specific examples and her having been a paralegal herself provide good context for theoretical discussions--hers and ours. This is a must-read for all new female lawyers! 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Biased and dated By dasom This book is extremely biased and dated. The research was done in 1980. Many of the scenarios may be interesting historically, but are not a relevant critique in today's age.

This engaging ethnography examines the gendered nature of today's large corporate law firms. Although increasing numbers of women have become lawyers in the past decade, Jennifer Pierce discovers that the double standards and sexist attitudes of legal bureaucracies are a continuing problem for women lawyers and paralegals. Working as a paralegal, Pierce did ethnographic research in two law offices, and her depiction of the legal world is quite unlike the glamorized version seen on television. Pierce tellingly portrays the dilemma that female attorneys face: a woman using tough, aggressive tactics the ideal combative litigator is often regarded as brash or even obnoxious by her male colleagues. Yet any lack of toughness would mark her as ineffective. Women paralegals also face a double bind in corporate law firms. While lawyers depend on paralegals for important work, they also expect these women for most paralegals are women to nurture them and affirm their superior status in the office hierarchy. Paralegals who mother their bosses experience increasing personal exploitation, while those who do not face criticism and professional sanction. Male paralegals, Pierce finds, do not encounter the same difficulties that female paralegals do. Pierce argues that this gendered division of labor benefits men politically, economically, and personally. However, she finds that women lawyers and paralegals develop creative strategies for resisting and disrupting the male-dominated status quo. Her lively narrative and well-argued analysis will be welcomed by anyone interested in today's gender politics and business culture.

From the Inside Flap "This is an exciting contribution to our understanding of gender and emotion in workplaces everywhere." Arlie Hochschild, author of *The Second Shift* and *The Managed Heart* "As a participant observer and insightful critic of lawyers' workplaces, Jennifer Pierce gives us a richly detailed picture of sex-based inequality and the strategies necessary to address it." Deborah L. Rhode, Director, Keck Center on Legal Ethics and the Legal Profession, Stanford University "Gender Trials is an important addition to the literature on gender and work. In studying each gender within different jobs (litigator, paralegal) and different jobs within each gender, Pierce uncovers the complexities and contradictions of 'doing gender' in contemporary law firms. The phrases 'Rambo litigator' and 'mothering paralegal' capture the normative and behavioral convergences of job and gender in these firms. In analysing resistance as well as compliance, and the emotional and identity costs associated with both dynamics, Pierce produces an insightful, and disturbing, picture of legal practice in our time." Patricia Yancey Martin, Florida State University "Pierce's lively first-hand account of women and men at work in several law firms greatly expands our empirical and theoretical understanding of what it means to say that occupations and work organizations are 'gendered.'" Miriam Johnson, University of Oregon