

Alternate Careers For New Law Students

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A sobering letter to the editor at [The New York Times](#), explaining that there are a wide range of career possibilities for lawyers and how the conventional thinking at law schools during recruiting season is often needlessly narrow.

Fulfilling Jobs for Lawyers

To the Editor:

Re “Downturn Dims Prospects Even at Top Law Schools” (Business Day, Aug. 26):

By taking away the possibility of easy employment in high-paying jobs, the economic downturn may end up helping the current crop of law students.

Very few law students at elite schools make meaningful explorations of the broad array of career choices available to law school graduates. Instead, lured by prestige and a high salary, they march through on-campus interviews to large urban law firms, where a great many end up leading unfulfilled lives.

As the jobs with large salaries disappear, law students will draw on the thoughtfulness, intelligence and perseverance that got them into law school in the first place in order to find employment that they actually find rewarding. They will also find creative ways to pay their loans and other expenses.

Most law graduates already do not expect a starting salary of \$160,000 and yet are able to make ends meet. Graduates of elite schools will adjust to the new financial realities and come out better for it.

Michael F. Melcher
New York, Aug. 26, 2009

The writer, a graduate of Stanford Law School, is the author of “The Creative Lawyer: A Practical Guide to Authentic Professional Satisfaction.”