Since 1980, the schools have kept the number of new places between 40,000 and 44,000 a year. Applications, meanwhile, have zigzagged between a low point of 60,000 (in 1985) and a high point of 99,000 (in 1991).

"Among the 25 schools that think they're in the top 10, you have relatively modest growth, where you have had any growth," said J. William Elwin Jr., the director of professional development and training at Shearman & Sterling, a Manhattan-based law firm.

The demand is by no means even. Professor Heins said there was a persistent surplus of lawyers who handle slip-and-fall cases, divorces and criminal defense. In a profession that gauges status finely and obsessively, he said, "some law schools supply one market and some supply others."

Nonetheless, he said, as firms that once hired everyone they needed from Harvard, Yale and Columbia claim an ever larger share of law graduates each year, students at the middle-to-top-tier schools are benefiting. That group includes Rutgers law school. This fall, employers went "deeper into the class" to fill their interview schedules, Dawne M. Smith, the placement director, said. She noted that many interviewers arrived with greeters, whose job was cordially pitching their firms.

Debra King, the placement director at Seton Hall University Law School, also in Newark, said, "Firms are turning to their so-called alternative schools, like us, not just the Ivies."

This fall, Ms. King said, at least three national law firms that "generally don't come over the river" came for on-campus interviewing. The school also had recruiters from firms in San Francisco and Palo Alto, Calif.

At Brooklyn Law School, the number of jobs listed with the career services office in 2000 increased 41 percent from 1998, said Joan A. King, the director of placement.

Ms. King said salaries at the smaller firms and government agencies that employ most Brooklyn graduates were also rising.

"Finally the D.A.'s offices are paying decently," she said. "That's a good side effect."

Still, at $38,000 to $47,500, the pay for those new graduates is about what the average city transit worker receives. Ms. Smith said one recent graduate, now working in a prosecutor's office, had sent an e-mail message that said, as Ms. Smith recalled: "I'm working for $33,000 a year and I have $76,000 in student loans. I can't do it."

Public-interest employers, the nonprofit organizations that for years have relied on the socially committed and self-sacrificing, drew 1 percent of 1999 graduates, down from 5.9 percent in 1986.

"You do see people taking firm jobs who wouldn't have a couple of years ago," Ms. Smith said. "And this used to be known as the People's Electric Law School."

More surprising to placement officials is the number of students forgoing judicial clerkships, despite their resume-enhancing value. Ms. Smith said that while 77 students in the class of 1998 took clerkships, in the class of 2000 she has counted a little over 40.

"I have judges coming out of the woodwork," she said.

While this market should foster happiness among law students -- Ms. King at Brooklyn spoke of "an overall sense of well-being" -- it has also created expectations that are easily disappointed.

"It's very difficult for kids to be happy if they're not where they thought they were going to be," Ms. Smith said. "A perfect student who scores

a colleague is making $125,000." 

News of salaries and much more is never farther away than the Web, where message boards like Greed.com (www.information.com) report salary and bonus schedules and exchange advice ("take all the money you've hoarded and run") and commentary ("much of what I do is chimp work").

Derek Craig, a second-year student and member of law review at Rutgers, said that salaries were definitely a factor in drawing classmates to large New York law firms, instead of to government or the nonprofit sector. "I need to pay off my loans," said Mr. Craig, 28, adding, "What's really scary is the debt."

He explained that he had spent the three years before law school teaching English in Taiwan for "$1,000 U.S. a month, tops."

Mr. Dugan, who is 24, agreed that six-figure salaries helped attract people to Manhattan.

"As much as this is an academic experience, I don't know one person who would say money isn't a factor," he said, though he is applying for clerkships and is not ruling out a job in government later.

Having been selected for the law review and the moot court board, Mr.
10 lawyers and $97,000 in firms of more than 500.

The biggest firms, meanwhile, are heeding to certain status lines in law school recruiting.

"As desperate as we've been, we're just now talking about putting our toe into the second tier," said a manager at a Manhattan firm.

Like most partners and recruiting managers, this one would speak only on condition of anonymity. As Ms. Smith said, "Who's going to want to go to a firm that can't find anybody?"

http://www.nytimes.com

GRAPHIC: Photos: SUPPLY SIDE -- From left, Kelso Anderson, Derek Craig and David Dugan, all second-year students at Rutgers School of Law in Newark, are enjoying the luxury of fielding many summer job offers. The high salaries are also a "nice surprise," Mr. Dugan said. (Photographs by Nancy Wegard for The New York Times); ABOUT-FACE -- Placement directors, like Dawne M. Smith of Rutgers, have seen many law students forgo judicial clerkships to work for firms.

Graph: "A Lawyer's Market"
The number of new lawyers has not kept pace with the demand for legal services, so salaries keep climbing.

Graphs tracks law school graduates, nationwide and median starting salaries for law school graduates in 1999 dollars since 1985.
(Source: American Bar Association; National Association for Law Placement)

LOAD-DATE: January 30, 2001
Once they put down the law, the Republicans went after the lawyers. In the recent battle over changes in the legal system, they cast zealous trial lawyers as responsible for excessive litigation, ignoring suggestions that perhaps some American manufacturers needed to be held accountable for the production of faulty products. Mr. Gingrich, who likes to polarize debates along moral lines, demonized trial lawyers as every opportunity as greedy, rich and selfish, in the end, his side won. Judges, too, have become fair game. In March, Mr. Bono, the anti-lawyer here, introduced his first piece of legislation, it is a bill that would reduce the ability of Federal judges to determine the constitutionality of state initiatives that voters had approved. California's Proposition 187, the one dealing with immigration, has been tied up in court since voters approved it in November, and Mr. Bono wanted it imple-
Legislators’ Own Brushes With the Law Help to Shape Legal Reform in Congress

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By Richard B. Schmitt
Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Legislative reform has struck a chord with Sonny Bono, the former singer turned Republican congressman from California. As mayor of Palm Springs, Calif., he found it very frustrating that the city was such an easy target for opportunistic lawyers. Questionable claims were routinely settled, he says, because the costs of going to trial were so great.

And a tougher test month of a House committee

means no one can be accused of having any blatant conflict of interest. (The House approved an extensive package of changes earlier this month, and the Senate, which started hearings on the issue yesterday, is expected to vote on its version of the legislation later in the spring.) Nonetheless, critics worry that legislators’ experiences may further muddy a debate that already involves misleading TV ads and self-serving anecdotes from attorneys on both sides. The added expense...

Savings & Loan Association, North Riverside, Ill., “baseless” and “very unfair.” But the lawmaker says his concern about lawsuit abuse long predates his own experience. “It didn’t make me pro-plaintiff or pro-defendant,” he says of the suit. “It is just one of the unfortunate side effects of being in public office.”

Sen. Bono says he fully supports trying to cut down on “unnecessary litigation.”
Privacy Isn't Everything

Handling the Client Interview
With Third Parties Present

and stress the importance of the interview to the client as well as third parties. Tell the third party that they're certainly welcome, but their presence in your office during the interview may subject them to subpoenas by the adverse party later.
Avoiding High-Demand/Low-Return Clients

Continued from Page 3:

client has paid all of his or her other expenses, including discretionary spending. Permitting the client to assign such a low priority to payment for legal services has the unintended effect of further devaluing those services. As a consequence, the client is likely to perceive the lawyer’s time and services as of little value. Not only will the client be reluctant to pay the bill, but the client will feel no compulsion to cooperate with the lawyer on other matters and will fail to grasp the importance of any lawyer-client team effort.

The amount of the monthly payment must be within the range of what the client can objectively afford to pay, with due regard to the priority which should be assigned to legal services in the context of the client’s monthly living expenses. Inevitably, the client will be unwilling to cut back on something in order to make a payment for legal services. This client will give greater attention to the value of the services and how to best utilize the lawyer’s time to get the client’s money’s worth. He or she will be less prone to initiate unnecessary contacts with the lawyer or to make demands for nonessential activity. At the same time, the client is more likely to see the importance of working in a supportive and cooperative manner with the
Avoiding High-Demand/Low-Return Clients

done, e.g., "what a good brief!"? Does it ruin your day when a client for whom you have successfully performed a particularly difficult bit of lawyering telephones, not to thank you, but to nitpick about nearly every charge on the detailed itemized statement that you have just sent to the client for payment? Think of the effect upon the average lawyer’s caseload of the presence of these two types of clients, particularly when they occur in multiples. It doesn’t take many negative nitpickers to appreciably impede the lawyer’s productivity. On the other hand, the client with sufficient maturity and sensitivity to understand that the client’s cause is well served by supporting and good, bad or indifferent. The client who greets any news which is not overwhelmingly favorable with a hostile diatribe is actually undermining the attorney-client relationship. While it is certainly true that everyone needs to vent from time to time and most lawyers are willing to be forgiving of the occasional misdirected outburst from a client, the client who is prone to verbal attacks on the lawyer is a very dangerous client to have for a number of reasons. First, having to cope with such behavior adds stress and inhibits productivity. Even more insidious, however, is that it encourages the lawyer to avoid talking with such clients if at all possible to delay the time that the client has, however inadvertently, set the lawyer up for. The time to terminate such an attorney-client relationship is right away, but in any event, before the lawyer reaches the point where it is very difficult to work on the case.

But What Have You Done For Me Today?

The client whose divorce case is so all-consuming that the client is unable to concentrate on anything else is a real millstone. Very few clients can afford to be their divorce lawyers’ only client and the few who can afford such hovering representation do not want it. The client who demands constant attention and daily communication with
Avoiding Clients
Continued from Page 5
been resolved, that does not necessarily mean that new activities should be generated in the case. The client must understand that, sometimes, the best thing to do from every standpoint is to withdraw and that is

How to Say ‘Goodbye’ to a Client
And ‘Thank You’ for a Referral

IT IS WISE to formalize the end of the lawyer-client relationship with a “disengagement letter.” Clearly and unequivocally, let the client know that the lawyer-client relationship has ended.

I. Introduction: Assumptions in the literature.
   A. The Culture of Litigation and Its Impact on Families
D. Children's Perceptions of Attorneys

1. One child said L was a lady w/ teddy bears who I can talk to, because mom
   and dad don't tell the truth all the time anymore. She does.
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