

MARY HUTCHINGS REED

Lawyer Finds a Way to Fulfill Her Dreams

by Olivia Clarke

Mary Hutchings Reed has spent much of her life in a male-dominated world.

When she attended Brown University as an undergraduate, the ratio of men to women was about 4 to 1. When she attended Yale Law School, it was about 6 to 1.

And as a female lawyer, she has found herself in the minority in the legal world.

"It is kind of like I don't notice it. It would almost be weird to go to a meeting and have it be half women," said Reed, of counsel at **Winston & Strawn LLP**. "It doesn't happen that way still. It's kind of what I'm used to."

Reed, who practices primarily marketing, advertising, trademark, copyright and entertainment law, said she has dealt with varying levels of gender inequality throughout her career, but she hasn't let it stop her.

"When it comes to doing the work, you do the work," said the 56-year-old lawyer. "Some of the politics of how business get handed out is male dominated, and it's still pretty much an old boy's network, frankly."

Law firms have come a long way in gender equality, but they still have further to go, she said.

"That could seem like a failure to women like myself," Reed said. "What do you mean after 31 years it is not a level playing field?"

In part to come to terms with this reality, she wrote the novel, *Courting Kathleen Hannigan*, about a fictional Chicago female lawyer who tries to advance her career in the late '70s to early '90s—in a world that doesn't always accept her.

At the start of the novel she quoted theologian Reinhold Niebuhr: "Nothing that is worth doing can be achieved in a lifetime; therefore we must be saved by hope. Nothing which is true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we must be saved by faith. Nothing we do, however virtuous, can be accomplished alone; therefore we must be saved by love."

"There is a hope and a faith that things will change, but slowly and over time," Reed said. "It is an incremental process to change a culture."



Agent of Change

Despite a successful law career, Reed originally planned on becoming a writer.

She initially thought she would major in creative writing at Brown, but she took a writing course at age 18 and realized she was totally intimidated by how little she had to say.

She instead earned her bachelor's degree in public policy, and a master's degree in economics. The feeling on college campuses was that becoming a lawyer meant becoming an agent of change, she said.

She wanted to be a journalist, but many people suggested she get a degree in something else so that she possessed a

broader background. Studying law, she said, seemed like a good way to combine her interest in journalism and social change.

While at Yale, she was strongly encouraged to work at a law firm after law school. Because she knew she needed to support herself and possessed a desire to get training, she applied to law firms.

Sidley Austin's Chicago office hired her in 1976, and she became partner there in 1983. Winston & Strawn then recruited her, her colleague Stephen Durchslag, and members of their team in 1989 to start an intellectual property group.

"When I joined [Winston & Strawn] it had no

female capital partners, and it's come a long way since then," she said. "I think I had some trepidation about joining a firm that had that kind of track record. But at the time I was convinced, which was represented by the management that recruited us, that it would work in my favor. There was a time when there was a premium for experienced women."

Reed and Durchslag focused their practice on everything that a company, ad agency, or promotion house needed to take a product to the market, with exception of patents.

The practice, she said, continues to provide full service on the marketing side, and often works with agencies that don't have in-house lawyers. While the firm today has patent expertise, she does not work with that area, she said.

Durchslag, a partner at Winston & Strawn, said Reed is a very thorough and creative lawyer.

"She is a very strong, liberal person," said Durchslag, who has known her for over 30 years. "She walks the walk, and she puts her thoughts out there."

"Because we've known each so long, we sort of read each other's minds. The years together have joined us at the hip."

Legal Achievements

Reed said probably her most significant legal achievements have been authoring "IEG Legal Guide to Sponsorship," and "IEG Legal Guide to Cause Marketing."

Her clients have included Muhammad Ali, whom she represented in the late '70s involving all his licensing work regarding his name and image.

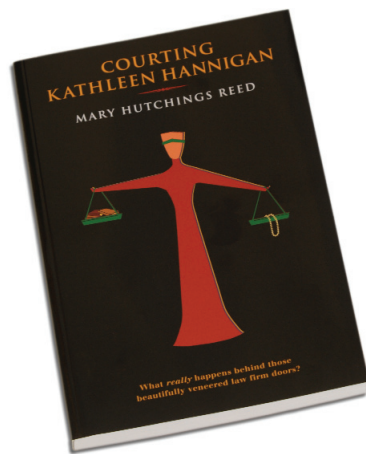
"In the '80s, I represented Don King and put together boxing events for him," she said. "That was the beginning of pay-per-view, and what we called 'addressable cable,' a time which presented significant technological and legal challenges to the event promoter."

She also represented the American Library Association from 1979 to 1989 when it dealt with the technological issues associated with copyright and photocopying.

"I loved representing the librarians because they were all about access to information and freedom to read," she said. "I got close to what I wanted to do in law school."

Reed said her pro bono work is also very important to her. She is involved with Lawyers for the Creative Arts, where she has been a board member for about 25 years, and won the Thomas R. Leavens Award for Distinguished Service to the Arts in 2004; and is chair of the board fundraising committee for the Legal Assistance Foundation of Metropolitan Chicago. In the past, she served on the boards of the American Civil Liberties Union, the YWCA, and the Off the Street Club.

Andrew Goldstein, a partner at Freeborn & Peters, said he has known Reed since 1983, and considers her a mentor.



Reed's recently-published legal novel, *Courting Kathleen Hannigan*.

"She's got a broad range of not only IP, but entertainment knowledge and corporate knowledge," Goldstein said. "She is very practical, and approachable, and a good client counselor and excellent mentor."

Kathy Maybaum, business manager at Cramer-Krasselt, said Reed has worked as an outside counsel to her company for over four years.

"I think she is a great combination of intelligence and practicality," Maybaum said. "She has a lot of experience that she brings to everything, and she also understands the business perspective of our business, and is very practical in the kind of advice she gives."

Living Out Her Dreams

William, her husband of 25 years, inspired Reed to live out her dreams.

Both avid sailors, he purchased an ocean-worthy sailboat, and they took a leave of absence in 1992. They sailed their 32-foot boat nonstop for 22 days and nights from Norfolk, Va., to St. Thomas.

He fulfilled a longtime dream of his by taking that trip, and she realized it was now her turn. Reed made the transition from practicing law full-time to splitting her time between writing and the law in 1994.

She eventually created a new work schedule and became of counsel. She started doing regular journal writing; attending a weekly writing workshop; and participating in an intensive novel workshop.

She's written one memoir, six novels, and the musical *Fairways*, which premiered in February 2006 at Steel Beam Theatre in St. Charles, Ill. In 2007, she launched her own web site, maryhutchingsreed.com, to showcase her writing projects.

Courting Kathleen Hannigan is her first published novel, which she hopes encourages people to study how they define personal success.

"I was very tempted to gage my own success by the measures of a law firm, and those are the wrong measures," she said. "I probably became a lawyer and partner of a law firm as much because people said women can't do that, and I was capable of doing that and I was good at it."

"I didn't want people saying, 'Oh, she couldn't take it.' So I sort of got stuck doing something that I like doing, but it's not my passion. Writing is my passion." ■