

Girls Just Wanna Have Funds Walking the Thin Pink Line

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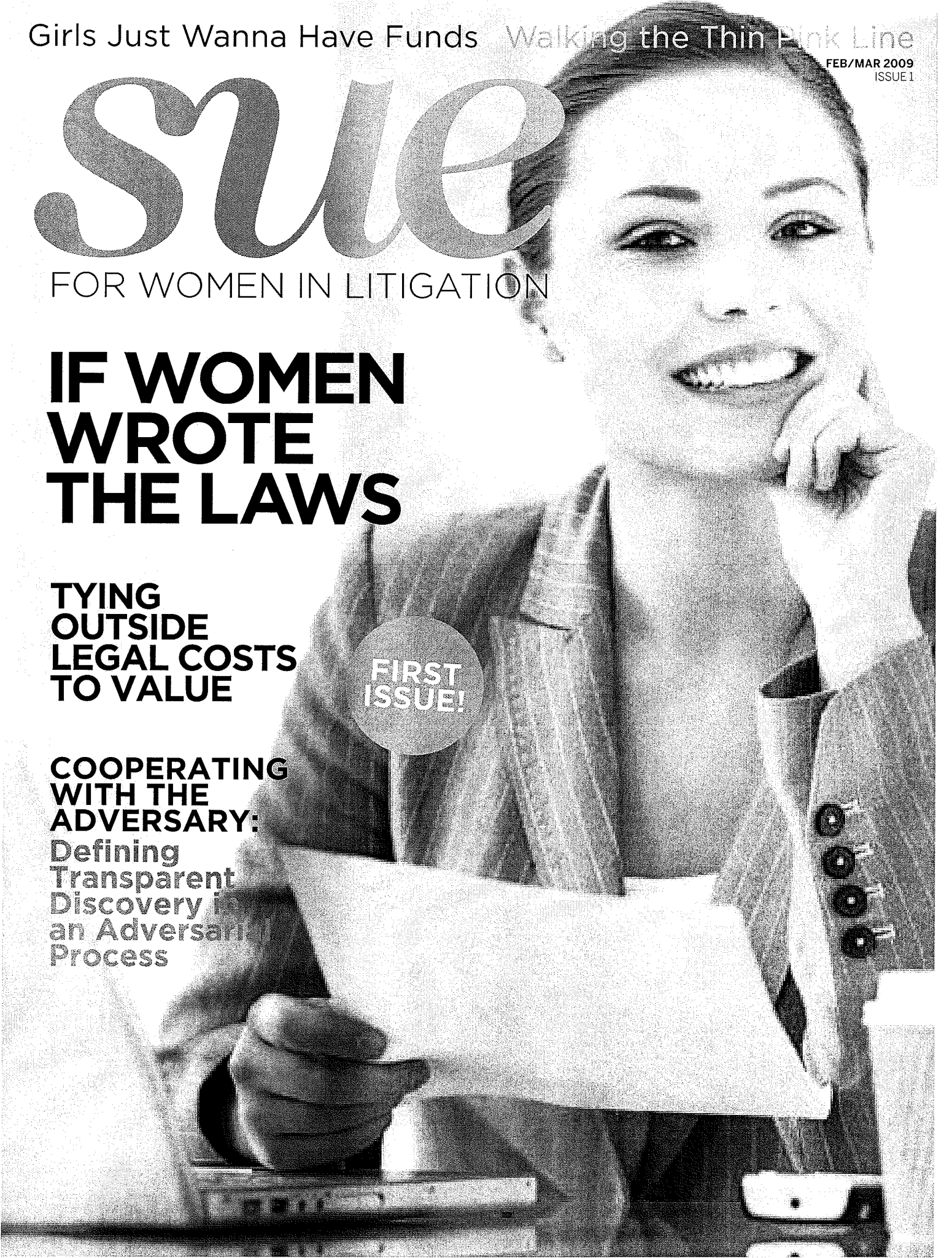
FOR WOMEN IN LITIGATION

IF WOMEN WROTE THE LAWS

**TYING
OUTSIDE
LEGAL COSTS
TO VALUE**

**COOPERATING
WITH THE
ADVERSARY:
Defining
Transparent
Discovery in
an Adversarial
Process**

FIRST
ISSUE!





SWEET SUCCESS

Pamela Bresnahan

Skill and experience is this litigator's formula for a triumphant career in a highly competitive market.

Tough, smart and determined would be an accurate way to describe Pamela Bresnahan, 50ish, partner at the prestigious firm of Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP in the Washington D.C. office. Never afraid of speaking up, Bresnahan was picked to be the head of her firm's litigation practice group and serves as trial and appellate counsel in business and commercial litigation matters. Among her many honors and awards, she was named by the National Law Journal as one of the 50 most influential lawyers in the U.S.

Tell us about yourself.

I am a native Washingtonian, University of Maryland undergrad and law school. I have loved the practice of law from the first day. I've done all kinds of trial practice working on cases all over the country and have been all over the world. It's a great life. What's not to like?

What challenges did you find when you were first starting out?

There were lots of challenges. The biggest was to figure out what worked for a woman who

wanted to do trial work. There weren't a lot of mentors who were females. Fortunately, there were "a few good men" - actually more than a few.

What challenges, if any, does being a woman present? How do you deal with those challenges?

Sometimes people are deaf to a woman's voice. So I have been known to tell a man "at the table" with me, "You are not listening to me. Maybe I should get a man to tell you the same thing."

Tell us about a time you may have bumped into opposition on the job because you were a woman.

I was once told that I could not be present at a client meeting because no women were allowed. So I spoke from behind a plant - I kid you not. It was cultural scenario.

Do you think that women play the corporate game differently than men? If not, should they?

If women have families and children, it is hard to go out and entertain clients five nights a week. I think most women who work outside the home have all these challenges.

There are about 1 million lawyers in the U.S. "Yet, only 17% of partners are women."

Being a partner in any law firm requires lots of time. If you have children, it is hard to find a balance. Law firms are not always family friendly. Clients are demanding, particularly when paying top dollar for legal services. Also, some women prefer working on their own to control their workload.

What can women do about being paid less?

Work more hours.

What is your strategy for getting the best cases?

I wanted the plum assignments, so I wasn't well-behaved. If I wanted something and they gave it to some bozo, I would take it away. The point is, some fighting goes on and some women don't do that. I was sort of lying-in-wait for the dumb ones to screw up. Someone said I was predatory but I thought it was like waiting for the heavy-hanging fruit. That's not how women behave culturally. However, I played sports. If you are just ruthless enough you can get what you want. Women are not taught to behave that way. I can act like my mamma taught me but you don't get to be successful from being non-competitive.

If you look at everything as a raid against females, you're going to shoot yourself.

Do women litigators try cases differently than men? If so, how?

I think women sometimes try a shorter case than men because they think people will listen to short if you are female but not long. I believe in short because no one can listen forever.

Has there ever been a time when you wanted to quit, throw in the towel, own a general store in Vermont instead?

Yes, about once a year, generally when I am tired. Vermont is too cold though. I want to own a fancy dress shop in Miami.

UP FRONT & PERSONAL

Start and end each day:

With a prayer.

Favorite vacation spot:

Ireland or any place with boats.

Why you do what you do: It's hardly ever boring.

Advice for women lawyers: Don't care what anyone thinks - find your own way.

Inspired by: My mother (a/k/a the Queen).

You changed your life when: Our son was killed.

Following your passion: Fast cards and good men.

Near and dear: Duke, the black lab.

Guilty pleasures: Nails at Glamour Nails