

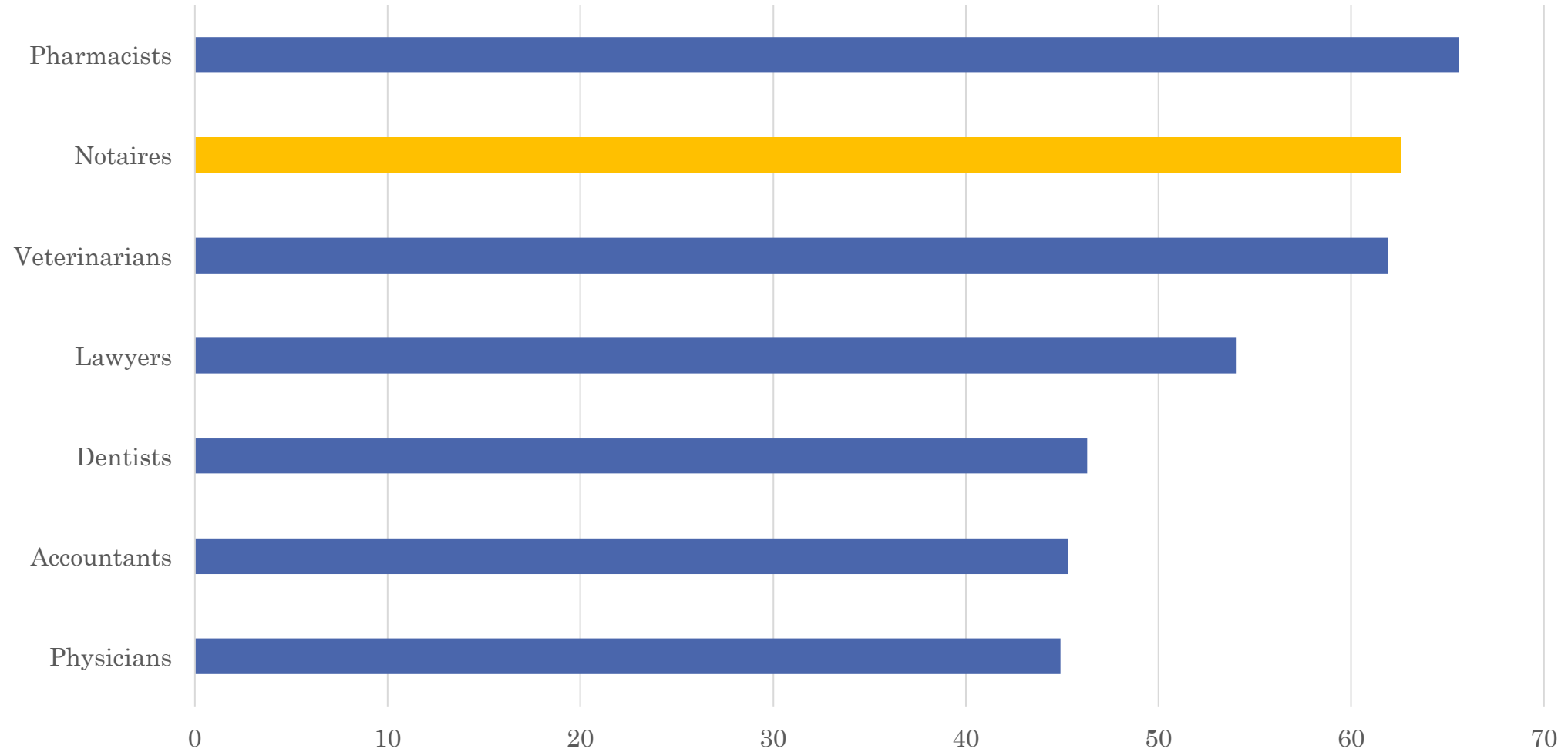
# The feminization of the notarial profession in Quebec

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## Proportion of women



Source: Office des professions du Québec

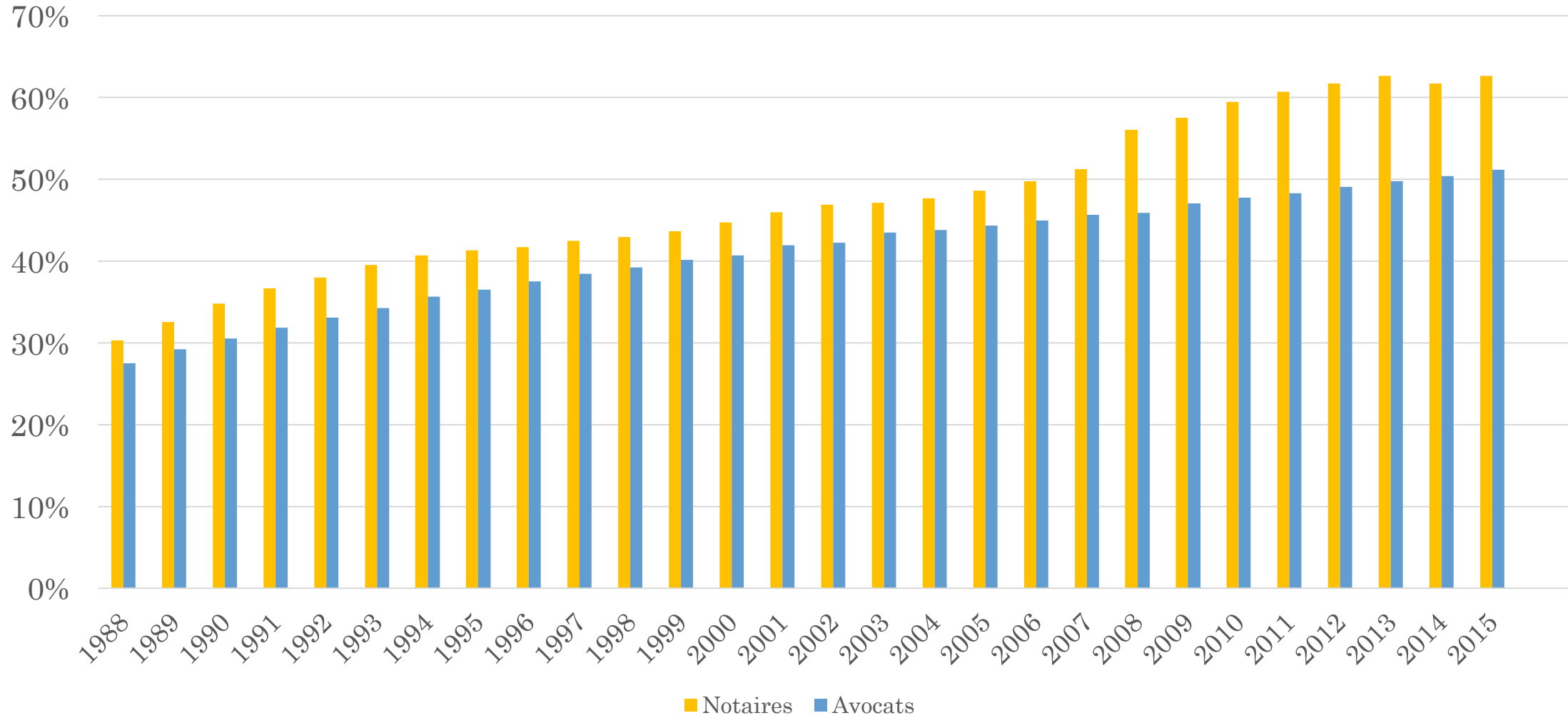
# Research questions

- Is there anything specific about the feminization of notariat vs other professions?
- What are the (specific) factors accounting for the feminization of *notariat* in Quebec?

# *Notaires vs avocats in Quebec*

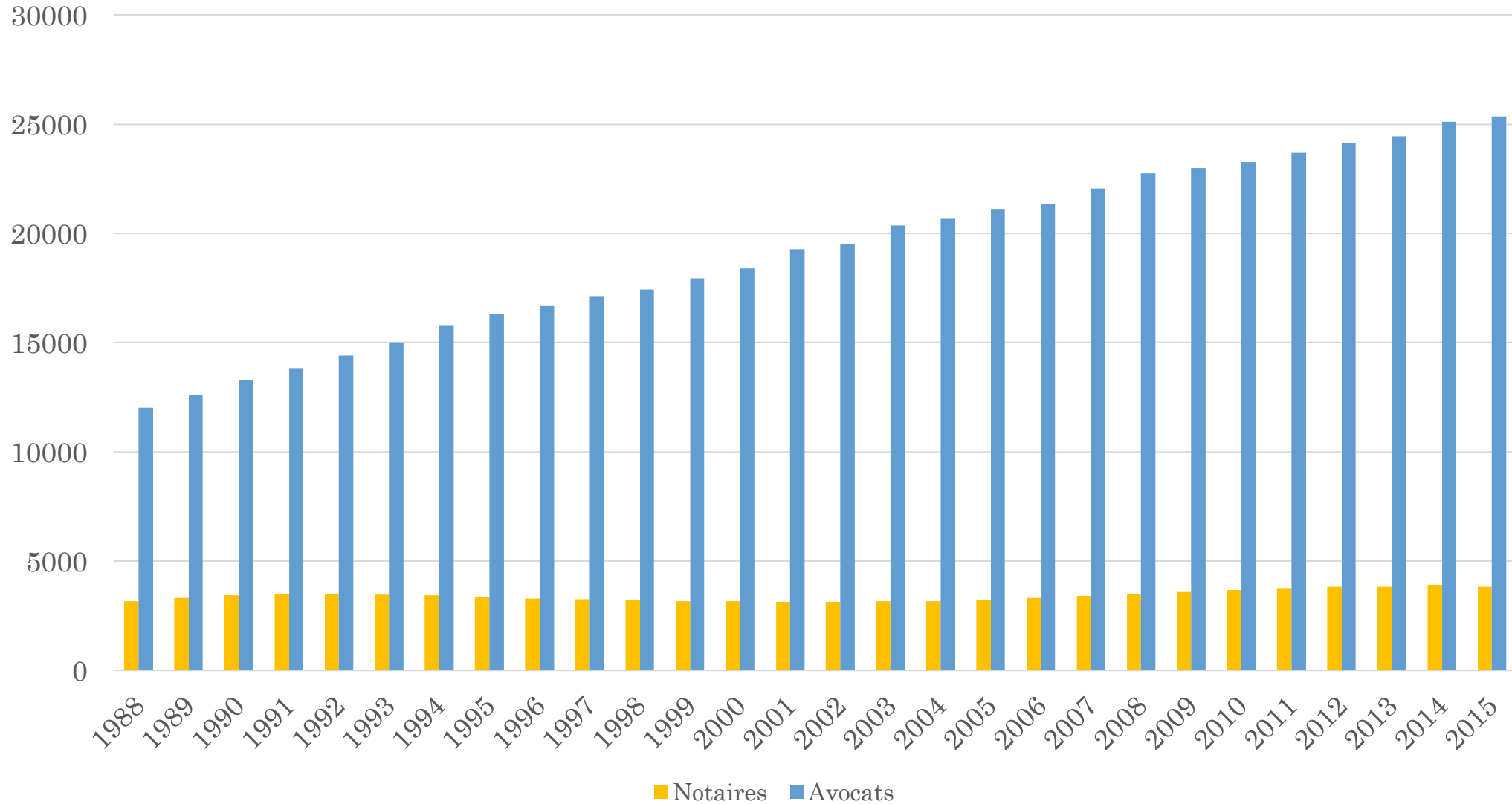
	<i>Notaires</i>	<i>Avocats</i>
Title	Both are called « Maitre »	
Law school	3-year Bachelor in laws	
Postgraduate training	Master in notarial law (in law school) 4-month internship	4- to 8-month in Bar school 6-month internship
Legal monopoly on :	-execution of acts that require notarial form (mortgages, marriage, gift of immovables...)	-representation of clients in court
Work context	<p>”Traditional model” dominates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-private practice (around 80%)</li> <li>-over 75% are in solo practice or very small firms</li> <li>-”general practice”, with emphasis on real estate</li> <li>-fixed rates</li> </ul>	<p>Variety of work contexts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-about 50% in private practice</li> <li>-from solo practice to very large firms</li> <li>-hourly rates</li> </ul>

# % of women - *notaires vs avocats*



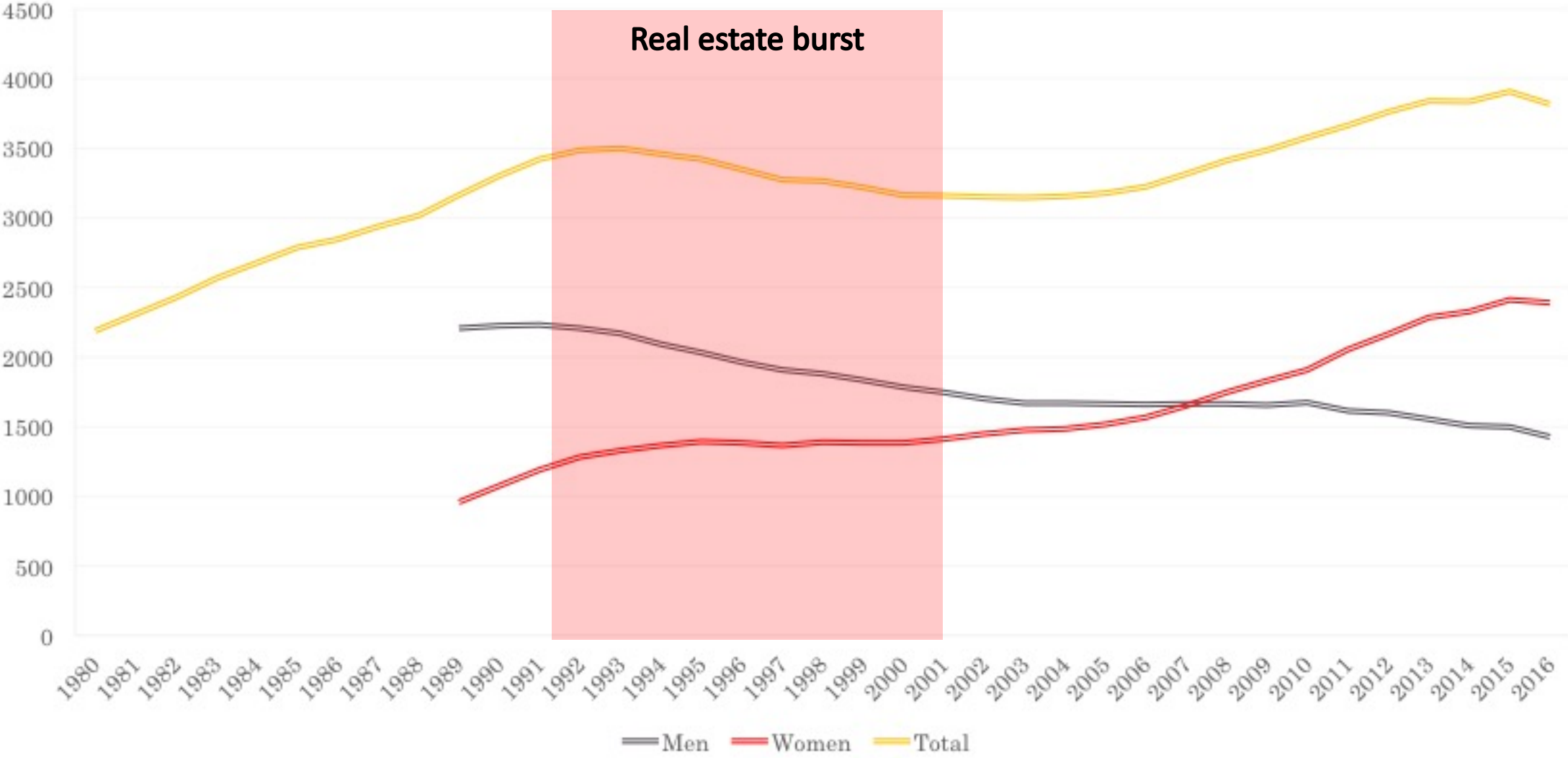
Source: Chambre des notaires and Barreau du Québec

# Total number of *notaires* and *avocats*



Source: Chambre des notaires and Barreau du Québec

# Number of *notaires*



Source: Chambre des notaires and Barreau du Québec

# The feminization of notariat

- More extensive / faster than in other professions in Quebec
- Increase of % women coincides with enduring state of crisis in the profession

**Why are women attracted to *notariat*?**



# 1. Differences in salary expectations

- Women have lower salary expectations than men and thus are
  - More likely to choose occupations with lower salaries
  - More likely to stay in less lucrative occupations
- *Hypothesis*: Male and female law students react differently to information about market conditions

# 1. Differences in salary expectations

BUT, are students aware of prevailing conditions?

"I did not choose to be a *notaire* to make money. I would not do anything else, I love really my job, I am happy to go to work every morning, to meet my clients, but this is not what I expected. All I invested, all those years of study, the student debt I incurred... It's a bit disappointing. It **is** a disappointment. I tell myself it's gonna pay off one day, but.." (woman)

"All my friends think I am rich. That's not true. It is stunning, realizing you have to work so many hours just to make a decent wage." (woman)

## 2. Differences in career priorities

- Sullivan & Mainiero (2007): types of careers related to gender roles
  - 'Alpha' careers = advancement, challenge, prestige
  - 'Beta' careers = flexibility, stability, pleasant work environment
- Men more likely to be found in 'alpha' careers and women in beta careers
- *Hypothesis*: notariat **is perceived** as
  - A less competitive/stressful milieu than law firms
  - Less demanding / providing more control over one's life (work-life balance)

## 2. Differences in career priorities

“For me it looked easier to start as a *notaire* than as an *avocat* – it was my impression at the time. You know, this race for articling position lawyers have to enter, it’s kind of scary. I had been working for 6 years to pay for my studies, I had a baby at home, I didn’t see myself entering the race...” (male *notaire*)

“I did the course aux stages, even got some offers from Big Law, but I found the work environment was not for me.”  
(female *notaire*)

### 3. Differences in values and interests

- Division of occupations along gender lines related to gender stereotypes:
  - ‘masculine’ occupations: strength, independence, assertiveness...
  - ‘feminine’ occupations: empathy, care, collaboration...

*Hypothesis:* Notariat is **perceived** as a ‘feminine’ profession

- Focus on people, real-life issues
- Problem-solving/ mediation vs conflict management/litigation

# 3. Differences in values and interests

- The ‘human side’ of legal things

ENTREVUES | Mercredi le 19 Octobre 2016

## Notaire : « Un travail plus serein que celui des avocats »

Par : Céline Gobert | Le : 2016-10-19 14h30



Entrevue  
**Pourquoi choisit-on de se lancer dans le notariat? Quels sont les défis d'un notaire? Pourquoi est-ce mieux que de pratiquer comme avocat? Droit-inc a voulu en savoir plus...**

*‘L’avocat rencontre des gens malheureux, le notaire des gens heureux’*

-Me Guay, (then) president, Chambre des notaires

“Notariat is about the human side of things, contact with people, being at their side at the most important moments of their lives, I really think that makes it a fine profession (*beau métier*). That’s what I wanted, to be close to people” (female *notaire*)

# 3. Differences in values and interests

- **Conciliation / Distaste for litigation**

“I did not see myself before the court ... Hmmm... Building cases, with all the stress that goes with it...” (male *notaire*)

“I had no interest in litigation, I was more into conflict prevention, and contract writing, rather than litigate, represent people... I am a little uncomfortable in conflict situations. Being a *notaire* means meeting with people, planning, talking, prevention work, it's closer to who I am.” (female *notaire*)

“In litigation, you keep fighting about issues that ... To me, quarreling for years to solve a problem, it comes down to a matter of pride more than anything. Anyway, I thought notarial practice was closer to reality, on the down-to-earth side of things.” (female *notaire*)

# Questions

If the feminisation of *notariat* is related to perceptions of notarial practice, to what extent do these perceptions reflect the realities of notaires?

- Salary expectations: based on what? realistic?
- Is *notariat* a 'beta' career? A feminine profession?



# Questions

- Work-life balance is not without costs...

“I did not want to work 80 hours a week like my father did, working on weekends, receiving calls at home... I wanted to do it my own way, and I did... I had three children, and I still work.” (female *notaire*)

“You can make 100 000\$ as a *notaire*, that’s feasible, but it takes a lot of work. It’s not a 9 to 5 job, more like 9 to 9, and working Saturdays, if you want a good salary. Sometimes, you wonder, is it really what I want in life?” (male *notaire*)

“We’re supposed to bill X times our base salary. It is a bit too much for me. Some people may be able to work longer hours, but for me, being a woman, with a family... It’s impossible for me to reach this billing goal.” (female *notaire*)

# Questions

- Helping people or running a business?

“I went to law school to practice law, to become an *avocat* or a *notaire*, not an entrepreneur, I did not want a business! That’s something you don’t learn in school, that you’re very likely to end up in a job where you have to build your own customer base...” (female *notaire*)

“You don’t have to have an entrepreneurial spirit to be a *notaire*, you can be a non-entrepreneurial *notaire* if you want. You’re gonna live hand to mouth, but it’s totally up to you.” (male *notaire*)