

## 3L and the City > column



By Blake Korb  
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### A case of third-year blues

**W**hen people ask me how excited I am to be graduating from law school, I find it difficult to convey just how excited I am.

I really am looking forward to graduation. Yet the truth is, whenever I think about graduation, I think about the months following graduation, and I can't help but feel, well, blue.

In all honesty, I seem to have come down with a case of "senioritis."

I have seen it in most of my third-year peers, too.

While I really did not start to feel it until my final semester, I noticed several of my classmates showing signs on the very first day of the third year.

We have all worked really hard over the last two years.

And now we are so focused on the bar exam and getting a job, classes just seem to be lower on our priority list.

At the same time, the lack of motivation is definitely haunting us.

It's not that we feel bored — contrary to the popular cliché: "The first year they scare you to death, the second year they work you to death and the third year they bore you to death."

But we do feel restless and anxious.

Some of my friends joke that they feel like they are already done with law school and have to remind themselves that they still have to earn grades this final semester.

I like to think that it's just that we feel confident in our legal knowledge and feel ready to graduate.

I know I especially feel anxious about starting my career soon.

But, at the same time, I don't feel particularly excited about spending the best time of the year in Chicago — the summer — studying for the bar exam.

And after the bar exam, I'm extremely anxious about what it's going to take to find a full-time job.

I won't have a job by the time I graduate and it could be several months later until I am finally hired.

I won't even be sworn in as an Illinois attorney until November (assuming I pass the bar), which is the very same month that my school loans begin to come due.

Money really seems to be the main source of my blues.

After I have paid thousands of dollars for my bar review course and the bar exam itself, I still have to find a way to pay for rent and food during those months while I'm job searching.

I would like to still be clerking or interning somewhere during the fall months while I am waiting for my bar results and searching for a permanent position.

But the chances of finding a place that will pay me are slim.

I have heard some of my peers toss around the idea of serving or bartending while they search for a full-time attorney position in order to pay their bills during that time.

The looming thought of bills and loan payments is without a doubt hanging over all of the 3L heads.

A lot of conversations I have had with my peers are about our career anxiety.

On top of the usual law student anxiety caused from classes and internships, we now have the bar exam approaching and job applications to fill out every day.

Whenever I am caught up with my school work and have some free time, I know I should be spending that time working on my resume or doing something else related to my job hunt.

Even the few of my friends who already have jobs tell me how they still feel like they need to be spending their free time doing as much bar prep as possible.

It's hard not to get discouraged about the coming months.

I'm terrified of not passing the bar.

I'm terrified of not finding a job.

I'm terrified of not being able to afford my rent.

But my dad constantly reminds me that nothing worthwhile is ever easy, and more importantly, that no matter what, everything will be OK.

And I know he's right.

Maybe this time next year I'll have a great career as an attorney and I'll look back at how anxious I am right now and laugh.

Almost every attorney I have talked to said they went through this same thing their third year — even during a better economy — and they passed the bar the first time and got a job and everything ended up OK.

Hearing this makes me feel better.

I can see the finish line in my sight and plan to keep working hard until I'm actually there.

I can't let my anxiety, boredom, fear or anything else keep me from making it there now.

I've worked so hard over the last three years, and nothing can slow me down now, not even the occasional case of blues.

I can't wait to finally be the lawyer I'm meant to be. ■

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