**Pink Ghetto**

Susan Ayres†

I teach legal writing.  
That says it all  
for about 80% of the faculty  
nothing more to ask.

So, they pretty much leave me alone.  
At best, pass pleasantries  
in the hall,  
at worst, make social engagements  
in my presence  
ignoring me.  
“Like to come by for wine  
after class?”  
“Nothing fancy, just some wine and crackers  
you know.”

I smile at this play.  
The Emperor’s New Clothes  
I’m a shirt? Trousers?  
No—something really invisible  
a stained t-shirt worn  
under a crisp Oxford shirt  
yellow armpits that no one sees.

The Other. Their Dark Continent.  
“The philosophical constructs itself  
starting with the abasement of woman.  
Subordination of the feminine  
. . . for the functioning of the machine.”†

Students ask me to be faculty  
advisor for the Women’s Law Caucus.  
They perceive the school advances women’s issues  

There is no feminist jurisprudence course  
There is no full-time advisor for their organization

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There is no full professor who is a woman

A male professor starts to say something (derogatory?) about the Women’s Law Caucus. Interrupted, or kicked under the table he never finishes.
“*If they believe, in order to muster up some self-importance,*
*if they really need to believe that we’re dying of desire,*
*that we are this hole fringed with desire . . .”*²

A tenured professor confides,
“Grading all those papers, never again. I did that, too when I first started.”
Other (women) professors chat, ask concernedly,
“You surviving?”
I’m learning:
“*We are in no way obliged to deposit our lives in their banks of lack.*”³

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³ *Id.* at 255.