

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Chief Justice Ellen Ash Peters

Date 2000 July 19

Primary Maker Ellen Ash Peters

Description Oral history interview with Chief Justice Ellen Ash Peters who was interviewed by Judge Guido Calabresi on July 19, 2000 for the Connecticut Bar Foundation's History of Connecticut Women in the Legal Profession Project.

Topics Discussed: - Early Life & Immigration: Ellen Peters was born in Berlin, Germany, in 1930. She, her mother, and sister immigrated to America in December 1939, followed by her father in 1940. - Family Background: Her father was a lawyer in Germany, and her mother was a housewife with a passion for music. - High School Education: Peters attended Hunter College High School, an all-girls school in New York, and worked as a fill-in secretary in her father's office, learning to type. - Cultural Assimilation: She struggled with linguistic differences and sought to assimilate into American culture. - Family's Religious Identity: Her immediate family was agnostic. Her Jewish father, an assimilated German who fought in World War I and received the Iron Cross, was arrested in September 1938, which prompted their emigration. - College at Swarthmore: She attended Swarthmore College, triple-majored in political science, economics, and math. J. Roland Pennock: a significant political science professor. - Law School: She decided to pursue law in high school. She attended Yale Law School, her class included eleven women, a large number due to concerns about male enrollment during the Korean War. - Law Clerkship: After

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law school, she clerked for Judge Charles Clark. - Faculty at Yale Law School: She

later joined the Yale Law School faculty. She co-authored a commercial

transactions casebook, initially with Grant Gilmore, who eventually gave her full

authorship. - Judicial Career: She moved to Hartford around 1979 and became a

justice on the Connecticut Supreme Court. - Sheff v. O'Neill, which refers to a

1989 lawsuit and the subsequent 1996 Connecticut Supreme Court case (Sheff v.

O'Neill, 238 Conn. 1, 678 A.2d 1267) that resulted in a landmark decision

regarding civil rights and the right to education. - Retirement & Future.

Dimensions Duration: 2 Hours, 28 Minutes, 11 Seconds