

Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Judge Janet Hall

Date 2016 December 21

Primary Maker Janet C. Hall

Description Oral history interview with Judge Janet Hall who was interviewed by Trish Walsh on December 21, 2016 for the Connecticut Bar Foundation's History of Connecticut Women in the Legal Profession Project. Topics Discussed: - Early Life: Judge Hall was born in Lowell, Massachusetts. Her father was a successful lawyer, while her highly educated mother, a teacher, had to retire upon marriage due to Depression-era norms. - Siblings and Mother's Influence on Career Path: Judge Hall's two older brothers became lawyers. Judge Hall attributes her career aspirations largely to her mother who strongly encouraged her daughters to pursue any desired profession. Her father, however, initially held a negative view of women in law. - College: Judge Hall attended Mount Holyoke College from 1966 to 1970. Her father passed away suddenly in September 1966, just before she started college. While initially a science major, she became actively involved in student government during her junior year, influenced by the Vietnam War and women's rights movements. She was elected Student Government President in her senior year. - Law School: Judge Hall was accepted into multiple law schools. She received a full Root-Tilden Fellowship from NYU. - Early Legal Career: After law school, Judge Hall studied for the bar in Lowell. She then began her legal career at Hale and Dorr in Boston, a large firm. She was among the first three women lawyers at the firm. - Transition to

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Department of Justice: Judge Hall spent four years at the Department of Justice

in Washington D.C., but she and her husband moved to Connecticut and she

joined Robinson & Cole in January 1980, drawn by its strong litigation

department. - Cases: A significant case she handled was the Hartford Civic

Center roof collapse case. The trial, lasting eight months, was one of the longest

in Connecticut history and involved eight defense teams. - Judicial Appointment

Process : Her active participation in Bar Association activities, particularly the

Federal Practice Section of the Connecticut Bar Association, helped her gain

recognition among legal peers, which was instrumental in her recommendation

to President Clinton for a federal judgeship. - Experience as a Judge: Judge Hall

notes the significant volume of daily paperwork for judges and the need to

manage a heavy docket. - Judicial Philosophy : Judge Hall has a firm belief in the

rule of law, and she stresses the importance of judges remaining open-minded.

Dimensions Duration: 9 Minutes, 2 Seconds