Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Carolyn P. Kelly

Date 2005 February 8

Primary Maker Carolyn P. Kelly

Description Oral history interview with Carolyn P. Kelly who was interviewed by Rosemary E. Giuliano on February 8, 2005 for the Connecticut Bar Foundation's History of Connecticut Women in the Legal Profession Project. Topics Discussed: - Early Life: Carolyn Kelly was born in Clifton Springs, New York, on October 27, 1937. She grew up in Palmyra, New York. Her mother was a physical education teacher who also coached during World War II, and her father had a small business. - High School and Early Work Experience : Carolyn attended a small high school in Palmyra, New York. During her high school years, she worked part-time on farms picking berries and cherries, and later as a soda jerk at age sixteen. - College Education: Carolyn attended Syracuse University on a full scholarship, graduating in 1959. She then switched her major to International Relations, studying political science at the Maxwell School of Government Affairs, which was considered unique in the post-World War II Cold War era. - Early Career at IBM: After graduating, Carolyn Kelly moved to New York City in 1959. She was employed by IBM, initially in the Personnel Department, then administration, and finally trained as a programmer and systems engineer. - Marriage: She married Bill Kelly, a writer for Prentice Hall Publications, in New York City. - Decision to Attend Law School: Carolyn decided to go to law school around 1967. She had an interest in law but no family members in the profession

or prior experience with lawyers. - Law School Experience : Carolyn attended the University of Oregon Law School, around 1967. She transferred her job with IBM to Oregon and worked there for a year before starting law school. - Discrimination: During her law school interview, the Dean questioned what she would do if she became pregnant and whether she would drop out, and also discouraged her from working part-time. Her class started with five women and ended with four. She was on the Law Review but had no women professors. - Bar Exam : After law school, Carolyn and her husband moved to Connecticut after her husband was hired by the University of Connecticut, and she took the Bar Exam there in 1970 or 1971. She was sworn into the Bar in 1971. - First Employement in Law: Her first employment in Connecticut was as a temporary Assistant Clerk in the Superior Court in New London County, which lasted about six months. - Transition to Private Practice and Career Evolution: She accepted a position at O'Brien Schafner, where she remains today. Initially, she handled a variety of cases, but unintentionally began specializing in divorce cases due to women's groups calling her for such matters. She then transitioned into worker's compensation, specifically the Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation Act, representing injured workers, including those with asbestos exposure. - Work-Life Balance - Challenges and Advantages as a Woman in Law - Impactful Cases: Carolyn Kelly is proud of some of her work under the Longshore Act, having successfully argued several cases at the Second Circuit.

Dimensions Duration: 1 Hour, 8 Minutes