Basic Detail Report

Title Interview with Nell Jessup Newton

Date 2006 May 23

Primary Maker Nell Jessup Newton

Description Oral history interview with Nell Jessup Newton who was interviewed by Christine S. Vertefeuille on May 23, 2006 for the Connecticut Bar Foundation's History of Connecticut Women in the Legal Profession Project. Topics Discussed: - Childhood: As a child, Nell Jessup Newton grew up in western Michigan and Kirkwood, Missouri, a St. Louis suburb. - Early School: She attended parochial school but fought to attend public high school (Brentwood High School). She began working at 14 and a half. - College Journey: Nell Jessup Newton took 11 years to earn her bachelor's degree. She started at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. She then moved to California for free education, arriving at Berkeley in 1968. She dropped out but returned in 1972, graduating in 1973 with a major in Ancient Greek Studies. - Decision to Law School: Her decision to go to law school was influenced by meeting the first woman lawyer at Legal Services in San Francisco, where she worked as a secretary. - Law School Experience : Newton applied to Hastings, which accepted her and offered a scholarship. She began law school in 1973. She joined the Law Review. - Early Work: During summers, she worked at California Indian Legal Services in Oakland, getting involved in Indian Law, and at Public Advocates, a public interest law firm in San Francisco. - Bar Exam: Newton took and passed the California Bar Exam on her first attempt. She was sworn into the California Bar

privately after moving to D.C. She later waived into the D.C. Bar and joined the Connecticut Bar Association as Dean. - First Legal Job: Her first full-time job in law was as a legal writing teacher at Catholic University in Washington, D.C. - Deanship: As Dean of the University of Connecticut School of Law, Nell Jessup Newton fosters a bottom-up leadership style, enabling faculty initiatives like the asylum and human rights clinic. - Challenges for Women in Law: She observed that in the late 1970s, while women were hired by top firms, they were often not hired in equal numbers to men. - Bar Association and Community Involvement: Nell Jessup Newton is a member of the California, D.C., and Connecticut Bar Associations. She was active in the Denver Bar Association and Inns of Court during her time there. In Connecticut, she became a Cooper Fellow with the Connecticut Bar Foundation and served on its Advisory Committee. - Impact of Historical Events on Career : Nell Jessup Newton believes historical events significantly impacted her career. The civil rights movement was inspiring, especially given her personal experiences living in poverty and interacting with people of color who showed her kindness. The Vietnam War also deeply affected her, as she lost her "first true love" in the war and became active in the anti-war movement.

Dimensions Duration: 1 Hour, 24 Minutes