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Title Interview with Patricia R. Kaplan

Date 2017 January 4

Primary Maker Patricia R. Kaplan

Description Oral history interview with Patricia R. Kaplan who was interviewed by Mary Christy Fisher on January 4, 2017 for the Connecticut Bar Foundation's History of Connecticut Women in the Legal Profession Project. Topics Discussed: - Early Life: Born in 1940, Pat Kaplan was raised in Long Island, where she was told that women's futures were to get married and have children. However, she was also expected to have a career as a nurse, secretary, or teacher as a fallback. - College: Pat Kaplan majored in theatre at Barnard College and was the first stage manager for the musical "The Fantasticks." She later became an early childhood education teacher, then a stay-at-home mother for ten years. - Path to Law School: In the early 1970s, Pat became involved with the League of Women Voters in Branford, Connecticut, and helped start the town's first state-funded daycare center. Her work on this project, along with being inspired by trials she observed, including the Black Panther trial, led her to apply to law school. - Law School: At age 35, she was accepted to the University of Connecticut School of Law. While in law school, she worked for the public defenders and for New Haven Legal Assistance, which became her career goal. - Career at Valley Legal Assistance: After graduation, Pat was hired as a VISTA attorney and was tasked with developing the Valley Legal Assistance office, where she worked from 1978 to 1991. While there, she and attorney Bennett

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Pudlin helped start the domestic violence program, The Umbrella, and worked on cases involving discrimination and family law. - New Haven Legal Assistance Director: In September 1991, she became the first woman director of New Haven Legal Assistance, a position she held for 21 years. - Family Reactions: Pat's parents responded to her becoming a lawyer by using "gender-humor," which she found upsetting, and her first husband felt threatened by her career, which contributed to the end of their marriage.

Dimensions Duration: 8 Minutes, 59 Seconds