ABA Senior Lawyers Division
Women Trailblazers in the Law

ORAL HISTORY

of

JOAN M. HALL

Interviewer: Terri Mascherin

Dates of Interviews:

February 27, 2013
March 6, 2013
JOAN HALL INTERVIEW
FEBRUARY 27, 2013

MS. MASCHERIN: Good afternoon, Joan. This is Terri Mascherin and this is the first of our interview sessions, and today is February the 27th of 2013, which means that as of today you have been at Jenner & Block for 48 years?

MS. HALL: That sounds correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: Thereabouts.

MS. HALL: Um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: And—


MS. MASCHERIN: 1965. I want to go back even farther than that and start with your childhood, and tell us, first of all, where you were born.

MS. HALL: I was born in the town of Inman, Nebraska, population approximately 100, and we lived there until I was about three years old. My father was the superintendent of the school and my mother was the home economics teacher.

MS. MASCHERIN: In a town of 100 how big is this school?

MS. HALL: Well, children come in from the surrounding area and live in town during—they come in from the farms and ranches in the area and live in the town during the week and go home on the weekends. But this school was small. And then we moved to the town of Bassett, population 800, which was really where I grew up. And I lived there until I went to college.

MS. MASCHERIN: So, Inman, Nebraska.
MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Let's go back to Inman. You lived there until age three?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And were you in the town, or on a farm?

MS. HALL: No, we were in town. But all of my aunts and uncles and grandparents lived on farms and ranches, and I had a number of cousins and so I regularly visited them in the country.

MS. MASCHERIN: And this is 1939. What part of Nebraska?

MS. HALL: It's an area called the Sand Hills. It's very beautiful; it's in the middle of the state, up near the South Dakota border, and there are low, rolling hills covered with grass and it's very beautiful.

MS. MASCHERIN: And is it ranching country, more than farming country?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: How long had your family been in Nebraska?

MS. HALL: I don't know the exact year, but that's certainly where my mother and father both grew up. They grew up in the same general area of the—out in the county—and they were both teachers in different one-room schoolhouses.

MS. MASCHERIN: Wow. Now, tell me again, the second town that you lived to, that you moved to, was Bassett?

MS. HALL: Bassett.

MS. MASCHERIN: And—

MS. HALL: That's where I went to elementary school and high school.
MS. MASCHERIN: How large was your class, going through school?

MS. HALL: I was always very proud to say I was first in my class of 16.

MS. MASCHERIN: And that was, was this a K through 12 school?

MS. HALL: No, the high school was separate, so it was the Rock County High School.

The town of Bassett was the county seat for Rock County. And, again, my father was the superintendent and my mother was the home economics teacher, and students came from the surrounding countryside and lived in town during the week.

MS. MASCHERIN: Where did the students live?

MS. HALL: Out of the farms and ranches, those who didn’t live in town.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right, but where did they live in town?

MS. HALL: Oh, they would stay with families. Families would take them in.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did your family take in students who came in?

MS. HALL: No, we had an extremely small house, and I had an older sister and a younger brother. And because my mother always worked we had someone who lived in to prepare meals and help with the house. So we had six people in a very small house and an even smaller bathroom.

MS. MASCHERIN: One bathroom, of course?

MS. HALL: One bathroom, of course.

MS. MASCHERIN: And what is your sister’s name?

MS. HALL: My sister’s name is Marilyn.

MS. MASCHERIN: And she’s how much older than you?

MS. HALL: She’s four years older.
MS. MASCHERIN: And your brother?

MS. HALL: My brother is five years younger, and his name is Jim.

MS. MASCHERIN: And what do they do now?

MS. HALL: My sister is a retired accountant, and my brother went to medical school and got his Ph.D. in biochemistry and for many years he ran a company in Nebraska which tested drugs on human subjects—paid volunteers. And he's now retired. He served for several years as President of the Board of Regents of the University of Nebraska.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did your mother work?

MS. HALL: My mother always worked.

MS. MASCHERIN: Was that unusual in your, you know, in the town of Bassett?

MS. HALL: Well, there were other teachers, there were other women teachers who were working.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did she take any time when you and your brother and sister were born?

MS. HALL: You know, I do not know the answer to that. So I was five when my brother was born and I have no recollection.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you remember her not working?

MS. HALL: No, no. I remember her being super-organized. My brother visited me over the weekend, and we were talking about how on Sunday nights we would sit down with our mother and she would—we came home for lunch on school days and she would sit down and write out the menus for the whole week so we had an opportunity to have input on what we wanted for lunch or dinner.
MS. MASCHERIN: And who prepared these lunches?

MS. HALL: Well, in those days in Nebraska they were called a hired girl. That's who lived in.

MS. MASCHERIN: And did you have the same hired girl throughout?

MS. HALL: No, we had a series.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were they young women from—

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: The area? The country?

MS. HALL: Yes, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Very interesting. What was it like—your school in Bassett, when you were going through grade school, was it just one class per grade?

MS. HALL: Yes. Definitely.

MS. MASCHERIN: And what did the other—what were the other kids in the class like? What kind of backgrounds did they come from?

MS. HALL: Well, they were children of merchants in town. You know, the family that owned the drug store, the family that owned the movie theater. And then they were the children of farmers and ranchers.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you still have contact with anybody from that time?

MS. HALL: I have contact with one friend from my class, who still lives in Nebraska.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did most of the folks that you grew up with in Bassett stay in Nebraska?

MS. HALL: A number of them did.

MS. MASCHERIN: What kinds of things did you like to do when you were a kid?

MS. HALL: Well, there was a big premium on achievement in my family, so—
MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] That’s evident.

MS. HALL: I busied myself with every possible activity. And I always worked from the time I was 12. When I was in high school I had to—I played the organ for church. I didn’t get paid for playing for Sunday services, but I got paid for weddings and funerals. I gave piano lessons. I wrote for a daily newspaper in a larger town, the Norfolk Daily News, and I got paid by the inch. And I worked as a secretary and a sales clerk in a dry goods store where we sold cowboy boots and cowboy hats and sheets and towels and things of that nature. At school, in high school, I was involved in every activity that was offered—marching band, chorus, small singing groups, extemporaneous speaking, drama, cheerleading, all those things.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did you play in the band?

MS. HALL: I played the clarinet.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you still—

MS. HALL: I no longer have a clarinet.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you play anything?

MS. HALL: Yes, I play the piano.

MS. MASCHERIN: And you’ve told me you took that up again recently.

MS. HALL: That’s correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: Quite recently, then.

MS. HALL: That’s correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was it like living in, you know, a small community like that?
MS. HALL: It was very wonderful. Everyone knew you so there was no chance to get in trouble. Anywhere you went someone was watching you who knew your family, so it was a very close-knit community. I still subscribe to the weekly newspaper, the Rock County Leader.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you really?

MS. HALL: Yes, I get it every week. And on the second page there’s a column that’s A Hundred Years Ago, Seventy-Five Years Ago, Fifty Years Ago. Recently my brother’s name was in there for a singing group that he was in when he was in high school. And the first week of the month, on the back of the newspaper, there’s a calendar and it lists everyone’s birthdays and anniversaries.

MS. MASCHERIN: Everyone who still lives in the town—

MS. HALL: Everyone’s.

MS. MASCHERIN: Or everyone who gets the—?

MS. HALL: No, everyone who still lives there.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you still have relatives in the area?

MS. HALL: I do not. My brother lives in Lincoln, which is 250 miles away. When I was growing up, we went to Lincoln and Omaha for orthopedic shoes and glasses.

MS. MASCHERIN: What about, was there a doctor in Bassett?

MS. HALL: There was a doctor, and a very small hospital.

MS. MASCHERIN: You graduated from high school and attended Nebraska Wesleyan.
MS. HALL: I did. I grew up as a Methodist. I was very active in the Methodist Church as a child, and in high school. I made my first trip to Chicago as part of a Methodist Church youth group in Bassett. And we came to Chicago and we slept on the pews of the Methodist Church that is across the street from the Daley Center.

MS. MASCHERIN: That’s a beautiful church.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: When was it that you came with your youth group?

MS. HALL: When I was a junior in high school.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you remember any other trips that you took when you were a kid or in high school that really stood out?

MS. HALL: Our family took one trip. We took a car trip to the west coast to visit relatives and it was, I believe it was before my brother was born because in this one car we had my mother and father, my mother’s parents and my sister and me. Then the other trip I remember is that, when I was a senior in high school I won the Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow Award for the state of Nebraska.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] In your spare time.

MS. HALL: And people always thought that it was a cooking contest, but it wasn’t. It was a standardized test, like the SAT, and as a winner of that contest my mother and I won a trip to the east coast. And that was the first time I was on an airplane. We flew to New York, we stayed at the Waldorf Astoria, we went to Williamsburg, Virginia, and my school got a set of free
encyclopedias, and I got my first year of college tuition. So it was a big deal.

MS. MASCHERIN: Quite a big deal.

MS. HALL: Um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: Quite a big deal. What do you remember about that plane trip? What was it like?

MS. HALL: Well, I remember we were going to Washington but we had to stop in Chicago. I remember that.

MS. MASCHERIN: Probably for fuel.

MS. HALL: Probably for fuel, yes. Um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you remember what airline it was?

MS. HALL: No, I have no idea.

MS. MASCHERIN: This would have been probably in the—

MS. HALL: Mid-fifties.

MS. MASCHERIN: Mid-fifties, so—

MS. HALL: Probably United Airlines.

MS. MASCHERIN: Yes.

MS. HALL: Probably.

MS. MASCHERIN: Airplane travel was still not very—

MS. HALL: Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Typical then.

MS. HALL: Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: It was quite the extravagant trip.
MS. HALL: Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Where did you go on the trip to the west coast?

MS. HALL: We went to Oregon, and we went to the redwoods.

MS. MASCHERIN: You had family who had been ranchers.

MS. HALL: Yes. That's right.

MS. MASCHERIN: In Nebraska, as well.

MS. HALL: That's right.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did they raise?

MS. HALL: They raised cattle, primarily, so they grew wheat and hay. And then always right at the homestead there would be the usual farm animals, pigs, chickens. And I would—there was one farm where my maternal grandparents lived and an aunt and uncle who had a daughter my age, and I would stay there frequently in the summer. And my brother worked in the hay field there, and I would help my aunt. We would, in the morning we would prepare—they called their noonday meal dinner—we would kill chickens and strip the feathers and cook them and make pies and take all of those things to the men in the field at noon. I also—all of those cousins attended one-room schoolhouses, so on my vacations I would visit them and go to their one-room school house with them.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was that like?

MS. HALL: It was a very interesting operation. First of all, the teacher did everything. The teacher cleaned the building, made the fire, pumped the water, and you could have a year where you had children in each of the eight grades.
And because they’re all in the same room it’s wonderful for bright, little children because they learn from what the older children are doing.

MS. MASCHERIN: Was it a very different experience in that kind of a classroom than even in the small class that you were in?

MS. HALL: I think it was. I think the one-room schoolhouse was a very unique institution, and Nebraska was the last state to do away with one-room schoolhouses.

MS. MASCHERIN: I heard recently that there was one in the Chicago area.

MS. HALL: Really?

MS. MASCHERIN: On the fringe somewhere. The woman who is general counsel of Leo Burnett, whose name is escaping me right now but I’m sure you know who I’m speaking of, apparently attended a one-room schoolhouse.

MS. HALL: Really?

MS. MASCHERIN: And, so, she can’t be that old, and relatively recently.

MS. HALL: Um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: Fascinating.

MS. HALL: Um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you choose Nebraska Wesleyan?

MS. HALL: I was Methodist, and my sister had gone there.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you apply anywhere else to college?

MS. HALL: I don’t think so.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did it ever occur to you that Nebraska Wesleyan would not accept you?

MS. HALL: No, I’m sure that they took all comers.
MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]  

MS. HALL: I feel confident that was the case.  

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] All right. Was it unusual that you and your sister went to college? Or was this typical—  

MS. HALL: I think there was one other person, there was one other person in my class that went to college.  

MS. MASCHERIN: And was that a boy or a girl?  

MS. HALL: It was a boy.  

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you have any other girlfriends from Bassett who ever went to college?  

MS. HALL: No.  

MS. MASCHERIN: Why did you go?  

MS. HALL: Well, it was expected in my family. My parents earned their undergraduate degrees during the Depression, and then when we were small we went to Lincoln, to the University of Nebraska for three or four summers where my father got his Masters. And then when that was finished we went to the University of Wyoming in Laramie for three or four summers while my mother got her Masters. So there was a big premium on education in my family.  

MS. MASCHERIN: Were your parents the first in your families to have gone to college?  

MS. HALL: Yes.  

MS. MASCHERIN: What did you think when you went off to college? What were you going to be when you grew up?  

MS. HALL: I had no idea. Never really thought about it.
MS. MASCHERIN: Were there many women at Nebraska Wesleyan?

MS. HALL: Yes, um-hmm. I don’t know exactly, but I think it was, it was probably roughly equal.

MS. MASCHERIN: And was Nebraska Wesleyan a residential—

MS. HALL: It was.

MS. MASCHERIN: University?

MS. HALL: Yes. I lived in a freshman dorm. I had two jobs. I was a secretary for the head of the English Department and I played the organ for a Lutheran Church in town.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did you study?

MS. HALL: I majored in sociology.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why sociology? What was it?

MS. HALL: Well, I always, I think I always wanted to help people, and somehow I felt that would further that goal.

MS. MASCHERIN: What kinds of things did you do when you were in college?

MS. HALL: Well, again, I was extremely active in everything. So I did the same things, you know. I was a sociology major and a music minor, so I practiced the piano, I practiced the organ, I joined a sorority, I was the president of my sorority, I played in the marching band. All the usual activities.

MS. MASCHERIN: What sorority were you a member of?

MS. HALL: It was a local sorority. It was called a Willard, and it was named for the Temperance woman.
MS. MASCHERIN: From Evanston.

MS. HALL: From Evanston. And it was a very temperate college. There was no drinking, no smoking, you had to be in your room at nine o’clock, and there was compulsory chapel twice a week.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you have a boyfriend in college?

MS. HALL: Not really. A couple of short-term—until I was a senior.

MS. MASCHERIN: When you were approaching the end of college, what were your thoughts about what you would do after college?

MS. HALL: I didn’t really have a lot of thoughts. In my senior year I went on a program called Washington Semester, so there were two women and two men from my college who went to American University in Washington, D.C. for the first semester. We lived in the dorms, we went—we participated in programs on Capitol Hill, all over town. Our senator from Nebraska gave us tickets for the JFK inauguration, on a very cold day.

MS. MASCHERIN: So you go to D.C. for your fall semester?

MS. HALL: Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: And were you taking classes at American?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was Washington, D.C. like then? Would it, you know for a girl from Nebraska?

MS. HALL: Well, it seemed like a big city to me. I remember taking the train to get there, and I thought that was quite an adventure, and then we lived in the
dormitory. And there were students from other colleges all over the
United States in the program.

MS. MASCHERIN: What were you studying while you were there?

MS. HALL: Primarily government, public policy.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who was the senator from Nebraska?

MS. HALL: Roman Hruska.

MS. MASCHERIN: What do you remember about JFK’s inauguration?

MS. HALL: I remember it was very cold. It was very cold. And we stood on those—they were smaller events in those days—and we stood on the steps of the Capitol.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you remember the speech?

MS. HALL: Oh, you know, I can’t separate what I now know he said from what I remember.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you feel at the time—were you a Republican or a Democrat?

MS. HALL: I was a Democrat, yeah.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you feel at the time?

MS. HALL: I was excited that he was president.

MS. MASCHERIN: Had you supported him in the election? Had you been active?

MS. HALL: I had not.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was the atmosphere like in Washington, D.C. on that day?

MS. HALL: I think the people were very excited to have such a young, elegant couple moving into the White House, and I think there was great hope about what he could do leading the country.
MS. MASCHERIN: Had anybody in your family served in the military? I'm just thinking—I'm free associating, thinking he took over, of course, from Eisenhower. Had anyone been in the war?

MS. HALL: I had a great-grandfather who had been in World War I and that's all.

MS. MASCHERIN: When did you graduate from Nebraska Wesleyan?


MS. MASCHERIN: And what next?

MS. HALL: Well, in my second semester, when I returned to the campus of Nebraska Wesleyan I decided to go to graduate school. And I was late in getting my applications in because I had been in Washington. And I had to go somewhere that would give me a fellowship which funded my education. So I applied for and was accepted to a graduate sociology program at Rutgers University.

MS. MASCHERIN: In New Jersey.

MS. HALL: In New Jersey. I went to Rutgers in the fall. It was—the undergraduate college was all male. There was a small building in the middle of the campus that was housing for graduate women, so when you left the dorm and walked over to get your mail or get food, guys would hang out the windows and hoot and holler. And my fellowship required me to travel to Trenton, New Jersey, which was not a terribly desirable location.

MS. MASCHERIN: This is 1962?

MS. HALL: Yes. And I had met a young man from Nebraska Wesleyan during the Washington Semester program who was very interested in marrying me,
so during the time that I was in New Jersey he sent me a dozen yellow roses every week and urged me to come back to Nebraska. And he had known since he was very young that he was going to be a lawyer, so he said to me, “Why don’t you go to law school, too?” and I said I have nothing better to do, so at the end of the first semester I left Rutgers, returned to Lincoln, Nebraska, got a secretarial job. We were not married at the time we applied to law school, so there was no way to indicate that we were planning to be married and came as a pair. We applied to five law schools and we got into all of them, and we chose Yale on a very scientific basis without having seen the campus. We went to Yale because they gave us the most money.

MS. MASCHERIN: What were the other schools you applied to?

MS. HALL: They gave us tuition and living expenses for the first year—

MS. MASCHERIN: Wow.

MS. HALL: And we only had to borrow the last two years.

MS. MASCHERIN: Had you done that well in college?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And your fiancé as well, I guess?

MS. HALL: Yes, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What other schools did you apply to?

MS. HALL: We applied to Harvard, Yale, Georgetown. I’m not sure about the other two.

MS. MASCHERIN: So you went off to Yale then in 1962?
MS. HALL: Got married in the summer and went off to law school in the fall.

MS. MASCHERIN: Okay, so '62 or thereabouts?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: How many women were in your class?

MS. HALL: Seven.

MS. MASCHERIN: And did you get along with them? Did they—was it a—

MS. HALL: Well, I was married and none of the others were married. We lived in married student housing. We brought our lunch in a brown bag every day. There was a small lounge where the few married students and the few students who lived in New Haven ate their lunch. So, apart from the fact that there was only one ladies restroom in the law school, I didn’t spend a lot of time with the other women in the law school.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were there any couples, any other couples—

MS. HALL: No.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who were married to each other?

MS. HALL: No.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you get any reaction from the law school when you arrived as a married couple?

MS. HALL: Not that I’m aware of.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did the professors react to you in law school?

MS. HALL: My first class my first year was civil procedure with James W. Moore, so if you’ve ever hears of Moore’s Federal Practice, that was Prof. Moore. He was a short, stout man, and he smoked a very big cigar which he rested
on the edge of the desk during the class, and on the very first day—and
you had to stand to recite in his class—on the very first day I was the first
person he called on.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did that go?

MS. HALL: I was terrified. In fact, I walked around the whole first semester with my
mouth hanging open. I was so over-awed by all these sophisticated, Ivy
League people in my class, many of them from Yale, from Princeton, from
Harvard.

MS. MASCHERIN: And the vast majority of them men.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did they react to you?

MS. HALL: Well, again, because I was married, you know I don’t really know. I was
so engrossed in law school, in doing the work and just putting one foot
ahead of the other, you know, that I didn’t pay much attention to what
anybody thought about my being there.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you encounter any, anything that seemed to you be negative in your,
from you professors, from your—

MS. HALL: No, I did not.

MS. MASCHERIN: Classmates?

MS. HALL: But it was a very different time and when it came time to interview for
summer jobs and for permanent employment there were firms that called
the placement office and said “Don’t sign up any women for interviews
because we don’t hire women.” But we didn’t march or organize or do anything. That was just a fact of life.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did the other women in your class stick with it and graduate?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: From Nebraska?

MS. HALL: Every woman. At Yale, you mean?

MS. MASCHERIN: Right.

MS. HALL: Everyone in my law school class graduated.

MS. MASCHERIN: And where are those women now?

MS. HALL: One of them is a federal district judge. One is retired from Debevoise. She was the first women president of the Bar Association of the City of New York. Two, I believe, never practiced. They went into finance and insurance. One lives in Israel; she does very interesting research. One practiced in St. Louis and she’s no longer active in the practice.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did it take a particular type of women to go to law school at that time, do you think, as you look back on it now?

MS. HALL: I think so.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did it take?

MS. HALL: Well, I think it took a determination not to be deterred by whatever was going on around you and just deciding you were going to go to law school and study and graduate and be a lawyer.

MS. MASCHERIN: Now this is, you were really, you entered law school, Joan, at a time really before there was a lot of publicity about a women’s movement or—
MS. HALL: Absolutely.

MS. MASCHERIN: That sort of thing. Did you ever look around and say, there are only seven of us here.


MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: When I graduated in 1965, only 4% of the law school graduates that year were women.

MS. MASCHERIN: At Yale?

MS. HALL: No, in the country.

MS. MASCHERIN: Wow.

MS. HALL: In the country.

MS. MASCHERIN: Wow. You mentioned—

MS. HALL: But I never thought about it. I never thought about being so much in the minority, or you know, that we were an oddity at the law school.

MS. MASCHERIN: Very curious. Were there any folks in your class who were not white?

MS. HALL: Yes. Two of the women were not white. And there was an African-American male in the class.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you sense any kind of racial bias at the school?

MS. HALL: No, but I wouldn’t have been aware. When I was a first-year student Eleanor Holmes Norton was a third-year student, and Marian Wright Edelman was in that class as well.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were there any women professors?

MS. HALL: There was one—Ellen Peters.
MS. MASCHERIN: What did she teach?

MS. HALL: I don’t remember. I didn’t have a class from her.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you have a favorite professor at Yale?

MS. HALL: I did.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who was that?

MS. HALL: Harry Wellington.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did he teach?

MS. HALL: He taught labor law. I majored in labor law, never realizing that there was no law firm in the world that would hire a woman as a labor lawyer in 1965.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you get interested in labor law?

MS. HALL: I don’t know, I just—I enjoyed the subject.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was labor law back then?

MS. HALL: It was a—

MS. MASCHERIN: What did you learn about?

MS. HALL: It was just this, you know, the study of the law and regulations pertaining to labor relations.

MS. MASCHERIN: So, really what you would think of as sort of old school, big firm—

MS. HALL: Yes. Representing management.

MS. MASCHERIN: Representing management.

MS. HALL: Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: Kind of a practice.

MS. HALL: Right.
MS. MASCHERIN: You mentioned employment.

MS. HALL: Um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did you do? Did you have jobs during the summers?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Where did you work?

MS. HALL: The first summer we stayed in New Haven and we had a perfectly awful job. We revised—my husband and I revised the footnotes in a totally boring book for a Yale law school professor named Steve Duke. So we spent the summer in the library, which was not air conditioned, and the book was really boring. The second semester we lived in Washington, D.C. and we worked for the office of the legal advisor of the State Department.

MS. MASCHERIN: That sounds very interesting.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What kinds of work did you do?

MS. HALL: I worked in the passport office. However, I did not receive an offer of employment.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did your husband?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And what was behind that?

MS. HALL: I have no idea.

MS. MASCHERIN: Then you go back to law school for your third year?

MS. HALL: Correct.
MS. MASCHERIN: I should ask, what kinds of things were you active in? Any activities or journals, or anything like that in law school?

MS. HALL: I was—did we call it moot court? I can’t remember what we called it. I have a distinct memory of Gary Hart calling me and asking me to do whatever this was. That was my main activity.

MS. MASCHERIN: So you were involved in the moot court competition?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And then?

MS. HALL: And then in running it, as I recall.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you do in the competition?

MS. HALL: I don’t remember.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you have a partner?

MS. HALL: I must have, but I don’t really have any recollection of it. I mostly just remember studying.

MS. MASCHERIN: I remember that, too.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: There was a lot of that.

MS. HALL: Yes. Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: As you went through your third year, you’re thinking ahead to what to do after law school.

MS. HALL: That’s right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us about your thought process.
MS. HALL: Well, my husband was quite severely crippled from polio, and he was on crutches, and we were strongly advised not to go to New York because people thought it would be too difficult for him. And we had a neighbor in the married student housing who had graduated and come to Chicago to Jenner & Block and he liked it very much.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who was that?

MS. HALL: Hugh King. Lived next door. We also went and talked to Bob Bork who was teaching at the school at that time, and he had a relationship with Kirkland & Ellis, and he strongly advised us to look into Chicago. So, we did go to Washington and did interview in Washington. My most vivid memory is having an interview at Arnold & Porter with Carolyn Fortas, who was a tax lawyer. It was a snowy day, and I was walking to their office, wearing those plastic boots you used to wear that went over your shoes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right. With the little buttons on the side?

MS. HALL: And my heels wore a hole in the bottom of the boots so that by the time I got to their office the boots were filled up with snow and ice and my shoes were all wet. And I got my worst grade in law school in tax and I was pretending to be interested in tax law, so I was ushered into Carolyn Fortas's office and she was smoking a cigar.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] How old was she, would you say?

MS. HALL: I have no idea.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did that interview go?
MS. HALL: I did not get an offer from them.

MS. MASCHERIN: [laughs] In that day, how did it come about that you would get interviews at these firms. Did you write—

MS. HALL: I don’t remember. They all came to the law school and we signed up, and then you would be invited to come. Like—

MS. MASCHERIN: As it is now.

MS. HALL: As now. Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What about your husband? Did he—

MS. HALL: My husband was on the Law Review, so he did better everywhere we went.

MS. MASCHERIN: And—

MS. HALL: I don’t remember what offers he got in Washington.

MS. MASCHERIN: Okay.

MS. HALL: He did get an offer from the legal advisor’s office.

MS. MASCHERIN: From the job the summer before?

MS. HALL: From the summer job, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And then did you come out and talk to some firms in Chicago?

MS. HALL: We did, and we went around together and made it clear that we didn’t come as a pair. I interviewed with a labor law firm in town and I did not—I got no offers. And my husband got an offer from Lord Bissell & Brook, which he accepted. And then he got an offer from Jenner & Block, so he wrote back to them and said, “Thank you very much. I’ve taken a job, but here’s my poor wife.” And so they decided to make me an offer.
MS. MASCHERIN: Had you interviewed at Jenner & Block?

MS. HALL: Yes, oh yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who did you interview with?

MS. HALL: Ken Burns and Phil Tone and Bert Jenner and Sam Block are the ones I remember.

MS. MASCHERIN: What do you remember about those interviews?

MS. HALL: I remember being very nervous, that I was never going to get a job.

MS. MASCHERIN: Sam Block ended up being your great mentor.

MS. HALL: He was.

MS. MASCHERIN: At the time.

MS. HALL: He was.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was your first impression of him, do you remember?

MS. HALL: He was a lovely, warm, wonderful man. And he loved teaching young lawyers. He liked having me come and sit in his office, for hours, and I would just watch him practice law, and I learned a great deal that way.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did you think when you came out of the interview? That’s quite an auspicious group of folks that you interviewed with here.

MS. HALL: I thought I’d just be happy to have a job anywhere. And of course I was thrilled when I got an offer; I was absolutely thrilled. I was the Firm’s 45th lawyer.

MS. MASCHERIN: And the second woman to work here—

MS. HALL: The second woman.

MS. MASCHERIN: As a lawyer.
MS. HALL: That’s right. That’s right.

MS. MASCHERIN: And was Mary Ann Cook still here—

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: When you came to the Firm?

MS. HALL: Yes, um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us a little bit about her.

MS. HALL: Mary Ann Cook, as I recall, had been with a client. And I don’t know whether it was a bank or it was some kind of institution. She then came with the Firm—I heard conflicting stories. I heard she was told she was never to be made a partner when she came, but she was made a partner and she did trust and estates work.

MS. MASCHERIN: So you come as the 45th lawyer and you join the Firm in 1965.

MS. HALL: 1965.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right. Were there many women practicing at the big firms in Chicago then?

MS. HALL: No. No.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you have any contemporaries here in Chicago that were women?

MS. HALL: Well, I knew Sylvia Decker, who had been ahead of me in law school, and she was practicing trusts and estates at Sidley. And there was a woman named Alice Bright. There was a handful of women.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did the group of you have any sort of, kind of community in the city here?

MS. HALL: You know, I don’t remember very well. I think there did come a time where we got together, not all of us, but really there were a number of
years where I never saw another woman anywhere I went. In court, in
conferences, in meetings.

MS. MASCHERIN: When you came to Jenner & Block did you come with plans to be doing a
particular type of legal work?

MS. HALL: No. And I feel I was very fortunate because I know that some other
women who came out of law school about the same time I did were
required by their firms to do trust and estates because that was felt to be an
acceptable thing for a woman to do. But the Firm, as far as I knew,
always put me forward on the same footing as the two men who started
with me. And I was permitted to practice where I wanted to.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who started with you?

MS. HALL: John Stiffler and Tommy Eovaldi. And we worked together in a
conference room that was our office, all three of us.

MS. MASCHERIN: This was back down on LaSalle Street?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you remember any of the things you worked on, you know, as a very
new lawyer? I can tell you what my first assignment was.

MS. HALL: Can you really?

MS. MASCHERIN: Yeah, I can.

MS. HALL: Oh, my god. No, I do remember writing a brief for Charlie O’Laughlin
and giving it to him to edit and him sending it back to me with not a single
mark on it. [Laughs]

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]
MS. HALL: Which may have been because he hadn’t read it, I’m not sure.

MS. MASCHERIN: [laughs] Or it was brilliant.

MS. HALL: Or it was brilliant. Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you do all sorts of—

MS. HALL: In the beginning I did all sorts of things. And once I had, once I started working with Sam then my practice was very much the same as his, which was a mixture of corporate and litigation.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us about Sam.

MS. HALL: Samuel W. Block was a great family man, deeply in love with his wife, Jean. They lived on the south side of Chicago, they had three children. His daughter Elizabeth is a college professor; his son Bill is a lawyer who clerked on the United States Supreme Court and then moved to the west coast where he did work for the homeless. And his other son was killed in a hit-and-run accident. So Sam always had a very balanced life, unlike Mr. Jenner, whose whole life was the law. Sam really cared about his family and spent time with his family. They had a home in Wisconsin that they shared with other relatives, and he loved to go up to Mill Pond. He was a warm, wonderful man. I think he was a person of very good judgment, and he generated a lot of confidence in his clients.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you remember any of the things that you worked on with Sam?

MS. HALL: Well, I remember the day that he died we were, we had been working together all day, trying to settle a shareholders class action and we were planning for a luncheon event the next day, and so he called me at home
that night to talk to me about the arrangements for the lunch. He went out for a walk with his dog and came back and fell dead in the front hallway of his home. And I thought it was the end of the world.

MS. MASCHERIN: He was quite young.

MS. HALL: Fifty-eight.

MS. MASCHERIN: How old were you at the time?

MS. HALL: Well, it was 1970, so I was—

MS. MASCHERIN: Maybe 30?

MS. HALL: Yeah.

MS. MASCHERIN: Or thereabouts. You’d been at the Firm for five years.

MS. HALL: I was the Firm’s first pregnant lawyer. And Sam was a little perplexed about that, and he went home and talked to his wife Jean about it. And she said it was fine.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: So he had been enormously supportive of me, and he died in October and my baby was born in November.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who were some of the clients that you worked with when you worked with Sam?

MS. HALL: Sam was very close to Ben Heineman, who died this year, and Ben was an enormously successful businessman in Chicago who was running Northwest Industries, which had a lot of different—

MS. MASCHERIN: A lot of different businesses.

MS. HALL: A lot of different businesses. It was a conglomerate.
MS. MASCHERIN: What kind of work did you do for them?

MS. HALL: Litigation.

MS. MASCHERIN: During this time, when you were a young lawyer, did you get into court?

MS. HALL: Yes. I tried two murder cases with John Crown.

MS. MASCHERIN: At Twenty-Sixth and California?

MS. HALL: At Twenty-Sixth and California. John Crown had the office next to me, and he was very much of a character. He loved training young lawyers, and he really didn’t care about anything except trying pro bono cases.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] We don’t have anybody like that now. [Laughs]

MS. HALL: And so John and I tried these two cases together.

MS. MASCHERIN: How long had you been practicing when you did these murder cases?

MS. HALL: Don’t remember. Don’t know.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were you an associate?

MS. HALL: Oh, yes. Oh, yeah.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you remember anything about the cases?

MS. HALL: I remember going down to the south side and interviewing witnesses, and having this stunning revelation that people didn’t always tell the truth when they took the stand. And another revelation was, these men had both committed these murders but they had convinced themselves that they had not. It was a great learning lesson.

MS. MASCHERIN: Yes.
MS. HALL: The other thing was that John Crown, from one of the wealthiest families in Chicago, never had any money to pay for the parking lot at Twenty-Sixth and California.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] So you got to pay for the parking lot.

MS. HALL: That’s right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Was Bruna’s around down then?

MS. HALL: Who?

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you got to Bruna’s for lunch after court?

MS. HALL: No. No.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was it like to try a case in criminal courts back then? Was it trial by fire? Was it—

MS. HALL: Yeah, well, yeah. It was pretty—you know, it felt very high stakes. It felt like a very rough place.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did the judges treat you?


MS. MASCHERIN: Did you have juries in the cases?


MS. MASCHERIN: How did it feel to argue before a jury as a woman at that time?

MS. HALL: You know, I just never was conscious—I just went out and did whatever.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were there any women prosecutors?

MS. HALL: I don’t remember any. No, there weren’t. Because the prosecutors would—the first case that I tried with John Crown was also the first case that Tom Tully ever prosecuted. Do you know Tom?
MS. MASCHERIN: I do know Tom.

MS. HALL: That was the first case he ever prosecuted. We laugh about it.

MS. MASCHERIN: Um-hmm. I had a case against his son.

MS. HALL: Really?

MS. MASCHERIN: Yeah. Did you do other trials besides these trials when you were a young lawyer?

MS. HALL: No, I was mostly a second chair—I mean, I helped people.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were there any women on the bench in Chicago at this time?

MS. HALL: I didn’t encounter any. I’m sure there were, but I didn’t encounter any.

MS. MASCHERIN: You mentioned your first son’s arrival.

MS. HALL: Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: He was born in 1970.

MS. HALL: Seventy. Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: And by this time you were married to Wes Hall.

MS. HALL: Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right? And Wes, was he a partner here at the time?

MS. HALL: He was.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did the Firm, how did the members of the Firm react to having a married couple?

MS. HALL: Well, some people considered it quite problematic. First of all I was the first Jenner & Block lawyer to get a divorce, and some people have a problem with that. When Wes went to tell Bert that he was going to marry
me Bert said, “Well, she’ll have to leave the Firm,” and then I don’t know what happened.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: But no one ever asked me to leave.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: So I’m thinking that perhaps Sam intervened on my behalf.

MS. MASCHERIN: That’s probably a good supposition.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What’s your first son’s name?

MS. HALL: Colin.

MS. MASCHERIN: Colin. Colin was born in the fall of 1970.


MS. MASCHERIN: How did the rest of the Firm—you mentioned that Sam wasn’t quite sure about how he felt about a pregnant lawyer. How did the rest of the place react?

MS. HALL: I have no idea.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did anybody say anything?

MS. HALL: No one ever said anything to me, no.

MS. MASCHERIN: By this time were there other women at the Firm?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who had come after you? How many women had joined by the time that you, by the time that Colin was born?

MS. HALL: I don’t remember, but Leah Hamilton was here.
MS. MASCHERIN: Was she doing litigation?

MS. HALL: I think she was primarily doing tax work.

MS. MASCHERIN: And was Mary Ann Cook still here?

MS. HALL: I don't know when she left.

MS. MASCHERIN: You took a very extended maternity leave with your first child.

MS. HALL: That's right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us about that.

MS. HALL: Well, there was no maternity leave policy, and may I just say that it was very difficult to find maternity clothes which were appropriate for the office.


MS. HALL: And so I didn't have any discussions with anyone. I knew another woman lawyer in town whose firm asked her to stop coming to the office when she was pregnant, but nobody ever said anything to me about when I should come or when I should go or how much time I should take. And so, in those days, you stayed in the hospital with your baby, so I was in the hospital for four or five days, and all together I took one week. I came back after a week.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were you—did you got into labor in the office?

MS. HALL: No. We, Wes and I had dinner that night at the Union League Club with two lawyers from Washington, D.C. who were here for an antitrust case. And we went home and I was working on some papers—the case that I had been working on with Sam had been transferred to Bert—and I was
working on some documents and I went into labor. So Wes drove down to
the office and he took the papers up to Bert. Bert was still at the office,
it’s like midnight, and I went to the hospital and Colin was born about
5:00 a.m.

MS. MASCHERIN: And I’ve heard, there’s an urban myth, that you worked on the papers
even from your hospital bed. [Laughs]

MS. HALL: No, I think I gave them to Bert.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you—so, Colin arrives, you take a leisurely week—

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And how did you care for him then?

MS. HALL: We had—

MS. MASCHERIN: You came back to work full-time, of course.

MS. HALL: We had a baby nurse. A baby nurse was a very particular institution, I
don’t know whether it exists any more, but it was Miss Frederickson. She
wore a white uniform, she came to the hospital, she was there when the
baby and I checked out. She was absolutely fastidious about everything.
She ironed his undershirts and his socks.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] How old was Miss Fredericks?

MS. HALL: I would think she was probably 60, and she had devoted a life to caring for
other people’s babies. And there was a group of them in the
neighborhood. They used to meet in the park. You know, they all had
fancy prams.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you live in the city?
MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What part of town did you live in?

MS. HALL: We lived at Cedar and Lake Shore.

MS. MASCHERIN: How long was Miss Fredericks with you?

MS. HALL: Well, four years later I had another baby and she was still with us, and then it became apparent that we needed a different kind of skill level.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] You needed to up the game a little bit.

MS. HALL: That’s right.

MS. MASCHERIN: And your second son’s been a challenge ever since, right?

MS. HALL: That’s right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Somewhere in between Colin and -- your second son is Justin?

MS. HALL: Justin, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Between Colin and Justin you became a partner.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right? When did that happen?

MS. HALL: I don’t remember the year. All I remember is that I was in Acapulco on vacation when I found out. Somebody called me from Chicago and we all raised a glass; it was very festive.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you know that you were under consideration for partner?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: You were the first woman partner.

MS. HALL: No, Mary Ann was a partner.

MS. MASCHERIN: Mary Ann was a partner.
MS. HALL: I think she was gone by then.

MS. MASCHERIN: Okay.

MS. HALL: So that for practically my entire career I was the oldest woman partner at Jenner & Block. Probably for 30 years.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did that feel?

MS. HALL: Well, I very much liked it when we had more women. And you know the next woman down in age is Laura Kaster. Laura and I are still very close to this day. We were emailing yesterday. But there's quite an age gap there.

MS. MASCHERIN: There were many people who probably, I suspect, who came and left between you and Laura.

MS. HALL: There were some. Yes, there were some. Leah left.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right. By the time you became a partner, what was your practice like?

MS. HALL: It was litigation.

MS. MASCHERIN: What kinds of clients were you working with?

MS. HALL: Well, I was assigned to a matter for one of Ed Hatton’s clients, and Ed was a lovely man and he paid absolutely no attention to this matter, and through that matter I met Marvin Schwartz, who was a partner at Sullivan & Cromwell in New York. We worked very closely together in that case, and subsequently Marvin sent me two or three very important clients. Also in that case there was a general counsel of the client who went on to become CEO of Kemper Financial Services and Kemper was my largest—

MS. MASCHERIN: Which became—
MS. HALL: Was my largest client.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right.

MS. HALL: Marvin Schwartz—

MS. MASCHERIN: And took you to the Supreme Court at one point.

MS. HALL: Marvin Schwartz sent me the accounting firm of what was then Haskins & Sells, which is now Deloitte.

MS. MASCHERIN: And what kind of litigation work did you do?

MS. HALL: Did a lot of federal securities law cases, 10b-5.


MS. HALL: I did. I did a lot of work for Jerry Solovy, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: When did you start working with Jerry?

MS. HALL: I don’t know. I’m bad on years.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who else did you work with during, let’s take the ’70s. Sam had passed away.

MS. HALL: Right. I think mostly with Jerry, probably.

MS. MASCHERIN: And who were your contemporaries at the Firm at the time?

MS. HALL: Well, John Stiffler died and Tom Eovaldi left.

MS. MASCHERIN: He’s still at Northwestern, I think.

MS. HALL: Right. So, but Chet, Chet Kamin is my age.

MS. MASCHERIN: He would have joined a couple of years after you, right. When was it that women started coming to Jenner & Block in greater numbers?

MS. HALL: Well, when I became chairman of the hiring committee I started hiring 50% women.
MS. MASCHERIN: When was that? Mid '70s?

MS. HALL: Don’t know.

MS. MASCHERIN: I have a cheat sheet that says '74, does that sound about right?

MS. HALL: Could be.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why did you start hiring 50% women?

MS. HALL: Because I saw all these qualified women coming through. And I’m sure there was a subconscious desire to be surrounded by more women, but I certainly never articulated that. I recall being in a limousine with Bert Jenner, going to a funeral, when I told him that we had hired 50% women for the next year. I thought he would fall off of his—

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] What did he say?

MS. HALL: But he didn’t—he said, “Are any of them from Illinois.”

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: Which was his alma mater.

MS. MASCHERIN: You stayed very active with your alma mater—

MS. HALL: I did.

MS. MASCHERIN: Throughout the years.

MS. HALL: I was enormously grate—I am enormously grateful to the Yale law school.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why?

MS. HALL: Because I got a great education and it opened up the whole world for me.

So I, until recently, was always the class secretary which meant that I wrote the class notes for the law school alumni magazine and I organized
our reunion every five years. And I served as president of the Yale fund board.

MS. MASCHERIN: And I’ve heard you say that that was a terrific way to stay connected with—

MS. HALL: It was. With all my classmates.

MS. MASCHERIN: Class mates, yes. Are you still close with some of the classmates from your days at Yale?

MS. HALL: I am. Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What kinds of things are they doing?

MS. HALL: Well, we are of an age where most everybody is starting to retire. There are a few who are actively practicing, but they’re doing wonderful things in their travel and in their charitable work.

MS. MASCHERIN: What’s the most memorable case for you as you look back over your practice?

MS. HALL: The Calvin R. case.

MS. MASCHERIN: I remember Calvin R. Tell us about Calvin R.

MS. HALL: So, we, Jenner & Block brought a class action on behalf of all the inmates in protective custody at Stateville, which is a maximum security prison in Illinois, and we argued that the conditions of confinement for inmates in protective custody constituted cruel and unusual punishment. It was, working on that case was a wonderful experience because the Firm was so generous with its resources. We were able to hire experts, we got a court order which enabled us to go down to Stateville with cameras and
photograph the conditions. I worked very closely with Jayne Barnard on that case, who is a very able lawyer, and we achieved a significant result. The State eventually agreed to a consent decree, which they subsequently greatly regretted.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did the consent decree require?

MS. HALL: Well, it required that inmates in protective custody be allowed out of their cells, be able to go to classes, be able to go to the library, be able to get exercise.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you become involved in the case?

MS. HALL: I don’t remember. I don’t remember.

MS. MASCHERIN: Had you done—that, of course, was a pro bono case.

MS. HALL: It was, indeed.

MS. MASCHERIN: You had a team, as I recall, that may have been an all-women team, on the case.

MS. HALL: That’s correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: I remember Trish Refo—

MS. HALL: Absolutely

MS. MASCHERIN: Worked on this.

MS. HALL: Yes. And Ruth Ann de Wolfe, who was with I think the Lawyers Committee or some organization.

MS. MASCHERIN: Yes. Right.

MS. HALL: And Jeannie Nowaczewski was the paralegal.

MS. MASCHERIN: Right.
MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And you had a woman judge, as I recall.

MS. HALL: I don’t remember.

MS. MASCHERIN: Judge Getzendanner.

MS. HALL: Oh, was it? I don’t remember that.

MS. MASCHERIN: Yes, I believe so.

MS. HALL: Okay.

MS. MASCHERIN: I believe so.

MS. HALL: Yeah.

MS. MASCHERIN: So it was the women of Jenner & Block taking on the—

MS. HALL: It was a great experience. And to have the backing of the Firm, at such a high level, was really, it was very affirming.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was it like—did you do any of the tours of Stateville?

MS. HALL: Oh, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was it like to go down there at that time?

MS. HALL: Well, it’s a very depressing place. The conditions were very bad.

MS. MASCHERIN: I remember I was asked to do one of the tours with your expert in that case because Trish got called out of town.

MS. HALL: Really.

MS. MASCHERIN: And I spent eight hours, a very long day which included eight hours with your expert.

MS. HALL: Really.

MS. MASCHERIN: Doing a Cook’s tour—
MS. HALL: Oh, my goodness.

MS. MASCHERIN: Of Stateville.

MS. HALL: Depressing place.

MS. MASCHERIN: A very depressing place.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: One of the most moving experiences of my legal career.

MS. HALL: Yes, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you do other pro bono work here at the Firm over the years?

MS. HALL: Yes, I spent a great deal of time working with Tom Sullivan, I think starting when I was an associate, and we created an entity we called the Legal Opportunity Scholarship Program.

MS. MASCHERIN: What's that?

MS. HALL: It doesn't exist anymore, but we created it with George Leighton and Ed Stephens from Mayer Brown, and we got all the law schools in town plus the University of Illinois, to contribute scholarships, tuition scholarships, and then we raised money from the large law firms to pay living expenses, and we recruited, evaluated, and selected minority students to get these scholarships. And George Leighton would work with them, help them with their schoolwork. And I did all the administrative work of running the program.

MS. MASCHERIN: Wow. How many students came through that program?

MS. HALL: I don't know.

MS. MASCHERIN: How many years were you working on it?
MS. HALL: Probably not more than five or six.

MS. MASCHERIN: I've never heard of it.

MS. HALL: Yeah.

MS. MASCHERIN: Remarkable.

MS. HALL: Yeah.

MS. MASCHERIN: And George Leighton, of course, is still alive.

MS. HALL: Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Just celebrated his hundredth birthday.

MS. HALL: Hundredth, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Is he still a friend?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: He's a wonderful man.

MS. HALL: Wonderful man.

MS. MASCHERIN: As time went on at Jenner & Block, you started doing some things with the women here.

MS. HALL: I did.

MS. MASCHERIN: At the Firm. Tell us about some of the things that you started.

MS. HALL: Well, it was very important to me that—well, first of all I went through quite a struggle where I would be very disappointed if a woman left the Firm because I wanted them to stay and succeed. And finally I understood that it was important that women have choices, and if that was their choice I learned to respect it. But for the women who stayed, I really wanted
them to be successful, and I understood that an important part of that success would be having their own clients.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why do you say that?

MS. HALL: Well, because that's where power comes from in a large firm.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us some of the things that you did, or you tried to do with women here.

MS. HALL: Well, I think probably the most important thing was the women's lunches where we would get together periodically and talk of many things, but frequently talk about how to get business. Because I felt that the women were somewhat reluctant to be aggressive about looking for business, and it was important to talk about it and think about it.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you get business?

MS. HALL: I got business by working very hard and doing a very good job in the cases that I was assigned. And I use that one example of Ed Hatton's case, where through the work I did on that case I got three or four very large clients who used my services for a long time.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you ask—you made this wonderful contract at Sullivan & Cromwell.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you ask him?

MS. HALL: No.

MS. MASCHERIN: To refer things to you?
No. And I didn’t ask the Kemper general counsel, either. He just called me up one day, he had become president of the company, he said, “May I come over and bring my general counsel?” And I said, “Certainly.”

Of course, please do.

Yes.

You argued before the Supreme Court for Kemper.

I did.

What was that case about?

It was a decision of the Seventh Circuit in which Frank Easterbrook created a common law right which had not previously existed, which—

Oh, no. He did that? [Laughs]

Which the Supreme Court did not look with favor upon that. But it was a wonderful experience. The Firm again was very supportive, particularly lawyers in the Washington office who helped me prepare. And I’m sorry to say, it was so long ago, I cannot remember which women were on the Court. All I remember is standing before the bench and feeling—have you argued?

I have not argued before the United States Supreme Court. I have moved the admission of people before the Court.

Yes.

So I’ve stood there.
MS. HALL: Yes. It feels very different than—I had argued a lot of Seventh Circuit cases. It felt very different, it felt very male. Everybody on the front side of the bar was male.

MS. MASCHERIN: And you’re very close to the bench.

MS. HALL: And you’re very close, yeah.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you prepare for that argument?

MS. HALL: By just knocking myself out getting ready.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you do a lot of practice arguments?

MS. HALL: I did, yes. Here and in Washington.

MS. MASCHERIN: What did it feel like to step up before the Court to argue?

MS. HALL: Oh. It was a challenge, it was a challenge. I felt prepared.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were there any other women arguing that day?

MS. HALL: No.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did the justices react to you? Did you sense that it was all unusual—at all unusual that you—

MS. HALL: I didn’t; I did not. But I was not paying attention to that.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: I wasn’t looking for that.

MS. MASCHERIN: It sounds like you never really paid attention to that.

MS. HALL: I never did; no, I didn’t.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you ever have an experience in your career with a judge who you felt—

MS. HALL: Never.
MS. MASCHERIN: Was not treating you appropriately?

MS. HALL: Never. I never walked into any situation expecting to be treated differently, and I never was aware of any client complaining to Jenner & Block that I had been assigned to their matter. It may have happened, but I don’t know about it.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you ever feel that you had to overcome anything with a client to gain acceptance?

MS. HALL: No, but I always was an extremely hard worker, you know, so I just felt if I did a really good job that everything would work out.
MS. MASCHERIN: Good afternoon, Joan. This is Terri Mascherin again and today is
February, I'm sorry, March 6, 2013, and we're here at Jenner & Block's
offices, once again. Thank you for coming back after your first interview.

MS. HALL: My pleasure.

MS. MASCHERIN: I'd like to pick up on a couple of topics that relate to the time period last
week that I neglected to cover. One of them is clubs in the City of
Chicago. I know that, it used to be the case, perhaps more than it is today,
that many professionals in the city belong to various luncheon clubs or
clubs like that in the city. What was the situation when you were a young
lawyer and were those kinds of places open to you as a woman lawyer in
the city?

MS. HALL: They were not. My husband belonged to the Union League Club and I
could go there for dinner but I had to go in the side door. I could go to the
University Club, but I could not eat in the dining room. I could eat in a
private room off to the side. My husband also belonged to the Tavern
Club and there were two floors. I could eat on one floor, but I couldn't eat
on the other floor, and women were not admitted to the Chicago Club at
that time. The Chicago Club historically had had the University of
Chicago President as a member so that when Hannah Gray became
President of the University of Chicago in 1984, they decided to admit four
women and I was one of those women who was admitted in 1984.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you feel about this situation with the clubs?
MS. HALL: I thought it was annoying to go to these places and for example not be able to walk in the front door, and when I joined the Chicago Club, I was paying the same dues as the men but I was not permitted to eat in the Grill Room, and after I had been paying my dues for several months I sat down and thought about it and I thought this is really not appropriate so I called the manager and I said I am going to integrate the Grill Room and he said well just let me know when you’re coming. So, I invited a woman client to lunch and the two of us went to lunch in the Grill Room of the Chicago Club and nothing happened.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why did you decide to join the Chicago Club if it had not admitted women for so many years.

MS. HALL: Well, it’s a very prestigious club in Chicago and a wonderful place to entertain people.

MS. MASCHERIN: For many years you would host a holiday luncheon of the woman partners of Jenner & Block at the Chicago Club, and I have fond memories of those lunches and some of those discussions we had. I remember though in particular the art on the wall. Would you tell us about the art work in that particular room.

MS. HALL: So there was a room at the Chicago Club that had a painting which the predominant color was pink and it was called *Aunt Fanny* and it was on a hinge, and if you pulled it away from the wall, you could see – it was a portrait of a woman and if you pulled it away from the wall you could see her fanny, so it was called *Aunt Fanny* and there was a song that went
along with it. I was at a breakfast one morning at the Chicago Club with a woman who had an art gallery here in Chicago and all through this breakfast she kept looking at that painting and when it was over she asked me about it, and so I pulled it away from the wall and showed her how it worked. Shortly thereafter, I was walking down the street in Chicago, and someone stopped me and said, I understand that you got Aunt Fanny removed from the Chicago Club. I said I didn’t do anything, but evidently that called enough attention to it that they took it down.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did the members of the Chicago Club react to the integration of the membership and the integration of the Grill Room.

MS. HALL: Well the manager of the Club at that time was a very wonderful man and he called when I was admitted and asked me if I would like a tour of the Club, and I said that I would. So I went over and he was showing me all of the club’s facilities and then he got a very worried look on his face and he said do you play squash; I said I do not. He said, well that’s lucky because we only have one locker room. So he took me and showed me the locker room, and he said actually there are only three or four guys that ever play but just to give them a start, I am going to put your name on one of the lockers. And I would say that absolutely I had no reactions, when we, that I am aware of, when we ate in the Grill Room.

MS. MASCHERIN: Who were the other women besides Hannah Gray and you who joined?

MS. HALL: I don’t remember.

MS. MASCHERIN: Was Jean Allared one?
MS. HALL: Probably, but I don’t remember.

MS. MASCHERIN: You became very active, at least by the 1970s, in the American Bar Association.

MS. HALL: I did.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why did you become active in the ABA and what kinds of things did you do with the ABA?

MS. HALL: So at that time, Bob Hanley, who is now deceased, was a partner at Jenner & Block and he was very involved in formation of the ABA Section of Litigation. The Section of Litigation being a new entity within the Bar Association was very open to women and Bob asked me to organize programs for the Section. And so I started as the program chairman for the Litigation Section. That brought me in touch with lawyers and judges all over the country because we had programs in many different locations and that was the way I first became active in the American Bar Association was through the Section of Litigation.

MS. MASCHERIN: You eventually became Chair of the Section?

MS. HALL: I did.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were you the first woman to chair the Section of Litigation?

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And how, why did you decide to take that on?

MS. HALL: Well I very much enjoyed all the work I did with the Litigation Section. I was led to believe that there were other sections of the American Bar Association that operated on sort of an old boy network kind of a thing. In
the Litigation Section moving forward was based almost entirely on your willingness to work and turn out work product, and I very much liked that approach and I had wonderful friends amongst the people who were active in the Section and I enjoyed the work. I thought the Section grew very rapidly. It clearly fulfilled a need and I thought that the Section turned excellent work product in terms of publications and programs.

MS. MASCHERIN: It still does. It still does. You spent a great deal of time over your career, working with the Bar Association. Some people don't get involved in the bar. What did you get out of it, that, that you found it worth while to spend that much time?

MS. HALL: Well, one of the enduring things is that I, became very well acquainted with lawyers from other parts of the country, and I enjoyed them enormously and I learned a great deal from them. I think it also helped me to polish my skills, all the programs that I participated in, and the publications that I ran. I also got to know a number of judges who were active in the Section, so I found the Bar Association work very rewarding.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were there any particular initiatives that you put in place when you were Chair of the Litigation Section?

MS. HALL: I had a particular interest in alternative dispute resolution.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you get involved in alternative dispute resolution?

MS. HALL: I don't remember. I don't remember, I know that I chaired a special committee in the American College of Trial Lawyers, where I wrote a
booklet which was published by the college on the subject of alternative
dispute resolution.

MS. MASCHERIN: Okay, and you brought up the American College of Trial Lawyers, you
have a wonderful story about that.

MS. HALL: I do.

MS. MASCHERIN: You were elected to the college in 1982 according to my cheat sheet. Tell
us about that.

MS. HALL: It’s my belief that I was the third woman admitted to the college. Umm,
and the President of the College at that time was a friend of mine that I
knew from the ABA’s Section of Litigation, and his name was Austin
Jennings. A wonderful trial lawyer from Arkansas, and umm, so I
received my plaque in the mail and opened it very eagerly and read it, and
saw that it recited—this testifies that he is a fellow of the American
College of Trial Lawyers. So, my secretary made a Xerox copy of the
plaque and I circled the word “he” and I wrote in the margin “how long oh
Lord, how long?” and I mailed it to Austin Jennings. Ah, who as I say
was a lovely man, and he wrote back to me and said, when we in the
American College make somebody a fellow, we go whole-hog.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: And then they sent a second plaque which said “she” so I hang the two
plaques together in my office.

MS. MASCHERIN: They asked you to return the one with, with—

MS. HALL: No, no.
MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: No, they didn’t.

MS. MASCHERIN: You were active the American College, you mentioned.

MS. HALL: I was very active in the American College.

MS. MASCHERIN: And, what kind of things did you do in the American College?

MS. HALL: Well, of, I worked very hard on this alternative dispute resolution project, which resulted in a publication.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did you make some friends through the College?

MS. HALL: Yes, again, I made wonderful friends through the college, and I met my husband.

MS. MASCHERIN: The best friend of all.

MS. HALL: Right.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us about George.

MS. HALL: So, George Koutouras was a regent of the American College of Trial Lawyers, which was their governing board, and umm, he called me one day, and said he wanted to have lunch to discuss getting more women into the college, and I was quite exited about that because there were very few women in the college. So, we went to the Tavern Club. We had lunch there three times, to discuss getting more women into the American College of Trial Lawyers, and at the end of the third lunch, he asked me if I would like to have dinner.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: And that’s when I knew it wasn’t on the up and up.
MS. MASCHERIN: George was a renowned trial lawyer in Chicago.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us a little bit about his background and his practice.

MS. HALL: George was an extraordinary man. His parents came from Greece when they were quite young. He was one of five children. He was raised in the City of Chicago. He began college—He went to Marshall High School. He started college at the University of Illinois. He didn’t think it was challenging enough so he transferred to the University of Chicago, and he got his law degree from the University of Chicago, and immediately, went into the navy, and was involved in, went to Officers Training School, was involved in five invasions in World War II. Umm, he was involved in the invasion in Sicily, Terawa, Peleliu, the Philippines, and one other that escapes me. When he got out of the navy, he came back and went into the State’s Attorneys Office, and tried criminal cases, and when he came out, he started his own criminal law firm. He was a superb lawyer, and a superb human being.

MS. MASCHERIN: And you and George married in 198—

MS. HALL: We had our first date on August 17th of 1988 and we got married in front of our, 400 of our closest friends on December 4 of that same year.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] So you wasted no time.

MS. HALL: We wasted no time.

MS. MASCHERIN: Now you had umm, you and George both had families.

MS. HALL: We did.
MS. MASCHERIN: Okay. You’ve told us you had two sons, Colin and Justin.

MS. HALL: I do, yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: And, tell us about George’s family.

MS. HALL: Uh, George has, had three children, and they’re all lawyers. He has a daughter who lives in Maine, and is not practicing, but his two sons live in California, and they are both criminal lawyers. One practices in San Francisco and one in San Diego.

MS. MASCHERIN: And, how many grandchildren, now do you have?

MS. HALL: I have eight, step grandchildren, I don’t have any grandchildren of my own, but I have eight step grandchildren.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us what your sons Colin and Justin are doing now.

MS. HALL: My son Colin, went to Amherst, and then he joined Morgan Stanley in New York for about five years. Then he joined a private equity firm, that some partners at Morgan Stanley, formed. He left them and went to get his MBA at Stanford, and when he came out of Stanford, he worked for that same firm but in London for five years. He came back to New York, worked in New York for two years, then he’s currently living and working in Brussels, and he ran a half marathon in Paris on Sunday. And, my son Justin, works for a company in San Francisco that makes video games for the iPhone. He went to Sworthmare and was a freelance writer after he graduated, he spent a year in Japan and when he returned from Japan he enrolled in the film school at USC, they have an interactive media component, and he got his masters in the film school at USC.
MS. MASCHERIN: He was an early blogger, as I recall.

MS. HALL: Justin is said by many, to have been the first blogger. During the time he was at Sworthmare he wrote on his blog every day. Often about the most intimate details of our families lives.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs] I recall hearing about that when he was in college.

MS. HALL: Yes.

MS. MASCHERIN: When, before we leave your, the period of time when you were practicing here at Jenner & Block, I want to talk a little bit about your service within the Firm. You mentioned last time that we talked that you were the first woman to chair the Hiring Committee—

MS. HALL: Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: —of the Firm. Do you remember how many years you did that?

MS. HALL: A long time. I don’t remember how many years.

MS. MASCHERIN: Okay. What kind, what impact do you think your role as Chair of Hiring at the Firm had on the attraction of women to Jenner & Block?

MS. HALL: Well, I, looking on it, I think women were very attractive to the fact that we had people here who were really interested in getting women into the practice.

MS. MASCHERIN: I’ve heard it said that, by the early ‘80s, Jenner & Block had more women than any other firm in the country.

MS. HALL: I think that’s correct.
MS. MASCHERIN: What do you think it was about the Firm, that, that, you know made it possible for there to be so many women lawyers here, at a time when that wasn’t so common?

MS. HALL: Well, I think it was, umm, coming here and seeing that there were women in positions of power, and that there was a nucleolus of women, so that you wouldn’t be the first, and that women were in all different areas of practice. You weren’t restricted in what you could do in your practice.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you decide to be a litigator?

MS. HALL: Umm, when I started with the Firm, the first five years I worked exclusively for Sam Block, and his practice was, so I worked on whatever Sam was working on, and that was a mixture of corporate and litigation, and then Sam died, very unexpectedly in 1970, and after that, I just pursued the litigation part of the practice that I had developed.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why? Why litigation?

MS. HALL: Because I loved it. I’ve always been interested in helping people solve concrete problems, and litigation represents a real concrete problem that has to be resolved one way or another. I find that very attractive.

MS. MASCHERIN: You were, by the late 1970s the first woman to serve on the Firm Executive Committee here.

MS. HALL: Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: Did, was, did you view that as being a significant milestone at the time?

MS. HALL: I thought it was important.
MS. MASCHERIN: Did you, do you think you had an impact on the Firm, from having served in Firm leadership like that?

MS. HALL: I'd like to think so.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did the other, members of the Executive Committee take to you being a member?

MS. HALL: I have always felt, umm, enormous respect for and received enormous respect in return from the members of this Firm. I've never had anyone give me any suggestion that they didn't value my opinions, or want to hear what I had to say.

MS. MASCHERIN: Do you think there was something about, the, the Firm culture or the type of people who were here that made Jenner & Block a place where a woman, you know, of your generation coming into a big law firm could be successful?

MS. HALL: I believe that very firmly. This was a Firm composed of men, who were open to the possibility that women had something to contribute.

MS. MASCHERIN: You mentioned last week that, you were for most of your career, when you practicing at Jenner & Block, always the most senior women.

MS. HALL: Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did, did, did you feel that that put an extra burden on you? Did—

MS. HALL: No because I loved seeing women come into the Firm, and be fabulous lawyers, and I just considered it a privilege to be associated with them. It was very exciting to me, having been alone for a period of time, it was just enormously exciting to have women come in and be doing great work.
MS. MASCHERIN: You had a fabulously successful career, you made a decision relatively young, to stop practicing actively. How, how old were you when you decided to stop the active practice?

MS. HALL: I retired in 1999, so I was—60. My husband was much older than I was, and he was retired and he wanted me to retire, and so I spent uh, two years considering that question, and I had two main considerations to resolve. One was that I had worked since I was twelve, and if you don't have earned income how does that work? I had to think about that, and secondly, if I wasn't a partner at Jenner & Block, who was I? Because a great deal of my identity, my identity I think was tied up with being a partner at Jenner & Block.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you resolve that issue?

MS. HALL: Well, I figured out that I had enough money saved to live on, and umm, I got to the point where I didn't need to be able to announce that I was a partner at Jenner & Block to feel that I was still a person.

MS. MASCHERIN: You've done, you've continued to be very active, you've done some wonderful things, since you retired from the practice. What are the things, that, that cause you to, you know, that catch your passion now?

MS. HALL: I'd like to say that if you were Type A when you were practicing law, then when you retired, you're still Type A. So the Firm has been enormously generous to me in giving me an office, uh, which enabled me to continue my involvement in the community, and certainly the most satisfying thing I have done, is to be co-founder of the Young Women's Leadership
Charter School of Chicago. The only all-girl public school in the city. It’s a school on the South side. Ninety-Five percent of our students qualify for free or reduced lunch. We serve 350 girls in grades seven through twelve, and this is our 13th academic year. We had our annual fundraising luncheon yesterday, and we had a Thousand people in attendance.

MS. MASCHERIN: You started working on the school in the late 1990s.

MS. HALL: In 1997 we started working. We worked for two years before we opened.

MS. MASCHERIN: How did you get the idea?

MS. HALL: Jeannie Nowaczewski had worked for me as a paralegal, at Jenner & Block. She then went on to go to law school, and she eventually joined BGI, which is a public interest law firm in Chicago. Her job involved education and she traveled around the country to see schools. In 1997, there were only three all-girl public schools in the country. There were old schools in Baltimore and Philadelphia, which were each a hundred years old, and there was new school in the East Harlem, started by Ann Tish. Jeannie came back and called me and said we have to start a girls school, and I was hooked from that first conversation.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us, a little bit about the process that you had to go through.

MS. HALL: So the process was, we put together a group of 23 incredible women, from all different areas of life. We had Joan Harris, who was a leading philanthropist in Chicago. We had Penny Pritzker, umm, and we, we met all the time, to figure out what we wanted to do. We did, we made the decision to apply for a charter. That was in the early days of charter
schools in Chicago. It was a highly competitive process. We didn’t know whether we would get a charter. Joan Harris and her husband Irving, gave us space in their office. We hired a project manager. Charter schools have to find and pay for their own space, so we, every time we heard a catholic school was closing, we would chase out and meet with the nuns, and we looked and looked for space. We got our charter application together, and, in December of 1997, we were told that our, no, in December of 1999 we were told that our charter had been granted.

MS. MASCHERIN: There was umm, an issue to be resolved about the fact that you were proposing a single sex school—

MS. HALL: That’s correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: —and that it would be a pubic school. Tell us what you had to do to—

MS. HALL: So the AC—

MS. MASCHERIN: —to navigate that.

MS. HALL: The ACLU, repeatedly threatened to sue us. Jenner & Block represented us, pro bono. A great deal of work was done. Experts were hired. We were prepared to defend a lawsuit. We umm, attended a meeting of the ACLU Board, and I must say, I’ve never been treated so, shabbily.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: Umm, but, ultimately, they did not sue us.

MS. MASCHERIN: Why was it that you felt so strongly that a girls school—

MS. HALL: Well—

MS. MASCHERIN: —was the thing to do.
MS. HALL: I think they’re two things. One, when I entered the practice of law in 1965, there were very few women, and so, I like to see women well represented in all professions, and, I knew that women were still seriously under represented in, science, engineering and math, and we decided to make that a focus of our school. And the second thing that motivated me, was, I cared deeply about public education, and I believe in the City of Chicago, that if we can’t turn out well-qualified graduates from our public schools in Chicago, our work force will not be what we need it to be.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was your role with the school? What has your role been?

MS. HALL: So, I was Chairman of the Board for about eight years, and I did most of the fundraising during that time. We are a separate 501C3. We get a per-pupil allowance for each student, but it’s less than what, non-charter schools get? Currently, we have to raise about Four Thousand Dollars per pupil per year. So, during the time that I was doing the fundraising, we had to raise about a Million Dollars a year. I ask everyone I knew for money. I think my husband got tired of going to dinner parties where I talked about nothing but the girls school. People were incredibly generous. Jenner & Block was incredibly generous, we got a development director to assist me, and she had an office at Jenner. Jenner did our mailing, helped with our publications, and, I spent a great deal of time helping to manage the school and keep, keep the Board running.

MS. MASCHERIN: You were also, you’ve also served as a mentor to some of the young women who have—
MS. HALL: I have.

MS. MASCHERIN: —been students at the school. Tell us about some of them and what they’ve done.

MS. HALL: So one of my first mentees went to the University of Illinois. It’s, college can be very difficult for minority students. There are many things in their home situations that pull them to leave school and come back, like, taking care of their grandmother, or of, young children in the family. There are constant money problems, and just many things that they don’t know how to navigate and they don’t have anyone to assist them with. This young woman, when she got to be a senior, maybe a couple months before graduation, emailed me and said, I hate to bother you, but my mother and my brother have just been evicted, and, can you help us? Oprah Winfrey was our first commencement speaker, and the Tribune came to school to do an article on that, and I noticed that this young woman never opened her mouth when was, smiling, and then I found out that she had not had front teeth since sixth grade. She’d been hit by a car and the teeth had never been replaced, so I prevailed upon our dentist to, to give her front teeth. He found someone else to pull four teeth for her, and he found someone else to do braces for her. All at no cost to her, so that today she has a beautiful smile.

MS. MASCHERIN: What’s she doing now?

MS. HALL: She, uh, graduated from Illinois. She got her Masters in Marriage and Family counseling, and she’s doing that kind of work.
MS. MASCHERIN: How many classes now, has the school graduated?

MS. HALL: Um, I'm not sure.

MS. MASCHERIN: A decade—

MS. HALL: I'm not sure.

MS. MASCHERIN: —a decade of classes at least, probably.

MS. HALL: Um-hmm.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us about the graduation rate at the school and the rate of acceptance into colleges.

MS. HALL: The graduation rate is, very high, normally about 95%. A 100% of this year's class has already been admitted to college.

MS. MASCHERIN: How does that compare to the typical Chicago Public Schools?

MS. HALL: It's much higher than, than the usual.

MS. MASCHERIN: And are these, what's the, what's the admission process like, for the charter school?

MS. HALL: Um, our teachers do not belong to the unions, so the Chicago Teachers Union is very opposed to charter schools and they got a provision in the law, saying that charter schools must select their students by lottery.

That's fine with me, because it's not so hard to teach the gifted. What we have to do is figure out how to reach regular Chicago Public School students. So, all of ours students are selected by lottery. The only requirement is that you be a resident of the City of Chicago.

MS. MASCHERIN: And what's the, what are the demographics of the school like?
MS. HALL: So we, we have about 14% Latino, about 18% White, and the rest of the girls are, African-American. Um, and they come from the surrounding area, but they come, some of them come from a very long distance.

MS. MASCHERIN: Where is the school located now?

MS. HALL: The school is located at 26th and Calumet on the South side, just south of Mercy Hospital and McCormick place.

MS. MASCHERIN: Through your work with the girls school, you did some work with Oprah Winfrey.

MS. HALL: I did.

MS. MASCHERIN: Tell us about the work that you did with Oprah Winfrey relating to her school.

MS. HALL: Oprah was interested in opening a school in South Africa, so she was very interested in learning about our school. So, first, I went over to Harpo, for some meetings. A meeting with her foundation, meeting with some of the people there who worked on the school, and then, I got a call on a Thursday afternoon asking me if I could go to Johannesburg on Monday morning, to help negotiate the contract for her school, and I said I'm quite sure I'm available.

MS. MASCHERIN: [Laughs]

MS. HALL: Um, so, I went to Johannesburg for a very interesting week where I helped negotiate the contract for her school, and then she invited me, subsequently invited me to the opening of her school.
MS. MASCHERIN: Has this work that you've done with the charter school let to other things that you're doing with regard to education?

MS. HALL: Well, the work with the charter school, really, I have met hundreds of people that I otherwise would not have known, because so many people are involved in public education, and so many people care about charter schools. Last night, I went to dinner at the home of the British Counsel General, so that I could meet the Minister of Education for Great Britain, and he was very interested in, in our school.

MS. MASCHERIN: I've heard you speak about the importance of quality public education. Tell us about, you've been involved in other types of volunteer activities I've, as well, I know for many years you've served on the Board of Rush Medical Center here in the city, and you've told me that you found that to be very rewarding as well.

MS. HALL: It was very rewarding. I went on the Board of Rush University Medical Center in 1983, that was the first time they had had women on the board who had not been President of the Women's Board. Marilou von Furstel and I were the first women on the board. I began by raising money for nursing, then my next assignment was raising money for multiple sclerosis, but my long term assignment at the hospital has been quality of care. For twelve years I served as Chairman of the Quality Committee.

MS. MASCHERIN: What does that involve?

MS. HALL: It's just what it says. It involves every aspect of the operation of the institution. Every part of the hospital has quality officers, and they keep
enormous records, and our committee keeps abreast of everything that’s
going on in the hospital. We’re also the liaison between the institution and
all the accrediting agencies, the Joint Commission comes to accredit us,
and many other accrediting agencies, and we participate in those surveys.

MS. MASCHERIN: What have you gained from the work that you’ve done with Rush?

MS. HALL: I have gained an enormous amount from my work with Rush. I have
learned so much about medical care. Medical care in a large institution
like Rush, which is, both a hospital and a, a medical school, is so
complicated, and we have fabulous doctors and nurses at Rush. One of
the reasons I was attracted to Rush, is because there is a long standing
culture amongst the doctors of enormous respect for the nurses. We have
just built a beautiful new building, and the nurses had a great deal to do
with the design, of the building. I’ve also become personal friends with,
some wonderful doctors. That’s been very useful because whenever my
friends have a problem, and they say, who shall I see? I can contact the
President of the Medical Center and he gets back to me right away, which
enables me to help, people.

MS. MASCHERIN: You served, for some time, as well, on the committee that vetted judicial
candidates, for the Federal Courts, right?

MS. HALL: I served for two terms on the ABA Committee on the Federal Judiciary.
There’s one member from each judicial circuit, and I was the Seventh
Circuit representative.

MS. MASCHERIN: What was that experience like?
MS. HALL: That was, very interesting, and very labor intensive. Committee members investigate, all candidates for the Federal District Court within their circuit, and Seventh Circuit, and then the entire committee investigates Supreme Court candidates. So, for example, if you have a nominee for the Federal District Court, you receive a lot of matter—, written material, which we examine, if they’re a sitting judge, you read opinions. You make a lot of phone calls. If they’re a practicing lawyer or a judge, you get information on, cases in which they have been involved. You call all of those lawyers. You call leading lawyers in the community. You write all of that up and circulate it to your committee members, and then, and then there’s a vote. So I did that for I think six years.

MS. MASCHERIN: Um-hmm. And, were there Supreme Court nominations during that time?

MS. HALL: There were.

MS. MASCHERIN: Were you on the committee when Robert Bork was nominated?

MS. HALL: I was.

MS. MASCHERIN: I know that part of this process is confidential, but are —

MS. HALL: Well, they, the whole —

MS. MASCHERIN: —observations you can give us?

MS. HALL: The whole process is supposed to be confidential. We normally operated by conference call, but we had face to face meetings with regard to the Bork nomination, and everything was supposed to be confidential. The next day after we had voted, the names of those who, of us had voted against him appeared in a column in the Wall Street Journal.
MS. MASCHERIN: Quite surprising.

MS. HALL: Quite surprising.

MS. MASCHERIN: Now, is this the same Robert Bork who you had known —

MS. HALL: At the [Inaudible] law school.

MS. MASCHERIN: —back at the [Inaudible] law school—

MS. HALL: Correct. Correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: So, so, there are circles within circles here.

MS. HALL: That’s right. That’s right.

MS. MASCHERIN: And he had suggested that you go to Chicago.

MS. HALL: That’s correct.

MS. MASCHERIN: You’ve done some wonderful traveling, since you and George retired. What are your favorite places that you’ve been?

MS. HALL: I would say that, one of the best trips I ever took was Bouton. Bouton is a really beautiful country. It’s only about 650,000 who people live there. It’s mountainous, it’s gorgeous. I was there when the rhododendron forest were in bloom. People were in native dress. They’re very friendly. We saw, we went to many monasteries. We went to a wonderful nunnery. We went to dance festivals. Paris is probably my most, my favorite city. I have rented an apartment in Paris and stayed there. I love spending time in Paris. I’ve been to Sicily three times. I’ve been to Cuba three times. I like those trips very much. I’ve been to South Africa twice, to Tanzania and Kenya, and Botswana on animal safaris. I’ve been trekking in Nepal, so I love to travel.
What advice would you give to women lawyers today? Particularly women who are coming out of law school now?

Well, if they, I always tell them if they think they might get married, to look for someone who will be very supportive of their career, and will not be threatened by their success. I think it’s so important for women to take high powered jobs, that they be in relationships where the other person has real respect for what they’re doing, and is not threatened. I would, in the beginning it used to trouble me if women came with the Firm, did well and then decided to quit. I eventually reconciled myself to that, to the point of view that everyone should make whatever choices are good for them. But, if women decide to join a big firm, I want them to try to be as successful as they can, and they need to recognize that that involves generating legal business. It’s good to know that from the beginning.

Yes. And maybe we’re better about telling that people that from the beginning now than we used to be.

Yes, um-hmm.

What haven’t I asked you that we should talk about.

Oh, I think you ask, I think you’ve covered absolutely everything.

[Laughs].

Thank you so much.

Thank you.

[End of transcription]