



CSLS SPEAKER SERIES

*In celebration of 150 Years of Women at Berkeley
Cosponsored with the Department of Gender & Women's Studies*

Monday, September 14, 2020

PATRICIA CAIN

Professor of Law, Santa Clara University

ELEANOR SWIFT

Professor Emerita, Berkeley Law

“Breaking into the Legal Ivory Tower: The First American Women Law Professors - a book by Herma Hill Kay”

Herma Hill Kay was the second female law professor to be hired by Berkeley Law (then Boalt Hall). That was in 1960, before most American law schools had hired even one female faculty member. By Herma's count, she was the 15th female law professor to be hired by an ABA accredited school that was also a member of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS). Herma worked throughout her academic career to support women in the legal academy and to diversify the academy even further by supporting people of color and sexual minorities.

For the last 30 years of her life, she focused on a book project that is finally nearing fruition after her untimely death in 2017. That project was to tell the stories, including both personal and professional aspects, of the first 14 women law professors at ABA/AALS schools. Why did she stop at number 14? Because she was number 15 and thought their stories should be told first.

At this event we will discuss both Herma's legacy and her book project with Professor Patricia Cain (Santa Clara Law), who was friend of Herma's from the 1970s and is currently working on Herma's book project to see that it is published, and Professor (Emerita) Eleanor Swift (Berkeley Law), who was a long-time colleague of Herma and her associate dean during Herma's tenure as dean.

Herma Hill Kay was also a longtime close friend of current Supreme Court Associate Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, who has spoken out many times since Herma's death about the importance of publishing Herma's book. Fortunately the University of California Press was quick to recognize the import of Herma's work and is working closely with Professor Cain to make publication happen as soon as possible. Justice Ginsburg's honorary preface in the book, which is a personal tribute to who Herma was as a friend and a person, will be summarized at this event.

This Center for the Study of Law and Society event will celebrate the role of early Berkeley Law women, but most importantly Barbara Armstrong, hired as a law faculty member in 1919, and Herma Hill Kay, hired in 1960.

PLACE [Please register here for Zoom link.](#)

TIME 12:45 – 2:00pm.

INFO <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/research/CSLS/>

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150 Years of Women at Berkeley

