David Knight: . . . . your last name, and give me your title. That'll allow me to get an audio level.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Okay.

David Knight: And we'll start with Justice Cooper.

Candace Cooper: Okay. My name is Candace Cooper, and I am currently retired. I was the Presiding Justice of Division Eight of the California Court of Appeal, Second Appellate District.

David Knight: And Justice Todd.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And I am Kathryn Doi Todd. I sit in the Second District in Division Two. Today . . . . Oh, can I start with the . . . .

David Knight: Give me just a second here. I just want to move my camera a little bit.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I have a little blurb to start it off with.

Candace Cooper: Okay.

Kathryn Doi Todd: What day it is, and what we're doing.

David Knight: All right, and we are ready to go.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Today is June 23, 2009, and this is an interview of Justice Candace Cooper, recently retired from the Court of Appeal. This is part of the Appellate Court Legacy Project, creating an oral history of the court. I am Kathryn Doi Todd, and I had the pleasure of joining Justice Cooper in Division Two of the Second District before she was appointed Presiding Justice of Division Eight.

So, Candy, you were born in Los Angeles on November 23, 1948. Tell me about your parents and about your siblings and your family life growing up.

Candace Cooper: Okay. I was born in Los Angeles – Queen of Angels Hospital, I understand. My parents are both deceased. My father's name was Cornelius Cooper, and for the majority of my life he was a member of the Los Angeles Police Department. Then when I was in college, he retired from LAPD and joined the Justice Department, where he had a second career.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Well, when you were young, was he one of just a few black officers . . .

Candace Cooper: Yes.

Kathryn Doi Todd: . . . in LAPD? 2:03

Candace Cooper: Yes. He was a contemporary of a man named Jesse Brewer, who became one of the first very high-ranking members . . . black members of LAPD. A little bit younger than Tom Bradley when he was on the police force. Most of the early African-American lawyers – male lawyers – in Los Angeles, a lot of them were LAPD officers who retired.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And a few of the judges.

Candace Cooper: Yes, yes, a few of the judges as well. My dad was also a contemporary . . . . One of our judges that a lot of people remember from the superior court was David Cunningham. Not the . . . . We have a new David Cunningham, who is also a judge now, but they had . . . my dad and him had been in kindergarten together. My dad was also born and raised in Los Angeles.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And had Dave Cunningham, Sr., been on the L.A. Police Department?

Candace Cooper: That I don't remember; I don't remember him. But a good number of the black judges were ex-LAPD officers.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And what about your mother? Did she work, or . . . .

Candace Cooper: My mother was primarily a housewife. She would work from time to time as economics indicated that she needed to get out and do more assistance. She sold insurance for a few years, and . . . . However, her *best* job when I was in high school is she became a reservation agent for Trans World Airlines.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh! So did that mean you got access to travel?

Candace Cooper: At that time, you could . . . . We didn't get passes because we weren't . . . . I think the spouse could get a pass. But we could pay the tax and fly anywhere TWA went. So if I had a three-day weekend, I was gone. So I did a lot of traveling on those days.

Kathryn Doi Todd: At what age were you starting to travel like that?

Candace Cooper: This was in high school and . . . the end of high school and college. Undergraduate.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So what were some of the places that you visited?

Candace Cooper: Well, mostly . . . . Actually, at that time I was going back and forth to Germany, 'cause there was a very good German family that my family was very close to and they had a lot of children and several homes. And so we would go there. So I would go to Berlin – then West Berlin – or northern Germany, or they also had a country home in the southern part of Germany. So it was 4:22

Kathryn Doi Todd: What a wonderful experience for you!

Candace Cooper: That was fun, yeah. That was fun.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So did you get to learn any German at that time?

Candace Cooper: I never studied it, but we would be there for long enough. My whole family would go. My brother was also friends, my younger sister was friends, with this family as well. And you'd go and you'd stay for several months because they were very accommodating people, and they had a lot of kids as well. And I must say, after two or three years of those kinds of visits, I got conversational. So I could carry on a routine conversation. And I could understand a *lot* unless they started talking, you know, politics or religion, or something with . . . . more sophisticated. And then I'd lose it.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So you have a couple of brothers, don't you?

Candace Cooper: I have. I am . . . In birth order, I am number two of four. It was boy-girl-boy-girl. My older brother Cornelius is a medical doctor; he lives in New York City, in Manhattan. I have a younger brother . . . . My older brother is a year older than me. I have a younger brother who's five years younger, lives here in Los Angeles; his name is Conrad, and he is a preeminent swim instructor. He teaches hundreds of kids each summer to swim and then takes the winter off, and he loves his life.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And you have a sister as well.

Candace Cooper: And my . . . the youngest sibling is my sister, Crystal, who's eight years younger than me. And she lives in L.A. and is raising, with her partner, two beautiful adopted children.

Kathryn Doi Todd: All of your names begin with "C."

Candace Cooper: Yes.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And I heard that your father's name was Cornelius.

Candace Cooper: Cornelius also.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And what about your mother? Did she have a name that began with "C" as well?

Candace Cooper: She did not. She was fairly close in the alphabet; her name was Eunice Cooper. But she . . . I don't know why they got stuck with these "CC"s. But everybody started with "C."

Kathryn Doi Todd: So you were born in Los Angeles. You've basically spent most of your life in Los Angeles, haven't you? 6:25

Candace Cooper: I did. We did a lot of traveling. My father was, you know . . . . I was born in '48 and, basically, elementary school years was in the '50s, and college years and high school years in the '60s. But in those elementary school years, that was back in the day where gas was 10 or 15 cents a gallon, and it was "See the U.S.A. in Your Chevrolet." And we had a series of station wagons. And cops don't have a lot of money for hotels, so he'd pile us all in the car and we would go all over. I probably went to . . . . I went to many states, almost all of the national parks, and we would camp and drive around and that was how we vacationed. And so we got to see a lot.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You were very fortunate. You had a close family, and I know that when I was first on Division Two, you were . . . you had your mother with you, and she . . . .

Candace Cooper: Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And you took care of her in the last years of her life.

Candace Cooper: Yeah. She lived with me. In fact, the home that I'm in now, I purchased a larger home so she could come and stay with myself and my daughter. And so, yeah, she was actually . . . she attended my enrobing into the Second . . . to Division Two and then again she made . . . she wasn't well, but she made it for Division Eight also.

Kathryn Doi Todd: She must have been very proud of you.

Candace Cooper: Yes, yes.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So, when did your father pass away? Were you already a judge, or did he ever know anything about that?

Candace Cooper: I was just . . . . I had been a judge for two years. He . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: So he knew about that.

Candace Cooper: He knew about it. My dad . . . . Actually, it was a little longer than that, now that I think about it. I'm losing these dates. My dad passed away in 1985 at the age of 62, which was *way* too young.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Yeah, *way* too young.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, way too young. But I had . . . was appointed to the muni court in 1980, so he did get to know 1) I had become a lawyer, and also that I had become a judge.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, that's wonderful.

Candace Cooper: So, yeah, he 8:26

Kathryn Doi Todd: He must have been very proud of you.

Candace Cooper: He was, he was.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And your mother as well.

Candace Cooper: Yes.

Kathryn Doi Todd: But your whole family sounds so accomplished.

Candace Cooper: Well, we are that generation that basically jumped into . . . You know, an educated generation. My father's family was interesting because the generation before his, there were some college-educated people in that generation. His father was an AME minister and came to California around the turn of the century to open a church, and actually pastored a church in Pasadena – that historically well-known church out there. And then was transferred to San Francisco and *[audio drops out]* away when my father, who was the youngest of four, was only two.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I see. So then where did your father grow up?

Candace Cooper: He grew up . . . . They came back to Los Angeles, so he grew up in Los Angeles. Went to Jefferson high School here in L.A. And . . . . But as a result of losing his father when he was only two years old, and his mother being in California – this was then back in the early '20s – had no support and no relatives on the West Coast. So it was . . . . He then had a tough . . . a much tougher upbringing.

Kathryn Doi Todd: From a very young . . .

Candace Cooper: Yeah, yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: . . . age.

Candace Cooper: And so my dad and his siblings . . . . He was one of four, there were no college graduates in that generation, and they lost track of his father's family. And his mother's family pretty much as well, 'cause communication travel back in the '20s and 30s isn't what it was these days.

Kathryn Doi Todd: It's interesting how much of an impact economics had on their life – their whole life.

Candace Cooper: Yeah. I think it's really a testament to education. And you can do, you know, a great deal without it, but it certainly is not an assurance, and you can do a heck of a lot better if you do have, you know, the economic . . . the educational credentials. 'Cause my dad ultimately did pretty well. He went as far as he could in the Los Angeles Police Department, but he 11:02

retired from LAPD it must have been around '67 or '68, because he had risen basically as far as you could go as an African-American officer in LAPD at that time. It was *very* difficult to get above sergeant, and he had made that level. But you would only be assigned to, you know, predominately African-American areas, and there were a lot of restrictions. So he left LAPD and went with the Justice Department in a program called Law Enforcement Assistance Administration that, at that time, was giving out block grants – federal money – to local and state law enforcement agencies and other educational institutions and, in fact, partially funded one of the first California judicial colleges.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, my goodness.

Candace Cooper: It was funded through, in part . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: It's a small world, isn't it?

Candace Cooper: It's a very small world. Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So . . . .

Candace Cooper: But I was very proud of him – I have to add this – because he ultimately rose to I think it was GS18 or whatever . . . the top level in the government below where you have to have a confirmation hearing.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Fantastic! Oh, my goodness.

Candace Cooper: And it's just an example of being given an opportunity. And went through several different administrations.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So he must have been a very intelligent man.

Candace Cooper: He was a very smart guy, he was a very smart guy. Very thoughtful, very kind man.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So where did you go to junior high school?

Candace Cooper: I grew up in the Crenshaw neighborhood.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So did you go to Audubon Junior High School?

Candace Cooper: I went to Audubon Junior High School and then Dorsey High School and then skipped down the road to USC.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I remember that you told me once, a long time ago, that your high school counselor had not really prepared you for college. I was just astonished to hear that. But tell me again about that.

Candace Cooper: Well, those were sort of interesting days. I graduated from high school in '66, so that would have been junior high 13:18

school in ’63. And we moved into the Crenshaw neighborhood in 1959. When we moved in the Crenshaw area, the Crenshaw neighborhood was predominately Caucasian. And they had a large pocket of Japanese-Americans, and they . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: That’s where I was, also.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, on Crenshaw by the Holiday Bowl.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Yes!

Candace Cooper: And so I went . . . . I grew up in that neighborhood, but I saw, and personally witnessed, you know, some real negative things that the whole neighborhood was subject to – you know, a lot of . . . they called it “block busting” at that time. And the . . . . Dorsey . . . . Well, I’ll put it this way, just to show you. In the length of time . . . . In about a seven-year time span . . . . My brother and sister . . . . my brother . . . my two brothers and I were all in elementary school at the same time. My brother was sixth grade, I was fifth grade, my baby brother was in kindergarten. And we started at a school called 54th Street School, which had probably about five or six hundred kids in the student body there. When we arrived, there were two other black kids at the school, and then my three siblings, and the rest of the school was predominately white. Dorsey High School, which is – this is all in the same neighborhood – Dorsey High School, which I graduated from – so this is like ’66, so from ’59 to ’66 – Dorsey High School had 3,600 students there. My graduating class of 750 had 125 white kids, and it was the last class out of Dorsey with any significant number of whites. They had bailed out of the whole Crenshaw neighborhood.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I remember that Audubon Junior High School was basically white when I went.

Candace Cooper: Yes. Yeah. And it was the same when I was there. The real change occurred, I would say, between like ’62 and ’66. The whole neighborhood flipped. The school flipped. They had an 85 percent turnover in faculty at Dorsey High School, ’cause the faculty also left.

And that ties back to your comment about the college counseling. I was student body president my senior semester; I’d been student body president the fall semester. As class president, I was, you know, “Most Likely to Succeed” in my graduating class – all that sort of Type A achiever stuff. And I was rejected for UCLA – and I had good grades, I was in the Phoebian Society and so forth – because I had not filled all of my college requirements. And the reason I didn’t fill my college requirements is because my college counselor gave me poor advice on certain activities that she said would qualify me for . . . they would give me credit. Specifically . . . . ’Cause I was student body president, so Student Government was 16:16

actually during a class period every day. And she told me that Student Government would qualify for one of my government requirements for entering the UC system. And it didn't. And so my application got turned down. And the only two schools . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: So it wasn't really . . . . It sounds like it was more something that she didn't understand technically – not necessarily because you were black, or anything like that.

Candace Cooper: It was a . . . . It seems to me beyond comprehension that the student body president at a school is going to be given bad advice. There were a lot of, you know, white kids in that class in Government, as well. I think it was a lack of care about my particular future, and I didn't have the . . . . You know, neither one of my parents had gone to college; they didn't have the . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Wherewithal, right.

Candace Cooper: . . . skill to really understand what the entrance requirements were. And that's a pretty basic question. The other thing is, I don't know of any one of my peers that were also active in student government that had the same problem.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So was that your first choice, then, to go to UCLA?

Candace Cooper: It would have been my first choice financially. And so I wound up going to USC, which is the only other California school . . . . I wanted to go to a four-year university. I could have gone to a state college or a city college, but I was not going to do that. So I basically went to 'SC undergrad with no financial aid, 'cause I was a good student but not perfect, and . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: That must have been tough for your family.

Candace Cooper: It *was* tough.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So did you work during high school or college?

Candace Cooper: I had always worked. I . . . . The . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: What kind of jobs did you have?

Candace Cooper: YWCA . . . YWMCA. Young men. YMCA camp counselor. And they had summer camps every summer, and they'd have camps during the spring break. And I was active in the Y. And so I became a Y counselor. And then I had . . . . The one fortunate scholarship that I did get . . . . The Southern California Gas Company – which they still have a program, the metropolitan district, it's now Sempra Energy, I think, although this is not a promo – had a program where they were giving scholarships to what they called "inner-city" kids. And 18:38

their scholarships consisted of a small cash stipend, but you would get a summer job all through college.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh. So you benefited from that.

Candace Cooper: Yes, I benefited from that. So I knew I had a summer job every summer.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So, what did you study, undergraduate?

Candace Cooper: I studied, for the first couple years, pre-med. And so I took the, you know, the general ed classes, and the . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: And your brother had already done this? I mean, it's your older brother who's a doctor now?

Candace Cooper: My older brother's a doctor now. My older brother was at West Point at the time, and so . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: What did I say about this is an accomplished family? My goodness!

Candace Cooper: They're . . . . They get an engineering degree, I think, is the basic degree you wind up with there. So he was at West Point a year ahead of me. His is another story, how he wound up a doctor, but . . . . And . . . . But I had . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Did you know doctors? Is that why you wanted to be a doctor?

Candace Cooper: No, you know, I, honest to God, if I had to do this all over again, I would still be a doctor, even though, you know, the judicial . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Even though it was so tough.

Candace Cooper: No, just because I think I would have truly loved the work. You know, the judicial career has been wonderful, and I think probably in terms of suitability, it's probably the next best thing I could have done, and . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: What do you think would have been so satisfying about being in medicine?

Candace Cooper: More hands-on service to people, assisting people that have, you know, whatever illnesses or things if you can, you know, treat them. And I just think that would have been a great thing to do. Plus from a little kid, that's what I wanted to do.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, my goodness.

Candace Cooper: You know, so you never can get that out. But I was . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Well, it's never too late, you know, Candy! 20:27

Candace Cooper: It's too late for . . . . No, you know why it's too late? The same reason it was too late in high school and college: I am *terrible* in math. *Terrible* in math. I got through a good portion of the pre-med things, and I'm just horrible in math. And that just killed me, all those pre-med courses that had the heavy-duty math requirements.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So when did you change to political science?

Candace Cooper: My junior year.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, boy, then you suffered through it for two years.

Candace Cooper: I suffered through it for two years, but I was holding up my GPA with the classes that I was taking in English and history and psych and all the other classes. And just struggling with the physics and organic chem and all that other madness that you need for pre-med. And I finally said, you know, you're swimming against the stream here, kid. You know, your GPA, you know, trying to keep my GPA up. And the classes I was doing well in was not those that were going to get me into med school. So I flipped.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So you flipped, and at that point did you think that you would probably go to law school, or had you not decided?

Candace Cooper: I hadn't decided that. I flipped to poly sci 'cause I always had an interest in government and politics. And I'm looking around for majors and said, okay, well, you know, math, the whole math and science area, that's out. I knew I didn't want to be a teacher, so I wasn't going to go into those kind of teacher preparation-type . . . child development and all of that sort of stuff. I had a general interest in perhaps psychology, but sort of in the same way I was interested in medicine, in the sense of, you know . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: So you would have had to go to med school!

Candace Cooper: Do some sort of counseling-type thing, of working with people. But so I said, well, you know, my best class scores were in this area, so I said, well, let me just make this my major.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Were there any particular professors or mentors at that point in college who were encouraging to you?

Candace Cooper: I have . . . . Yeah, there are two that I remember from undergraduate. One was a guy named Fred Krinsky, who was . . . taught Poly Sci 101 at 'SC. And he left 'SC later – I can't remember what year exactly he left – and then he went to Pomona College, where he became Professor Emeritus of the Poly Sci Department there. And he was also the father of another fellow I got to be good friends with. But he was 23:05

a really remarkable guy. He was a reformed rabbi as well as just a remarkable poly sci professor and lecturer. And we actually got to be friends and remained friends for many years. He died a few years ago. And I even went to the 50th anniversary of his bar mitzvah, which he gave . . . after the service he gave a . . . essentially a lecture. I mean, he was just a natural-born teacher, and he gave a lecture to all the people there about things going on in the Middle East, just from, like, memory and his own knowledge. He was just a wonderful man, wonderful man. He was a very significant person to me.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Did he inspire you towards law, or just generally?

Candace Cooper: Just generally. And specifically. It turns out his oldest son is a partner now at O'Melveny & Meyers – a guy named David Krinsky. Turned out was in my law school class. And we got to be good friends, and he and I are still friends, and his family. And he was in my study group all through law school, and that was one of the reasons I was able to stay connected to Professor Krinsky was through the . . . what then became family connections.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So did you enjoy law school?

Candace Cooper: I *loved* law school. I hated undergraduate school, except for a course here or there, on . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: What was it about law school that was so different from undergraduate . . . .

Candace Cooper: Well, 'SC undergraduate in the '60s was a wasteland for black kids.

Kathryn Doi Todd: How was it socially for a black student?

Candace Cooper: A wasteland. They had . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: What kind of percentage of minorities were there?

Candace Cooper: Oh . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Negligible?

Candace Cooper: Negligible. If I remember correctly, at one point I think we sort of did a head count, and there was something like 125 African-American undergraduates at 'SC during my early years, and a fair number of those were on the football team. And it's true.

Kathryn Doi Todd: That makes me laugh.

Candace Cooper: It's true. I started 'SC, Mike Garrett was playing football. I was there through all of O.J. Simpson's playing years. 25:38

And when I left, Lynn Swann was playing football – when I left law school. So athletes, you know, a lot of . . . not a lot, but a good number of black athletes and not that many kids in the academic programs.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So what did that mean for your social life?

Candace Cooper: It meant you had to go elsewhere, basically, in terms of social life. But not so much social life; I never really worried about that too much. But what really discouraged me is, having come from a high school atmosphere where I was just super-active and engaged and involved in everything, you got to 'SC in the '60s and the sorority and fraternity system was running the school – undergrad – and it was . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: And you . . . there weren't any for you, were there?

Candace Cooper: No. No. They only had one African-American woman that I knew to be a member of any sorority on the row. It was not one of the elite sororities. And she was so fair-skinned I doubted that they knew she was black.

And I went and applied after my first year (I had done, you know, well) for a couple of service organizations – not the sororities, which I regarded as social – and was turned down.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Did they give you any reason?

Candace Cooper: No.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, they didn't have to?

Candace Cooper: No, they didn't have to give a reason.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So that must have been . . . .

Candace Cooper: So my suspicion was . . . . 'Cause I went . . . . I remember I went to one of the group's offices to turn in my application, and as I handed it to . . . . And it was a student, another student that was there. She said, "Oh, well, you know you have to have a "B" average to apply to this group."

Kathryn Doi Todd: Assuming, of course, that you didn't.

Candace Cooper: Assuming that I didn't. And I was rejected for that group also. And so I spent about, you know, a year or so trying to fit in, and then I forgot about it. And I was a commuter student anyway, so . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: You lived at home.

Candace Cooper: I lived at home, and so 27:39

Kathryn Doi Todd: Were you able to talk about these kinds of rejections with . . . I mean, I call them rejections.

Candace Cooper: They are.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Were you able to talk about them with your parents, or was it something that you didn't really want to share because you didn't want to hurt . . . them to be hurt or sad?

Candace Cooper: They had . . . . Actually, my dad . . . . It was around this time that my dad had changed jobs and they had moved to Washington, D.C.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, I see.

Candace Cooper: And so I was on my own during that time. But it did sour my whole undergraduate, sort of, years.

The other professor that I remember real well that made a . . . significance to me was an interesting fellow who had the oddest name: his name was Shimshon Zelnicker. And he was a visiting professor from Israel. And I took a class . . . a Comparative Civilization class from him. And I remember we wrote papers, and at the end of the year, he said, "I want to see you in my office to talk about your paper." And so I came in, and he . . . we talked about the paper for a little while, and then he asked me, he said, "Why are you here?"

Kathryn Doi Todd: He meant at USC.

Candace Cooper: At USC. I said, "What do you mean, why am I here?" He said, "Why are you here?" He said, "This is just a, you know, a breeding ground for upper-middle-class white kids. They're all just here looking for husbands and wives, and why are you here?" And he said, "I don't understand it." And so I kind of, you know, went through, you know, why I was there, and he said, "Well, you know, you're really . . . ." You know, he gave me positive feedback about what he thought my talents and skills were and said, "You know, you really . . . . You know, don't be discouraged, you know, about anything that's gone on here. You . . . . You know, there are other places that are more receptive."

Kathryn Doi Todd: Did you ever think about transferring over to UCLA or something like that?

Candace Cooper: I had left 'SC for one year. My junior year, I went to University of Maryland 'cause my folks had gone back during my sophomore year when my dad left L.A. and got this job with the government. And I went back to live with them and I went to University of Maryland, and I kind of got out of the frying pan into the fire in terms of colleges. 29:49

Kathryn Doi Todd: In what way?

Candace Cooper: Well, University of Maryland at that time was even *further* in the Dark Ages, in terms of racial issues, than USC was in the '60s. I went to a football game at Maryland, and all the black kids were sort of sitting together in one section. And 'SC – I mean, not 'SC, Maryland – had its own group of cheerleaders, and they were all white cheerleaders, and without being too racist and non-PC, they really didn't have a lot of rhythm! And so the black kids, having no cheerleaders on the cheerleading squad, we did our own cheers, right? *In* rhythm.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Up in the bleachers?

Candace Cooper: Up in the bleachers. I mean, we were not anti-school, we were just, you know, we just had our own thing. So I remember being at this football game, and the cheerleaders, you know, were doing *their* thing, and then when they weren't doing theirs, then the . . . sort of the black kids in their own section, we had made up our *own* cheers that kind of had a beat. And we got pelted with ice and cups and debris from the other kids in the stands. I thought, "Oh, this is very interesting."

Kathryn Doi Todd: So you stayed there a year?

Candace Cooper: I stayed there a year. And then the cheerleaders came out with about a 16-by-20-foot Confederate flag during the half time. That was sort of a message.

And then the other, I think, significant issue at University of Maryland is they had a Home Ec or a . . . department . . . that might not be exactly the name. But they had a department dealing with, I guess, teaching, at that point transitioning into more modern-sounding things like nutrition and so forth. And they had a government research grant, where they were going to provide food to kids and wanted . . . and was going to be a . . . it was a dietary study of some sort. And I know it was federally funded, 'cause that was part of the issues. Anyway, it was open to everybody on campus – undergrads. You had to be between a certain age. And you'd come in, and they would feed you three meals a day and then I guess they were going to check your vitals and so forth. And being as most of the black kids on campus were a little bit broke and thought, "Hey, this sounds like a pretty good deal," a bunch of them went to sign up. And they were all turned down, every last one – except, again, one very light-skinned girl that lived in the dormitory. And everybody put their heads together and said, "What in the world is happening? Everybody got turned down." So we had a picket at the Home Ec building. And the head of the department came out with a 1930-something University of Mississippi Medical School article that said that the blood of African Americans was different than the blood of whites and therefore we couldn't participate in the study. So I left 33:02

Maryland after one year and came back to 'SC and thought, "Lord have mercy. This is really pathetic."

So anyway, came back to 'SC, graduated that year, and then wound up surprising myself by accepting an offer to go to 'SC Law School, which was for financial reasons because I finally got a scholarship.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, that's great.

Candace Cooper: They gave me a wonderful scholarship that – for the full time I was there – that had made . . . that made the difference. 'Cause I had partial scholarship offers from some other law schools, but 'SC had a . . . . I had a full scholarship, and so I thought I'd suck it up and stay.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And you did so well at law school.

Candace Cooper: I did.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You were on the *Law Review*.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, I did very well at law school. Law school was totally different.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And you said you loved it.

Candace Cooper: I loved law school for a variety of reasons. One is, for the most part the attitude in the law school was totally different than the undergraduate school. They had a commitment to diversity; they really didn't care much about your background; it was pretty much a meritocracy in terms of, you know, class participation, grading, and everything else. I also was excited by the content of the subject matter and, for the first time in college, really studied and liked what I was doing and, as a result, did well and met other terrific people, you know, that became, you know, lifelong friends. And so that was . . . . As negative as the undergraduate experience was, the law school experience was good all around.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So what was the minority population, at that point, in the law school at USC?

Candace Cooper: It . . . . The entering class was a little over a hundred, and I think there were seven blacks in my . . . . No, six. Six blacks in my entering class. And 'SC actually has – because it's a private institution and not subject to the Prop 209 things – has been able to maintain its minority student representation, and I think now is probably one of the most diverse law schools in the country. They have . . . . Minority enrollment has stayed around 30 percent every year. 35:39

Kathryn Doi Todd: I read some remarks that you had made – I think it was in the *Law Review* tribute to Scott . . . .

Candace Cooper: Bice?

Kathryn Doi Todd: Bice, when he was retiring. And you were commending him and his work . . .

Candace Cooper: Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: . . . to create a diverse student body.

Candace Cooper: Well, we had . . . . 'SC has had a real . . . during a number of years had a very stable dean situation. The dean when I started law school was Dorothy Nelson, who's on the Ninth Circuit. And she was a very, very wonderful person – a very kind woman. And she left as dean, I think . . . . I don't know if it was my second or third year in law school, I forget now. And Scott Bice, who was then a very young professor, became the dean. And he was then dean for the next 19 years. And I've stayed active with the law school there – been on the Board of Counselors, was chair of the Board of Counselors at one time, and stayed very active with the law school.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So what was the first year of law school like for you? Was it immediately exciting?

Candace Cooper: Yes. Yeah. It was immediately exciting. It was . . . . You know, I like verbal-type exchanges. And, you know, the kids are clever and funny. And the professors are . . . some are clever and funny and some are not. But the ones that aren't entertaining are challenging. And so even if the class was somewhat hideous, you had your friends to laugh about it. And I think probably everybody who's gone to law school has funny stories about law school, and that was sort of the *Paper Chase* style of teaching at the time. And there were teachers that were better at it than others. But with . . . when you make friends, you sort of can survive anything.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So would you consider that a really wonderful three years of your life, the law school experience?

Candace Cooper: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Very much so.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Then immediately after that, you get hired by one of the most prestigious law firms in Los Angeles. And I mean, just looking back, I know that was a time when there were very few minorities, and particularly minority women, being hired by those law firms.

Candace Cooper: Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So where did you go, and how did that come about? 38:15

Candace Cooper: I went to the law firm Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher. I had summer-clerked the second summer for O'Melveny & Myers, and I had an offer to go there. And then interviewed in the fall with a variety of firms, and interviewed at Gibson Dunn and had an offer to go there. And I accepted Gibson Dunn. I think sort of a "grass is greener" kind of thing. I kind of had an idea what O'Melveny was like 'cause I had clerked there during the summer. And the Gibson Dunn people sort of rang the right bells, and I accepted their offer and went there. And I . . . . Looking back on it, I don't think it really would have mattered. I just don't think being a lawyer really suited my nature. And being a lawyer in a highly competitive, you know, the sort of Wall Street kind of environment added to that.

Kathryn Doi Todd: What was it about being a lawyer that you think didn't suit your . . . .

Candace Cooper: I am by nature not an advocate; I'll put it in the negative. Lawyers really need to have a bit more of . . . a bit more – aggression, I think, is probably the right word – than I have, and desire to win. And my desire to win is very much related to the merits of the issue. And I have a real hard time fighting for something I don't believe in. And, you know, you get into that corporate environment, and I sort of understand doing the best for your client, but it's hard. You need to put heart and soul into it to make it a success at those kinds of places. And . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: So were you surprised at your feelings about all this at that time, or did you . . .

Candace Cooper: No.

Kathryn Doi Todd: . . . kind of suspect that . . . .

Candace Cooper: Well, you know, the thing about it is I really had no idea, because I didn't know any lawyers growing up, and I certainly didn't know any lawyers at those kinds of firms. And the only lawyer that I remember is a man you've probably met, Kathy, in your career, is H. Clay Jacke.

Kathryn Doi Todd: That's right.

Candace Cooper: And Clay Jacke was a criminal defense lawyer in L.A. He was my father's colleague and peer on the LAPD – one of the ones that had gone . . . . He was the only lawyer I knew. And he was a very flashy criminal defense lawyer. And he used to come and see my dad. He'd come to visit the house, and he was a . . . . Both he and my dad were tall, good-looking African-American men. That was back in the day when you had to be a . . . in order to be a police officer, you had to be 41:10

a male of decent size. And they were all . . . both over six feet and, you know, good-looking.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Handsome.

Candace Cooper: Handsome. Handsome guys.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Yes, indeed.

Candace Cooper: And he'd come visit my dad. And he'd . . . he always wore cowboy boots and a cowboy hat; he had his own style of things. And so he was "the lawyer" that I knew. So I really didn't know what these law firms did, or what the environment was really like there, until I went. And . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: How long did you stay?

Candace Cooper: I stayed . . . . I graduated law school in '73. I took the summer off and went to Germany on a TWA ticket again.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You lucky girl.

Candace Cooper: I know. Didn't come back until . . . . I passed the bar first time – I found out in the fall – but I didn't come back to the States until January. So January '94 *[sic]* I started at Gibson Dunn. And then I stayed there until I was appointed to the bench in 1980. But I . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Six years, yeah.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, six years.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And I had no idea that you were only 32 until I saw your materials. You were only 32 when you were first appointed.

Candace Cooper: 31.

Kathryn Doi Todd: 31!

Candace Cooper: Yeah, I hadn't turned 32 yet.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, my goodness.

Candace Cooper: It was the year . . . . I turned 32 that year, but later.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, I see.

Candace Cooper: So, no, I was 31.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You must have been one of the youngest judges. I remember people talking about Eric Younger being so young.

Candace Cooper: There are very few other judges that were . . . 42:36

Kathryn Doi Todd: That young.

Candace Cooper: . . . judges that young. I know Eric Younger *was* one, and I think Ron George – the Chief – may have been quite young when he first went on the bench. But not . . . . It's hard to . . . It was hard to get on . . . . That meant going straight, you know, ...

Kathryn Doi Todd: That meant going immediately . . . . You had to have five years at that time.

Candace Cooper: You had to have five years.

Kathryn Doi Todd: To go on to the municipal court.

Candace Cooper: Yeah. That meant you went on the bench very quickly after . . . . I think I had been a lawyer six . . . a little over six years when I went on the bench.

Kathryn Doi Todd: How did you apply? I mean, how . . . what made . . . encouraged you to apply for the bench?

Candace Cooper: Oh, that is actually an interesting story. That's going to bring two names in that everybody is going to be familiar with.

Once I got out of law school and became a lawyer, I instantly went back to my activity level of being a joiner of things and became a bar junkie. And became a member of California Women Lawyers, Women Lawyers of Los Angeles, Black Women Lawyers – all the bar groups that I could belong to. And for Women Lawyers of Los Angeles, I chaired the committee that did judicial evaluations for folks that were interested in order to get WLA's endorsement. And I had chaired a bunch of different committees, but that was the one I was chairing at this time.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And were you doing litigation work?

Candace Cooper: No.

Kathryn Doi Todd: No. Okay.

Candace Cooper: For two of the six years that . . . or about 24 months, maybe a little more, of the time I was at Gibson Dunn, I actually went to . . . lived in New York and Minnesota, working on a single anti-trust case. So I was gone for a little over two years out of that four – out of that six – which was another different experience. But that was my jaunt in litigation. And . . . . But I was the most junior lawyer out of about 12, so I . . . . We would get to go to court occasionally and watch the senior lead litigator argue. But other than that, no, I had no litigation. The rest of the time I was in the Corporate department at Gibson Dunn. Anyway, where was I? 44:52

Kathryn Doi Todd: So you chaired a committee evaluating judges for Women Lawyers.

Candace Cooper: I chaired a committee evaluating judges. And at that time – this is now late '70s – and at that time Jerry Brown was Governor and had started appointing more women to the bench. And so I was interviewing a lot of women, and some men that wanted to get that endorsement. And I was interviewing also women that wanted to be elevated from muni to superior. And whether these were D.A.s or P.D.s who wanted to become judges, or whether they wanted to be elevated, the judges loved their work. And the women that were litigators that wanted to become judges were all just, "I want to do this. This is what I want to do." And I believed them, you know. I thought, "This really sounds great." And, you know, and I would . . . I was reading their, you know, their PDQs and interviewed a lot of different people. And I thought, "This really sounds . . . ." So I got intrigued by the idea. I had not filed anything myself. I was, you know, still struggling over at GD&C, trying to fit in and make that work.

And I went to lunch, and I'll remember who was there. It was Veronica McBeth, who retired from L.A. Superior Court. A woman named Katherine Vaughns (her name was Tooks at the time), who was a local lawyer.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Kathy Tooks.

Candace Cooper: Kathy Tooks. And they were B . . . we were all in BWL. And we had lunch with Vaino Spencer . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: BWL being Black Women Lawyers.

Candace Cooper: Black Women Lawyers. And we had lunch with Vaino Spencer and Joan Dempsey Klein. And they said to the three of us, they said, "We know that Jerry Brown is interested in appointing more women to the bench and more minorities to the bench," and . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: And were they still on the municipal court at that time?

Candace Cooper: This would have been in '79, and I don't recall. I know Vaino went on . . . . I think they may . . . . I'm not . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Seems to me, when Vaino Spencer was involved in starting the National Association of Women Judges, she was still on the municipal court.

Candace Cooper: Well, I know somewhere right around that time she was . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Elevated. 47:28

Candace Cooper: . . . elevated. 'Cause I remember going to a large party for her, and it was all around the same time. Whatever position they were in, they were the acknowledged leaders of the women lawyers in the state at that time. And I think all these things were going on around the same time. And so the pitch was – 'cause we were all . . . I was the president-elect, and Vicki was the outgoing president; anyway, we were all active with BWL – is, "We want you guys to help us recruit some women to apply to the bench." And they said, "Oh, by the way, are any of you interested?" And Katherine said no, and Vicki said no, and I said, "Yes, I am." And so I applied. And they were both very supportive with that application, and actually from then on, 'cause they're just . . . are very supportive of women that apply.

Kathryn Doi Todd: How long was the process before you got the telephone call?

Candace Cooper: It took a while. It took awhile. It was, you know . . . . It didn't zoom through. But I'm pretty sure it was six months to a year from that date that I was actually appointed to the bench. I think my first appointment was April of 1980.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And who was the appointments secretary? Was it Tony Kline at that time?

Candace Cooper: Yes. When I was finally appointed it was Tony Kline. I think it was someone else when I first started. I think. But it was Tony Kline, yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: So what was your first assignment on the court?

Candace Cooper: Traffic court. And I was really quite happy with that, because I had not . . . having not been a litigator, I hadn't gone to court. The only time I had gone to court prior to my first day on the bench, to litigate something, I had gone to court with a cousin – a younger cousin of mine – who wanted a divorce. And I went down with her to help her get an uncontested divorce. And I researched this thing. I had about an eight-page script, which started with, "How long have you lived in the county?" after the name and everything. I was going to establish, you know, jurisdiction in the county; they had lived in the county. I asked about two or three questions, and I don't remember the name of the judge . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Who stopped you.

Candace Cooper: . . . who stopped me and asked the three questions that they had . . . that he needed to know, and it was over. And I had gotten all dressed up; I had gotten a suit. I was so nervous my knees were shaking. And I sat for a little while and listened to a couple of other divorces, and there really was . . . . You know, it was the difference between somebody going in on a criminal case and not waiving arraignment, you know, on 50:14

a 25-count indictment. It would be . . . . I was about that inept. So that was my one litigation experience. So I didn't know what I was doing.

Kathryn Doi Todd: How long were you . . . . That's a great place to start; I started there.

Candace Cooper: It's a perfect place to start.

Kathryn Doi Todd: How long were you in the Traffic Courts building?

Candace Cooper: I wound up being there for a couple of years because they made me supervisor, which is their way of sneaking people into keeping lousy assignments. But I really didn't mind it, 'cause I also then started doing court administration stuff, which I wound up liking all the way through my career. And I was not able . . . . You know, it's sort of like the doctor's thing: Do no harm. I wasn't able to do much harm to anyone down in traffic court. It was a great place to learn. And learn, you know, learn I did. The cases, you know, if they do go to trial, they're all so similar factually. And everybody had two drinks, and then they failed their FSTs, you know. That's "field sobriety tests" for the noninitiated. But . . . . So you really couldn't do anything.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You really were involved in court administration. I mean, at . . . after you went on the superior court, you were the supervising judge at Santa Monica, which is a . . .

Candace Cooper: Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: *significant* assignment.

Candace Cooper: Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: A plum assignment, really, . . .

Candace Cooper: That was great.

Kathryn Doi Todd: . . . to be in Santa Monica.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, I would up . . . . While I was on muni court, I was in two primary assignments: I was in traffic court and then after two years I came to CCB, which is where I stayed – Criminal Courts Building. And I wound up doing . . . . Actually, I was sort of getting into court administration then. I was supervisor of criminal there on the muni court, and my own personal assignment was doing long-cause preliminary hearings, which was a great assignment. And so I did those. Those were fun.

Kathryn Doi Todd: How long were you on the municipal court?

Candace Cooper: From '80 to '88, so like eight years. 52:09

Kathryn Doi Todd: And then when you went to superior court, what . . . did you stay in criminal?

Candace Cooper: I stayed in criminal initially, and then I wound up bouncing around. I was appointed in '88, and in 1990 I got pregnant and had my wonderful daughter Erin. And she was born in November of 1990. And I took off on maternity leave, and when I came back from maternity leave I worked Inglewood juvenile for a few months, and then I got a call from the presiding judge, who said, "We're not going to put any of our good judges in juvenile anymore, so we're going to transfer you. You can go to either Compton or Torrance." And so I said, "Well, let me get a map and find out where the heck Torrance is," 'cause I didn't know, and I knew where Compton was. And . . . . But Torrance was closer to home, so I went to Torrance and I stayed there for probably about four or five years and then transferred down to Santa Monica. And that was where I stayed until I was elevated.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Well, you received acclamation from just about every bar association and organization that exists in Los Angeles. I mean, when I looked at your résumé, I saw that you were "Outstanding Trial Jurist," named by the L.A. County bar in 1992; in 1990 you had been the county bar's "Criminal Court . . . Superior Court Judge of the Year"; you were "Judge of the Year" from the Langston Bar Association; and you also received the Women Lawyers Association of Los Angeles "Ernestine Stahlhut Award" in 1989. I mean, I don't know anyone else who has had so many awards recognizing their work as a trial judge.

And I also looked at some of the comments that lawyers had made about you, and read that you are considered one of the most astute . . . you *were* considered one of the most astute and wisest judges sitting on the bench. That you were called "brilliant." That . . . commented that you understood complex cases, that you were super-bright, you were even-handed, you were a role model for other judges, you were approachable, you were hard-working. So how did you approach your role as a jurist?

Candace Cooper: I think I had three things that I always kept in mind. And the first one – which, I think, although I . . . through . . . including my appellate work – is: more than anything I wanted to get it right in that case. You know, it wasn't enough for people to feel like they had been treated fairly. To me, I really wanted it to be . . . . I wanted the right result to happen, no matter what. And so that was always very, very important. So I would work for that, you know. That'd mean you had to stay on top of things in terms of working to not only have people think that they are being treated fairly but that you're going to get 55:56

a fair result. That, I think, played a lot into my success. The other is: I just respect people.

And so I think one reason that I got a lot of accolades for judicial temperament and behavior is to me there's . . . everyone that comes into my court has the same status, and that . . . in terms of the respect that they're warranted out of the box. So if it's a pro per, you know, a homeless person, you know, a police officer, you know, a very prominent lawyer, I mean the homeless guy is going to get respect from me just like the prominent lawyer. And then I'm going to try to get the right result for everybody. And so I think people appreciate that. I don't know that they do or don't get that elsewhere. I know other judges, you know, have good temperaments, too, but I will say this: that mine's not studied, it's not an affect. I truly feel that. And I would even . . . . You get into a situation where assuming the lawyer, or the litigant, or whoever it is is rational – which is not always the case – but if they are, even if things start off badly, you can talk to them and get it to turn around.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Well, that seems to be the feeling of people who argued cases in Division Eight as well. People were looking forward to seeing how this new . . . brand-new division in Los Angeles was going to develop. And I read comments that they were so pleased at how user-friendly and accommodating and willing to listen that that panel was.

Candace Cooper: We had a great time. We had a great time. Division Eight was absolutely wonderful. Now, you know I enjoyed my time with you, Kathryn, in Division Two. We had a good time.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Thank you. Well, I enjoyed my time with you.

Candace Cooper: That was also wonderful. And Division Eight, when we put it together, it was, you know, Paul Boland and Larry Rubin and myself for the first couple of years, and then Maddie Flier joined us later. The . . . . I think the thing about Division Eight is we all had a very similar . . . . We're very different personalities, but in *this* respect I think we're all quite similar – which is, you know, the willingness to give people their due, and their due time in court, and listen. And we were all rookies, so it was all new and exciting and, you know, you can . . . . There's an enthusiasm that comes from being new that we all had. I think that kind of was probably reflected in what we did.

Kathryn Doi Todd: There was a *lot* of disappointment when you decided to retire, Candy. I heard it from so many people.

David Knight: I'm going to ask you to pause for just a moment while I change tape. 59:19

Kathryn Doi Todd: We've been talking about the way that you approached being a judge, and the respect that litigants and lawyers have for you and how they've shown it by giving you so many awards. Your colleagues and peers also have this kind of respect for you. I mean, the fact that you were elected president of the California Judges Association back in 1988 – from what I know now, that was when you first went onto the superior court – how did you begin to . . . your activity with CJA right away when you became a municipal court judge?

Candace Cooper: Not immediately.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Because that is an organization where you go by steps.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, you have to work your way up.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Right.

Candace Cooper: That one was a case of mentoring. Robert Weil became a friend of mine, really led me into CJA, and showed me the ropes. And he became a president of CJA, was also a very active guy, and at one point – this was very early on – at one point I was on the muni court, and I don't know that I knew Bob all that well, but there was going to be an annual meeting that was going to be in the L.A. area or San Diego, perhaps. It must have been in the L.A. area. And Bob said, "I want you to get active in this organization. And you need to get some visibility and you need to meet people." He said, "So I want to appoint you as chair of the committee that organizes the seminars for the annual meeting." Or, you know, it might have been a summer meeting, or whatever. And he said, "That way, you'll sort of run the conference and you'll get to meet a lot of people, and I think you'll enjoy it." And I did. And so I did that committee, and then I think I chaired some other committees, eventually went on the Board – which is about a three-year term – and the third year was elected president of the Association. But Bob Weil got me active in CJA and kind of really, truly, showed me the ropes. "You did to do this, and you need to do the other, you know, those are the steps."

Kathryn Doi Todd: It's really important to have mentors, isn't it?

Candace Cooper: Very much so. Very much so. I mean, you can do it on your own, but there are ways, you know, there are shortcuts of a sort, and by shortcuts . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: Encouragement, also.

Candace Cooper: Yes, absolutely.

Kathryn Doi Todd: It's about understanding that something is possible. 1:02:04

Candace Cooper: Understanding that something is possible, and also there's a validation that you get. The one thing that I remember most from my early years of judging – that was before there were a lot more woman and others on the bench, and you may have experienced this, Kathy, as well – before you established a reputation and people knew who you were, you'd walk into every single situation with zero on your scorecard, you know. And you had to reestablish your credibility every single time.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And sometimes it was a "minus" on your scorecard.

Candace Cooper: Sometimes it *would* be a minus on your scorecard.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Just by looking like you did.

Candace Cooper: Because everybody wasn't receptive. And so you had to, you know, you were constantly having to prove yourself, establish your . . . you know, your vitae and so forth, and, you know, eventually that ended, but that went on for a very long time.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I remember at every meeting of CJA or every . . . you were present, you made remarks, and you were all up and down the state that year.

Candace Cooper: Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Did you enjoy that year?

Candace Cooper: CJA president was a lot of fun. It was a lot of fun. There was very good staff support. They had a woman named Connie Dove, who was the executive director of CJA at that time. And for a small organization with small staff – and I think there were only four or five full-time employees for the organization – they did an enormous amount of work on behalf of the judges and gave the president a great deal of support. Court-wise . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: How did it impact on your court work?

Candace Cooper: Court-wise, you . . . at that time you didn't get any break. So you maintained your normal calendar and you also absorbed all of your other . . . all of your expenses.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh – you had to pay for everything yourself.

Candace Cooper: Everything yourself. They would cover . . . a couple of the meetings were . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: That's tough!

Candace Cooper: . . . paid for. And otherwise you were paying for a lot yourself. That has subsequently changed, because I think there were some judges after me that complained about that. 1:04:22

Kathryn Doi Todd: That would be very tough, because you were at . . . I saw you at every meeting.

Candace Cooper: We were at a lot of things.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And didn't we as judges get subsidized for going to these . . . .

Candace Cooper: You would get the annual meetings.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And that was all?

Candace Cooper: And the semiannual meetings.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I don't remember any more.

Candace Cooper: But not these committee . . . you know, the meetings that would go on up and down . . . . When I became president, the organization picked up some of that, but the years that I was on the Board, you're working your way up. The judges . . . . The court would pay for the annual meeting and maybe the semiannual meeting, but all the other committee meeting things that you would go to, you were on your own for those.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You've been pretty active with the Judicial Council committees as well, haven't you?

Candace Cooper: Mm hmm.

Kathryn Doi Todd: What are some of those committees that you've participated with?

Candace Cooper: I'd actually have to look at a list, there've been so many. But I . . . . Chief Justice George has, in addition to appointing me to the Judicial Council and I did a term there, also put me on a number of different advisory committees and boards.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I saw that you were on the Racial and Ethnic Bias in the Courts Committee, the Commission on the Future of the Legal Profession, . . .

Candace Cooper: Yeah. And I was on an early one on private judging that was really . . . pretty interesting. But a variety of those. And . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: So you've really been called upon by the Chief to play a leadership role in judicial administration throughout the state.

Candace Cooper: I'd like to think that was right, yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: One of the most significant, it seems to me, was your chairing the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. There was a statewide symposium in Sacramento. 1:06:07

Candace Cooper: Yeah.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And I remember attending that extraordinary conference.

Candace Cooper: It was great.

Kathryn Doi Todd: What were your thoughts in planning that symposium?

Candace Cooper: That one was very much of a collaboration with the members of the committee. The Chief decided – and I really, truly have the greatest respect for Chief Justice George; I think he's been a visionary and . . . for the court and a man really dedicated to some fine things – but it was his decision that this court, meaning the California court – should acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. That was not . . . . I didn't initiate that idea. But he asked me to chair the committee to design the . . . statewide what the court was going to do in recognition of that. And there was a very terrific board – a committee – put together to assist me with that. But the showpiece of the work that we did . . . . We did a variety of things that were educational and making information available to courts throughout the state; I'd really have to go back over all the things we did, but the real showpiece was the symposium. There was a conference that was held that had a variety of speakers and . . . just dealing with the overall topic. And I know we had Juan Williams from National Public Radio, who had written a biography on Thurgood Marshall. And we had some of the original . . . I know one of the . . . a man who lives in Pasadena was one of the Little Rock . . . one of the kids that integrated the Little Rock schools, and he was one . . . on a panel. And just a variety of subjects. We had a very interesting symposium.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You know, Candy, I couldn't help but think about how your life was reflected in this period of time, because you were born just a few years before that decision was made.

Candace Cooper: Yes.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Things have changed so dramatically over these last 50 years, and, you know, your accomplishments, the way that . . . the position that you've been able to achieve, sort of all reflects this kind of change and historical change that's gone on in the United States. So I found that just to be remarkable that you worked on that.

Candace Cooper: I mirrored that era pretty well.

Kathryn Doi Todd: You really did.

Candace Cooper: Yeah. I mirrored that era pretty well. And, yeah, 'cause I . . . . You know, I mean, things have changed dramatically 1:08:53

since I was a child. It's not like this was something my parents told me about. I can . . . . I remember watching the civil rights movement on black and white TV, and the Montgomery march, and Martin Luther King, and, you know, . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: And the Watts riots in your neighborhood.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, the Watts riots.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Because I remember that, too.

Candace Cooper: Yeah. The Watts riots were right in my neighborhood. My dad was on LAPD at that time. And I can remember we lived in . . . kind of in a hilly area, and I can remember looking out our window and seeing L.A. burning. And not being able to cross Crenshaw, 'cause that was the curfew line at that time. So, no, those were, you know . . . . To . . . . You know, and you look back, and I've sort of studied the history of, you know, like African-American judges, and until the '70s there were *so* few. You know, maybe one a decade, almost. You know, Edwin Jefferson and Bernard Jefferson – a couple of the early ones. And then it was, you know, just so few for so long.

Kathryn Doi Todd: No one until Jerry Brown started appointing.

Candace Cooper: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just a . . . just a few, I mean, here and there. And . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: And for a while after that influx, there seemed to be a real diminution when most people started retiring.

Candace Cooper: What I have observed – and has been the reason why I have maintained my personal commitment to the whole issue of diversity – is that it seems that absent a commitment to the concept of diversity and inclusion, and absent that sort of a desire, that it's a very easy issue to lapse. And my observation has been that Jerry Brown had a deep commitment to diversity and appointed just a large number of minority and women judges during the time he was in office. And that was a personal commitment of his. He totally changed the face, I think, of the court system. And subsequent to that, we've been working to maintain it. Now, the number of women judges is, I think, no longer a serious issue. But maintaining the number of minority judges, particularly African-American judges, has been much more problematic. Now, I understand from talking to some others that Hispanic judicial appointment numbers have been maintained better. But I personally track the African-American numbers, and it's been a process of trying to maintain the representation as opposed to growing at critical mass.

Kathryn Doi Todd: We have a new African-American member – or *soon* to be – of the Court of Appeal. 1:12:06

Candace Cooper: Yes, I know that. Yes.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I haven't had the pleasure of meeting him, yet, but . . .

Candace Cooper: Well, I've met him. Justice Spencer and I both had lunch with him here at the court when he was applying and talked to him. This is Jeff Johnson. Talked to him about, and encouraged him to pursue, that because I was highly aware . . . . I knew Vaino was going to retire, and whether she knew I was or not, I knew I was going to be out within a year or so after she retired. And that would have meant . . . left no African-Americans on the court. So we had been encouraging people to apply. And I found out about his appointment right before I left for vacation about 10 days ago, and so I have yet to speak to him personally, but that's on my agenda, to make sure I communicate my congratulations. So there's been about one every decade-plus, because prior to me . . . . So Jeff is now . . . . This is now 2009, and prior to that was my appointment. Prior to my appointment was Leon Thompson.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Oh, my goodness. That long ago.

Candace Cooper: Yeah. So that's from the '80s until now.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Now, you mentioned when your beautiful daughter Erin was born, back in 1990 – so that makes her now 18 or 19?

Candace Cooper: She is now 18.

Kathryn Doi Todd: 18.

Candace Cooper: And all that entails.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And beautiful, and she's going to be going off to college this year.

Candace Cooper: She just graduated. My daughter, who is my only child and, you know, the joy of my life, as you, I think, can understand, having . . . being the mother of a daughter, she graduated just about a month ago from Marlborough School and is off to University of Pennsylvania in end of August.

Kathryn Doi Todd: And that was her absolutely first choice for college?

Candace Cooper: It was her first choice.

Kathryn Doi Todd: It was where her father had gone to school?

Candace Cooper: Her dad went to law school at UPenn, and that . . . she applied early admission and was accepted. And so we didn't have to finish any of the other applications. And now just found 1:14:31 out her dorm assignment about a couple weeks ago.

So now we're doing all of this stuff. So now I get to go to college again. Yay!

Kathryn Doi Todd: So kind of as a final question, Candy, what are your hopes and your aspirations for your daughter? What kind of advice are you giving her in this very, very complicated world?

Candace Cooper: You know, Kathy, it is . . . that is a wonderful question. I think because things change so much and because there are so many critical things going on now and just . . . in the world that have a bearing on our everyday lives, it was . . . . My mother's advice to me was much less complicated. You know, basically, do your best, work your hardest, you know.

Kathryn Doi Todd: I know, I know.

Candace Cooper: And now I have no idea what challenges she's going to face, 'cause I don't have any confidence now in what the world's going to be like in 20 years. Hopefully I'll still be here to help give her some advice. But that's a stretch.

Kathryn Doi Todd: But I now you've done *everything* to prepare her for this.

Candace Cooper: I do, but . . . .

Kathryn Doi Todd: I mean, she's gone to the best schools.

Candace Cooper: But, you know, all I can do is give her values, you know, and advice. You know, values that I think held me in good stead. And just hope they work in her future, because it is just vastly different, frankly, and almost scarily different. I'm not, you know . . . . Somebody . . . . Hopefully there will still be a California in 50 years and someone can look at this thing and sort of reflect on what actually did happen. But, you know, between all the social upheaval and the economic upheaval and, you know, global warming and everything else, I simply have no idea what she's going to face in her life. And I just pray she has a wonderful life and that I give her all she needs.

Kathryn Doi Todd: Well, you've been an incredible role model, and I know a wonderful mother.

Candace Cooper: Thank you.

Kathryn Doi Todd: It's been great.

Candace Cooper: Thank you, Sweetheart.

Duration: 77 minutes
June 23, 2009