

2011

Library Profile: Kathleen Farmann, the Third Succeeding Woman Law Library Director at Notre Dame

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Recommended Citation

Hamilton, Susan, "Library Profile: Kathleen Farmann, the Third Succeeding Woman Law Library Director at Notre Dame" (2011).
1966–1985: Kathleen Farmann. Paper 3.
<http://scholarship.law.nd.edu/kfarmann/3>

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Library Profile: Kathleen Farmann, the Third Succeeding Woman Law Library Director at Notre Dame

In the first installment of this two part series, entitled "Lora Lashbrook and Marie Kathryn Lawrence: The First Two Women Law Library Directors at Notre Dame," it noted that for many years it was very difficult for women to hold leadership positions in libraries and even more so to be law library directors. However, Notre Dame was an exception with the appointment of Lora Lashbrook as early as 1942, followed by Marie Lawrence in 1945, and Kathleen Farmann in 1966.

When Marie Lawrence retired in 1966 from the law library, Dean Joseph O'Meara appointed Mrs. Kathleen C. Farmann as the third woman director of the law library (1966-1984). Kathleen was born in Addison, New York and grew up in Washington, D.C. She had a stellar academic life and a reputable professional, legal, and librarian background before coming to Notre Dame. In her position as library director she was responsible for all administrative functions of the law library in addition to serving on faculty committees in the areas of Recruiting, Admissions, Scholarships, and Buildings, serving as acting faculty advisor for Moot Court programs, and teaching Legal Bibliography, Legal Research and Writing to both first- and third-year law students. She also served as an Assistant to the Dean of the Notre Dame Law School.

Kathleen earned an A.B. from Trinity College ranking first in her History Major Comprehensive. She was awarded a summer study Fellowship at the University of Fribourg, in Switzerland, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State and received a three year scholarship to Catholic University of America Law School from 1942-1945. In 1945, Kathleen received her J.D. with prizes for academic distinction in Trusts and Labor Law, and ranked first in class and first in Moot Court Finals. From there Kathleen practiced law in the District of Columbia from 1945-1953 as an Associate Attorney with the Covington & Burling law firm with primary responsibilities and experience in corporate and anti-trust work. In 1957, she completed her M.L.L. Degree from the University of Washington with a 4.0 G.P.A (on a 4.0 scale), ranking first in class. She served as an Assistant Librarian at Ohio State University Law Library in Columbus, Ohio from 1957-1961 in the capacity of Supervisor of Serials, Acquisition, Reference, Circulation and Binding operations in the Law Library.

However, the warm breezes from Hawaii beckoned, and Kathleen accepted a librarian position with the Hawaii Supreme Court Library from 1961-1962 and administered the law library functions that served the bar, the judiciary and the public of Hawaii. She also served as a consultant to the smaller law libraries on the outer islands and to the U.S. District Court Library, in Honolulu, Hawaii. Returning stateside in the fall of 1962, Kathleen carried multiple responsibilities at the Ohio State University Law Library (1962-1966) which included Assistant Director of Research Services, Supervisor of Serials, Acquisitions, Reference Services, and Legal Research Instruction. She also assisted students, faculty, and the public with research problems and assisted in preparation of the 1967 edition of Pollack's *Fundamentals of Legal Research*.

The 1973 enlargement of the Notre Dame Law library's physical space came under the leadership of Kathleen, who had the prime responsibility of drafting the successful Title II government grant proposal for the projected addition to the law building and handling the onsite inspection. While at Notre Dame, Kathleen assisted the Dean in several research projects and served as a judge in three Moot courts. She also represented the Notre Dame Law School at several functions: at the Diamond Jubilee of the Ohio State University College of Law; the Organization Meeting of the Indiana Constitutional Commission; at the annual Law Career Days at Ohio State University. In 1977, Kathleen was considered for inclusion in the 11th edition of *Who's Who of American Women*.

Kathleen C. Farmann retired in 1984 from the Notre Dame Law Library. "She was a woman of determination with flaming red hair," and "she practiced law at a time when there were few women practicing law, let alone in the areas of antitrust and corporate law" said colleague Carmela Kinslow. She was also a member of the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, American Association of Law Libraries, as well as member and past president of the Ohio Regional Association of Law Libraries.



Read more about Kathleen Farmann in Carmela Kinslow's article "[Kathy Farmann: An Inspiring Woman Remembered](#)," which appeared in the Spring 2002 issue of the *ND Lawyer* magazine.

The following link is a 1947 promotion piece for women interested in Library Science as a career. There is an enormous discrepancy between the expectations, capabilities, and the level of responsibilities portrayed in the piece compared with what our first three women law library directors carried here at Notre Dame. <http://www.archive.org/details/Libraria1947>

-Susan Hamilton