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Guide to the Elizabeth Bullitt Interview, 2005

Elizabeth Bullitt was the first woman to graduate from the surgical residency at Duke University. She later served as the first female neurosurgeon on staff at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she was vice chair and acting chair of the department.

Descriptive Summary

Collection Title: Elizabeth Bullitt Interview, 2005

Creator: Bullitt, Elizabeth

Extent: .5 record storage boxes, 3 items, .25 linear feet

Processed By:

Date Completed:

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Biographical Note

Dr. Elizabeth Bullitt received her undergraduate degree from Harvard University. She received her MD from the University of Colorado, and completed her residency at Duke University, becoming the first woman to graduate from the surgical residency at Duke, in 1981. She then became the first female neurosurgeon on staff at the Mayfield Neurological Institute where she stayed until 1984, and in 1984 became the first female neurosurgeon on staff at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. From 1989-1990 she was the vice chair of Neurosurgery at UNC, and she served as acting chief of the Department of Neurosurgery at UNC from 1990-1994. In 2002 she left clinical practice to devote her full energies to research. Her lab, the Computer-Assisted Surgery and Imaging Laboratory (CASILab) is an interdepartmental group of researchers designing methods for computer-assisted surgery and medical image analysis.

Dr. Bullitt holds several patents and is the author of numerous articles in her field. She has served as editor and reviewer for numerous journals and conferences. She has maintained continuous NIH funding since 1985.

Collection Overview

Contains audiotapes and transcript of an oral history interview of Dr. Elizabeth Bullitt. Dr. Bullitt discusses her experiences as a female physician in the field of neurosurgery.

Online Catalog Headings

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Duke University. Medical Center. Dept. of Surgery.

Women Physicians.

Women in medicine

Bullitt, Elizabeth

Oral histories.

Interviews.

Transcripts.

Guide to the Elizabeth Bullitt Interview, 2005

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Detailed Description of the Collection

Interview on October 18, 2005

Dr. Bullitt discusses her background; her fascination with the brain and neurosurgery; residency at University of Colorado; internal problems in program at University of Colorado; coming to Duke under Dr. Robert Wilkins; military feel of Duke program; rules in Duke program; Dr. Guy Odom; Dr. David Sabiston; hierarchy in Department of Surgery; male presence in neurosurgery, particularly at the time; husband as present chief of Neurosurgery at Duke; being the first female neurosurgeon on staff at both Mayfield Neurological Institute and University of North Carolina; feeling need to survive as opposed to feeling like a pioneer at Duke; treatment as a female neurosurgeon at Duke; her sensitivity to her treatment and dedication to her field; evaluation of her treatment versus current regulations against such treatment; facilities for female neurosurgeons; being overlooked at Duke because female; feeling uncomfortable returning to Duke; uniforms in Duke Department of Surgery; Dr. Robert Wilkins; others in the department who influenced her, including Dr. Blaine Nashold; meeting husband [Dr. Allan Friedman] at this time; time commitment as resident at that time versus the current time commitment; technology at Duke at the time; Carol Ludolph; conservative nature of Duke Surgery Department in terms of operating, flexibility; treatment received from patients; history of career at University of North Carolina; balancing home life and work life; current work with brain imaging at University of North Carolina.

Box 1

Interview tapes [1 audiotapes (1 hours and 15 minutes total)]

Transcript [29 pages]