

Liz Abzug

Daughter of U.S. Representative Bella Savitzky Abzug of New York

“You’ve Got to Go Speak”

Liz Abzug recounts the time she had to represent her mother’s campaign at a rally for striking Legal Aid lawyers in New York City.

Interview recorded November 20, 2018

I would go to a rally—one of my first big speeches, which, you know now, many years later—of making public speeches is natural to me. But the first one—major one I made for her campaign was the—Legal Aid was having a strike—the lawyers. Legal Aid was striking. And they were in City Hall Park. And my mother—I was I think first- or second-year law school—my mother said, “You’ve got to go speak. I have to do something else.” And so I did speak for her there, I was very, very nervous. I had to go on top of a sound truck and, you know, walk up a ladder on the side of a sound truck and go up there, and then when I saw the crowd—I mean, these were lawyers. I was starting to be a lawyer. I was a nothing, you know? And yet, I had to come up and, you know, fight—represent my mother, but also deal with the issues. And it was a way of getting thrown into cold water quickly, you know?