

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Deborah Cole

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*African-American Chronicles* Oral History Project

Interview # DST-A-L-2017-015

Deborah Brown Cole, a Delta Sigma Theta sorority member and later a partner with Hoogendoorn & Talbort LLP, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *African-American Chronicles - Delta Sigma Theta Sorority* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Apr 9, 2017

Location: Chicago, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Yvonne Singley, ALPL volunteer

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 1:08 / 1.13 hrs.

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on October 11, 2017.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Transcript  
being processed

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# Abstract

Deborah Cole, *African-American Chronicles*, DST-A-L-2017-015

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Deborah Browne Cole was born on October 24, 1951 in Chicago, Illinois. The oldest of two children, she was the daughter of Frank and Felicia Browne. Her father worked at the US Post Office, and her mother was an elementary school teacher. After graduating from Hype Park High School in 1968, Deborah enrolled in Bradley University, where she majored in economics. While there, she helped begin a Delta Sigma Theta sorority chapter on campus. She graduated from Bradley University in 1972, and in 1974 she received a Master's of Science degree in urban planning from Washington University in St. Louis. Ms. Cole moved to Springfield, Illinois after graduating from Washington University. In Springfield, she was employed at IBM in the data processing division where she worked as a marketing representative. Not satisfied with her current employment status, Deborah enrolled at the Illinois Institute of Technology – Chicago-Kent College of Law. Ms. Cole is former chair of the trusts and estates section for the Council of the Illinois State Bar Association. She also holds or has held memberships in the following organizations: the Black Women Lawyers Association of Greater Chicago, the Cook County Bar Association, the National Bar Association, the Chicago Estate Planning Council, the Board of Advisors of the African-American Legacy Fund of the Chicago Community Trust, the Board of Directors of the Constitutional Rights Foundation of Chicago, and the Chicago Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.

Cole is one of the charter members of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc Springfield-Decatur Area Alumnae Chapter. While in Springfield, she encouraged members of the sorority to consider forming a chapter. She was instrumental in gathering enough sorority members, eighteen to be exact, to form a chapter covering Springfield and Decatur. According to Ms. Cole, several members in Springfield at first were reluctant to form a chapter and to meet the requirements of chartering. As a result, she had to seek out members in the Decatur area. This oral history interview described the struggles and the triumph of Ms. Cole, who was only twenty-five years old when she helped organize the chapter.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Delta Sigma Theta Sorority; Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. Springfield-Decatur Area Alumnae Chapter

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