

Victoria Pynchon's Story

Victoria Pynchon attended San Diego State after finishing high school. Her parents expected her to go to college and become a teacher, the only profession they ever imagined for her. She attended unhappily and reflexively, riding her bike to campus everyday from her parents' home. As Vicki puts it, "It was 1970 and the spirit of adventure was in the air and I was not adventuring".

After a summer trip to Europe between her Sophomore and Junior year it occurred to her that she did not HAVE to be in college if she didn't want to so she withdrew from school that day. Soon thereafter she moved out of her parent's house to the beach and took a low-level clerical job to support herself. After working for a year Vicki came to the conclusion that she needed to go back to school and get her degree in Literature even though she didn't really know exactly what she wanted to do with it.

She eventually got married and friends and family would ask her what she was going to do with her future. To get them off her back she told them she was going to go to law school even though she didn't believe it was a goal she could possibly achieve. They moved to New York so her husband could pursue his Master's Degree and she dutifully went through the motions of taking law school entrance exams and applying to colleges. She got a job in a law firm doing clerical work and was soon promoted to paralegal while also volunteering her time at Legal Aid in East Harlem. "This life I was pretending to live was becoming real", she said.

Vicki was accepted at several law schools but decided to go to the best and least expensive at the time; U.C. Davis. She started out wanting to be a trial lawyer representing plaintiffs in personal injury lawsuits but left two years later to teach undergraduate courses. She returned to practice law in 1987 representing businesses in all manner of disputes until 2004 when she decided to become a mediator helping lawyers help their clients settle law suits.

Remember, Vicki wasn't sure what she was going to do with a Literature degree when she started college, but she's using it now through launching an online literary journal, writing and blogging the stories of people involved in disputes, and obtained a Master's of Law (LL.M) in Dispute Resolution from the Straus Institute at Pepperdine University in 2006.

This incredibly successful woman with a great sense of humor has been involved in non-profit organizations such as the Legal Aid in East Harlem and this past year became deeply involved in the political process as a Deputy Field Organizer for the Obama campaign. She remains involved in her community and volunteers her time for the Constitutional Rights Foundation. In addition she lends her expertise at her local community dispute resolution center in West Hollywood, California to help neighbors resolve disputes with other neighbors.

When asked if goal setting has been a key component to her success, Vicki replied, "Goals are dreams with deadlines. I dreamed and set deadlines. I dreamed dreams I had no right to believe I could achieve. The deadlines made me achieve them anyway."

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*More of Victoria Pynchon's story may be featured in the Pink Ladder's Book in the near future.*