

CHEMICAL HERITAGE FOUNDATION

**GAIL P. JARVIK**

The Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences

Transcript of an Interview  
Conducted by

William Van Benschoten

at

University of Washington  
Seattle, Washington

on

22, 23, and 24 May 2002

From the Original Collection of the University of California, Los Angeles

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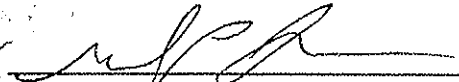
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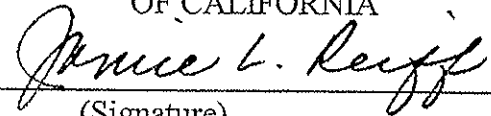
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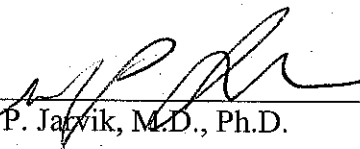
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## GAIL P. JARVIK

1959 Born in Evanston, Illinois, on 8 February

### Education

1980 B.S. with Honors, Zoology, University of Iowa  
1983 M.S., Human Genetics, University of Michigan  
1986 Ph.D., Human Genetics, University of Michigan  
1987 M.D., Medical Scientist Training Program, University of Iowa

### Professional Experience

University of Washington  
1991-1992 Acting Instructor, General Medicine  
1991-1994 Senior Medical Genetics Fellow  
1994 Acting Instructor, Medicine  
1995-2000 Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, Division of  
Medical Genetics  
2000-present Associate Professor, Department of Medicine Division of  
Medical Genetics

University of Pennsylvania  
1989-1991 Physician, Student Health Service

Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania  
1989-1991 Adjunct Faculty, Walk-In Clinic  
1990-1991 Attending Physician and Instructor, General Internal Medicine

Philadelphia Veterans Administration Hospital Medical Center  
1990-1991 Educational Consultant to the Director

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center  
1995-present Affiliate Assistant Member

Medical Genetics Clinic  
2000-2001 Acting Head

### Honors

1982-1986 NIH Predoctoral Training Grant Award



1992	Individual National Research Service Award (declined)
1992-1995	Howard Hughes Medical Institute Postdoctoral Fellowship
1995	American Heart Association Clinician Scientist Award
1996	Diabetes and Endocrinology Research Award
1996	Howard Hughes Medical Institute Pilot Research Award
1997	Royalty Research Grant
1997-2001	Pew Scholars Program in the Biomedical Sciences Grant
1998	Veterans Administration Hospital Epidemiology Research and Information Project Award
1998	National Institute of Health Award (PI): RO1 1HL6199
1998	Poster Award, International Genetic Epidemiology Society Meeting
1999	National Institute of Health Award (PI): PO1 HL30086 (Project 1)
1999	NIH Awards (PI): RO1 1HL6199-01, 1998; PO1HL30086 (Project 1)
2001	American Medical Association Physician's Recognition Award (Internal Medicine)
2002	National Institute of Health Award (PI): HL67406
2002	National Academy of Sciences "Frontiers of Science" Meeting, Chair, Organizing Committee
2002	Roger R. Williams Award for Excellence in Genetic Research, American Heart Association

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## ABSTRACT

**Gail P. Jarvik** was raised in Mount Prospect, a suburb of Chicago, Illinois, one of six siblings (with an age-span of seventeen years between the oldest and youngest). Her mother was a housewife who received a college degree in her fifties and her father transitioned from being a television repair man to becoming the youngest fire chief in Illinois. She had an early interest in nature, reading, and math, and had several influential teachers. She matriculated at the University of Iowa, majoring in zoology. An interest in science and medicine led Jarvik to apply for admission to various medical and graduate programs, including the University of Iowa's Medical Scientist Training program, to which she was accepted.

She began her studies for her medical doctorate at the University of Iowa before James Hanson, the head of pediatric genetics at Iowa, gave her the opportunity to pursue her PhD at the University of Michigan. In the lab of Charles F. Sing at Michigan, Jarvik began to work on fetal hydantoin syndrome but then switched topics before completing her degree. Upon finishing her medical education at Iowa she moved on to train in internal medicine at the University of Pennsylvania where she collaborated with Terri Beaty from Johns Hopkins University, on hyperlipidemia. After finishing her training she began a medical genetics fellowship on the genetics of prostate cancer at the University of Washington, Seattle, under Ellen M. Wijsman, and then went on to accept a position at the University of Washington Medical Center.

Throughout the interview Jarvik spends much time talking about her current work, her life outside of the lab, her perspectives on science and its practice in contemporary culture. She discusses her opinions on the public awareness of genetic research, ethical questions in science, the advantages and disadvantages of competition in science, her collaborative research projects, and the importance of being familiar with the history of biomedical science in her research. In addition she reflects on the ways in which the Pew Scholars Program in Biomedical Sciences has affected her work and on the methods that should be used to improve the quality of science in her field.

## UCLA INTERVIEW HISTORY

### INTERVIEWER:

William Van Benschoten, Interviewer, UCLA Oral History Program. B.A., History, University of California, Riverside; M.A., History, University of California, Riverside; C. Phil., History, UCLA

### TIME AND SETTING OF INTERVIEW:

**Place:** University of Washington, Seattle, Washington

**Dates, length of sessions:** May 22, 2002; May 23, 2002; and May 24, 2002.

**Total number of recorded hours:**

**Persons present during interview:** Jarvik and Van Benschoten.

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