

LOUISE B. RAGGIO
President, Raggio & Raggio, Inc.
Dallas, Texas



Louise Ballerstedt Raggio has perhaps done more than anyone to help Texas women achieve financial equality and independence. "She brought women's rights to the forefront long before it became the fashionable thing it is today," states Dallas District Judge Frances A. Harris, "Women now and in future generations enjoy the fruits of Louise's labor."

While raising a family, Ms. Raggio attended law school at night graduating in 1952 as the only woman in her class. Since law firms tended not to employ women lawyers, Ms. Raggio practiced law from her home until she was hired as the first female criminal prosecutor in 1954. Two years later, Raggio and her husband established their own firm, Raggio & Raggio.

A founding member of the State Bar of Texas Family Law Section, Raggio served as its chair from 1965-1967. Under her direction the Marital Property Act of 1967 radically changed the property rights of married women in Texas. During her tenure as chair she also initiated the Family Code project, which led to the first completed Family Code in the United States.

Ms. Raggio's career has been marked by a series of "firsts." In addition to being the first woman assistant district attorney in Dallas County, she was the first female member of the board of directors of the Texas State Bar and the first female trustee and chair of the Texas Bar Foundation. She was chair of the ABA's Family Law Section and former Governor of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers. The State Bar of Texas has honored her with its highest awards: the Citation of Merit in 1967 and the Presidents' Award in 1987. She is one of six women members of the "Dirty Thirty" considered a select group of family lawyers in America.

A member of the board of the First Unitarian Church of Dallas, Raggio's multifaceted services to the community were recognized in 1985 with her election to the Texas Women's Forum which honored her with their "Woman that has Made a Difference Award."

Ms. Raggio earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Texas and her J.D. from Southern Methodist University (1952). She is a widow and practices law with her three sons. She has seven grandchildren.