

“Sandra Day O’Connor: Breaking Into a Man’s World”

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Group Website

Process Paper

We chose Justice Sandra Day O'Connor as our topic because her role in history connected to an aspect of all our interests. She is the first female on the Supreme Court of the United States, which governs our nation, and in turn, influences us in our day-to-day lives. In addition, the idea of women influencing the nation, especially in law, an uncommon feat at the time, interested us very much.

We began our research by learning about Justice O'Connor's childhood and early adult life. The burning question we had at the time was "What set her on the path to the Supreme Court?" and so we began there. We researched her childhood, early adult life, and eventually, the impact she left on the nation's laws. Our research began with Google searches, but as we got more in depth with it, we turned towards biographies, interviews, and expert interpretations of her life on the court for deeper analysis. We were also able to find official documents and letters from the United States government regarding Justice O'Connor's appointment to the court. A biography we used, *First: Sandra Day O'Connor* by Evan Thomas, had interviews with people who knew the justice personally, and interviews with even the justice herself, which was very useful. We tracked down newspaper articles from when Justice O'Connor was first appointed to gauge the public's reaction to the first female justice on the United States' Supreme Court.

When selecting a presentation category, we wanted to choose something that excited us and made us eager to work on this project, as well as something we had experience with. The website category was the perfect medium for us to work with. All of us have experience with creating a website and organizing it, and we also have experience with long term projects such as this and turning it into a concise final product. With our expertise and pre-existing knowledge while learning along the way, we were able to create a final product we are proud of.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was not only the first female Supreme Court Justice, but also the first woman to lead a state senate majority. Straight out of law school, Justice O'Connor was not accepted into a law firm despite graduating third in her class at Stanford Law School. Throughout her life, she was the only woman in a man's world. O'Connor knew the way she held and presented herself would set the precedent for future women in her field. After her, three other women served on the Supreme Court. By *Breaking Barriers* in female advancements in law and other occupations, Sandra Day O'Connor's actions resonate and are still remembered through her efforts to advance women's rights, on and off the court.