

Biographies of the Justices of the Supreme Court

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William H. Rehnquist, Chief Justice of the United States, was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, October 1, 1924. He married Natalie Cornell, now deceased, and has three children—James, Janet, and Nancy. From 1943–1946 he served in the U.S. Army Air Forces. He received a B.A., M.A., and LL.B. from Stanford University and an M.A. from Harvard University. He served as a law clerk for Justice Robert H. Jackson of the Supreme Court of the United States during the 1951 and 1952 Terms, and practiced law in Phoenix, Arizona from 1953–1969. He served as Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legal Counsel from 1969–1971. President Nixon nominated him to the Supreme Court, and he took his seat as an Associate Justice on January 7, 1972. Nominated as Chief Justice by President Reagan, he assumed that office on September 26, 1986. ~ ~ *Chief Justice Rehnquist died of thyroid cancer September 3, 2005.*

John Paul Stevens, Associate Justice, was born in Chicago, Illinois, April 20, 1920. He married Maryan Mulholland, and has four children—John Joseph (deceased), Kathryn, Elizabeth Jane, and Susan Roberta. He received an A.B. from the University of Chicago, and a J.D. from Northwestern University School of Law. He served in the United States Navy from 1942–1945, and was a law clerk to Justice Wiley Rutledge of the Supreme Court of the United States during the 1947 Term. He was admitted to law practice in Illinois in 1949. He was Associate Counsel to the Subcommittee on the Study of Monopoly Power of the Judiciary Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives, 1951–1952, and a member of the Attorney General's National Committee to Study Antitrust Law, 1953–1955. He was Second Vice President of the Chicago Bar Association in 1970. From 1970–1975, he served as a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit. President Ford nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and he took his seat December 19, 1975.

Sandra Day O' Connor, Associate Justice, was born in El Paso, Texas, March 26, 1930. She married John Jay O' Connor III in 1952 and has three sons—Scott, Brian, and Jay. She received her B.A. and LL.B. from Stanford University. She served as Deputy County Attorney of San Mateo County, California from 1952–1953 and as a civilian attorney for Quartermaster Market Center, Frankfurt, Germany from 1954–1957. From 1958–1960, she practiced law in Maryvale, Arizona, and served as Assistant Attorney General of Arizona from 1965–1969. She was appointed to the Arizona State Senate in 1969 and was subsequently reelected to two two-year terms. In 1975 she was elected Judge of the Maricopa County Superior Court and served until 1979, when she was appointed to the Arizona Court of Appeals. President Reagan nominated her as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and she took her seat September 25, 1981. ~ ~ *Assoc. Justice O'Connor announced her resignation from the Court on July 1, 2005.*

Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice, was born in Trenton, New Jersey, March 11, 1936. He married Maureen McCarthy and has nine children—Ann Forrest, Eugene, John Francis, Catherine Elisabeth, Mary Clare, Paul David, Matthew, Christopher James, and Margaret Jane. He received his A.B. from Georgetown University and the University of Fribourg, Switzerland, and his LL.B. from Harvard Law School, and was a Sheldon Fellow of Harvard University from 1960–1961. He was in private practice in Cleveland, Ohio from 1961–1967, a Professor of Law at the University of Virginia from 1967–1971, and a Professor of Law at the University of Chicago from 1977–1982, and a Visiting Professor of Law at Georgetown University and Stanford University. He was chairman of the American Bar Association’s Section of Administrative Law, 1981–1982, and its Conference of Section Chairman, 1982–1983. He served the federal government as General Counsel of the Office of Telecommunications Policy from 1971–1972, Chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States from 1972–1974, and Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel from 1974–1977. He was appointed Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in 1982. President Reagan nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and he took his seat September 26, 1986.

Anthony M. Kennedy, Associate Justice, was born in Sacramento, California, July 23, 1936. He married Mary Davis and has three children. He received his B.A. from Stanford University and the London School of Economics, and his LL.B. from Harvard Law School. He was in private practice in San Francisco, California from 1961–1963, as well as in Sacramento, California from 1963–1975. From 1965 to 1988, he was a Professor of Constitutional Law at the McGeorge School of Law, University of the Pacific. He has served in numerous positions during his career, including a member of the California Army National Guard in 1961, the board of the Federal Judicial Center from 1987–1988, and two committees of the Judicial Conference of the United States: the Advisory Panel on Financial Disclosure Reports and Judicial Activities, subsequently renamed the Advisory Committee on Codes of Conduct, from 1979–1987, and the Committee on Pacific Territories from 1979–1990, which he chaired from 1982–1990. He was appointed to the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit in 1975. President Reagan nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and he took his seat February 18, 1988.

David Hackett Souter, Associate Justice, was born in Melrose, Massachusetts, September 17, 1939. He was graduated from Harvard College, from which he received his A.B. After two years as a Rhodes Scholar at Magdalen College, Oxford, he received an A.B. in Jurisprudence from Oxford University and an M.A. in 1989. After receiving an LL.B. from Harvard Law School, he was an associate at Orr and Reno in Concord, New Hampshire from 1966 to 1968, when he became an Assistant Attorney General of New Hampshire. In 1971, he became Deputy Attorney General and in 1976, Attorney General of New Hampshire. In 1978, he was named an Associate Justice of the Superior Court of New Hampshire, and was appointed to the Supreme Court of New Hampshire as an Associate Justice in 1983. He became a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit on May 25, 1990. President Bush nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and he took his seat October 9, 1990.

Clarence Thomas, Associate Justice, was born in the Pin Point community of Georgia near Savannah June 23, 1948. He married Virginia Lamp in 1987 and has one child, Jamal Adeen, by a previous marriage. He attended Conception Seminary and received an A.B., cum laude, from Holy Cross College, and a J.D. from Yale Law School in 1974. He was admitted to law practice in Missouri in 1974, and served as an Assistant Attorney General of Missouri from 1974–1977, an attorney with the Monsanto Company from 1977–1979, and Legislative Assistant to Senator John Danforth from 1979–1981. From 1981–1982, he served as Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, and as Chairman of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission from 1982–1990. He became a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in 1990. President Bush nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and he took his seat October 23, 1991.

Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Associate Justice, was born in Brooklyn, New York, March 15, 1933. She married Martin D. Ginsburg in 1954, and has a daughter, Jane, and a son, James. She received her B.A. from Cornell University, attended Harvard Law School, and received her LL.B. from Columbia Law School. She served as a law clerk to the Honorable Edmund L. Palmieri, Judge of the United States District Court for the Southern District of New York, from 1959–1961. From 1961–1963, she was a research associate and then associate director of the Columbia Law School Project on International Procedure. She was a Professor of Law at Rutgers University School of Law from 1963–1972, and Columbia Law School from 1972–1980, and a fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences in Stanford, California from 1977–1978. In 1971, she was instrumental in launching the Women’s Rights Project of the American Civil Liberties Union, and served as the ACLU’s General Counsel from 1973–1980, and on the National Board of Directors from 1974–1980. She was appointed a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit in 1980. President Clinton nominated her as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and she took her seat August 10, 1993.

Stephen G. Breyer, Associate Justice, was born in San Francisco, California, August 15, 1938. He married Joanna Hare in 1967, and has three children—Chloe, Nell, and Michael. He received an A.B. from Stanford University, a B.A. from Magdalen College, Oxford, and an LL.B. from Harvard Law School. He served as a law clerk to Justice Arthur Goldberg of the Supreme Court of the United States during the 1964 Term, as a Special Assistant to the Assistant U.S. Attorney General for Antitrust, 1965–1967, as an Assistant Special Prosecutor of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force, 1973, as Special Counsel of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, 1974–1975, and as Chief Counsel of the committee, 1979–1980. He was an Assistant Professor, Professor of Law, and Lecturer at Harvard Law School, 1967–1994, a Professor at the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government, 1977–1980, and a Visiting Professor at the College of Law, Sydney, Australia and at the University of Rome. From 1980–1990, he served as a Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit, and as its Chief Judge, 1990–1994. He also served as a member of the Judicial Conference of the United States, 1990–1994, and of the United States Sentencing Commission, 1985–1989. President Clinton nominated him as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and he took his seat August 3, 1994.

Biographies of the Court Worksheet

Answer the following questions about your justice(s) ...

Justice's name _____

Age _____

Family status _____

Academic background _____

Legal background _____

What else would you like to know about him or her? _____
