



One Brush With Greatness

If you are a fan of history as I am, this has been quite a bar year. The State Bar of Arizona celebrated its 70th year, and the anniversary was marked for two seminal U.S. Supreme Court cases: *Marbury v. Madison* and *Brown v. Board of Education*. At the Bar Convention this month, two of our most distinguished members will be honored. U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist will be recognized for 50 years of membership in our Bar, and Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor will receive our Distinguished Career Award. As I write this final column, I hope to give you a little more history about two remarkable women whose accomplishments mean so much to our state, and to the country: Hon. Lorna Lockwood and Hon. Sandra Day O'Connor.

Both were true Southern Arizona pioneers, who encountered bias and adversity on their journeys to becoming "firsts," both in politics and within the profession. They were deeply committed to public service and serving their communities, doing so with creativity and distinction. Though both are clearly role models for women everywhere, they have much to offer any lawyer who is looking for experienced and wise guidance.

The Arizona Historical Society's collection contains an unusual item: a Barbie doll sporting a black robe, mounted on a platform with names of women judges inscribed. It was donated by Justice O'Connor and is known as the "Lorna Lockwood Traveling Memorial Trophy." It was presented to each new female judge in Maricopa County Superior Court, and the legend goes that it would continue to circulate until one of them was the first woman to become appointed to the United States Supreme Court. Many thought that woman

would be Hon. Lorna Lockwood. She did become the first woman in Arizona, and also the country, to serve as a state Supreme Court Chief Justice, following her election to that court in 1960.

Lorna Lockwood was born in Douglas, Ariz., in 1903, and grew up in Tombstone. There, as a 10-year-old, she and her father would climb the hills outside town to watch Pancho Villa fight in the evenings. Justice Lockwood told a friend, Bud Jacobson, years later that it was like "going out after dinner to watch a war."

Sandra Day O'Connor was born and schooled in El Paso, Tex., in 1930, but

1925, she was the only woman in her class. She received the same job offer upon bar passage that Sandra Day O'Connor would after graduating third in her class from Stanford with service on law review and membership in Order of the Coif: legal secretary. Lockwood worked in this capacity, while joining several women's organizations and leading them all, consolidating what would later become her base of support. In 1952, O'Connor put her legal skills to work, becoming a deputy county attorney in San Mateo, Calif. That original secretarial offer would prove valuable: It was made by the firm of William French Smith, who, as Attorney General, was instrumental in O'Connor's appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1981.

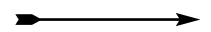
Justice O'Connor's first job "influenced the balance of my life because it demonstrated how much I did enjoy public service." In that, she had much in common with Lorna Lockwood. Both served as assistant attorneys general and were elected to the legislature and the Maricopa County Superior Court bench. Lorna Lockwood served three terms in the Arizona House, beginning in 1939, and chaired the Judiciary Committee. Sandra Day O'Connor was appointed to fill an unexpected term in the Senate and was twice re-elected. She was elected Senate Majority Leader in 1972, the first woman ever to hold such an office in the United States.

The trailblazing continued in their judicial careers, but it also left time for community service. When Lockwood was elected to the Maricopa County Superior Court in 1950, she was the first woman judge in the history of Arizona. Her experience with juvenile court led her to found Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Arizona, and she was on boards of other organizations dedicated to improving the lives of women and children in our state.

The trailblazing by Lockwood and O'Connor left time for community service.

grew up on the Lazy B Ranch, 198,000 acres with 2,000 cattle, located 25 miles from the town of Duncan, in southeastern Arizona. Her early years were just as rough-and-tumble: The ranch house was a simple, four-room adobe building that had neither electricity nor running water until 1937. By the next year, the 8-year-old was mending fences, riding with the cowboys, firing her own .22 rifle, and driving a truck.

Lockwood's father was a Tombstone judge who was self-taught, licensed upon passage of the Arizona Territorial Bar, and served as Chief Justice of the Arizona Supreme Court. Lorna was a leader both in college and law school at the University of Arizona. When she earned her law degree in



Sandra Day O'Connor won a hard-fought election to that same court in 1974, the last such election prior to the institution of merit selection. When she was tapped for service on the Court of Appeals only five years later, it was by a Democratic governor, despite her active involvement in Republican politics. O'Connor has served on the boards of many diverse organizations, including the Heard Museum, Salvation Army Advisory Board and the National Board of Smithsonian Associates.

Lorna Lockwood helped found the Arizona Women Lawyers Association, with her famous "Wednesday lunch group," and Justice O'Connor has been a member, despite her Washington address. Both have many male fans, as well. John Frank once said of Justice Lockwood,

She was insightful, thorough, responsible. She was firm. No one ever wasted time in her courtroom. She seemed to me everything traditional judges ought to be. ... If we had an especially hard case we tried to get it before Lorna because she was the best. ... She ruled against me the first time I ever argued a case before her and she was absolutely right.

Scott Bales, a former law clerk to Justice O'Connor, provides insight into her approachability:

When she talks with someone, they enjoy her genuine interest and full attention. I recall that while her law clerks and other staff worked very hard, the long hours were lightened by the Justice regularly leading impromptu "field trips" to see new exhibits at the Smithsonian museums, and Saturday lunches to discuss cases to be argued the following week. Law clerks and other justices have been the victims of her mischievous sense of humor. Over her extraordinary career, Sandra Day O'Connor has admirably maintained her down-to-earth nature, while reflecting her belief that every person can make a difference and that anything worth doing is worth doing well.

Both have offered sage advice, but I have two favorites.

Lorna Lockwood counseled the youth in her family: "There's nothing important you can't say politely. ... If you say it politely you're entitled to say it and it doesn't matter how old you are." A speech titled "Women in Judging," delivered by Justice O'Connor, included this comment:

"I think this should be our aspiration: that, whatever our gender or background, we may all become wise—wise through our different struggles and different victories, wise through work and play, through profession and family."

Sage advice indeed. I hope that this year has been for you, as it has been for me, and for the Bar too, an opportunity to find victory within struggle and ultimately some wisdom. I hope you will join us as we honor Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's distinguished service to this profession and her community, on Friday, June 11.



This column was prepared with review of materials from the United States Supreme Court's Web site and the following publications: Arizona's Pioneering Women in Law, ASU Women Law Students' Association, 1999; Lady Law: The Legacy of Lorna Lockwood, Sonja White David, The Eleusis, Fall 2001; with special thanks to Cari Gerchick.