

Biographies of the justices



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Biographies of the Justices The Oyez website contains a significant amount of useful and interesting information regarding the U. S. Supreme Court and its justices. Among this information are succinct biographies of the justices that summarize the key points throughout their lives and trace the route that led to their current positions on the court. These biographies also do a good job of explaining the judicial temperament of these jurists, and how they tend to behave on the court.

The justice whom I like the most based on these biographies is David Souter (http://www.oyez.org/oyez/resource/legal_entity/105/). He stands out as a judge with a moderate judicial temperament who has equally pleased and disappointed both conservatives and liberals. Appointed by a Republican president, Souter had been expected by some to be a solid conservative on the court. Nevertheless, his Oyez biography notes that he has shored up the "moderate camp" of the Court and has been instrumental in preventing it from shifting too far to the right. This propensity to avoid extremes is, to me, a desirable characteristic in a person who wields tremendous influence over the lives of so many people.

The justice whom I like the least is Antonin Scalia (http://www.oyez.org/oyez/resource/legal_entity/103/). Here is a justice who has ruffled feathers both on the Court and off. He has a confrontational and abrasive style that has led to consternation among his associates and his opponents, while usually pleasing extreme conservatives. He takes a very dogmatic and red-line view of the law that leaves little room for nuance. Unfortunately, the complexity of many issues that can come before the Court often requires a more nuanced approach in order to reach the optimal decision.

Scalia is also the justice who surprised me the most. I had always considered <https://assignbuster.com/biographies-of-the-justices/>

him to be an unabashed conservative in the political sense of the word. Upon learning that Scalia provided the pivotal vote in a decision that struck down a Texas statute prohibiting flag-burning, it became clear that he is not necessarily aligned with every signature issue of the politically conservative. To be sure, his vote on flag burning is consistent with his unfailing support for freedom of speech that has permeated his judicial career.

Oyez Baseball Game

The baseball game that compares Supreme Court justices with ball players is an entertaining and informative diversion that does a good job of imparting facts about those who have sat on the bench of the High Court as well as facts about baseball players. For baseball fans, this is a terrific way to leverage knowledge of a beloved pastime to compare characteristics that translate to very divergent occupations.

Recent News

My selection under "Recent News" was to the article entitled "High Court to Hear 'Greenhouse' Case." The case deals with the question of whether states can force the EPA to use its regulatory power to tackle global warming (<http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0627/p10s01-usju.html>). A decision is expected during the Court's next term that begins in October. Considering the recent shift of the Court to the right, I think the outcome will be in favor of the EPA, and predict states will be found to lack the power to compel this federal agency from taking action.

How has the website enhanced my understanding of the Court

Overall, the website provided excellent background information on the justices and their judicial philosophies. It also provided great insight into current issues being addressed by the court. Finally, the website enabled me

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to learn about the characteristics of various justices, past and present, and how they compare to characteristics held by famous baseball players.