law by supreme courts around the world, Barak cited Ginsburg as a pioneering catalyst in that field. “Our accountability is beyond it. Ruth is a force in this direction.”

“Though it is true that we were both only the second women appointed to the ‘court of last resort,’ this is not the only reason I’m an unconditional admirer of Justice Ginsburg,” said L’Heureux-Dube. “One thing among so many others that I find very impressive in Justice Ginsburg is an evident love of language that translates into an exceptional ability to formulate her thoughts in the most difficult of cases in short, clear, precise—even meticulous—language while conveying all the nuances. It is a talent I envy, as every judge should.”

Known for her keen eye for detail and clear thinking, Ginsburg was a seminal figure for women’s equality, defending the working rights of women in the 1970s and throughout her distinguished career. Former President Bill Clinton called her a “profound moral voice for gender equality law.”

Born Ruth Bader, she was raised in Flatbush, Brooklyn. Her parents were both from Jewish American immigrant families.

She received her B.A. from Cornell University in 1954, receiving high honors in Government and distinctions in all subjects. After completing her LL.B. (J.D.) in 1959 from Columbia Law—tied for first in her class as well as making law review, Ginsburg could not find work with any New York law firms. Concluding that her gender played a pivotal role in not gaining employment, Ginsburg focused her career on fighting these biased social conditions. Her growing stature and expertise in the field brought her to the fore where she argued several cases before the Supreme Court.

In the early 1970s, Ginsburg joined forces with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), establishing and directing the Women’s Rights Project while teaching at Rutgers University. Continuing her work with the ACLU, Ginsburg returned to Columbia, to become the first tenured woman law professor in the country. She also taught at the University of Amsterdam, Harvard Law School, New York University Law School, University of Strasbourg, the Salzburg Seminar in American Studies, and the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies. In 1978, she was a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences in Stanford, California.


After a celebrated teaching career at Columbia, she was appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia Circuit in 1980 and returned to Washington under the Carter Administration.

In 1993, she was appointed to the Supreme Court by then-President Clinton, where she has received worldwide acclaim for her critical thinking and calculated efforts in comparative law.