

# THE PENDULUM

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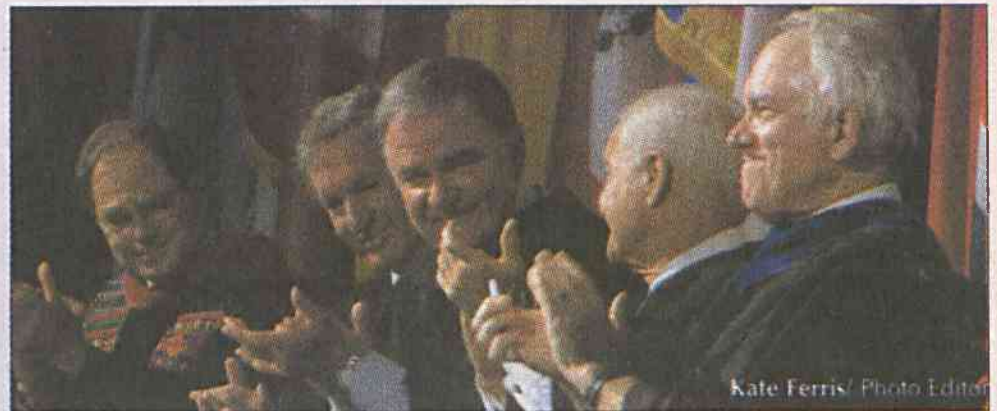
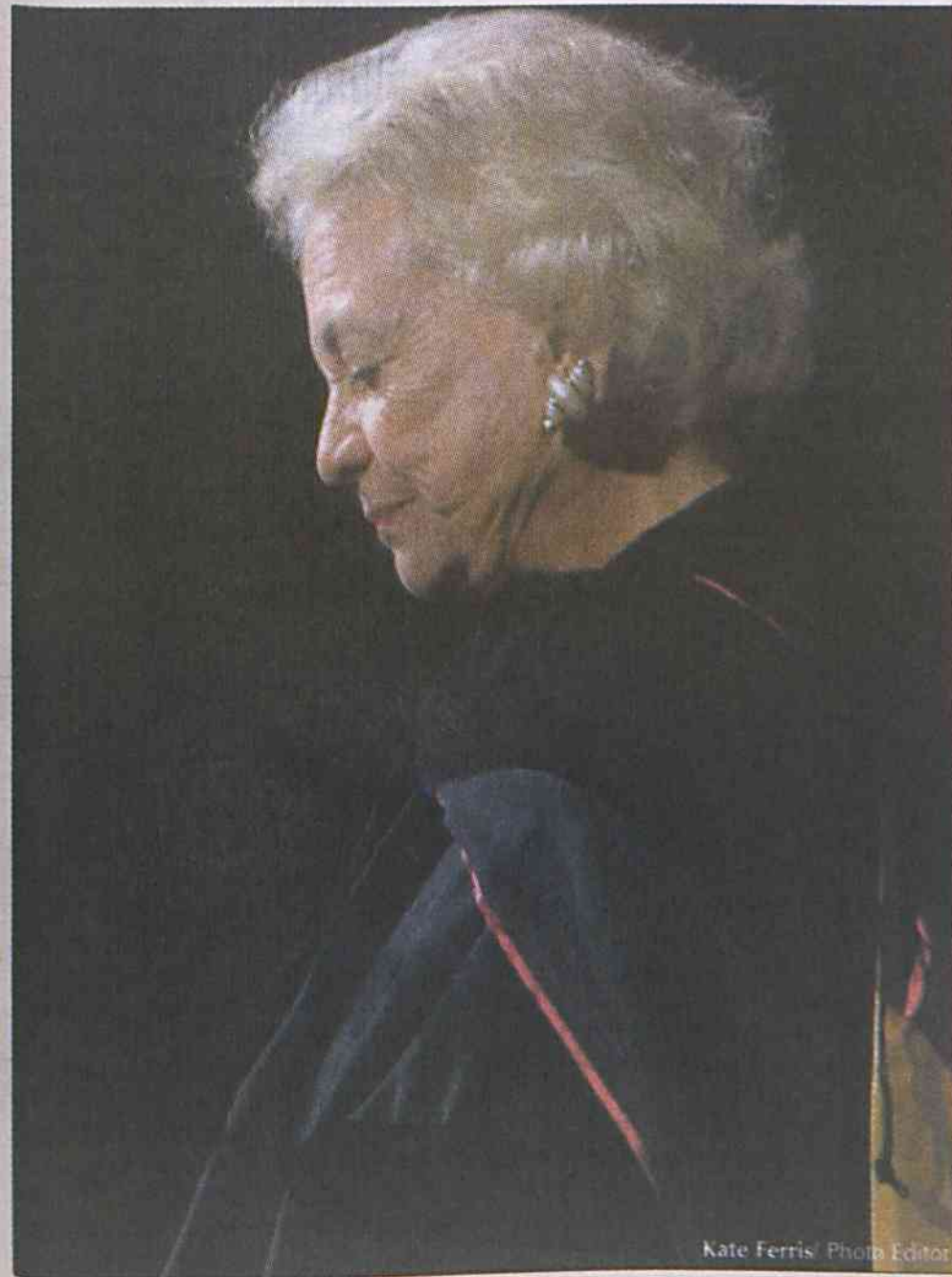
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"If it matters to you, it matters to The Pendulum."

## 'Build bridges for the future'



**Brittany Smith**  
Managing Editor

Retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor briefly reminded Elon University students, faculty and staff members to build metaphorical bridges in their community at Tuesday's Fall Convocation.

Building bridges through careers in public service allows those building them to think in the present and future so generations to come can cross the bridge with more ease and insight.

"Hopes and ideas are vindicated and well adapted through public service," O'Connor said. "You can focus your energies on finding solutions and what's right to remedy instead of what's wrong."

She cited Justice John Harlan's decision in the 1896 case *Plessy v. Ferguson* as an example of a man who laid the groundwork for a bridge that would later overturn the racial policy of "separate but equal" in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case in 1954.

"Harlan's dissent inspired the highest calling among others who struggled for racial equality," she said.

Even though Justice Harlan did not live to see his bridge complete, the effects of his groundwork are still seen today through racial diversity in schools. O'Connor encouraged students to lay their own foundations in public service, despite the challenges they might face.

"With every step in the area of public service is doing something right for a good reason," she said. "It's more interesting and challenging and the encouragement and guidance you receive is genuine."

O'Connor also thinks that the nation needs more people to build bridges in communities through public service.

"Our nation needs hardworking, innovative people to operate and improve our nation," she said.

O'Connor's quick jokes at the beginning and her insight of a life of public service is what made her speech applicable to her audience.

"Her ability to relate to all students and not just the law students made it easy to relate to and a pleasure to listen to," freshman Austin Buckley said.

Contact Brittany Smith at [pendulum@elon.edu](mailto:pendulum@elon.edu) or 278-7247.

### FEATURES

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See what's hot for fall fashion.



### ENTERTAINMENT

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Alumna's "American Idol" documentary premieres Wednesday.



### SPORTS

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Cross country prepares for its third race of the season.