

SUSIE MARSHALL SHARP

Susie Marshall Sharp is Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of North Carolina. She has had a distinguished career in an exacting profession. Justice Sharp showed great potential in the School of Law here; she was a student editor of the North Carolina Law Review and was chosen to the order of the Coif; she is also a member of Phi Beta Kappa, and the Order of the Valkyries. She has always approached her work with humanity. In her first term as Superior Court Judge she condemned the "medieval" brutality with which a prisoner had been treated and emphasized that the penal system was not designed for revenge. She has strongly advocated more and better resources for the treatment of alcoholics and juvenile offenders. Justice Sharp has often been "only" or "first". She was the only woman student in her law school class, the only woman city attorney in the State, the first woman Superior Court Judge in the State, when Governor W. Kerr Scott appointed her to that post in 1949, and the first woman Supreme Court Justice when Governor Terry Sanford elevated her to that position in 1962. She has, appropriately, urged greater participation of women in politics; she once charged them with "indifference, lethargy, and plain laziness." Justice Sharp herself, however, is not to be judged as a woman who has held her own in a profession usually dominated by men. By any standard, she has distinguished herself in the service of the people of North Carolina. The University of North Carolina is happy to bestow upon her the degree, Doctor of Laws.