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**Anita Hill vs. Clarence Thomas
Face or Fiction?**

The claims of sexual harassment made by Anita Hill have been argued a fair amount over the past decade and a half. Not only is it relevant because it finally brought sexual harassment in the workplace out into the light, but also because Clarence Thomas remains a member of the Supreme Court to this very day. After Anita Hill made her harassment public, a flood of accusations were made against both senators and congressmen, including one against Senator Bob Packwood of Oregon.¹ Having been nominated by the Bush Administration after Thurgood Marshall, a prominent member of the NAACP, retired from the Supreme Court, Thomas was a controversial candidate from the start. Most controversial, however, were accusations made by Anita Hill, a former employee of Thomas at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. She claimed that Thomas harassed her with the inappropriate discussion of sexual acts and pornographic films after she refused to date him. Thomas denied these charges and called the hearings before the Senate Judiciary Committee “a high-tech lynching for uppity blacks.”

The questions that are asked over and over again are, “why did Hill wait to file complaints against Thomas until 1991 instead of when the actual harassments took place?” and “why did she continue to associate with the harasser?” According to Hill, she didn’t want to compromise her position at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.² In the end, the Senate voted 52-48 to confirm Clarence Thomas as an associate justice of the supreme court.

¹ Timothy Egan, “Accusations Against Senator May Pose Test for Congress,” *The New York Times* (23 November 1992): A-10. Available from: ProQuest, New York Times Historical Collection, Menlo School Lib. <http://library.menloschool.org> (Accessed 30 March 2006).

² Emma Coleman Jordan, “Why Rush to Vote on Thomas?” *The New York Times* (8 October 1991): A-25. Available from: ProQuest, New York Times Historical Collection, Menlo School Lib. <http://library.menloschool.org> (Accessed 30 March 2006).