**FRONTLINE Presents “Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court”** *A major two-hour investigative documentary special on the Thomases’ lives and controversial rise to power and influence*[***Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court***](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/clarence-and-ginni-thomas/)  
Tuesday, May 9 at 9/8c on PBS and on YouTube  
Streaming at 7/6c on pbs.org/frontline and in the PBS Video App  
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Over the past three decades, Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas has risen to the center of power in Washington, impacting issues affecting millions of Americans — from abortion to affirmative action. By his side has been his wife and best friend, Ginni Thomas. 

Together, the Thomases have left an indelible mark on America — in the legal realm and in conservative politics. But what has fueled their rise and expanding influence, and what have been the consequences?

FRONTLINE investigates these questions in a comprehensive and incisive two-hour special, [***Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court***](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/documentary/clarence-and-ginni-thomas/)*,* premiering on PBS and streaming on PBS.org/frontline and YouTube on Tuesday, May 9 at 9/8c ([check local listings](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/schedule/)). The documentary is supported by [Preserving Democracy](https://www.pbs.org/wnet/preserving-democracy/), a public media reporting initiative from The WNET Group. 

Amid reports that the Supreme Court justice has accepted luxury trips and gifts and his wife’s support of former President Donald Trump’s attempt to overthrow the 2020 election, *Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court* is television’s first major examination of the Thomases since the 2020 election, and the conservative shift in the court that gave Clarence Thomas increased power.

Through detailed, interwoven biographies, the documentary examines defining issues that have shaped their lives and ambitions, from race and religion to politics and personal scandal. 

Weaving in searing new interviews with personal confidants — several of whom have never before spoken on camera — as well as conservative allies, biographers and critics, the documentary traces the lives of Clarence and Ginni from childhood into adulthood.

FRONTLINE offers insights into the Supreme Court justice’s past — from the racial prejudice he experienced as a kid in Georgia and as a Black student at Yale Law School — to how the indignation he felt influenced him going forward.  

The documentary also details how Ginni Thomas’ upbringing — influenced by far-right ideologies and an admiration of Phyllis Schlafly and young conservative activism — would later lead to an attachment to conspiracy theories and a belief that America is under spiritual attack.

“[Ginni] saw herself as having more running room, more freedom to get out there and play a hands-on role in rallying and organizing conservatives. She saw herself as on the same mission as her husband but in a much more partisan, political, hands-on, practical kind of way,” Marc Fisher, a senior editor at *The Washington Post*,tells FRONTLINE.

*Clarence and Ginni: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court* features interviews with the reporters who have uncovered Justice Thomas’ trips — trips that have raised questions about the court’s legitimacy and independence.

“It shows that he is comfortable accepting largesse at a scale that has no known precedent in the modern history of the U.S. Supreme Court,” ProPublica reporter Josh Kaplan says in the film.

The two-hour special reveals how the Thomases became a united force in Washington, and the influence they’ve had, especially following Trump’s appointments of Justices Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett.

“Thomas has developed into one of the leading lights on the court, if not the leading light. So this is why it's often referred to as the Thomas Court now, instead of the Roberts Court. He really is sort of the ideological and intellectual center of gravity on the court,” says Notre Dame law professor and former clerk for Justice Thomas, Stephen Smith.  

As the nation sees historic Supreme Court rulings being overturned or challenged, *Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court* offers an unflinching look at how grievances, bitter politics and divisiveness have shaped the couple — and the country — as they have reached the pinnacle of power.

“If you look at where the Supreme Court is right now, in many ways it's implementing the political agenda and imposing the views of people like Clarence Thomas and Ginni Thomas. Some people might call it payback. Others might call it the fulfillment of his dreams,” Jane Mayer, *New Yorker* staff writer and reporter on *Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court*,says in the film.

***Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court*** will be available to watch in full at pbs.org/frontline and in the PBS App starting May 9, 2023, at 7/6c. The two-hour special will premiere on PBS stations ([check local listings](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/schedule/)) and on FRONTLINE’s YouTube channel at 9/8c. *Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court* is distributed internationally by PBS International. [Subscribe to FRONTLINE’s newsletter](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/newsletter-subscriptions/) to get updates on events, podcast episodes and more related to *Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court.*

**CREDITS**

***Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court*** is a FRONTLINE production with the Kirk Documentary Group. The director is Michael Kirk. The producers are Michael Kirk, Mike Wiser and Vanessa Fica. The writers are Michael Kirk and Mike Wiser. The reporters are Vanessa Fica and Jane Mayer. The editor-in-chief and executive producer of FRONTLINE is Raney Aronson-Rath. 

**About FRONTLINE**FRONTLINE, U.S. television’s longest running investigative documentary series, explores the issues of our times through powerful storytelling. FRONTLINE has won every major journalism and broadcasting award, including 104 Emmy Awards and 28 Peabody Awards. Visit [pbs.org/frontline](https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/) and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/frontlinepbs), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/frontline), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/frontlinepbs/) and [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3ScyryU9Oy9Wse3a8OAmYQ) to learn more. FRONTLINE is produced at GBH in Boston and is broadcast nationwide on PBS. Funding for FRONTLINE is provided through the support of PBS viewers and by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. Additional support for FRONTLINE is provided by the Abrams Foundation, Park Foundation, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; and the FRONTLINE Journalism Fund, with major support from Jon and Jo Ann Hagler on behalf of the Jon L. Hagler Foundation, and additional support from Koo and Patricia Yuen. Funding for *Clarence and Ginni Thomas: Politics, Power and the Supreme Court* is provided by the Jonathan Logan Family Foundation and The WNET Group’s Preserving Democracy, a public media reporting initiative.  
  
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