



Law and Order in Real Life

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I didn't follow the traditional route. I got my degree in psychology from Cornell and then went to nursing school. I practiced nursing for 10 years, then opened a bookstore and ran it for four years. Then I went to law school after my fourth child was born. It was either that or have another baby.

I try cases. I present cases to the grand jury. I prepare cases for trial. There's not a job duty in this office that I don't do. I answer the phone.

We do everything from flagrant nonsupport to death penalty; Kentucky still has the death penalty.

I will often go to the crime scene so I get the feel of it. Because I'm ultimately going to have make the jury see that.

I may be out with a detective talking to witnesses. Most people are intimidated by the courtroom, the jury; they might be intimidated by me.

It's my responsibility always to consider the death penalty when it's a death penalty eligible case.

Sometimes there are big surprises during prosecutions. Somebody will get on the stand and testify to a statement I'm unaware of. That's really bad! That most always leads to a mistrial. We call it Trial by Ambush.

Law and Order. I do watch those shows. I thoroughly enjoy them. They are completely unrealistic and as far from the reality in Kentucky as you can get.

The forgotten party is the victim in our judicial system. Defendants have all the rights under the constitution and more rights by Supreme Court holdings. Victims have very few rights, and they tend to get lost in the process.

When I have a child victim of sexual abuse and we can convict the rapist, that's very satisfying, because I know that child will be protected and we will be able to provide that child some ongoing services.

We may be dealing with a murder case, burglary, or trafficking in a controlled substance, which is a large part of our caseload.

You need good oratorical skills. You have to gear your presentation for your audience. There are times, depending on my jury pool, where I'm going to be a lot more Kentucky. I'm going to use a lot more vernacular.

You have to be able to tell a story, to get your story across to the jury, so they can see the way you believe it should be perceived.

Preparation is key, but especially with closings, I'll get up and whatever I've written is not what I end up using. It will be more extemporaneous based on what has gone on during the trial.

You have to be able to think on your feet.

Most memorable day was the day I got elected. I'm the first woman to hold this position in this circuit. 