

PHOTOGRAPHS BY VINCENT RICARDEL

# 30 Stars of the Bar

These 30 lawyers have helped elect Presidents, defend senators, and work out high-profile divorces. They're the top guns of the profession, and Washington wouldn't be the same without them.

BY MARISA M. KASHINO

**1 Brendan Sullivan** (Williams & Connolly). See profile at right.

**2 Seth Waxman** (Wilmer-Hale). See profile on page 68.

**3 Theodore Olson** (Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher). Ted Olson is best known as the lawyer who won George W. Bush the presidency with his argument in the 2000 Supreme Court case *Bush v. Gore*, but the high-court advocate says the case he's handling now could be the most significant of his nearly 45-year career. It's the lawsuit he filed this summer in California federal court challenging Proposition 8—the state's same-sex marriage ban.

Olson is both a legal and a Republican icon. He was an assistant attorney general in the Reagan administration, solicitor general under George W. Bush, and a leader in John McCain's 2008 presidential bid—hardly

an expected poster boy for gay rights.

Olson doesn't see it as a partisan fight. That's why he recruited New York lawyer David Boies—who argued for Al Gore in *Bush v. Gore*—to be his co-counsel: "I thought that if I combined myself with Boies, we could make the case that the issue was not a conservative or liberal or Republican or Democrat issue. It's an issue of human rights and human dignity and decency and equality." The case is set to go to trial in January.

Olson doesn't have any Supreme Court arguments scheduled for this term, though he argued seven times before the justices last term.

**4 Michele Roberts** (Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld). See profile on page 67.

**5 Sanford AIn** (Ain & Bank). See profile on page 65.

**6 J. Warren Gorrell Jr.** (Hogan & Hartson). Gorrell has achieved what countless other lawyers have failed to: He's built a successful New York-style

corporate practice in Washington, proving that the city can be home to more than just white-collar defenders and regulatory lawyers. Not only that, but as chairman of Hogan & Hartson he has helped transform the homegrown Washington firm into a global powerhouse with offices in China, Germany, the United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, and Switzerland. And it looks as if he intends to expand the firm further. Though Gorrell won't comment on the matter, Hogan is in talks to merge with United Kingdom-based Lovells. Such a union would turn Hogan into one of the ten largest law firms in the world, with revenues close to \$2 billion.

The Kentucky native is the rare firm chairman who maintains an active law practice while managing the firm. Though corporate transactional work has slowed since the credit crisis, Gorrell handled several major mergers and acquisitions before the downturn. In one of the biggest real-estate deals ever, he represented Archstone-Smith in its \$22-billion acquisition by Tishman Speyer and Lehman

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## Brendan Sullivan

(Williams & Connolly). He went to law school thinking he would never become a trial lawyer. If he had been right, Washington might never have known one of its all-time brightest legal stars. Sullivan changed his mind about trial work when he represented soldiers in the 1969 Presidio mutiny case while serving as a military lawyer. In that matter, 27 soldiers faced years in prison for staging a nonviolent sit-in. "It was an abuse by government that made me focus on the need for vigorous criminal defense," Sullivan, 67, says today.

This year, Sullivan was at the center of the most talked-about criminal trial in Washington, representing then-senator Ted Stevens of Alaska against federal corruption charges. Sullivan's arguments drew crowds of young lawyers eager to watch the master at work. The case against Stevens was thrown out after a series of foul-ups by the prosecution came to light. That misconduct never would have been revealed had Sullivan not rejected a plea deal earlier in the trial.

Sullivan—perhaps best known for his televised representation of Oliver North during the 1987 Iran-Contra hearings—shies from comparisons to the late Edward Bennett Williams, the founder of his firm and DC's most fabled criminal defender. Yet it's tough to think of anyone better suited than Sullivan to be Williams's successor.

Staff writer Marisa M. Kashino covers lawyers and lobbyists. She can be reached at [mkashino@washingtontian.com](mailto:mkashino@washingtontian.com).

## TOP LAWYERS

Porter partner who Regan argues sustained career-ending brain damage during a stay at George Washington University Hospital.

In October, Regan also won more than \$5 million for the family of a man and his son killed by a drunk driver in Frederick County. Now Regan is handling a number of cases against Metro, including one on behalf of the six children of a woman killed in June's Red Line collision.

**15 Jamie Gorelick** (Wilmer-Hale). Gorelick believes that "a good litigator can do anything." She's referring to the many litigators she's observed since

becoming one herself in 1975, but her own practice proves she might be right. The former deputy attorney general in the Clinton administration now fills multiple roles at her firm. She's a partner in the regulatory and government-affairs and litigation departments, chair of the defense, national-security, and government-contracts practice, and chair of the public-policy practice.

Gorelick focuses on many of the hottest issues of the day. In her national-security practice, she represents clients before the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, which monitors the security implications of foreign transac-

tions. She's helping the financial firm Lazard navigate regulatory reform at the Treasury Department, the SEC, and the Federal Reserve, and she's representing Citigroup in connection with congressional inquiries into its compensation practices.

**16 Peter Greenspun** (Greenspun, Shapiro, Davis & Leary). Greenspun's work is not for the faint of heart. He defends people accused of the most heinous crimes—rape, murder, solicitation of sex with a child. On occasion, their lives are at stake. But some lawyer has to do it. And few do it better than Greenspun, one of Virginia's elite criminal defenders.

His most high-profile case came when a judge appointed him defense counsel to John Muhammad, mastermind of the 2002 DC sniper attacks, who was executed on November 10. No matter how hopeless the case or despicable the crime, Greenspun is legally devoted to his clients. He says he sees them as "really just people. They have individual problems and challenges." On a recent rainy morning, Greenspun was on his way to visit John Muhammad—"just to go see him."

Greenspun has had some recent successes. He represented Miles Harrison, who was accused of involuntary manslaughter after leaving his 21-month-

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### Debra Katz

(Katz, Marshall & Banks). Don't be fooled by her cheerful disposition. Katz is one Washington lawyer who isn't afraid to go to battle. She's been involved in some of the highest-profile employment-discrimination and whistleblower-protection suits, having litigated such matters here for more than 25 years.

In the past year, Katz has filed a series of whistleblower-retaliation suits against ArmorGroup North America, including one this fall on behalf of one of the government contractor's former executives, who alleges that company employees at the US embassy in Kabul frequented brothels, purchased counterfeit goods, and abetted sex trafficking. In August, Katz reached a settlement with the US Tennis Association in a racial-discrimination suit filed by her client, former tennis champion Zina Garrison. She has also been handling the sexual-harassment case against Andre Chreky, owner of the K Street salon and spa that bears his name.

