

if I can see how they saw that reality through their eyes, the defense is there. It's just taking the time to understand what the human dynamic was that brought them in conflict with the law.

Can you give me an example? I represented a Vietnamese man who killed a Korean at point-blank range. Our defense was that he'd been raised in the Vietnam War when Korean soldiers came into their village and killed people after displaying their martial arts expertise. So he thought when people got into certain stances, they were experts in the martial arts and that his life was in jeopardy.

Does your approach ever vary? Sometimes the facts are totally against you, but you have the law there: You realize the police did an unlawful search, or they tricked someone into making a confession; they had bad evidence or a lying informant. In those situations it's more about what the government did.

Is taking the Fifth Amendment code for "guilty"? Everyone believes what you just said, but I am a total die-hard advocate that it is extremely important to *not* talk. The prosecution has the sole burden to prove their case. So you are entitled to be a spectator in that process, and if the government can't find enough facts to prove the case they're out of luck, so don't add to the fact mix.

I've heard this work described as running from crisis to crisis. Yes, you have to be an adrenaline addict.

Is that how you balance being a mother of two, a wife and a lawyer? Three years ago. Christmas Eve. The kids have gone to sleep, and I get a phone call saying there's a shooting and the police need me. So I leave my house on the 25th at 1 a.m., and I'm out all night with the police and get home in time for Christmas morning. But I loved that hiatus in the middle of the night, where I was in this milieu of crisis and helping people, and then I loved coming home, and so you balance the two and learn from both.

You must feel like you've been able to have it all. Well, I've got wonderful, complicated cases; clients I really want to help; the kind of practice where every day is interesting; and I have adversaries who let me take the time off I need so my kids can say I wasn't an absentee mother. I have everything but peace of mind. Think about it. You don't want a lawyer who walks around with total peace of mind. I mean, I wouldn't be doing my job.

PORTLAND'S BEST LAWYERS

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SHOULD YOU EVER need legal representation, whom would you want in your corner but the best possible attorney specializing in the appropriate area of law? To help you find that person, *Portland Monthly* brings you our third annual guide to the most skilled lawyers in the metro area, now in more legal fields than ever before.

This list—compiled by Woodward/White Inc, the publishers of *The Best Lawyers in America*®—is a preeminent referral guide to the legal profession that uses a comprehensive peer-review process to evaluate top legal professionals in cities across the United States; reviewers assess the work of other lawyers in their specific practice specialties within their communities. After receiving the Woodward/White list, *Portland Monthly* verified that all lawyers were licensed by the Oregon State Bar and practicing in good standing. We then confirmed addresses, phone numbers and practice specialties.

While the list includes many of Portland's most proficient attorneys, it by no means mentions all our area's talented lawyers. Therefore, use this guide only as Step One in your duly diligent search for the services of an adept attorney.

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