



Tough

To Patricia Glaser, entertainment law is competitive and fun.

Most lawyers envision the perfect litigator as a trial tarantula spinning her web, ensnaring all in the courtroom. To entertainment and business litigator Patricia Glaser, that's a one-dimensional view. While she finds "nothing more stimulating than a really good cross-exam," she considers equally critical the paperwork that leads to the assault.

"If you're not good on paper, you have a big problem," she says. "The ultimate business litigator is a Renaissance person — good on one's feet and able to write well."

Those qualities, which she perceived in the attorneys at Wyman, Bautzer, Kuchel & Silbert, induced her to join that firm when she graduated from law school in 1973. Although she and others left that firm in May 1988, Ms. Glaser, who became a partner and co-chair of the litigation department at Christensen, White, Miller, Fink & Jacobs in Century City, says she has never regretted her decision to start her litigation career with Wyman Bautzer, which dissolved in 1991.

"I wanted to be around really good litigators," she says. While clerking for U.S. District Court Judge David Williams as a law student, Ms. Glaser had observed the Wyman Bautzer lawyers to be "aggressive and careful" in court — and, she says, "Their papers were great."

These days, she has the reputation for carrying on those traditions. Last year, a sexual harassment case brought by Dian Parkinson, a hostess on "The Price Is Right," against Ms. Glaser's client, host Bob Barker, was "dismissed without [him] paying a penny," she says. "He was totally vindicated."

In a highly publicized 1993 trial, Ms. Glaser represented Main Line Pictures in its breach of contract suit against Kim Basinger when she declined to play the lead role in "Boxing Helena." The case resulted in a jury verdict of more than \$8 million, though the award was vacated on appeal and a retrial was ordered. Settlement discussions are currently being held.

Ms. Glaser's current clients include Paramount Pictures in its role as owner of the syndicated television show "Hard Copy," which she is defending from a \$100-million defamation case filed by Michael Jackson. She also represents one of director Ridley Scott's production companies in a dispute with the owners of large water tanks in Malta. The tanks became polluted, delaying filming of a movie for a substantial period of time, she says. She also had a starring role in the years-long Credit Lyonnais saga, in which Ms. Glaser represented financier Kirk Kerkorian's Tracinda Corp. against the international bank.

Not all of her work is Hollywood-based, however. She also represents the CEO of a major New York company, who is being sued in a securities class action.

Describing herself as "aggressive and fair," Ms. Glaser stresses integrity in the litigation process. "When I make a deal — whether it turns out to be right, wrong or indifferent — you can take my word to the bank. I won't turn around and say, 'No, you must have misunderstood me,'" she says.

She distinguishes herself from litigators who "need to be loved." Says Ms. Glaser: "A lot of people have that need and I respect it, but I'm not one of them. It is of no moment to me that others like me, but it is important that they trust me."

She and her clients firmly believe she should not be "part of the club," says Ms. Glaser. "During litigation, opposing counsel are not my best friends. I'm very clear about that. It's just not my style," she says.

What is her style? The same as that of her firm, she says: "We play by the rules and we play tough."

While Ms. Glaser says she is "very competitive" and "loves winning," the thrill of litigation for her lies not only in the destination, but the journey. "I have lost motions [in hearings] where I couldn't have had more fun," she says.

— DI MARL RICKER