

## Litigation Leaders: Wilmer's Howard Shapiro on 'Classic Trial Lawyering,' Suing the Government and Lateral All-Stars

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In this installment of *The AmLaw Litigation Daily's* series on litigation leaders, [Howard Shapiro](#), chair of WilmerHale's Litigation/Controversy Department, discusses some of the firm's biggest recent wins, goals and priorities for the department he manages, and his supportive family.

**Excerpt: Lit Daily: Tell us a little about yourself—beyond what's in your law firm bio.**

Howard Shapiro: I have a terrific and terrifically supportive family. When I delivered the closing in a federal criminal trial in New York last May, my wife, Shirley Brandman, and our two grown sons—Zack and Samuel—all came to town to cheer me on.

My older son, now himself a lawyer, started that practice early. When he was five weeks old, I began trying (as a prosecutor) a federal murder trial involving the mail bombing assassinations of **Judge Robert Vance** and civil rights attorney **Robbie Robinson**. After a change of venue, the trial took place in Saint Paul, Minnesota, before the legendary **Judge Devitt**. Since I was going to be away from home, and from my newborn child, for several weeks, Shirley moved with me and baby Zack into an apartment across the street from the courthouse.

The U.S. Marshals saved a seat by the door for Shirley to come into the courtroom carrying Zack in a Snuggli—and from which she could quickly escape when he started to peep. It may have provided an unfair advantage that Judge Devitt would, from time to time, lean forward while I was at the podium and say—in a stage whisper—"Your baby's in the courtroom." The entire jury looked and smiled. This was, happily, not an issue on appeal.