



Concentration

Civil litigation, criminal defense

Education

J.D., Southern Methodist University
Dedman School of Law, 1975

Bachelor of Arts, Wesleyan University, 1965

Honors

American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA)

Top Ten "Texas Super Lawyer," Texas Monthly,
2003-2007; 2nd in Texas, 2005-2007;
3rd in Texas, 2004

"Attorney to Hire When You're in Trouble,"
Houston Chronicle, 2003

"Go-To Lawyer" for Commercial Litigation,
Texas Lawyer, 2007

"Go-To Lawyer" for Civil Defense Litigation,
Texas Lawyer, 2002

"Houston's Top Lawyers," H Magazine, 2006

"Prosecutor of the Year," State Bar of Texas, 1989

Founder, Texas People Against Crime



Rusty Hardin is the firm's founder and leader. A 1965 graduate of Wesleyan University in Middletown, Connecticut, Rusty earned his law degree in 1975 at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. After graduating from Wesleyan and before law school, Rusty taught American history at Montgomery Academy in Montgomery, Alabama, and spent five years in the U.S. Army, leaving with the rank of Captain after 15 months in Vietnam. He also spent a year as a legislative assistant to Congressman Charles R. Jones, Republican of North Carolina.

Before entering private practice, Rusty established his reputation as an assistant district attorney in Houston for over 15 years. During that period, he never lost a felony jury trial, tried 14 death penalty cases, and earned renown for his cross-examination skills in celebrated cases.

Before leaving the District Attorney's office in 1990, Rusty was named Texas Prosecutor of the Year in 1989 and was featured in numerous news articles for his trial skills. In 1990, he founded Texas People Against Crime (TPAC), a statewide organization dedicated to

addressing criminal justice issues from the perspective of crime victims and law enforcement.

Rusty entered private practice in 1991 as a founding partner of Hardin, Beers, Hagstette & Davidson, engaging in a civil and criminal trial practice at both the state and federal levels. In 1994, he was named Chief Trial Counsel for the Whitewater Independent Counsel's Office, serving under both Bob Fiske and Ken Starr. In 1996, he established Rusty Hardin & Associates.

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Rusty Hardin

Rusty Hardin & Associates, P.C.
5 Houston Center
1401 McKinney, Suite 2250
Houston, TX 77010
(713) 652-9000
(713) 652-9800 (fax)
rhardin@rustyhardin.com



Rusty's practice has been a diverse mix of approximately 80 percent civil trial work and 20 percent criminal trial work. Clients have been as varied as Arthur Andersen in both its civil and criminal cases; ExxonMobil; Rice University; The Venetian Hotel/Las Vegas Sands; the Houston Texans; various trusts and a corporation established by J. Howard Marshall II in a probate trial involving assaults on the J. Howard Marshall II estate by Anna Nicole Smith and J. Howard Marshall III; Dow Jones in obtaining a new trial in the face of the largest libel verdict in history; and various professional athletes such as Rudy Tomjanovich, Warren Moon, Wade Boggs, Scottie Pippen, Steve Francis, and Calvin Murphy.

Rusty enjoys nothing more than pleading cases before juries. "I love the challenge of trying to persuade a group of strangers to my point of view," says Rusty. "From my years of experience on both sides of the courtroom, whether prosecuting or defending a client, I have found that juries almost always do the right thing. Even when I disagree, I can see how they got there."

Rusty is a nationally recognized speaker on trial tactics, which includes counseling lawyers on dealing with the media during high-profile cases. Hardin has three simple rules for media relations: "Always return their calls. Always tell them the truth. If you can't talk to them, explain why."

Rusty has been married to his wife, Tissy, for over 35 years. Rusty and Tissy have two sons, Russell and Thomas. Russell is in graduate school in Chicago, and Thomas is an officer in the Houston Police Department.

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