

# Catherine “Cat” Clark

BAR NUMBER: 21231

Cat Clark is a surprise litigator—she found she loved it several years after graduating from law school when she joined a litigation firm: “Never did I think that litigation was my path in law school.”

## What is the most interesting case you have handled in your career so far and why?

I find all my cases interesting, otherwise I don’t take them. I prefer the unusual case where there is not an easy answer. My firm’s catch phrase is, “We don’t do easy.”

## Did you end up practicing in the area of law you expected? If not, where did you end up and why?

No. I thought I would be an environmental lawyer. I started out in real estate and real estate litigation because I needed a job and was offered one as claims counsel for a title insurance company after my clerkship (it was tough for law grads in the early 1990s).

## What is the biggest regret of your career?

I should have started my own firm earlier than I did.

## What is your biggest success?

I was part of a team of lawyers who

challenged the tolling system on the SR 520 bridge, which was really janky when it started. We managed to get the state to fix the problems without engaging in years of warfare with it.

## What is an example of something you’ve done to make the legal field more accessible to attorneys from marginalized backgrounds?

I regularly mentor University of Washington student-athletes (like I used to be). Many are people of color. I tell each of them that they can become a lawyer, as I am perfect proof that you don’t have to be a perfect student to do it. Athletics is a great training ground for litigating. And I’ve managed to persuade a few to the practice!

### > WE’D LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT YOU!

Email [wabarnews@wsba.org](mailto:wabarnews@wsba.org) to request a questionnaire and submit materials to be used for a hand-drawn portrait.

## LIGHTNING ROUND

**How would you be earning a living if you weren’t a lawyer?** Artist/novelist/writer.

**If you had to give a 10-minute presentation on one topic other than the law, what would it be and why?**

Mentoring. I’m a beneficiary of the informal mentoring system we have in this country. I pay it forward to those younger than I am. I could go on for far more than 10 minutes about what joy this work brings to me and how it makes my heart sing for all of them.

**Do you have any favorite legal or philosophical debates that you enjoy having with colleagues or friends?**

Grammar questions are always fun to argy-bargy about—debate on the split infinitive, proper capitalization, the Oxford comma. And of course, the application of the Schrödinger’s Cat paradox to the many questions posed by the law is entertaining too.

**What is one thing from your childhood that you would bring back if you could?**

The ability to consume gluten in all its glorious forms.

**How do you unwind or recharge after a difficult day?** I do something creative.

Even if it’s just doodling. It forces my mind to work differently after a day of litigating.

**What is one thing your colleagues may not know about you?** I earned an athletic scholarship to the UW in swimming. I am also a four-year varsity letter winner and former school record holder on a relay.

As the kid who was always picked last for EVERY group sport in elementary, middle, and high school, and who was failing bowling as part of high school P.E. (I am a horrendous bowler), getting to represent the UW as an athlete was a big deal to me. Still is.

**Who is your favorite writer?** My father, Carl Clark. At 91 he is producing great work.

**What’s your go-to karaoke song?**

*Enter Sandman*, Metallica.

**What’s the best place you’ve ever traveled to?**

All the places I’ve been with my partner, Marc Jacques. Wherever he goes is the best place. **BN**

