

# Daily Journal

COVER STORY

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## TOP WOMEN LITIGATORS 2010



**Lisa Perrochet**

ENCINO

**Law Firm:** Horvitz & Levy LLP

**Practice Area:** Appellate law

**Years in Practice:** 22

**Law School:** Loyola Law School

Lisa Perrochet scored a big win this year that helps not only her client but also law firms across the state. She persuaded the 2nd District Court of Appeal to endorse the use of so-called ethical walls within firms to minimize the conflicts that arise when attorneys hop from firm to firm. *Kirk v. First American Title Insurance Co.* The ruling prevented the insurance company from losing its lawyers at Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal, who had represented them for decades. The plaintiffs sought to disqualify the firm because a newly hired Sonnenschein lawyer had confidential information about the case. “In terms of broad significance in the legal community, it’s huge,” she said. “It’s something that is so critical to clients to know where they stand and that they can rely on reasonable measures to keep the lawyers they’ve got and they won’t be broadsided later because of something completely out of control.” Experts said the ruling could influence the California State Bar to change its rules and sanction ethical walls. Right now, Perrochet is awaiting a decision from the California Supreme Court on an issue of civil procedure that will affect wrongful death cases. The case is *Boeken v. Phillip Morris*.

**Pretrial Ritual:** Before every oral argument, Perrochet dons her 2nd District Court of Appeal wristwatch. The good luck charm has sentimental roots as well. It was a gift from a beloved secretary who now works for the Los Angeles-based appellate court. “It sounds completely silly. Other people have Mickey Mouse. I have the gold seal of the 2nd District,” she said.

**Biggest Career Break:** Perrochet said it was serendipity that led her to the appellate firm of Horvitz & Levy. Although she was all set to join a big firm and practice admiralty law, a friend told her about a firm where she could spend her days researching and writing. “I’m sure a lot of people would find it very isolating, but I really like to win on the briefs,” she said. “I’m the lucky one who found the right fit by day one.”