

LAURA
WASSER



Client
Angelina
Jolie is in
mediation
with Brad
Pitt.

Divorce Lawyer to the Stars

ANGELINA JOLIE. JENNIFER GARNER.
KIM KARDASHIAN. WHEN THE RICH
AND FAMOUS BREAK UP, THEY WANT
THIS ATTORNEY IN THEIR CORNER

By GILLIAN TELLING

As a Hollywood divorce lawyer, Laura Wasser has seen her share of ugliness—including one client who fed laxatives to his ex-wife's cat so it would soil her pristine white condo. "There have been some thrown water glasses. There was once a stiletto heel that got stuck in our conference room door," she says. Still, the \$850-an-hour lawyer famous for handling celebrity breakups says she tries to steer her clients away from fighting dirty. "Mediation makes the most sense in almost every divorce," she says of her go-to method for dividing assets behind closed doors instead of going to court. Now Wasser, 49, divorced herself with two sons (Luke, 12, and Jack, 8), wants to make her expertise accessible via her website itsovereasy.com, which guides users through the legal system. "Divorce is heartbreaking. Going through a process so hard to understand adds insult to injury," she says. "We want to make the legal aspect easier and less expensive. We bank online, shop online, date online—why shouldn't we divorce online?" Here she shares what she's learned about the business of breaking up.



Power Player
Wasser (at home in Los Angeles) says she's a lawyer, not a shrink. "I was married once for about five minutes. I'm not the best person to ask about relationship advice."



**Seal
& Heidi Klum**

Wasser helped keep Klum's 2014 divorce details private when the parents of four broke up.

**Amber Heard
& Johnny Depp**

Wasser repped Depp in the ugly 2016 split, which ended in a \$7 million settlement.

**Ben Affleck
& Jennifer Garner**

They separated in 2015 and filed for divorce last April. Wasser is mediating as they divide assets.

**Kevin Federline
& Britney Spears**

After two years and two kids, they split in 2006. Wasser's client Spears paid \$20,000 a month in child support.

**Kris Humphries
& Kim Kardashian
West**

The 2011 marriage lasted 72 days, the bitter divorce battle more than 500, with Wasser in Kim's corner.

**Ashton Kutcher
& Demi Moore**

With his TV-and-tech fortune at stake, Kutcher hired Wasser for the divorce, finalized in 2013.

**Halle Berry
& Olivier Martinez**

Wasser worked with Martinez to strike an amicable custody deal with the actress when they parted in 2015.

**Her Most
Famous
Divorce
Cases**

Celebrities Love to Relate to Their Lawyer

The Los Angeles native joined the law firm of her father, Dennis Wasser, after law school at Loyola University in L.A. "When I started, I was about 10 years younger than most of my colleagues, and they would send me in to talk to clients because I was young. I was hip, I had a tattoo. I could speak with this athlete or musician or actor, and they could relate to me better than they could to an old guy in a suit."

Hide That Dirty Laundry

When the 2006 split between Britney Spears, one of her first superstar clients, and Kevin Federline turned into a media circus, "that was a big lesson for me," she says. "Media was booming, and I don't think anybody could fathom how quickly news would travel." She developed tricks for keeping details out of the press, including strategic dates for filing (before holiday weekends) and having clients announce their splits in press releases beforehand so they wouldn't be discovered via public records. "If both parties are willing to do it quietly, sometimes the entire divorce is worked out before we file, which is much less invasive," she says.

Fame Doesn't Make Breaking Up Easier

"There isn't really a difference" between celebrity and civilian divorces, Wasser says. "I tell all my clients, 'You're going to go through heartache and have the same fears, frustrations and insecur-

**'The more
you argue,
the more
money I
make. That
doesn't
make sense'**

—ON
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ity.' Everyone's worried about their kids, worried about money. Wondering who you're going to the office Christmas party with is the same as wondering who you're going to the Oscars with. The only difference is the media planning."

You Will Survive That Split

"It's not fun, but everyone who comes into my office has been touched by divorce, whether they're a child of divorce or their best friend has gone through it," she says. "It's not taboo; it's more like, 'Okay. How do we deal with this?'" Still, she has some clients who find it hard to fully end things, as in the case of Ben Affleck and Jennifer Garner, who stayed separated for nearly two years before filing for divorce. "There's a psychological finality to being fully divorced.... Maybe they don't want to take the final plunge," she says of why that happens. "I've had clients whose divorce was pretty much finalized and then they got back together."

Keep Things Civil

"I say two things: Remember that this is a business transaction. There is a different place for you to be having emotions. And at some point remember that this is someone you married. Try to tap into those good memories. If you have children with them, you'll be dealing with them the rest of your life. So figure out a way to deal with anger—before it starts making your face look bad." ●