



THE **VOICE** OF
THE **CRIMINAL**
DEFENCE BAR

MEMBER PROFILE QUESTIONS

INTRO :

Member Name : Gerald Chan

Year of Call : 2007

Twitter Handle: @Gerald_Chan_law

LinkedIn Page : If you search for Gerald Chan, you'll either get me or an ASIC Design Engineer. I'm the former.

QUESTIONS :

1- How did you get into criminal law?

I worked on an intervention in the first Omar Khadr case at the Supreme Court of Canada when I was an associate at Goodmans. I realized I wanted to do this type of law all the time. Luckily, Ruby & Edwardh had an opening at the time.



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2- What type of cases do you enjoy defending the most and why?

Criminal cases that have civil or regulatory dimensions. I like walking the edge between worlds. Makes life more interesting.

3- How did the practice of criminal law change you?

It has given real life context to something I've always believed: good people make bad decisions and we are not defined by our worst mistakes.

4- If there is one thing only you would like to see change in criminal law, what would it be?

The erosion of the principle against self-incrimination.

5- What advice would you give to your younger self when you first started practising criminal law?

Don't be afraid to talk about money with your clients.



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6- How do you deal with bad work days?

Read up on Raptors news or watch a game with my son

7- What do you think of Zoom court?

I didn't mind it so much—even for trials. I liked being able to see a close-up of the witness' face and found it useful to be able to pull documents up quickly on the share-screen. But now that I'm doing in-person stuff, I realized how much I missed the adrenaline rush that you get from a real courtroom.

8- Any embarrassing court story you're willing to share?

Not in court but related to court. I was making (what I thought would be a) smooth getaway from the press with my client. He jumped in the passenger seat. I calmly opened the driver side door and got in. The media closed in on my car. I turned the engine on and was ready to peel off—only to realize that all my windows were covered in ice. I had to get back out, pop the trunk, and grab my scraper to slowly clear the ice from my windows—all while surrounded by reporters and their cameras. The media had the mercy to not include that part on the 6 o'clock news.



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9- Who is your role model/inspiration in criminal law?

Do I have to give just one ? Edward Bennett Williams' speeches about the role of the criminal defence lawyer still energize me. Clayton Ruby was so forceful and fearless. Frank Addario is the master strategist and stylist.

10- What's your favourite song?

Sorry too hard. I'll go with album instead. Jay-Z, "Reasonable Doubt".

11- How do you maintain work life balance and how do you deal with the stress of the job?

I guard certain family routines jealously, especially when I'm not in a long trial.

12- What is your biggest legal inspiration?

Blackstone's ratio ("It is better that ten guilty persons escape than that one innocent suffer.")



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13- What do you do outside of the law?

Tennis, ski (or at least I'm trying to learn), eat out with people who know their food and wine, watch the Raptors, read about the Raptors, think about what trades and draft picks the Raptors need to make...

14- What would your defence bar colleagues be surprised to learn about you?

I used to be an underground battle rapper. (Also, I'm running for Bencher as part of the Good Governance Coalition. Please vote!)