

Good essay about criminal courtroom visit

[Law](#), [Evidence](#)



The courtroom is a place where cases are heard and deliberated as evidence is produced to prove whether the accused person is innocent or guilty.

Different courtroom varies depending on the hierarchy and the type of cases, they deliberate upon in the courtroom. In the United States, the courts are closely interlinked through a hierarchical system at either the state or the federal level. Therefore, the court must have jurisdiction before it takes upon a case, deliberate, and come up with a judgment on it. The criminal case is different from the civil cases, especially when it comes to the court layout. In this essay, I will explain how I experienced a courtroom visit and the important issues are learnt from the visit.

In the courtroom, the judge was presiding over the court, and because the matters were on criminal cases there were jurors. This jury received instructions from the judge about the law, as they were nonprofessional. A jury consists of twelve persons when it comes to serious felonies and six members when it is only a misdemeanor. The reason why the judge gave them the facts on the law was to help them deliberate after the case was over to establish whether the accused person was guilty or not. The judge was referred as to your honor by the counsel, the accused and the prosecution. Additionally, there was the judge's associate whose duty was to swear in the jury, keep the trial exhibits during the court proceedings and record the court verdict at the end of each trial. There was also the judge's tipstaff whose work was to announce that the court was in session as well as swear in witnesses. However, the most important duty of the tipstaff is to take care of the jury and escort them out of the courtroom. I learnt that the jury selection process is called voir dire.

Lawyers play an important part in the courtroom as they are used to defend the accused person. Two types of lawyers are involved in dealing with criminal matters there are the barristers and solicitors. The parties to the case are the prosecution who brings the case against the defendant. The prosecution side is represented by the state counsel also known as the crown prosecutor. The defense is the side of the person who has been charged with a criminal offense and is referred to as the accused person. The court allows the accused person to be presented by a lawyer, as it is a constitutional right. However, the accused person may decide to represent her or himself depending on the circumstances of the case.

After the judge entered the courtroom, we all stood up and sat down after him as a sign of respect. Then the judge's associate called the first case, which was a misdemeanor by the accused person. The crown prosecutor read the charges that were against, and she was asked what she pleaded. She pleaded guilty to a drunken driving and was given community service for a whole week. The next case was on a murder case, where the accused persons were charged with murdering their friend in the house where the three had rented. The case had already started and was in progress. However, I was lucky because I got to the case before all evidence was produced in court, and I got to know how evidence and exhibits are produced in court.

Before the prosecution begins to produce any evidence or exhibits in the courts, he asks the jury and the Judge to exclude or admit certain evidence. However, in this case all evidence that the prosecution brought up in court was admissible until the judge decided it was not. Although, the case was

ongoing I got the chance to understand that the defense, and the prosecution are given a chance to make opening statements on the issue pertaining to the case. During the opening statements, the two sides give the court an outline on how they are going to go about the case and how they are going to prove the case. Both sides have to be careful not to make any promises to the jury about how well they will prove the case.

The prosecution gives the first opportunity to present its case by conducting a prosecution case in chief, where he or she calls out the prosecution witness to give his witness and the account of the case. The prosecution case in chief is usually a direct examination, and the prosecution is allowed to ask leading questions to help in proving his case. The prosecutor assigned to this murder case was probing, and he asked questions as if he was there at the time of the commitment of the crime. The prosecutor had six witnesses, and he got a chance to examine all of them (Ebisike, 2008). However, the defense counsel is at liberty to either cross-examine the witness or not. In this case, the defense counsel cross-examined the witness and some of them were not sure of what they were saying, and some of the witnesses, especially prosecution witness three changed his whole evidence. The jury was astonished and confused, and the crown prosecutor had to re-examine or redirect the witness to set the record straight. However, nothing much could have done because the jury believed the evidence he gave during cross-examination. At this point, the burden of proof all rested on the prosecutor to come up with a strategy, or a way to save his case like looking for more evidence or the three accused persons would go home free.

The counsel got an opportunity to move a motion to dismiss the case,

because she thought that the prosecution did not provide sufficient evidence to charge the accused persons. However, the judge denied the motion to dismiss, and the defense counsel was given the opportunity to establish that his clients were innocent of the crimes they were charged with in the court. The defense counsel called his first defense witness he gave an account of his story. The way the witness gave his evidence in the case moved the jury, and they seemed to agree that the accused persons were innocent. Later, the prosecutor was given the opportunity to cross-examine the defense witness and after the cross examination the defense counsel redirected the witness.

The court was adjourned after lunch and by looking at the cause list, it seemed that the case would not continue. Another case would be deliberated, but it was a civil case. However, during my visit in the courtroom, I have to understand various issues. There are various types of evidence that can be produced in court. There are electronic evidence, character evidence, circumstantial evidence, and forensic evidence and DNA evidence among others (Strauss & Strauss, 2002). Evidence is anything that is presented in support of the case as an assertion. The evidence may support the case, and it can be either weak or strong. Before any evidence is produced in court, the parties to the case have to give each other relevant documents so that there cannot be any surprises during the courtroom sessions.

The strongest evidence is direct evidence that provides direct proof of evidence. The rules of evidence are used to determine whether the evidence is admissible or not in legal proceedings. The burden of proof is left on the

prosecution in criminal cases to show that the evidence produced in court is sufficient to charge the accused persons. In 1970, the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Re Winship* the court held that the prosecution should prove the case beyond reasonable doubt. Therefore, the biggest burden of proof is on the prosecution to prove that the evidence produced in court is sufficient to punish the accused persons.

The proceedings affected the administration of justice in a positive way, because the accused persons were given their constitutional rights. The courts were not in violation of the Due Process Clause as the accused persons were given a fair trial with representation of a defense counsel. This showed that the administration of justice in the United States courts is good, and people are treated fairly without discrimination even though they have been accused of committing a crime. For instance, the accused persons were not mistreated by the court, as they allowed them to be represented by the counsel, which meant that the justice department was defending the interests of its citizens.

The courtroom visit was a very good experience to learn as I got to understand things in a more practical way, than what I read in the books and what I learn in class. For instance, if the witness does not understand the language of the court, then the court has a duty to provide an interpreter so that the accused person can understand what is happening, as well as the crime they are being accused of according to criminal law. Additionally, the judge gives the jury law facts that help them to understand, and know how to deliberate and come up with a verdict for the accused person (Lamb, 2013). This is because the jury is filled with laymen who do not have any understanding of the law,

and if they are allowed to deliberate on the evidence produced in court, then they may be misguided and may at many times find the accused person innocent while in the real sense they were guilty.

In conclusion, the courtroom is a very good place to learn and understand the practical side of the law than the theoretical part. This is because a person gets first hand information, and the counsels and the crown prosecutor brings out various facts that are supported by statutes and precedents. Additionally, one gets to see how justice is administered and whether what people say about the justice system is true or false. Therefore, by visiting the courtroom, I have to understand that the administration of justice is fair.

References

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