

# Free essay on a day in court

[Law](#), [Criminal Justice](#)



On the 13th day of February 2013, I made a visit to Suffolk Superior court. The court has both criminal and civil jurisdiction. For the purposes of this assignment, I visited the criminal section of the court between 1230 hours and 1250 hours, during which time I heard a trial concerning a case involving the violation of copyright law. The case involved the illegal downloading of music from the internet. The accused, a 25 year old man, had pleaded innocent during the arraignment session. The judge had postponed the day which, coincidentally was the day I visited. On this day, much like all working days, the court was formal, with people dressed in suits and ties. The arrangement was so formal that the air seemed tense.

When the judge walked in to the court, everyone stood up and gave a bow. We only sat after the judge had taken a seat behind his towering desk. The judge was a serious-looking bespectacled judge dressed in a wig and the long black robe characteristic of the legal profession. Between the place where the ordinary people and observers sat and the judges' desk was a smaller desk occupied by the federal attorney. The federal attorney is also known as a prosecutor (Beatty and Samuelson 41). To the right of the prosecutor's desk was a section set aside for the witnesses that were to testify against the accused. To the left, there was a section for the accused, and his attorney. Usually, the prosecutor represents the state in any criminal proceeding because a crime is variously described as a wrong against the state. The accused person had a private attorney that would represent him in the case, which typically, is associated with hefty fines and long jail terms.

The type of proceeding was a normal trial. Having settled down, the judge

read out the charges. After reading, the accused person's lawyer stood up and said that his client was guilty. Every time the lawyer stood up to talk, he would start by saying " I am so and so, and I am on record for the accused". After being addressed by the judge, the lawyer would always reply " Much obliged". These words were a formality as the lawyer used them repeatedly. The witnesses were summoned by the prosecutor who cross-examined them by asking questions relating to the incident. After every cross-examination, the judge would ask, " Is there any question for the witness by the accused?" to which the counsel would reply, " Yes your honor" then he would proceed to ask. If there was no question he would say, " no your honor". Before and after talking, the lawyer would face the judge and take a bow. After the cross-examination by the prosecutor, the judge asked the accused person's lawyer whether or not they had witnesses, to which the lawyer stood, took a long bow and said " My name is so and so, I am on record for the accused and we have no witnesses."

When it was time for the accused to defend their stand, the private counsel stood, took a bow and proceeded to say the usual words then said that his client was innocent, for all he cared. He then re-examined the witnesses of the prosecution by asking them questions seeking to disapprove their credibility as witnesses. The witnesses responded to all questions and chose to remain silent on others. The attorney said that his client was not aware of any website going by the name provided in the prosecution. He further explained that his client had no internet connection in the house to perform the crimes that the prosecution alleges he had committed. Further, the attorney gave a long lecture on how the police had trespassed by entering

the house of his client without consent. This amounted to trespass and violation of the right to privacy. The judge held that the accused was guilty as evidence had been provided beyond reasonable doubt. The judge also explained that the police had the right to enter the house of the accused as it was a formality. After giving his ruling, the judge said to the accused, “ The accused is allowed by the American constitution to appeal, if and only if, they feel the judgment gave an unsatisfactory ruling, or if they feel that there was bias in the manner that the case was handled. The case is closed and the court is adjourned”. Everyone stood up, gave along bow, and walked out after the judge had left.

I found the court session engrossing and enlightening. The session was captivating in the sense that the arguments put forward by either side seemed equal and opposing. The proof beyond a reasonable doubt doctrine is among the things I found most intriguing about the trial session. The informality with which the attorney cooked up arguments was rather intriguing and somewhat humorous. The session was more enlightening than it was enthralling because, prior to the court session, I did not know that the consequences of illegal downloading of music were so severe. This, I thought, was something that people ought to be educated about, more so university and college youths that are fond of music and movies.

### **Work cited**

Beatty, Jeffrey F, and Susan S. Samuelson. Legal Environment. Mason, Ohio: South-Western Cengage Learning, 2011. Print.