

Yerusi Rodriguez

8SU

Closing Statement

Good Morning your honor my name is Yerusi Rodriguez, again I am a defense attorney in this case. We appreciate your attention throughout this matter and we thank you for listening to both sides equally. As stated in the case the prosecution has presented to you today, it's clear there is insufficient evidence to convict Mr. Harris and Mr. Blanck of first degree manslaughter.

Mr. Harris and Mr. Blanck are exemplar individuals, arriving to America as poor immigrants seeking to make their fortune, they made the Triangle Shirtwaist factory. This factory was successful and helped many in need of a sustainable job during this industrialization period. Mr. Harris and Mr. Blanck built a name for themselves through this factory making them "Shirtwaist Kings" in the eyes of many.

Since March 25, 1911, the day of the tragic Triangle fire, these two men have been viewed differently, where people once looked up to them in admiration, there was hate, anger and resentment.

We the defense entirely believe that this fire was inevitable and even if the Washington Place door was unlocked Margaret Swartez would've still passed away in this tragic accident.

Many had the misfortune of being at the Triangle factory this very day, witnesses we've seen in this courtroom no matter what side they've testified for, have firsthand lived through this horrible traumatic event. Numerous losses occurred due to this horrific fire, the most important one

being the lives of 146 factory workers. Mr. Harris himself was in the Asch building on this very day. Your honor, do you believe Mr. Harris should've let those who were with him suffer a similar tragic death as those 146 workers? Now imagine you were Mr. Harris, would you have been able to live with the remorse if you knew you could've helped? Mr. Harris proved to be a heroic, selfless individual and even though he couldn't help everyone he made an attempt to help those he could.

Mr. Harris and Mr. Blanck acknowledge the lives of these workers, lives that were taken in this tragic, inevitable fire.

The prosecution argues that this fire needed to have every exit available for the best chance of survival. Yet there had been a key near the Washington Place exit described by Mae Levantini and Ida Mittleman. These two women didn't lock the door although they saw extremely thick smoke coming from it and both realized it was an unuseable exit. Charles Baxter had stated that he himself had changed the Washington Place door from a right handed lock to a left handed one. Your honor a morris lock locks from the inside it can be believed there is a possibility that due to incorrect movement to the lock it might've locked itself.

The defendants don't have to prove their innocence, rather it is the burden of the prosecutor to ultimately establish these defendants as guilty. A burden which they have not met. The only possible verdict for this case should be not guilty.