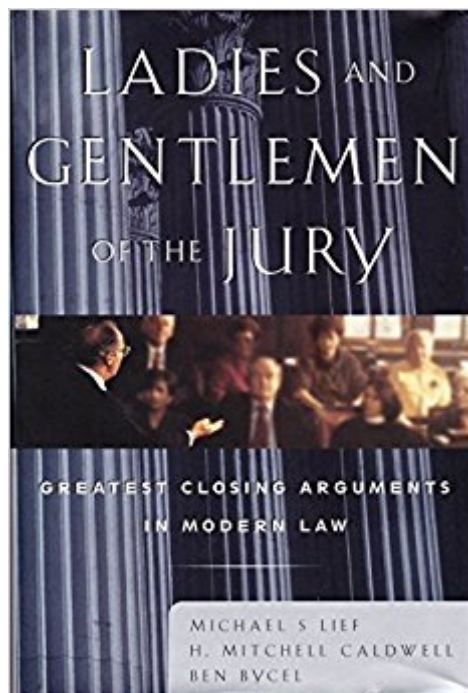




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# Ladies And Gentlemen Of The Jury: Greatest Closing Arguments In Modern Law



## Synopsis

In the hands of a skilled trial lawyer, the closing argument offers the courtroom's greatest dramatic possibilities. It is the advocate's last opportunity to convince the jury of their version of the "truth" before the defendant's fate is sealed. It is the art, essentially, of the storyteller. Complete with analysis and biographical profiles of the lawyers involved, this volume gathers the finales of some of the most celebrated cases in history. Included are: the climactic closes to the Nuremberg War Trials; Gerry Spence's crusade against Kerr-McGee Nuclear Power Plant after the mysterious death of Karen Silkwood; Vincent Bugliosi's successful prosecution of cult leader Charles Manson and his followers; the acquittal of John Delorean despite video evidence of his offences; and the prosecution resulting from the Mai Lai massacre.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Anyone who's ever watched Perry Mason knows that the closing argument is a very important part of a big legal case. The closing argument is the "game point" of law, the time when lawyers pull out all the stops on the cajoling and the litigating. Michael S. Lief and his coauthors have collected the closing arguments from 10 noteworthy cases in this volume, introducing each speech with background information on the trial and commentary on the lawyer's technique. In these pages, readers get front-row seats to some of the most riveting trials in this century, including the Charles Manson murder trial, Karen Silkwood's wrongful-death suit, and the trial of the Chicago Seven. Because the authors chose to include all the courtroom interruptions in the transcript, the Manson summation makes for especially lively reading. Manson and his codefendants repeatedly spoke out

of turn during prosecutor Vincent Bugliosi's statement, saying things like "You are going to be eaten up by your own lie" and "Even if I have never been in the Gotham Bank!" Bugliosi's speech is among the most eloquent in the collection, which is why it is so stunning when one of the defendants provokes him so much that he loses his cool and calls her a name that rhymes with rich. Although the title promises the "greatest closing arguments in modern law," some of the speeches seem to have been chosen because they were connected to important cases rather than because of their own rhetorical merits. However, the cases themselves are interesting, and these transcripts bring them to life better than any summary would. This collection should be of interest to anyone in the legal profession. --Jill Marquis

In a country where celebrity lawyers are worshipped like divas, it's surprising that until now no one has collected their most glorious arias?the closing arguments of front-page cases. Here Lief (a deputy DA in Ventura, Calif.), Caldwell (a professor of law at Pepperdine University) and Bycel (dean of UWLAW School of Law) have assembled the "ten greatest arguments" delivered by American advocates in civil and criminal trials in the last century. Included are some obvious choices: Clarence Darrow's impassioned plea to spare Leopold and Loeb from the gallows; Robert Jackson's magisterial condemnation of Hitler's henchmen at Nuremberg; Gerry Spence's folksy attack on the Kerr-McGee nuclear power plant on behalf of Karen Silkwood; Vincent Bugliosi's methodical devastation of the Manson family. Readers will enjoy second-guessing the editors: Is Donald Re's close in the DeLorean trial "greater" in advocating on behalf of a notorious client than Johnnie Cochran's (overlooked here, as is Daniel Petrocelli)? Is William Kunstler's argument in the Chicago 7 trial "great" or is it merely a famous lawyer's last word in a famous case? Does the snippet of Clara Shortridge Foltz's argument presented here, in which she wittily exposes the opposing counsel's sexism, outrank the close of, say, Thurgood Marshall in *Brown v. Board of Education*? Unfortunately, the editors' brief commentaries shed little light on why these particular arguments make their top-10 list. They virtually ignore opposing counsel's arguments, except in the case of *My Lai* Lieut. William Calley Jr. Repeatedly, they praise the top-10 closures for focusing the evidence and talking "horizontally" to the jury, but surely there's magic unaccounted for. Copyright 1998 Reed Business Information, Inc.

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This book is a compendium of great trial arguments from notable lawyers. I think it is a must read for trial lawyers.

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