

Access to Justice: Class in the Courtroom
(HOSTING COURT)
(NAME OF JUDGE)

Lax Luthor versus Soup R. Mann: A criminal mock trial script
appropriate for upper high school and college students

**Charges: Impersonation, public indecency, using performance-enhancing drugs,
reckless public endangerment**

Participants in Trial

Presiding Judge	INSERT
Star Witness: Lax Luthor	INSERT
Defendant: Soup R. Mann	INSERT
Witness for Prosecution: Mruno “Feo” Bannheim	INSERT
Witness for Defense: Wunder Woman	INSERT
Prosecutor	INSERT
Attorney for Defense	INSERT
Bailiff	INSERT

Props

Superman! Music

DC Comics: Superman, Luthor, and Crime Bible editions

Kryptonite Pop

SCENE

12 student jurors are seated in the jury box in (NAME OF COURT).

Deputy court officers are seated or stand at appropriate stations.

Students comprising the Court of Public Opinion sit on benches with faculty.

BAILIFF: All rise.

(Judge enters and sits at his bench.)

BAILIFF: (NAME OF COURT) of the State of Texas is now in session. Judge (NAME OF JUDGE) presiding.

JUDGE: Welcome to (NAME OF COURT). Please be seated. *(Bangs gavel)*

(Judge names each school or college/university represented and asks its students and teachers to stand and be recognized. They are likely to remain standing until asked to be seated, so be sure to ask them to sit.)

Today we have some very special guests, students from (NAME OF INSTITUTION). Would the students and their faculty members and sponsors please stand and be recognized? (APPLAUSE)

Please be seated. *(Introduce other schools, if appropriate.)*

(Judge introduces elected and appointed officials and sponsors who are present. He introduces others throughout the trial as they arrive.)

We are joined by honor guests who also are mock trial sponsors, (INSERT).

Other honor guests are (INSERT). *(Introduce only those present.)*

Other sponsors are (INSERT). *(Introduce only those present.)*

Bailiff!

BAILIFF OR DEPUTY BAILIFF: The case of Lax Luthor versus Soup R. Mann is now ready for trial.

(Judge calls the prosecutor and his/her star witness, the defendant and his attorney, the prosecution's witness, and the defendant's witness. As they are called, they enter from the door opposite the judge's bench, stand before him to be sworn-in, and then sit at their assigned places.)

JUDGE: The prosecutor is (INSERT NAME), and his/her star witness is Lax Luthor.

(Prosecutor walks in, followed by Lax Luthor. They stand before the judge so he can be sworn-in, and then they take their seats at the prosecutor's table.)

JUDGE: Please raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

LUTHOR: I do.

(Star witness and prosecutor sit at the prosecutor's table.)

JUDGE: The defendant, Soup R. Mann, is represented by his attorney, (INSERT).

(The defendant walks in, led by his attorney, as Superman! music plays. Music fades as Soup R. Man reaches the bench. They stand before the judge so he can be sworn in, and then they take their seats at the defendant's table.)

JUDGE: Please raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

SOUP: I do.

(Defendant and his attorney sit at the defense table.)

JUDGE: Another witness for the prosecution is Mruno Bannheim.

(Witness walks in, wearing a hat and holding a toothpick in his mouth. He stands before the judge to be sworn-in, and then sits at assigned place.)

JUDGE: *(As witness walks toward bench)* The witness is directed to remove his hat and remove his toothpick from his mouth. Such behavior violates the protocol of the courtroom.

(Witness begrudgingly removes hat and toothpick.)

JUDGE: Please raise your right hand. Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

FEO: I do.

(Witness sits at assigned seat in front of judge's bench, facing the courtroom.)

JUDGE: The witness for the defense is Wunder Woman.

(Witness walks in to Wunder Woman theme music. She stands before the judge to be sworn-in, and then sits at assigned place.)

JUDGE: *(Wondering)* Where's all that music coming from?

Please raise your hand, Wunder Woman. Do you solemnly swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God? WUNDER: I do.

(Witness sits at assigned seat in front of judge's bench, facing the courtroom.)

JUDGE: I understand the charges against Soup R. Mann are impersonation, public indecency, using performance-enhancing drugs, and reckless public endangerment. Is everyone ready to proceed?

ATTORNEYS: Yes, Your Honor.

JUDGE: Will the bailiff please swear-in the jury?

(After the 12 jurors were chosen, the bailiff should have told them what they would do during the trial and how they would answer during their swearing-in. If the jurors don't respond appropriately, the bailiff needs to prompt them.)

BAILIFF OR DEPUTY BAILIFF: Will the jurors please stand and raise your right hands?

(Jurors stand and raise their right hands.)

BAILIFF OR DEPUTY BAILIFF: Do you solemnly swear that you will listen to all the testimony today and decide the issues fairly?

JURORS: I do.

Do you swear that you will not discuss this case with anyone until after you have reached a verdict?

JURORS: I do.

BAILIFF OR DEPUTY BAILIFF: You may be seated.

(Jurors sit.)

JUDGE: Does the prosecution have an opening statement?

PROSECUTOR: Yes, Your Honor.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the prosecution will show that Soup R. Mann is guilty of impersonation, guilty of public indecency, guilty of using performance-enhancing drugs, and guilty of reckless public endangerment.

When you hear the evidence, you most certainly will agree that Soup R. Mann is guilty of flagrantly committing all these crimes. He may fly high above us, but not so high that he is above the law. It's time we bring him down from the clouds.

Thank you.

JUDGE: Counsel for the defense?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Yes, Your Honor. We will show that Soup R. Mann is innocent of all those ridiculous charges. The prosecution is highly unlikely to produce a single eyewitness who truthfully can attest to his impersonation or public endangerment of anyone, anywhere; or to any public indecency or doping at anytime, anywhere.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, at the end of this mock trial, you should give Soup R. Mann a superhero's vote of confidence and find him not guilty of all charges.

Thank you.

JUDGE: The prosecution may call its first witness.

PROSECUTOR: Thank you, Your Honor.

The prosecutor calls Lax Luthor.

(Star witness takes the witness stand.)

PROSECUTOR: State your name for the record, please.

LUTHOR: My name is Lax Luthor. Call me Luthor.

PROSECUTOR: Where do you live?

LUTHOR: Wherever LaxCorp, my multi-billion dollar—that’s “billion” with a “b”—business empire takes me. But mostly at my magnificent (INSERT NAME OF CITY) subdivision, Villain Village. It’s close to (INSERT NAME OF COLLEGE OR SCHOOL), where I keep my herd of (INSERT APPROPRIATE MASCOT).

(If Lax has hair, add the following Q&A. Add reference to beard and mustache in Q&A, if appropriate, as in parenthetical addition below. Alternatively, edit as necessary, based on person’s hair, beard, and/or mustache.)

PROSECUTOR: The last time I saw you, you were bald. How did you get that handsome head of hair (and even facial hair)?

LUTHOR: (*Embarrassed*) Well, I wanted to look my best for the jury. My stylist suggested I wear this wig (and mustache set).

PROSECUTOR: I see.

Why did you file charges against Soup R. Mann?

LUTHOR: I am sick and tired of this so-called superhuman, superhero, protector of the world. He’s just an alien from another planet who constantly interferes with our way of life. He should go back where he came from and leave us earthlings alone.

PROSECUTOR: Can you be more specific?

LUTHOR: If I hear one more person say, “Faster than a speeding bullet. More powerful than a locomotive. Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound....It’s Soup R. Mann!”, I’m going to vomit.

Besides, anyone who flies around that fast is a public hazard. He’s as annoying as a supersonic (INSERT NORTH/SOUTH/EAST/WEST/CENTRAL) Texas mosquito. I’d like to swat him.

PROSECUTOR: Do you have any idea how fast Soup R. Mann flies?

LUTHOR: Have you ever seen a dust devil? It’s a “small whirlwind...column of dust and debris.”

PROSECUTOR: Thank you for the fun fact.

LUTHOR: Soup R. Man is like 1,000 dust devils wrapped up into one.

PROSECUTOR: Have you ever seen Soup R. Man impersonate anyone?

LUTHOR: All the time! Sometimes he acts like a scared little boosy-boosy, girlie-girlie, totally timid reporter. Other times he's a holier-than-thou self-appointed enforcer descending from the heavens. In reality, he's an evil deceiver who gains information illegally in each of those capacities. Then he uses it in the other capacity for personal vendettas against us criminals—uh, I mean—empire builders.

PROSECUTOR: Why is that impersonation?

LUTHOR: Nobody knows his true identity. He is a “fake reporter” writing “fake news,” about his second persona, a “fake superhero” and “fake superpatriot.”

He gets and uses information both ways—and always for a personal gain that is prohibited under the law.

PROSECUTOR: Anything else?

LUTHOR: Yes. Soup R. Mann deliberately wears an obscene skin-tight costume designed to expose his admittedly gorgeous physique. Those rippling muscles clearly are the result of using steroids.

PROSECUTOR: How does his public indecency relate to his impersonation?

LUTHOR: Good question! The lewd (*Pronounced lood*) namby-pamby reporter goes to a public phone booth, in full view of proper church-going women and men. In a flash, he changes from nondescript business attire into a magic flying suit and emerges as—Soup R. Mann!

Is that the full extent of his public indecency? No way, José! As an additional slap-in-the-face to public decency, he wears his even tighter underwear outside his clothes! Totally obscene! Gross! (*Pointing to Soup R. Mann*)

PROSECUTOR: Have you seen the defendant endanger the public?

LUTHOR: Every day! He repeatedly and recklessly flies over restricted air space above (INSERT LOCAL AIRPORT SITE).

He is especially a menace to every pilot trainer and trainee—not to mention to our drones that monitor our shady—uh, I mean—our thriving international business.

PROSECUTOR: How well do you know Soup R. Mann?

LUTHOR: Well enough to know he lives, to quote “Wikipedia,” “in a world in which the ordinary laws of nature are slightly suspended.”

He is a fool-er. He fools the American public, he fools the world—but he doesn’t fool me. He is a Super Bad, Super Creep, Super Jerk. We must send this transgressing alien back to his birth planet.

PROSECUTOR: No further questions.

JUDGE: Does the defense wish to cross-examine?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Yes, Your Honor.

(Looking at witness.) Did you say your first name was Lex or Lax?

LUTHOR: Lax! Lax! As in re-Lax, Simi-Lax, Ex-Lax!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: “Lax” as in lax habits, lax attitude, lax morals?

LUTHOR: *(Proudly)* The same.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: How appropriate. And is your surname really Luthor, as in the great civil rights leader, Martin Luthor King?

LUTHOR: *(Insulted)* No! Luthor, as in Martin Luthor—the genius who challenged you Catholics, and now this genius is challenging Soup R. Mann!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Mr. Luthor....

LUTHOR: *(Exasperated)* Just Luthor, you idiot. *(Looking at the jury)* I’m surrounded by nincompoops!

JUDGE: (*Bangs gavel*) The witness is directed to be respectful and to speak only when answering questions. Otherwise, you will be held in contempt of court.

(*Luthor rolls his eyes and head, sarcastically and drops his hand at the wrist.*)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Exactly what proof do you have that Soup R. Mann impersonates a wussy newspaper reporter or an interfering peace officer?

LUTHOR: Everybody knows it.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Well, do you have any proof that Soup R. Mann has changed in a phone booth?

LUTHOR: Everybody knows it.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: And everybody in the courtroom knows that it is hearsay, Your Honor. I object again.

JUDGE: Objection sustained. (*Bangs gavel*)

The jury will disregard those statements.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Hearsay aside, do you have any grounds for accusing Soup R. Mann of public indecency?

LUTHOR: Absolutely. As I said, he wears his tight little underwear on the outside. This is crass, indecent, and downright nasty. Poo-chee! (*Waving his hand in front of his nose*)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: (*Laughing*) You call his red over-shorts underwear?

LUTHOR: That's what they are.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: I won't even go there....Good grief!

Have you every seen Soup R. Mann use performance-enhancing drugs?

LUTHOR: I don't have to. He's not normal. Visualize "a hurricane with a will"— "then multiply that intensity a thousand-fold." (*Quoting DC Comics, Lex Luthor #3*)

That's Soup R. Mann. And that's proof enough for me.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Have you ever seen Soup R. Mann endanger the public?

LUTHOR: To repeat: Every time he flies over restricted air space over (INSERT LOCAL AIRPORT SITE), he endangers our military officers and pilots in training.

(Holding up comic book) Do you agree with this DC Comic book portrayal of Soup R. Mann as a Superhero, but you as a Super Villain?

LUTHOR: *(Pointing at comic book)* That trashy pulp fiction is biased and discriminates against cool dudes like me. Their bozo readers should want to be like me, the personification of the American Dream—not like that flying freak.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Isn't it true that your insane obsession with destroying our beloved Man of Steel has failed repeatedly, so you bribed the prosecution into accepting your charges against him?

PROSECUTOR: Objection, Your Honor! That is outrageous! I am un-bribe-able!

JUDGE: *(Interrupting prosecutor)* Objection sustained. *(Bangs gavel)*

(Addressing attorney for defense:) Counselor, the prosecutor's honesty is not on trial here. One more insult like that, and I'll fine you \$500 and hold you in contempt of court.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Isn't it true that Soup R. Mann has tirelessly thwarted your megalomaniacal *(Pronounced meg-ah-lo-mah-nigh-ah-cal)* crimes?

LUTHOR: "Must I remind you of my superiority?" *(Quoting Luthor In Injustice: Gods Among Us.)*

That meddling, little pretty boy finally is going to pay for it!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: He is, is he? We shall see.

By the way, I read in the same DC comic book that you want to eliminate Soup R. Mann so you can run for President of the United States? Any truth to that?

LUTHOR: Are you kidding? "Do you know how much power I'd have to give up to be President?" *(Quoting Luthor in "Justice League," "Question Authority.")*

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: One more question: You say you live all over the world. Where, exactly, were you born?

LUTHOR: *(Embarrassed, but angry.)* Smallville.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Small-ville? Perfect. *(Sarcastically.)* No more questions for this resident of *(Pause)* Small-ville.

JUDGE: You are excused.

(Witness returns to his seat at prosecutor's table, glaring at defense attorney.)

JUDGE: The prosecution may call your next witness.

PROSECUTOR: The prosecution calls Mruno Bannheim.

(Witness takes the stand.)

PROSECUTOR: State your name, please.

FEO: Mruno Bannheim. Everyone calls me "Feo," *(Pronounced in Spanish, Feh-oh)* and you will too. That's Spanish for "Ugly."

PROSECUTOR: *(Nervously)* Yes, sir.

What is your relationship with Soup R. Mann and Lax Luthor?

FEO: I hate Lax, but the enemy of my enemy is my friend. That's the only reason I cozied-up to that obnoxious, pompous egomaniac.

PROSECUTOR: Do you agree with Luthor that Soup R. Mann is guilty of all charges?

FEO: All of the above. That Big Blue Boy Scout in the Sky acts so tough. But expose him to one measly ounce of kryptonite, and he turns into a squealing pantyboy. That's why I think it's just fine he wears his panties on the outside!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Objection, Your Honor! The witness has no right to refer to Soup R. Man's over-shorts as panties!

JUDGE: Objection sustained. *(Bangs gavel)*

That's another statement for the jury to disregard.

PROSECUTOR: Have you witnessed Soup R. Mann act as if he's above the law?

FEO: Who hasn't?

PROSECUTOR: Do you agree he is a menace to society, not its hero?

FEO: I'll bet my original "Crime Bible" on it.

PROSECUTOR: No more questions.

JUDGE: Does the defense wish to cross-examine?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Yes, indeed, Your Honor.

(Looking at witness, condescendingly) I have no problem calling you Feo, Feo.

(Pronounced in Spanish, Feh-oh)

To begin with, who is your father?

FEO: *(Proudly)* Boxie "Boss" Bannheim, known worldwide as a sadistic psychopath. Everyone says I'm following in his footsteps.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: And your mother?

FEO: *(Endearingly)* Apocko Lips.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Ah-pock-oh *(slight pause)* Lips? As in Apocalypse?

FEO: *(Proudly)* Yep!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: *(Holding up comic book)* And are you the same Mruno Bannheim who stars with Lax Luthor in DC Comics as Soup R. Mann's archenemies?

FEO: The very same! The only difference is, DC Comics are English-only, so they refer to me as "Ugly," not "Feo." And, by the way, they refer to Luther as Lex, not Lax; and to me as Bruno Mannheim, not Mruno Bannheim.

Your high-priced scriptwriter must have changed our names for this fractured fairy tale.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Whatever....

Tell us about your “original Crime Bible” you mentioned.

FEO: Sure! (*Perking up*) If you know your DC comics, I am the leader of Intergang. We worship crime and live by the “Crime Bible.”

My pops and I own the original Crime Bible that is bound in real skin and real hair and wrapped with real intestines.

Anyhow, its written on the exact, same stone Cain used to kill his brother, Abel. We are committed to the legacy of Cain, the first murderer in history!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: (*Holding up comic with crime bible headline on the cover*) I actually read in this DC comic that you Intergang members are cannibals. Is that true?

FEO: That’s how we enforce our Crime Bible. We eat anyone who gets in our way.

You know, some people eat animals. Others eat vegetables and call themselves vegetarians. We eat humans. We call ourselves humani-tarians. (*Pronounced Hew-man-ee-tehr-ee-ans—to rhyme with vegetarians*) (*Laughing*)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Do you really, really eat people, or are you just acting scary?

FEO: (*Impatiently*) Yes, we really, really eat people. A few of the guys prefer the lean beef of skinny people, but me and most prefer chubettes (*Rhymes with club-ettes*). Their fat makes sizzling human pork rinds with salsa.

(*Attorney for defense acts repulsed.*)

(*Reacting to defense attorney*) Hey, man, beef is beef, regardless of its source, and it’s expensive. If someone’s dead, why waste all that good meat?

You haven’t lived until you’ve dined on Texas-style barbecued human heart or liver—and the tripeYumm!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Have you tried to eat Soup R. Mann?

FEO: No, he’s too fast to catch. But, believe me, I’d like to make a super-spicy beef soup out of him, using my favorite recipe. Then he would really be Soup R. Mann!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: That's disgusting!

FEO: Don't be so delicate. I'll bet bone marrow is delicious!

And I could dehydrate those muscular arms and legs into some super-scrumptious super-jerk-y.

JUDGE: *(Also repulsed)* Could we please move on?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Gladly, Your Honor.

(Handing Feo a "kryptonite pop") Could you please identify this?

FEO: *(Proudly; holding it up so the judge, jurors, and audience see it)* It's my own sweet concoction—a Kryptonite *(Pronounced krip-toh-night)* Pop.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: And didn't you hire some innocent children to trick Soup R. Mann into eating some?

FEO: They got ten bucks each, so what?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: And isn't it true that eating your Kryptonite Pops weakened Soup R. Man so your buddies could capture him and deliver him to be arrested and charged?

FEO: Under advice of counsel, I plead the Fifth.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Objection, Your Honor! Feo is a witness for the prosecution, so obviously no charges are going to be filed against him. He is under oath and must answer questions under cross-examination! Clearly, he doesn't know the difference between the Fifth Amendment and a fifth of scotch whiskey!

JUDGE: The witness will answer the question.

FEO: OK, OK. I admit it. Big Deal!

(Trying to hand Kryptonite Pop to the judge) And, by the way, Judge, I gotta case of these delicious pops for you and each of the jurors.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Objection, Your Honor! The witness is trying to bribe the judge and jury.

JUDGE: Sustained. *(Bangs gavel)*

(Looking at Feo) Feo, bribery is against the law. If you try that again, I will hold you in contempt of court.

FEO: Sorry, Judge. I gave a case to the prosecutor, so I thought it was OK.

PROSECUTOR: Objection, Your Honor! The prosecution turned it down too. How many times do I have to say, “I am un-bribe-able”?

JUDGE: Objection sustained *(Bangs gavel)*

The jury will disregard all offers of Kryptonite Pops.

(Looking at attorney for defense) Please continue, Counselor.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Is Soup R. Mann an impediment to your devotion to crime?

FEO: The biggest!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: No more questions.

JUDGE: You are excused.

(Witness returns to designated seat.)

PROSECUTOR: The prosecution rests, Your Honor.

JUDGE: The defense may call its first witness.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: The defense calls Soup R. Mann! *(Music from Superman!)*

(Witness takes the witness stand.)

JUDGE: *(Banging gavel)* Stop that music! Highly inappropriate! I heard it before and thought it was coming from outside the courtroom. Where is it coming from?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Not from us, Your Honor! No one knows. It’s part of this marvelous man’s mystique. He always enters to his own Sound of Music!

(Judge is speechless. Shakes his head. Music fades.)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Please state your name.

SOUP: Soup R. Mann.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Would you spell it, please?

SOUP: I-T.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: I beg your pardon, I meant, would you spell your name, please?

SOUP: S-O-U-P, Soup; R, as in Righteous; M-a-n-n.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Why the double-n?

SOUP: *(Embarrassed, modestly)* Some say it's to emphasize my manliness.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: *(With obvious admiration)* Also known as Kal El, the Man of Steel, the Last Son of Krypton, and the Greatest Superhero of All Time?

SOUP: *(Modestly)* My biological and adoptive parents would have loved to hear that, but I'm mostly known as Soup R. Man.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: *(Holding up DC comic books, making sure jurors and the audience see them)* Are you the same Soup R. Mann immortalized in hundreds of DC Comic books like this and in more than 50 movies, dating back to 1938?

SOUP: Close. The only difference is I am Soup R. Mann, and they refer to me as Superman.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Where do you live?

SOUP: Under the privacy protection act for law enforcement, I respectfully decline to give my address. I spend my time wherever I am needed, but especially in Metropolis and right here, in (INSERT NAME OF CITY), where I can keep an eye on Lax and Feo.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: And we are glad that you do. What effect does kryptonite have on you?

SOUP: A little bit weakens me. A lot can kill me.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: What did kryptonite have to do with your being arrested?

SOUP: Some children gave me a case of those watermelon-flavored green pops just before I had my afternoon snack. I didn't know they had kryptonite, so I ate several dozen of them.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Then what happened?

SOUP: I went into a super stupor. I vaguely remember Feo and his Secret Society of Super Villains throwing a whaling net over me, then delivering me to police headquarters while Luthor filed charges with the prosecutor.

I also remember them laughing and saying, "Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's a docked whale—named Soup R. Mann!" (*Quoting Superman observers.*)

When I came to, I was in a cell.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Are you weak now?

SOUP: No. I got over it.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Why didn't you use your superpowers to escape?

SOUP: I believe in the rule of law and due process. Breaking out would make me a fugitive from the law, so I decided to wait respectfully for my trial.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Very admirable.

Exactly what super senses do you have?

SOUP: Superhuman hearing; and telescopic, microscopic, and x-ray vision.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: So if you wanted any information, you could use those super senses to get it, without having to depend on an alt-personality like a reporter?

SOUP: I could, but I don't. I use my super senses only to protect and defend, never to break the law.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: What super powers do you have?

SOUP: Superhuman strength, speed, breath; invulnerability; flight—including super-jumping and super-leaping; and vocal abilities, including hitting glass-shattering high notes and ventriloquism.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: (*Admiringly*) Given your fabulous physique, legendary powers, and George Clooney-good looks, why would you impersonate a weak, whiney, unattractive reporter?

SOUP: No reason. Some people say I do, but nobody can prove it.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Have you ever used any performance-enhancing drugs?

SOUP: Surely you jest?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Please pardon the stupid question, but I'm afraid I have to ask another one, based on the charges before us.

How do you respond to charges of public indecency, specifically, that you change in phone booths?

SOUP: What phone booths? I don't know of a single phone booth in (INSERT NAME OF CITY), and nobody in this courtroom has probably ever heard of a phone booth, much less seen one. If there isn't one, how could I possibly change in it?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Agreed.

On a related note, how do you respond to the specific charge of wearing your underwear on the outside?

SOUP: Those old-school fashionistas apparently don't know over-shorts are classics dating back to the 1930s and remain in style, especially with jocks like me.

Besides, who's ever seen underwear with a belt? (*Flashing his belt*) I mean, do these look like boxers? (*Snapping his shorts*)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: (*Fanning herself with her hand*) Not to me, they don't!

(*Flirtatiously*) Actually, I think they're pretty nice!

Have you ever flown in restricted air space?

SOUP: Not in (NAME OF CITY).

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Have you ever endangered anyone, anywhere?

SOUP: Never, ever!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Is there anything else you want to say?

SOUP: “I’m here to fight for truth, and justice, and the American way.” God bless the U-S-A! (*Quoting Superman.*)

PROSECUTOR: Objection, Your Honor! That was a leading question.

JUDGE: Let’s move on.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Pass the witness.

JUDGE: Does the prosecution wish to cross-examine?

PROSECUTOR: Yes, Your Honor.

Soup R. Mann, do you deny ever getting confidential information from trusted sources as a reporter, and then using that information illegally to bust criminals, thereby reaping a professional benefit in law enforcement?

SOUP: I do.

PROSECUTOR: Do you deny ever getting confidential information as a peace officer, and then using that information to write newspaper stories, thereby reaping a professional benefit as a journalist?

SOUP: I do.

PROSECUTOR: You are under oath.

SOUP: I am.

PROSECUTOR: How can you sit there with a straight face and lie under oath?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Objection, Your Honor! The prosecutor is badgering the witness.

JUDGE: Ordinarily, I would sustain your objection, Counselor, but I’d like to hear the answer! Overruled! (*Bangs gavel*)

SOUP: I am not lying. Others may impersonate me, but I do not impersonate anyone.

PROSECUTOR: (*Impatiently*) Have you or have you not impersonated....

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: (*Interrupting prosecutor*) Objection, Your Honor! Asked and answered.

JUDGE: Sustained. (*Bangs gavel*)

Move on, Counselor.

PROSECUTOR: How can you deny charges of public indecency?

SOUP: You will never hear anyone say truthfully that he or she has seen me act or dress indecently. Never!

eBay sells more revealing clothes than anything I wear. And have you seen what (INSERT NAMES OF INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTED) students wear at the beach during spring break?

Frankly, my over-shorts don't reveal. They conceal.

PROSECUTOR: Why do you wear your underwear on the outside?

SOUP: (*Mildly exasperated*) They actually add a layer of modesty by....

(*Looking at judge*) Your Honor, do I need to explain?

JUDGE: Certainly not. I think we all get the picture. You are more modest with those over-shorts on than without, right?

SOUP: (*Indicating "thumbs up" to judge*) Right!

PROSECUTOR: How do you account for your superhuman senses and physical and mental powers if you don't use steroids or other performance-enhancing drugs?

SOUP: It's how I was born. I've never had to explain it.

PROSECUTOR: And you testified earlier that your adventures as Soup R. Mann have been chronicled since 1938?

SOUP: I did.

PROSECUTOR: That's 80 years ago? (*Calculate number, dating back to 1938. 2019, 81; 2020, 82; 2021, 83; etc.*)

SOUP. 80 years in June, 2018. (*Update as necessary; calculating number, dating back to 1938. 2019, 81; 2020, 82; 2021, 83; etc.*)

PROSECUTOR: That would make you 100 years old? (*Calculate number, dating back to 1938. 2019, 101; 2020, 102; 2021, 103; etc.*)

SOUP: That's what they tell me.

PROSECUTOR: How do you explain looking under 30?

SOUP: I don't.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Objection, Your Honor! Asking about Soup R. Mann's age is not an issue, and it is age discrimination. Next the prosecutor will ask him if he uses Botox or had a face or body lift. That is irrelevant and immaterial!

JUDGE: Sustained. (*Bangs gavel*)

PROSECUTOR: Is it your testimony you never endangered the public while flying over (INSERT LOCAL AIRPORT SITE)?

SOUP: (*Exasperated*) Right!

PROSECUTOR: You certainly have a slick and quick mouth, don't you? I bet Feo would love to have your big, fat, juicy tongue on a tortilla.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Objection, Your Honor! The prosecutor is being argumentative and insulting!

JUDGE: Sustained. (*Bangs gavel*)

The jury will disregard that threatening insult.

SOUP: Thank you, Your Honor.

PROSECUTOR: What makes you so arrogant as to think the world is your taco and you are above the law?

SOUP: No one is above the law. We who enforce the law, must first obey the law.

PROSECUTOR: Well, what makes you so egocentric as to think it is your duty to save the world?

SOUP: *(Sounding like Spiderman)* “With great power comes great responsibility.”
(Quoting Superman)

PROSECUTOR: Are you stealing Spiderman’s line?

SOUP: No. Actually, Voltaire said it first. Winston Churchill, President Roosevelt, and I said it during World War II. Spiderman didn’t come around until 1962, but he uses it so much, most people attribute it to him.

PROSECUTOR: *(Sarcastically)* You’re full of fun facts, aren’t you?

Do you have any form of personal identification—a driver’s license, voter registration card, or student ID?

SOUP: I do not.

PROSECUTOR: So you admit you must be an alien from another planet?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Objection, Your Honor! Irrelevant! Soup R. Mann’s residency is not a question before this court. Besides, that’s a federal or, maybe, even an international, issue, and we are in a (INSERT LEVEL OR TYPE OF COURT) court.

JUDGE: Prosecutor, what is the relevance of your question?

PROSECUTOR: Your Honor, if he has shown anyone a card, badge, emblem, or identification indicating he is a peace officer, when, in fact, he is not, then he has committed the crime of impersonation!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Your honor, like many young people, Soup R. Mann may have a permanent address in one place, but live in another. His residency status is irrelevant to the specific crimes charged.

JUDGE: You are correct, Counselor. The law applies the same to all— whether an alien or an earthling. The objection is sustained. *(Bangs gavel)*

PROSECUTOR: *(Nodding smugly)* No further questions.

JUDGE: You may step down.

The defense may call its next witness.

(Witness returns to the defense table as Superman! music starts up again. Judge shakes his head.)

ATTY FOR THE DEFENSE: The defense calls Wunder Woman. *(Wunder Woman theme music starts as Superman! music fades.)*

(Witness takes the stand.)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: State your name, please.

WUNDER: Princess Diana of the Amazons, popularly known as Wunder Woman. That's w-u-n-d-e-r.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: What is your relationship to Soup R. Mann and to Lax Luthor?

WUNDER: Soup R. Mann is my compadre and colleague. Lax Luthor is my mortal enemy.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: How do you differentiate them?

WUNDER: The first is good. The second is evil.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Do you work with Soup R. Mann?

WUNDER: Yes. We are the original co-founders of the Justice League, along with Batman.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Who are some of the other members?

WUNDER: Spiderman, Rubberman, Captain Marvel....The list goes on.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: More men than women in your workforce?

WUNDER: So what's new? Superwoman and I are trying to change that. We want to get equal pay for equal work and empowerment for all women while we're at it.

Now that more women than men are going to college, it's getting easier. More Woman Power! (*Raising right fist high*)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Have you ever seen Soup R. Mann using anything, even caffeine, to enhance his powers?

WUNDER: (*Laughing*) No!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Have you ever seen him endanger anyone by flying in a restricted air space?

WUNDER: Never! To the contrary, he has saved many lives flying in those zones. Every time Lax Luthor tosses poor Lorena Lane out of a plane or skyscraper, Soup R. Mann flies-in, faster-than-lightning, sometimes through restricted air space, and catches her, just in the nick of time.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Have you or Soup R. Mann ever shown a badge to make someone believe you are a government law enforcement officer?

WUNDER: Never!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Not even at an international bridge or at an airport checkpoint?

WUNDER: Never!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: What is your opinion of Soup R. Mann being charged with public indecency?

WUNDER: Ludicrous. If he is convicted, then every superhero should be too—me, Spiderman, Aquaman, Rubberman....The list goes on.

And if were all incarcerated, who would protect and defend the good citizens of (INSERT NAME OF CITY) and families throughout our U-S-A?

These charges are downright foolish!

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Foolish? Can you expand on that?

WUNDER: To quote my favorite song, "You don't tug on Superman's cape. You don't spit into the wind. You don't pull the mask off the old' Lone Ranger. And you

don't mess around with Jim.” That would be foolish. (*Quoting Jim Croce's “You Don't Mess Around with Jim”*)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Who's Jim?

WUNDER: I don't know, but Lax and Feo are trying to tug at Superman's cape with these foul charges, and they're just spitting into the wind.

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Thank you. Pass the witness.

JUDGE: Does the prosecution wish to cross-examine?

PROSECUTOR: Yes, Your Honor.

(*Addressing Wunder Woman*) Do you even know how to spit?

WUNDER: (*Sarcastically and menacingly*) Come a little closer, and I'll show you how an Amazon spits.

PROSECUTOR: No, thank you.

(*Condescendingly.*) Why do you worry your pretty little head about fighting super villains, instead of being a pretty little princess and living happily ever after with your Prince Charming?

WUNDER: (*Mimicking his tone*) Because there's nothing prettier than putting hideous criminals and corrupt prosecutors behind bars. Throw them in the can!

PROSECUTOR: Can you honestly deny that neither you nor Soup R. Mann has impersonated anyone or violated standards of public decency by your attire?

WUNDER: I can.

PROSECUTOR: Do you believe that Soup R. Mann's superhuman abilities are natural and not the result of prohibited drugs?

WUNDER: I do. He is naturally gifted, physically and mentally. Why, he would complete (INSERT NAME OF CITY) Early College High School curriculum in seconds!

PROSECUTOR: But you admit Soup R. Mann has flown in restricted air space over the local airport?

WUNDER: (*Exasperated, but respectful*) With all due respect, sir, from what planet do you come? There is no restricted local air space where he flies, just like there is no phone booth here.

He may have flown in restricted air space elsewhere, but not in (INSERT NAME OF CITY).

He's also flown in outer space, but you don't see NASA complaining, do you? In fact, they named him an Honorary Astronaut!

PROSECUTOR: So since you admit Soup R. Mann has violated restricted air space, even if it is to save lives, is it your position that the ends justify the means?

WUNDER: It is my position that charges were filed against my compadre in (INSERT NAME OF CITY) and that there is no restricted air space in his local flying zones.

PROSECUTOR: Do you believe you and Soup R. Mann and other so-called superheroes are above the law?

WUNDER: (*Leaning forward*) Sir, we are the Justice League. We are not above the law. We are the law.

We fight crime wherever in the world we are needed.

Our favorite pastime is to fight corrupt prosecutors who make deals with crime lords like Lax Luther! But we'll deal with that another day!

PROSECUTOR: Objection, Your Honor! Wunder Woman is being hostile and non-responsive.

JUDGE: She simply answered your question, Counselor. Objection overruled. (*Bangs gavel*)

PROSECUTOR: No further questions, Your Honor.

JUDGE: You may step down, Wunder Woman.

(Witness returns to designated seat. As she passes the prosecutor, she points her two fingers at her eyes and then at his.)

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: We have no more witnesses, Your Honor. The defense rests.

JUDGE: Very well. We will now hear closing arguments. Is the prosecutor ready?

PROSECUTOR: Yes, Your Honor.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have heard some nonsensical denials, ostensibly under oath. Consider, instead, the obviously more credible testimony of Lax Luthor and Feo, billionaires—with a “b.”

Do not believe Soup R. Mann and his buddy, Wunder Woman. They are fellow aliens from other planets. Just look at them: Would you go out in public dressed in such tight, revealing, indecent outfits? I know you wouldn't!

Yet, with flagrant disrespect to the public, most especially to our growing population of elderly, pious (*Pronounced pie-us*) women in (INSERT NAME OF CITY), Soup R. Mann repeatedly engaged in lewd (*Pronounced lood*) and indecent conduct and exposure, changing clothes in telephone booths and wearing his underwear outside his clothes. Do you want your children to do that? Surely not.

If you had nothing to hide or gain, would you impersonate a cowardly alter ego or a peace officer? Of course not!

This is a criminal act because he assumes fake identities to gain personal and professional benefit while causing injury to or defrauding others.

And how in the world can Soup R. Mann possibly deny enjoying the forbidden fruits of steroids and other performance-enhancing drugs? How else could he leap to the heavens in a single bound, flick-away meteors with a finger, and singlehandedly defeat the Secret Society of Super Villains like Bizarro or Brainiac—or even Lax Luthor and Feo?

Do you know anyone who can fly without drugs? I don't think so!

And if you could fly, would you even think of entering restricted air space, endangering our families? Never!

The law is the law, and you cannot break it to reach justifiable ends, even to save lives.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, only you have the power to bring this flying fool-er and dangerous dooper down to earth. It's time for his forced landing.

I implore you to find Soup R. Mann guilty of impersonation, guilty of public indecency, guilty of using performance-enhancing drugs, and guilty of endangering the public. As for Wunder Woman? We'll deal with her later. *(Points his two fingers at his eyes and then at Wunder Woman's.)*

Thank you.

JUDGE: Counsel for the defense?

ATTY FOR DEFENSE: Thank you, Your Honor.

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, the prosecutor's case is a flying bag of falsehoods. Lax and Feo are perfect names for the prosecution's witnesses. They have lax morals and ugly characters. What's more, they are crass, crooked mental midgets straight out of *(Holding up comic books)* DC comics and grade B movies. Zero credibility!

The prosecution wrongly implies that Soup R. Mann is here improperly because he's from another planet. First, this is not an immigration court. Second, there is no evidence, nor is there a charge, to that effect.

Equally important, why would Soup R. Mann impersonate a reporter to get information, when he could simply use his super vision or his super hearing to get any information he needs—though he doesn't? And how can he be accused rightfully of impersonating a non-threatening reporter, when everyone knows there is no such thing as a non-threatening reporter? Just ask any typical politician!

On a related note, how can Soup R. Mann be accused of impersonating a peace officer, when he is the best law enforcer on earth?

Furthermore, how could he change in a phone booth, when there are no phone booths in our city? And how can he be accused of indecently wearing his underwear on the outside, when anyone under-30 knows he wears stylish, belted outer-shorts that actually enhance his modesty?

Only jealous rivals would accuse this supremely, naturally muscular, proud specimen of manhood with indecency and with using prohibited drugs. Frankly, he's gifted in rather obvious ways—and they're not.

More important, why shouldn't Soup R. Mann enter restricted airspace to save someone?

If you fell out of a plane in restricted air space, wouldn't you want Soup R. Mann to fly-in and save you?

You know the answer, and so do I. Yes, Mr./Ms. Prosecutor, in some cases, the ends do justify the means. Even so, that example doesn't apply here, because the charges were filed in (INSERT NAME OF CITY), and there is no restricted air space in his flight paths, so how can he violate it?

Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, based on the prosecution's lack of evidence, your decision is obvious: Find Soup R. Mann not guilty of all charges.

Thank you.

JUDGE: Ladies and gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the evidence in this case. Now it is up to you to decide if Soup R. Mann is guilty of any or all of these charges. Please use your 10 minutes to consider all the evidence you heard. Bailiff, you may escort the jury to the jury room to consider the verdict.

All rise for the jury. *(Everyone in the courtroom rises as the jury leaves.)*

(Bailiff and deputy bailiff lead the jury to the jury room to vote on the verdict. An attorney should be with them in the jury room to answer any questions. Upon arriving at a consensus, they return to the courtroom to announce the verdict.)

(During the 10 minutes allowed for the jury to deliberate, the judge convenes other students in the Court of Public Opinion, asking them the same questions the jury will answer. If there is time afterward, he invites students to ask him questions.)

Please be seated.

After we hear the verdict and the trial is adjourned, our elected officials and honor guests will be invited to join the groups of students who will be photographed with the cast at the bench.

First, however, it is my pleasure to convene the students as a Court of Public Opinion.
(Bangs gavel)

The purpose of our Court of Public Opinion is to ask how you, the public, represented by students here today, feel about whether Soup R. Mann is guilty or not guilty.

So I will ask you the same questions that the jury will answer. We will have a voice vote. If I can't tell how the majority feels, then we will have a standing vote.

Are you ready?

First, if you agree that Soup R. Mann did impersonate a reporter and a peace officer for a personal benefit and gain, say, "Yes!" *(Pause)*

If you disagree, say, "No!" *(Pause)*

The (Yeses) (Nos) prevail. *(Bangs gavel)*

(If outcome isn't clear from voice vote, ask for the "yes" voters to stand, have staffers ready to count them, and ask them to be seated. Then ask the "no" voters to stand, have staffers count them, and ask them to be seated. Announce results.)

Second, if you agree that the Soup R. Mann is guilty of public indecency, say "Yes!"
(Pause)

If you disagree, say, "No!" *(Pause)*

The (Yeses) (Nos) prevail. *(Bangs gavel)*

(If outcome isn't clear from voice vote, ask for the "yes" voters to stand, have staffers ready to count them, and ask them to be seated. Then ask the "no" voters to stand, have staffers count them, and ask them to be seated. Announce results.)

Third, if you agree that Soup R. Mann did use performance-enhancing drugs, say, "Yes!" *(Pause)*

If you disagree, say, "No!" *(Pause)*

The (Yeses) (Nos) prevail. *(Bangs gavel)*

(If outcome isn't clear from voice vote, ask for the "yes" voters to stand, have staffers ready to count them, and ask them to be seated. Then ask the "no" voters to stand, have staffers count them, and ask them to be seated. Announce results.)

Finally, if you agree that Soup R. Mann endangered the public by violating restricted air space, say, "Yes!" *(Pause)*

If you disagree, say, "No!" *(Pause)*

The (Yeses) (Nos) prevail. *(Bangs gavel)*

(If outcome isn't clear from voice vote, ask for the "yes" voters to stand, have staffers ready to count them, and ask them to be seated. Then ask the "no" voters to stand, have staffers count them, and ask them to be seated. Announce results.)

So this Court of Public Opinion finds that Soup R. Mann is guilty of _____ charges, namely, _____; and not guilty of _____ charges, namely, _____.

Now let's see what the 12 jurors find.

(If jurors haven't returned, engage in Q&A, as follows.)

While we wait for them, we have time for a question or two. Who has a question?

(Q&A with students. Be sure to repeat each student's question before answering it. Keep answers short to allow more students to ask questions.)

(Staff member hands the judge a note that the jury has reached a verdict.)

(Bailiff and deputy bailiff enter. If necessary, they interrupt proceedings.)

BAILIFF OR DEPUTY BAILIFF: Your Honor, the jury has reached a verdict.

JUDGE: All rise for the jury. *(Everyone in the courtroom rises as the jury returns to jury box.)*

Ms./Mr. Foreperson, have you reached a verdict?

JURY FOREPERSON: Yes, Your Honor, we have.

JUDGE: The defendant and his attorney will please rise.

(Soup R. Mann and defense attorney rise.)

JURY FOREPERSON: We, the jury, find the defendant, Soup R. Mann,

not guilty ____ guilty ____ of the crime of impersonation,

not guilty ____ guilty ____ of the crime of public indecency,

not guilty ____ guilty ____ of the crime of using performance-enhancing drugs,

and not guilty ____ guilty ____ of the crime of endangering the public.

(IF NOT GUILTY:)

JUDGE: The jury has spoken, and the defendant has been found not guilty.

The defendant and his attorney may be seated.

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for listening carefully and making this important decision.

(IF GUILTY:)

JUDGE: The jury has spoken, and the defendant has been found guilty.

Soup R. Mann, I sentence you to _____ hours of community service. Your task will be to serve as the super security officer at (INSERT NAME OF INSTITUTION REPRESENTED). Your priority will be to thwart anyone with evil motives and to protect intended victims of would-be perpetrators. Please report to this court monthly so we can monitor your progress and certify your hours.

The defendant and his attorney may be seated.

(Star witness and defendant react appropriately, based on the jury's verdict. Judge may make an appropriate statement to the defendant, especially if he is found guilty.)

If he is found guilty of one charge, but not of another, the judge must respond accordingly.)

JUDGE: Ladies and gentlemen, thank you and your faculty and sponsors for being with us today. We hope you have enjoyed this mock trial as much as you have learned from it.

(Judge introduces director, cast members, and author, and they stand to be recognized.)

We are grateful to the director of the mock trial, (INSERT NAME).

JUDGE: I know you enjoyed the outstanding performances of *(SEE PROGRAM FOR LIST OF CHARACTERS AND THE NAMES OF ACTORS WHO PORTRAYED THEM.)*

And we are grateful to the author of the mock trial and of your handbook, Senator Judith Zaffirini.

JUDGE: Soup R. Mann, Wunder Woman, Lax Luthor, Feo, and the entire cast will be available to take group pictures with you. The elected officials and honor guests who are here also are invited to join us.

Ladies and gentlemen, we hope you enjoyed seeing justice in action in today's Access to Justice: Class in the Courtroom. You saw for yourselves the importance of obeying the law and the consequence of violating it.

Please come back to visit your (INSERT NAME OF COURT), and invite your family and friends to do so too.

This court is adjourned. *(Bangs gavel)*

(Judge rises and joins cast, students, and elected officials for photos.)

CAUSE NUMBER 2018-0427-L2

LAX LUTHOR	§	IN (INSERT NAME OF
	§	COURT)
VERSUS	§	
	§	
SOUP R. MANN	§	(INSERT NAME OF
		COUNTY), TEXAS

VERDICT

DEFINITIONS:

Impersonation means pretending to be someone else to deceive others and gain an advantage.

Public indecency means improper exposure of oneself in view of the public.

Using performance-enhancing drugs means using prohibited drugs that maximize mental and physical abilities and enhance muscle development.

Endangering the public means recklessly creating a substantial risk of serious physical injury to others.

Violating restricted air space means invading an area of space in which flying is not allowed.

We, the jury, find the defendant, Soup R. Mann, not guilty _____ or guilty _____ of the offense of **impersonation**.

We, the jury, find the defendant, Soup R. Mann, not guilty _____ or guilty _____ of the offense of **public indecency**.

We, the jury, find the defendant, Soup R. Mann, not guilty _____ or guilty _____ of the offense of **using performance-enhancing drugs**.

We, the jury, find the defendant, Soup R. Mann, not guilty _____ or guilty _____ of the offense of **endangering the public by violating restricted air space**.

SIGNED on the _____ day of _____, 20____.

FOREPERSON