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10:59 am  
May 16, 2006

## Enron: Ruemmler's Ramble &amp; Petrocelli's Passion

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By Peter Lattman



Had Kathy Ruemmler been required to title her closing argument yesterday, she could have borrowed that nifty [Thompson Twins](#) refrain from the 1980s: "Lies, Lies, Lies, Yeah." (We take no responsibility if you end up singing that song to yourself all day.)

"Hold them accountable for the choices they made and the lies that they told," she told the jury of eight women and four men, pretty much summarizing the government's case. She said that Skilling and Lay used "accounting tricks, hocus pocus, fiction, and outright lies" to give the public, Wall Street, and Enron employees a false picture of the companies finances.

But when a trial lawyer writes something down on a courtroom sketchpad, it's a clear signal they want to brand it on the jury's collective brain. So yesterday, Ruemmler used a visual device to hammer home what she called "one of the most telling moments of the trial." She wrote on the courtroom sketchpad a statement Lay made in response to his not reporting to the Board of Directors his investment in Photofete, an Internet company run by Skilling's ex-girlfriend that did business with Enron. His statement: "Rules are important, but you shouldn't be a slave to rules, either."

"That says it all," underscored Ruemmler.

Ruemmler, 35, a native of Richland, Wash., received her undergraduate degree from the University of Washington in Seattle and her JD from Georgetown. She worked in the Clinton White House, where she handled independent counsel issues, like those related to Ms. Lewinsky. According to a Washington Post story, she so impressed a partner at D.C.'s Zuckerman Spaeder with remarks she made on a TV show that she landed a job there. Here's a [profile](#) of her from the Houston Chronicle from January.

Not everyone was wowed by Ruemmler's four-hour closing. The Financial Times [described](#) it as "often-tedious." "Ruemmler's delivery was so slow that Judge Sim Lake hinted at the lunch break that she might want to speed it up," wrote the FT. Sensing that she wasn't bringing the house down, the paper says, she began "punctuating her remarks with hand claps."

Ruemmler also cannily warned the jury not to be fooled by the theatrics of the defense lawyers, who, as the Law Blog writes, are delivering their closings. Right now Daniel Petrocelli is delivering his closing statements on behalf of Skilling. For a play-by-play of the closing statements, check out the Houston Chronicle's [Enron Trial Watch](#). Here's a taste, in which Petrocelli suggested that Skilling was too sharp to commit crimes: "He's the smartest guy in the room but the dumbest crook on Earth?"

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1:51 pm May 16, 2006

**Anonymous** wrote:"Too smart to commit the crime" Where did we hear that before? Hmmmm...was it Martha?  
Worked real well for her didn't it?

cases, emerging trends and big personalities. It's brought to you by lead writer Jacob Gershman with contributions from across The Wall Street Journal's staff. Jacob comes here after more than half a decade covering the bare-knuckle politics of New York State. His inside-the-room reporting left him steeped in legal and regulatory issues that continue to grab headlines.

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