

NEWS & INSIGHTS

JACK SHARMAN AUTHORS LAW360 ARTICLE ON HOW MYTHIC ARCHETYPES CAN HELP WHITE-COLLAR ATTORNEYS AT TRIAL

December 17, 2024

Lightfoot partner **Jack R. Sharman** has written an insightful **Law360 article** (subscription required), where he discusses how white-collar defense attorneys can use mythology tropes to guide their storytelling during trial.

In his article, “How White Collar Attys Can Use Mythic Archetypes at Trial,” Sharman draws parallels between fairy tales and courtroom dynamics, offering a fresh perspective for defense attorneys. He emphasizes the importance of identifying heroes and other archetypes within the trial setting.

“In most stories, the hero is obvious, but that is not the case in a white-collar trial, or perhaps in any trial,” Sharman writes. “Jurors are in deeply unfamiliar territory. They look around for heroes and villains. We must persuade jurors that, in the courtroom, there is not just one hero, but actually two: the defendant and the jury.”

Sharman also lists archetype traits the government may use to sway juries, including overreach, represented by a dark villain; misinformation, used by the trickster; and misidentification, embodied by the shapeshifter. Sharman suggests that defense attorneys can adapt the role of another archetype, the mentor, to lead the jury toward an acquittal at the resolution of the story.

Download the PDF of the article here.

Sharman leads the firm's **White-Collar Criminal Defense & Corporate Investigations practice** and often speaks and writes on related legal subjects. He has served as special counsel in numerous high-profile matters, including the Whitewater investigation of President Bill Clinton and the impeachment investigation of a former Alabama Governor.