



Law on Screen: A Movie Lover's Guide



Ah, Hollywood. Despite what the cynics say, movies and TV do not cause [brain rot](#). Indeed, law students can learn a lot from watching trial video, whether it is fiction or not. And many scholars, both in and out of the field of law, have produced excellent analyses of American culture and film. It is to these students and scholars that this guide is dedicated.

Movie Lists & Research Guides

Law and Popular Culture Collection (University of Texas)

<http://tarlton.law.utexas.edu/lpop/film.html>

Alphabetical list of over 700 law-related movies. Each entry includes title, credits, and a summary. Keyword searching available.

Annotated List of Law-Related Films

<http://faculty.law.lsu.edu/ccorcos/lawhum/annotatedlistoflawrelatedfilms.htm>

Law on TV, Video, and Film

<http://lib.law.washington.edu/ref/lawonfilm.html>

Research guide by the University of Washington law librarians. Lists books, articles, and other resources on the portrayal of law in film. Also links to copyright info on when and how movies may be shown in a classroom.

Film Studies Resources (University of Iowa)

http://www.uiowa.edu/~commstud/resources/film_resources.html

Excellent guide to general film & TV research sources.

Movie Databases



<http://www.imdb.com>



Best-known movie database on the World Wide Web. Each film entry includes full cast and crew, a summary, trivia, memorable quotes, links to reviews, box office info, and more.

allmovie

<http://www.allmovie.com/>

Similar to IMDB, though it purports to be more intellectual. Includes a glossary of film techniques and original essays on various movie genres, one of which is the crime genre.

MRC
MEDIA RESOURCES CENTER

http://www.lib.unc.edu/house/mrc/films/film_search.php

Database of movies owned by the UNC Chapel Hill library. Entries include film title, credits, and description, as well as links to more information. Genres include “courtroom drama” and “law and legislation.”

hulu™

<http://www.hulu.com>

Links to **free** clips from movies and TV shows. Some full-length movies and TV episodes are available. Law- or crime-related titles include

- [Brokedown Palace](#)
- [Penitentiary](#)
- [Red Dragon](#)
- [Equal Justice](#) (TV)
- [Law & Order](#) (TV)
- [Murder One](#) (TV)
- [Bones](#) (TV)

Law Reviews & Journals

Quite a bit has been written in law reviews about law-related movies. Below are a few relevant articles:

- *Law and Popular Culture*, UCLA Law Review, v.48 no.6, Aug. 2001. [Hein Online](#)
- *Civil Litigation and Popular Culture, Sixth Annual Clifford Symposium on Tort Law and Social Policy*, DePaul Law Review, v.50 no.2, Winter 2000. [Hein Online](#)
- *Law and Popular Culture*, The Legal Studies Forum, v.22 no.1-3, Winter-Summer 1998. [Hein Online](#)
- *A Symposium on Film and the Law*, Oklahoma City University Law Review, v.22 no.1, Spring 1997. [Hein Online](#)
- *Picturing Justice; Images of Law and Lawyers in the Visual Media*, University of San Francisco Law Review, v.30 no.4, Summer 1996. [Hein Online](#)



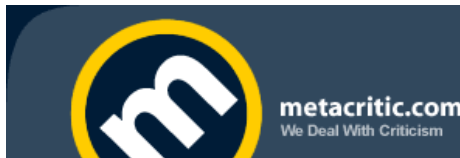
You can find more articles through keyword searches in the journals database of [Westlaw](#) or [LexisNexis](#). For other journals that may discuss the portrayal of law in film, try [ProQuest](#) or [JSTOR](#).

Film Reviews & Criticism



<http://www.usfca.edu/pj/>

Over 300 short articles on the intersection between law and lawyers on one side and popular culture on the other. Includes articles on “silver screen” (movies) and “small screen” (TV).



<http://www.metacritic.com/film/>

Online collection of film reviews from over 40 periodicals. Search by film title, genre, or critic. Also covers DVD releases and TV programs.



<http://www.rottentomatoes.com>

Online collection of film reviews from over 150 professional critics. Search by film title, genre, MPAA rating, or “Tomatometer” ranking. Seems to cover movies that metacritic.com does not cover (e.g., [The Paper Chase](#), everyone’s favorite screed about Harvard Law School).

The New York Times

<http://movies.nytimes.com/ref/movies/reviews/index.html>

Free archive of all NYT's movie reviews since 1983. Organized by year, by critic, or by genre.



So what movies does the CharlotteLaw Library own? (And can you guess which movie the above photo comes from?¹) We have over 50 movies and TV shows pertaining to the practice of law, and we're adding new ones all the time! Search the library [catalog](#) for any of the following subjects:

- Feature films
- Television programs
- Lawyers – drama

Compiled by A. Aycock, 4/08

¹ *Michael Clayton* (2007), starring George Clooney. See <http://catalog.fcsl.edu/search?/tmichael+clayton/tmichael+clayton/1%2C2%2C2%2CB/frameset&FF=tmichael+clayton&1%2C1%2C/indexsort=->.