Instructor: Prof. John J. Michalczyk  
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Office: Devlin 420  
Office Hours: By appointment during the summers; and prior to and following class.  
Telephone: (617) 552-3895 (email preferred)  
Schedule: Monday/Wednesday, 6:15 to 9:15 PM  
Room: Devlin 026  

Boston College Mission Statement

Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description

FM 24101 Film: Literature and Law

Interest in the rapport between film and literature as it relates to the law intrigues us as much today as ever. Literature captures the drama of a legal trial or an investigation into a brutal, racial murder. Film then takes this rich material and shapes it into a compelling form with dynamic visuals and other narrative techniques. The course explores the power of story-telling and the impact of film to embody and inhabit law and its relationship to ideas about inferiority, liberty, citizenry, race, justice, crime, punishment, and social order. Film adaptations from short stories, plays, and novellas will comprise the body of the curriculum.

June 24–July 31, M W, 6:15-9:15 p.m., 3 credits

Course Objectives

1. The student will learn how an actual incident or event evolves to an aesthetic expression in a written work, be it a play or novel, and then emerges as a feature film.

2. The student will learn the art of adaptation from text to screen.

3. The student will also become proficient in film analysis, studying elements of plot, characterization and cinematography.
Further Objectives
1. The student will also demonstrate knowledge across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, race, and age as demonstrated in various film adaptations such as *Inherit the Wind* and *1984*.

2. The student will demonstrate ethical knowledge as it pertains to legal issues viewed in the film adaptations.

Grading
Students will be graded on both CONTENT and STYLE for the two required essays based on film viewings outside of class. A final exam will conclude the course. In addition a STUDENT INPUT FORM will be filled out to indicate what additional work the student has completed outside class for the course.

WCAS Grading System
The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (0.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (0.00), failure; I (0.00), incomplete; F (0.00), course dropped without notifying office; W (0.00), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (0.00), failure.

Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their semester grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O'Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

Text(s)/Readings (Required)
BRADBURY: *FAHRENHEIT 451*
LAWRENCE: *INHERIT THE WIND*
MILLER, *THE CRUCIBLE*
LEE: *TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD*
ORWELL: *1984*
PEARCE: *COOL HAND LUKE*
PIEHLER: *TRIANGLE FACTORY FIRE PROJECT*
ROSE: *TWELVE ANGRY MEN*

Text(s)/Readings (Recommended)
HARR: *A CIVIL ACTION*
REED: *THE VERDICT*
TRAEVER: *ANATOMY OF A MURDER*
BOLT: *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS*

Further Research
Books about Law and Film: Possible paper topics could emerge from Kauffmans’s film list here in *The Movie Guide for Legal Studies.*

A guide to movies organized by these topics: courtroom heroes, injustice, experts and frauds, comedies, corruption of justice, circumstantial evidence, civil actions, contempt of court, prejudice, the death penalty, military justice, and family law. The authors summarize plots, address accuracy, and answer questions about legal issues and jargon used in the films. This edition contains ratings and about 150 brief film reviews in a category called "short subjects." Indexes are by topic, rating, and movie title.


Through its exploration of the "legal" film genre, Movies on Trial is an illuminating and entertaining examination of the interrelationship between law and film. While the dramatic possibilities of the courtroom scene have long been familiar to moviegoers, beyond that trope our culture relies upon a concept of the law drawn from images presented on the silver screen. Law professor and movie aficionado Anthony Chase focuses on how movies fit into our history, our politics and, particularly, our legal values and assumptions.


Film and the Law is concerned with the phenomena of films about law, lawyers and justice. These have a long and distinguished history ranging from the classic *Young Mr Lincoln* in 1939 to the contemporary *Erin Brockovich*. The book examines the major theoretical perspectives within which 20th century work on law and film has appeared and analyses the problem of how law films can be classified. It provides a critical review of the work produced to date before proceeding to analyse the general features and ideology of law films. Apart from reviewing the way law and lawyers are portrayed in film generally, the book covers areas such as the use of true stories as the basis for film, the limited portrayals of judges and juries and the role of what we have termed invisible lawyers. In addition, the influence of film noir and particularly private eyes is examined along with an analysis of the Film and the Law concludes by examining future developments for film and the law and how its future terrain might be mapped.


The Legal Movie Guide provides an easy way for professors to incorporate key scenes and films of a legal, judicial, or public policy nature into their course. Briefing 40 legal movies, entries include a synopsis of each film, its key facts, actors, length and overall rating. Going beyond just descriptions, it identifies key legal themes within each movie and correlates films to specific legal courses. Scenes are broken down into five to fifteen minute pieces and discussion suggestions provide tangible assignments students can complete after viewing each scene from the following films: *12 angry men*, *The accused*, *Anatomy of a murder*, *And justice for all*, *Animal farm*, *Body heat*, *Changing lanes*, *A civil action*, *Class action*, *The client*, *Criminal law*, *Disclosure*, *Erin Brockovich*, *A few good men*, *The firm*, *Fracture*, *Intolerable cruelty*, *Jagged edge*, *Legal eagles*, *Liar liar*, *The life of David Gale*, *Michael Clayton*, *Minority report*, *My cousin Vinny*, *Nuts*, *The paper chase*, *Philadelphia*, *Presumed innocent*, *Primal fear*, *The rainmaker*, *Runaway jury*, *The star chamber*, *Suspect*, *A time to kill*, *Thank you for smoking*, *To kill a mockingbird’ The verdict*, *Wall street*, *The war of the roses*, *The winslow boy*, *Young Mr. Lincoln*.

This innovative teaching resource lists films with significant courtroom scenes, illustrating the dramatic and tactical aspects of adversarial practice, including the demonstration of evidentiary rules in practice. The structure of the filmography is divided into two parts: the subject index followed by the synopses of films (see samples below) and subdivided by jurisdiction. The book encourages debate and discussion about the uses and role of law and its assumptions, its techniques of fact-finding and mechanisms for establishing truth. Covers civil and criminal law with a range of cases, from AIDS (*Philadelphia*) to war (*Judgement at Nuremberg*, *QB VII*), using films from the US, Great Britain, Australia and other countries.

One of the most important legal developments in the last half of the twentieth century was the change from criminal justice policies shaped primarily by liberal ideas to those shaped primarily by conservative ideas. This book examines images of law in Hollywood films and television crime dramas to better understand this conservative revolution in thinking about crime. The crime stories depicted in popular legal fiction provide interesting as well as insightful perspectives on law in American society, particularly changing images of justice and its administration as well as individual rights.

American legal film is a fertile genre, and well liked once people are reminded of examples, says Levi, but is not generally recognized or studied. A film is in the genre, he says, if it has something to say about the way Americans view their legal system and the players within it. He looks in turn at the major players in such films--the client, judge, jury, and lawyer--and examines how their portrayals have changed over the course of cinematic history.


**Important Policies**

http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/schools/advstudies/guide/academicinteg.html

**Written Work**
Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructors decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html].

**Scholarship and Academic Integrity**
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and
submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.

Request for Accommodations
If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.
http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html.

Attendance
Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate's notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to contact the WCAS at 617-552-3900 for consultation.

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late assignments will be graded accordingly.

Course Assignments (readings, exercises and/or experiences)
In order to account for the 4 credit hours of this course, students will see one film outside of class which will be on the reserve list at the Media Center. It is expected that the students will not only read the required text for the class but also take time to do some research on the topic. For example, analyzing the historical and allegorical play Inherit the Wind by Lawrence and Lee, some research could be completed on the web dealing with the celebrated “Monkey Trial” of 1925. It is expected that the students should be spending 8 hours per week outside of class with the readings and film viewings prior to the class sessions.
Syllabus

Date
1. Monday, June 24
   **Introduction to film adaptation**
   **Film:** Hytner’s *The Crucible*
   
   The Salem witch trials and the sensitive conscience of John Proctor, an allegory of the McCarthy era.

2. Wednesday, June 26
   **Reading:** Miller’s *The Crucible* (discussion)
   **Film:** David Helpern’s *Hollywood on Trial* documenting the 1948 trial of the Hollywood 10.
   **Film:** *High Noon*, a Western allegory about standing up against oppression during the McCarthy era.

3. Monday, July 1
   **Film:** Kramer’s *Inherit the Wind*
   **Reading:** Lawrence/Lee’s *Inherit the Wind*
   
   The 1925 Scopes (or “Monkey”) Trial: Evolution vs. Creationism.

   **Media Center:** *A Man for All Seasons*

4. Wednesday, July 3
   **Film:** Mulligan’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*
   **Reading:** Lee’s *To Kill a Mockingbird*
   
   Racial prejudice tears apart an Alabama town over rape charges of a Black man.

   **Media Center:** *A Time to Kill*

5. Monday, July 8
   **Film:** Lumet’s *Twelve Angry Men*
   **Reading:** Rose’s: *Twelve Angry Men*
   
   The power of an individual conscience in a jury trial.

   ****Assignment: First paper due****

6. Wednesday, July 10
   **Film:** *The Triangle Fire*
   **Reading:** Piehler and Evans splay: *The Triangle Fire*
   
   A deadly NY fire in a garment factory results in a lawsuit 100 years ago.
7. Monday, July 15
   Film: Rosenberg’s *Cool Hand Luke*
   Reading: Pierce’s *Cool Hand Luke*

   Injustices in the chain gang raise Luke to an icon of rebellion.

   Media Center: *Philadelphia*

8. Wednesday, July 17
   Film: Truffaut’s *Fahrenheit 451*
   Reading: Bradbury’s *Fahrenheit 451*

   A futuristic world where books are not read but burned by firefighters.

9. Monday, July 22
   Film: Radford’s *1984*
   Reading: Orwell’s *1984*

   A view of a totalitarian force that controls speech, politics, sex, and work through propaganda.

   Media Center: *Anatomy of a Murder*

10. Wednesday, July 24
    Film: Lumet’s *The Verdict*
    Reading: Reed’s *The Verdict* (optional)

    An alcoholic lawyer, Frank Galvin, pursues a medical malpractice case, against all odds.

    ****Assignment: Second Paper Due****

11. Monday, July 29
    Film clip: Reed’s *A Civil Action* (optional)
    Reading: Harr’s *A Civil Action*

    The families of children from Woburn, Mass. who died from toxic wastes sue two companies.

    REVIEW

12. Wednesday, July 31
    Final Exam