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# Law in Film: Part 1

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## **OSHER 310-001**

**Dates:** Tuesdays: January 12 – February 16

**Time:** 11:30 am – 1:00 pm

**Location:** Online via Zoom

**Instructor:** Scott Williams

**Email:** Rscottwilliams50@gmail.com

**Office Phone:** 385-695-2069

### **Description:**

The course is intended to examine how the law and lawyers are depicted in the popular culture of film, and examine the extent to which law and popular culture influence each other. Film clips will be watched of the assigned weekly movie, the non-required bonus film and other relevant films. Class analysis will discuss whether the portrayal of lawyers and the judicial system in the films is realistic or exaggerated for dramatic effect. Additionally, we will discuss the styles and techniques used by film makers to enhance the use of reason, passion and emotional appeal in the legal dramas studied. Class discussion is strongly encouraged.

### **Expectations and Goals:**

Each weekly class subject will include a discussion of an assigned film. To enhance class discussion, students are responsible for obtaining and watching assigned films at home before class. Check for availability at your public library or online sources such as iTunes, Amazon, Hulu, and Netflix. One or two DVD copies may be available from the instructor.

Please come to the first class having watched “The Paper Chase.” (1973)

### **Required Materials (Watching the films assigned at home)**

**Optional Materials and Texts**--Although not required, students would benefit from reading “Law and Popular Culture, A Coursebook,” 2nd edition, Asimow & Mader, Peter Lang Publishing Inc., New York, 2013 and “Reel Justice: The Courtroom Goes to The Movies,” Revised Edition, Bergman & Asimow, 2006

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## Course Schedule:

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topics</u>	<u>Films</u>
January 12, 2021	Introduction; Relationship between Law and Popular Culture; Legal Education and Preparation to be a Lawyer; The Socratic Method	<u><i>The Paper Chase (1973)</i></u>  <u>Bonus Film-Not Required</u> <u><i>Legally Blonde (2001)</i></u>
January 19, 2021	The Adversary System and the Trial Genre; Criminal Law Issues	<u><i>Anatomy of a Murder (1959)</i></u>  <u>Bonus Film-Not Required</u> <u><i>My Cousin Vinny (1992)</i></u>
January 26, 2021	Lawyers as Heroes; The Courtroom as a Study in Cultural and Social issues of the day	<u><i>To Kill a Mockingbird (1962)</i></u>  <u>Bonus Film-Not Required</u> <u><i>A Time to Kill (1996)</i></u>
February 2, 2021	Lawyers as Villains; The Expert Witness; Settlement Offers; Contingency Fees; Closing Arguments	<u><i>The Verdict (1982)</i></u>  <u>Bonus Film-Not Required</u> <u><i>Michael Clayton (2007)</i></u>
February 9, 2021	The Jury in Civil and Criminal Trials; Jury Selection and Consultants; Conflicting Visions and Efficiency of the Jury system	<u><i>12 Angry Men (1957)</i></u>  <u>Bonus Film-Not Required</u> <u><i>Runaway Jury (2003)</i></u>
February 16, 2021	The Civil Justice System; the Toxic Tort Case; Discovery and Depositions; Settlement Negotiations	<u><i>A Civil Action (1998)</i></u>  <u>Bonus Film-Not Required</u> <u><i>Erin Brockovich (2000)</i></u>

Please Note: Some films listed are rated "R" for language-viewer discretion is advised