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| |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | |  | | --- | | Page 2 | | |  | | --- | | [**SUBMIT YOUR OWN COMMENT**](http://docs.google.com/submit-comments.htm) | | **Pages** [**1**](http://docs.google.com/user_feedback.htm) **|** [**3**](http://docs.google.com/user_feedback3.htm) | |  |  | | --- | | **Comment on Jon-Christian Suggs' article: *Adam's Rib & A Time to Kill*** |   **From: John Denvir**  I very much enjoyed Suggs' comparison of *Adam's Rib* with *A Time to Kill* but would like to set out another way to look at Hepburn's performance in *Adam's Rib*. I think we can see Hepburn as portraying the lawyer as "trickster." "Trickster" figures in mythology as folks like Hermes and Mercuy or the Coyote or Raven in Native American folklore. Lewis Hyde tells us in "The Trickster Makes this World" that tricksters are people who intervene when conventional society comes to gridlock; their intervention is to break up the ossified status quo to allow a "new world" to emerge, and their tactics tend to be amoral—or at least not bounded by conventional morality.  Isn't that just what Hepburn does. She finds a very solemn legal system quite self-satisfied with itself by unable to accept the humanity of women and uses all sorts of "unprofessional" tactics to humiliate the law (and her spouse) towards the end of opening the system up to justice.  This might be a much better way for us to view lawyers (like Johnny Cochran)--people who use unusual tactics to awaken us to realities we would rather ignore.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on James Elkins' article: *Are Lawyer Films Anti-lawyer?*** |   **From: Brock Malcolm**  I agree that the lawyer films are not necessarily anti-lawyer. Making a character a lawyer aids the story because it sends certain signals to the audience, i.e. this character is intelligent, this character has a lot of money (rarely is the lawyer who struggles beneath his/her shingle portrayed), and this character holds someone's life in his/her hands. Lawyers make for good drama because, even though the bulk of the job (research, interviews, drafting motions) is usually not portrayed, the law will always be there to provide that climatic battle. Because a film is a story, it must have a perspective. This in turn divides the law into two sides—good and evil (although I realize that I am way over simplifying things, you can see my point). Films take on that anti-lawyer feel because we leave the theater hating one of the lawyers. As time goes by, we tend to hold on to those feelings of hatred much longer than we do any feelings connected with the triumph of good. But it is not the fault of the genre that the evil lawyer stands out. All through literature (see Paradise Lost), authors have fought with this problem: Evil is just more interesting than Good.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on John Denvir's article: *The Last Wave*** |   **From: Stan Ross**, University of New South Wales School of Law  I saw the *Last Wave* when it first came out. After reading John Denvir's comments I was drawn to comment and also I will see the film again. The conflict between Aboriginal law and Western (Australian law) is frequently in the news. Recently an Aboriginal elder assaulted a photographer who was taking photos against his wishes on Aboriginal land. The photographer complained and criminal assault charges were brought. The case was dismissed by the Magistrate in the Northern Territory on the basis of Aboriginal law. This has caused a political storm in the Territory with the Chief Minister (head of that Government) stating the decision is wrong and that it shows discrimination in favour of Aboriginals.  In Darwin a constitutional convention is atempting to establish the Territory as a State. One of the issues that is causing problems is that the whites are seeking to have a provision included that will make sure Aboriginals are no different than anyone else. There appears to be, at least among conservative politicians, little unstanding of the complexity and relevance of Aboriginal law.  A recent Australian novel, Al Turello's *Wild Justice* (Arrow Press, 1995) involves some interesting legal probems concerning the death by clubbing of an Aboriginal lawyer. It appears to be a tribal killing, but there is much more involved. Aboriginal custom has an important role in achieving a just solution to various murders.  There is also a distinct possibility that the Australian government is preparing to run an early election on the 'race issue'—the right of Aboriginals to have access to land held under long term leases by graziers, farmers and mining companies. If the present conservative government prevails the role of Aboriginal customary law will be greatly diminished.  Postscript by Stan Ross on The Last Wave: added September 9, 1998  There have been further developments in the confrontation between Aboriginal law and 'white man law'. On September 1, 1998 a senior Aboriginal traditional owner of the Jabiluka uranium mine site was found guilty of criminal trespass on her own land. Yvonne Margarula had argued that she was exercising her rights as part of Aboriginal tradition when she was demonstrating against mining uranium on her land. The magistrate held that he was 'satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the use and occupation the accused put the land was not in accordance with Aboriginal tradition.... Even if one could form the view that the very use and occupation was in accordance with Aboriginal tradition, the magistrate was satisfied those actions would still interfere with the use of enjoyment of Energy Resources Australia's (the mining company) interest in the land. Yvonne Margarula is now seeking legal advice as to a possibly appealing the decision.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on John Denvir's article: *Chinatown*** |   **From: Matt Zwolinski**  I find it difficult to see why John Denvir takes Polanski's *Chinatown* to be an indictment of capitalism. Throughout the film, it is not the free market which subverts the public good; rather, it is the manipulation of political institutions by persons like Cross which leads to the exploitation of the many to serve the interests of the few.  But this is something that advocates of laissez-faire have realized for years. It has been expressed by persons like William Legget who, in the Jacksonian era, couched plea for economic liberty in very populist terms, and it is still being expressed by modern libertarians, such as Murray Rothbard and others in the Austrian school of economics. Indeed, much of the insights of public choice theory are little more than elaborations on the way in which the government power is manipulated by private interests.  Where those in the classical liberal tradition differ from those such as Professor Denvir is not in their diagnosis of the problem, then, but in their perscribed solution. While those in the welfare-statist wing of the liberal tradition argue that such corruption is best dealt with by political oversight, classical liberals have long argued that the only way to limit the abuse of government is to limit the scope of government. By barring the use of political coercion as a legitimate means of economic advancement, we pave the way for a truly "populist" system in which each person is free to seek her own good in the free and voluntary exchange of the market.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on Rob Waring's article: *The Sweet Hereafter*** |   **From: Kevin Crisp**  I'm just plain bothered by a film that:  1) portrays people as using the legal system as a salve for their own spiritual yearnings (the film is about more than particular loss, it is about the loss of meaning and significance that has occurred in all areas of modern life),  2) suggests that it is our lack of community that ails us,  3) hints at the role that the modern consumer economy plays in undermining our humanity (Lawyers comment to father about how all our kids are dead wandering comatose through shopping malls) and  4) then actually makes a great case for the pro-corporate mantra that what we need is tort reform?  Political Message: If only people couldn't sue (corporations) to ease their pain, they would be forced to turn back to one another and re-build their communities. (Conservative version of deTocqueville)  Why not? If only corporations and the growth of the modern industrial economy hadn't elevated selfishness and the private family above community, we would be able to both avoid the emptiness of modern life AND the callousness of corporate cost-benefit analyses that make litigation justifiable. (Liberal version of deTocqueville). Besides that, I liked the film very much.   |  | | --- | | **Comments on John Denvir's article: Personal Politics** |   **From: Joel Gomberg**  I really liked the movie *Election* and Denvir's review, but I was especially fascinated by his view of "Mr. M" as the only character with the capacity for change, growth, and self-awareness. Is it possible, I wondered, whether, presumably a "popular" professor, identified just a bit with Mr. M?  While Denvir says that the other characters are not mere cartoons, he implies that he agrees with Tracy's view [wasn't Reese Witherspoon terrific?] that Mr. M should never have bothered to play around with Destiny. The rest of them are doomed to repeat their neurotic patterns, but somehow Mr. M is exempt? I certainly agree that just about anything would be better than repeating the neurotic pattern of "making love" to Mrs. M as she demandingly cries out "fill me up! fill me up!", but I'm not as sanguine as Denvir that he might have really learned something from his experiences. To me, Tammy is the one who managed to manipulate the situation for her own benefit. She got to go where the girls are. Why are is Denvir so sure that she won't find her true soulmate?  And I don't necessarily agree that "dumb as a stick" Paul was too nice to be successful in politics. Certainly, the Nixon type can't afford to be nice, but how about Reagan? He was Mr. Affable, letting his henchman do the nasty stuff. If you're dumb enough, you can be oblivious to what your underlings are doing in your name.  These disagreements aside, it's clear that Denvir is one of the most insightful critics of his generation.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on Robert Waring's article: Swimming With The Bottom Feeders** |   **From: Bill Rubens - *All Of Me***  As an interesting comparison to *Liar Liar*, how about *All Of Me* (1984) with Steve Martin? Besides *Liar Liar*, *AOM* is the only magical-intervention-causes-usually-lying-lawyer-to-tell-the-truth movie I know of.  Premise: Rich Lily Tomlin wants to have her soul placed into young woman's body when she (Tomlin) dies but the soul is put into Steve Martin's body by mistake. Martin is introduced as a PI specialist who will bend the truth to get a favorable settlement for clients. One of the high points in *AOM* is a courtroom scene: wife seeking large amount in divorce settlement from husband, whose extramarital affairs figure importantly into the alimony settlement. Steve Martin's character, exhausted from all the preparation he's been doing on the case, falls asleep and the "other half" of his body (Lily Tomlin's character) takes over and tells the truth to the court. (the husband in the divorce case was Tomlin's own lawyer when he was alive so she knows him quite well). It's a great scene---- Martin playing Tomlin inside his own body. Inspiration/borrowing for *Liar Liar*? Not sure, but I can't watch one without thinking of the other.  Trivia: Jason Bernard, who played the judge in *LL*, was Steve Martin's best friend in *AOM*!  Bill Rubens, Taiwan   |  | | --- | | **Comment on John Denvir's article: *Red Corner*** |   **From: Arlyn Gonzalez-Diaz**, Law Student  Last summer I studied at China with a Duquesne Univ. Program abroad. I'm a law student at P.R. (both civil and common law traditions) I went to a criminal case trial. The atmosphere was just the same I saw at *Red Corner*. No jury, no visitors, just us with special permission. The trial was really fast, I mean 2-3 hours. Three judges, two prosecutors and a legal representant provided by the PRC which probably was not even a lawyer (some judges even now with the new lawyers' law have never been at college or studied law). This woman was old and did not say a word through the process. The poor man was incarcerated. The conviction...7 years for stealing a bicycle and a cellular phone.(The translator told us that the real conviction should have been 10 years but they gave him 7 because he had some Americans watching. Anyway I'm doing research for a paper I'm writing here on the accuracy of the movie and the law in China. I'll let you now the details when I'm done. Thanks for your page, Arlyn   |  | | --- | | **Comment on Michael Asimow's article: *Dangerous Beauty,* The Trial Of A Courtesan** |   **From James Frieden**  Dear Mr. Asimow, It was a pleasure to speak with you last night at the CLE meeting. I have looked at your site and it is great. Your article on *Dangerous Beauty* is excellent. I definitely would like to link from teachwithmovies.org to articles on your site. Even if we don't recommend the film as suitable for parents or teachers to show to children because of violence or sex or historical inaccuracy, we like to provide information on the films. Your article on *Dangerous Beauty* is perfect. I don't think people need permission to link to other sites, but if you have a problem with it, please e-mail me. We are always trying to generate more traffic and would be pleased for you to place any of our Learning Guides on your site or to link to them. I am thinking particularly of the Learning Guides to *Inherit the Wind* and *Judgment at Nuremberg* both of which have a lot of substance to them. Sincerely yours, James Frieden  Teachwithmovies.org   |  | | --- | | **Comment on Dr. Paul Mason's article: Men, Machines And The Mincer: The Prison Movie** |   **From: Mike Newman**  "This article was fantastic. Thanks Paul for writing one of the rare pieces on prison films. Your work has proved invaluable for the assignment I am doing for you."   |  | | --- | | **Comments on Chris Jackson's article: Judging *Judging Amy*** |   **From: D. Hutch**  I thought this article was a thoughtful and insightful. The author Chris Jackson obviously knows what she is writing about! It was witty and creative. I loved it!!"  **From: BJC**  "Dr. Jackson appears to have a good handle on Maxine and her clan". It is difficult for me, a female person of the older generation, to allow Amy to be the star of this program when Maxine (Tyne Daly) has finally become the most wise leader we always knew she could be. Dr. J. has given good comparisons between Practice, Law & Order,&Povidence. *Judging Amy* could be changed to "Guiding Amy" with no problem. BJC**From: Tammy** found us through: Search Engine.  Amy Grant is a "Christian" Pop Music artist ....Amy "Grey" is the character you speak of in this article...   |  | | --- | | **Comments on the articles: *Legally Blonde* roundtable** |   **From: Robert Chaires** found us through: World of mouth.  I really liked the movie. So did my wife who is also a lawyer/professor. We viewed it as a meaningful comment on how undergraduates tend to judge people by their major-and for a 'teaching moment' that that people come to the law in strange ways and for strange reasons.  **From: Karen Greenbaum-Maya** found us through: World of mouth.  Paul, nice job here. I would add only a few things: 1. It was Cyndi Lauper, not the immaterial girl, who did the Girls Just Wanna Have Fun number. Persnickety, eh? 2. As pernicious as the notion that being smart gets you farther than learning something is the film's characterization of "high-brow" people as discriminatory snobs. My experience is that intelligent people who have actually studied something are a good deal more open to a variety of folk than the socially adept members of the popular crowd, who were deeply exclusionary. Bullies, anyone? Now they blame their limited adult success on the people they picked on in the first place-sweet.  **Paul Joseph's response:** "Thanks for the comment, Karen. We have fixed the error!"**From: Judith Grant** found us through: E-Mail list.  Film's inspiring message: Despite the handicap of being blond, beautiful, and rich, you can still make it America. You've come a long way, baby!**From: Sharon** found us through: Random surfing.  As a previous blonde law student often compared to Marilyn Monroe, I was prepared to point out the inaccuracies of your review of Legally Blonde. A fellow writer at Picturing Justice - John Owens - does an ample job of explaining that this movie is based on reality.  See: [/pj/blonde\_owens.htm](http://docs.google.com/blonde_owens.htm)  The 179 LSAT score and representing a criminal defendant in court may not be realistic...but it allowed a plot and a lot of humor. This is a comedy after all...things are exaggerated. My Civil Procedure teacher looked and acted exactly like the one in the movie-even though I never saw her hit anyone on the head with a pencil. (Probably only because she was afraid of a battery charge). The essence of law school - the competition, the holier-than-thou attitude, the feigned serious personalities, the belittling professors, etc...ALL REAL.  Most importantly, what someone that looks like "Barbie" but has an IQ of 160 goes through is real. The challenges from their inner self and others is real.  When Callahan hit on Elle in the movie, I bawled. I lived those moments of self-doubt when accomplishments were invalidated by males. Reality is that if you are a woman with a certain look, especially blonde, no matter what your grades, intelligence, or accomplishments, people will attribute your success to being wanted (or sleeping) with a man.  I get a double whammy - blonde jokes and lawyer jokes. The movie was a refreshing reminder to me that I'm not the only person who goes through what Elle did. You are a man..you just couldn't possibly understand. Law students need all the laughs they have time for. Your female students could benefit from this movie and in particular, your blonde students.**From: Meredith Lobel-Angel** found us through: Link from other site.  "LOVE IT!". I, too, went to Stanford Law and Amanda's book is virtually my right of passage "Catcher in the Rye." I am brunette and no sorority queen - but anyone who feels "different" can relate. My daughter and I do the "Bend and Snap" and re-enact the orientation where Elle meets her classmates for the first time.**From: Julia Baugher** found us through: Search Engine.  I am a senior at Georgetown University, currently studying for my Constitutional Law midterm (tomorrow). In desperate need of a study break, I thought it would be amusing to type in "The Law is reason free from passion" - a quote from Aristotle, but more importantly, from my favorite movie, Legally Blonde. I must politely disagree with the author's conclusion - that she is not "hip" to popular culture. Had I been in her first year torts class, I would have been rolling on the ground with laughter and relief, knowing that one of my professor's has at least a decent sense of humor. I saw Legally Blonde for the first time with a 2nd year Catholic U. law student. Then I saw it with my father, a lawyer. I have since seen it with many aspiring law students and I must say, I have no idea who the young people were in your class, but they must lead awfully boring lives. I hope you get an Elle Woods in your class one day - near-perfect LSAT score and all.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on the articles: *The Man Who Wasn't There* roundtable** |   **From: Alyson Dion** found us through: Search Engine.  I had the opportunity to view the film yesterday. After reading both movies reviews on this site, it seems to me that both authors acknowledge the presence of the stereotypical defense attorney (the best that money can buy), but neither address the probate and real estate attorney who is a blatant alcoholic. His life is pathetic: he barely pays attention to his talented daughter, tells his friend Crane not to have faith in the government system (public defender), and believes that you "pay lawyers to mess things up and then pay them to un-mess things up." His character, his behaviors, and his beliefs about a failing justice system, where only money and lies can set you free, all contribute to society's increasing disbelief in our judicial system and  attorneys. I fully understand that this was a satirical, noir film and that one should not take all the characters seriously. However, how many people, including those who find company with Jerry Springer, will realize that this film attempts to portray lawyers with a sense of humor, instead of a sense of truth? After viewing the O.J. Simpson trial (and not through personal experience), much of society may unfortunately relate to the theory that money is the key to success in the courtroom and that lawyers are shysters that are paid to "mess and un-mess" things.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on the articles: *Erin Brokovich*** |   **From: Leslie**  It's too bad that you raise a question without attempting to provide the answer, which is relatively simple. Settlement proceeds are to be placed in an attorney's client trust account and disbursed from there. Any interest made on the funds are required to be paid at the end of the year to the State Bar Association. These client trust accounts are very closely monitored and misuse of funds or settlement proceeds can be a basis for sanction, discipline or even disbarment.   |  | | --- | | **Comment on Chris Jackson's article: Picturing the President-*West Wing*** |   **From:** **Amanda** found us through: Link from other site, Random surfing.  Excellent article-I liked the way the other movies were brought up as a tie-in from big screen to small screen, then from real-life news to the Bartlet White House. I found one mistake-"President Bartlet doesn't hold grudges-that's what he pays me for" was said by Josh, not Leo. I assume this was a typo, as the next line begins with "Josh also..." I just thought I'd mention it. All in all, it's very well-written. I enjoyed reading an article that deals with the show not as something people watch for brain-candy during Wednesday prime-time, but as the artistic program it is-full of symbolism, parallels, and just plain artistic writing!   |  | | --- | | **Comment on Rob Waring's article: *The Winslow Boy,* Trial Of The Century?** |   **From: John R. Curd** found us through: Search Engine.  Over 1 hour ago I asked "GOOGLE" to search for 'Winslow Boy! It returned about! 12,400 result. Fate had me choosing /pj/winslowboy-waring.htm. The page presented a very good review with many interesting facts and commentary. Is RW English? The vocabulary and composition felt far more English than American. So then I wondered round the Universite but I must get into the garden (is that yard?). The rain has stopped and the sun is shining; for the records Sunday 3 March 2002 10:51 GMT!  **Rob Waring's response:**  Thank you for your kind words. The sun is shining in San Francisco, too. I am English, in that all my ancestors came from England, but I was born and raised in America. My maternal grandparents immigrated just before the Great War. My father's family came over about 1660, to Virginia. I sometimes feel more English than American, and I enjoyed the film because it portrayed a time when my grandmother, a suffragist, was politically active in England. There are several other articles about The Winslow Boy on the PJ site; it apparently struck a cord with our contributors. Regards, Rob Waring   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | [Top of page](#gjdgxs) | |  | | --- | | [**SUBMIT YOUR OWN COMMENT**](http://docs.google.com/submit-comments.htm) | | **Pages** [**1**](http://docs.google.com/user_feedback.htm) **|** [**3**](http://docs.google.com/user_feedback3.htm) | | |  |  | | --- | | [Home](http://docs.google.com/index.html) | [Silver Screen](http://docs.google.com/silver_screen.htm) | [Small Screen](http://docs.google.com/smallscreen/small_screen.htm) | [News & Views](http://docs.google.com/newsnviews.htm) | | |