



Our Top 10 Most Accurate Law-Related Movies & Shows (As Told By Lawyers, the ABA, and IMDb)

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Have you ever found yourself watching a show on TV and thought “there’s no way this is really what that’s like?” Well, we’ve done some fact-checking on your behalf and compiled what we believe to be the most accurate movies and shows around (sorry, Legally Blonde did not make the list - I know, I’m heartbroken, too). From an amalgamation of blog posts (in which lawyers were consulted), YouTube videos (made by a real-life trial lawyer), and IMDb ranking lists (created by consulting with 12 of the ABA’s most prominent lawyers who are somehow related to the film industry), we present: Our Top 10 Most Accurate Law-Related Movies:

1. My Cousin Vinny (1992) & To Kill a Mockingbird (1962)
 - a. Tied for first in this category we have two timeless classics. Despite the main lawyer in My Cousin Vinny lacking any trial experience, this movie ranked in the top 3 of this IMDb list, first in this lawyer-inspired blog post, and was described as “absolutely nail[ing]” being on trial” in this article. To Kill a Mockingbird, on the other hand, ranked first on the same IMDb list, and first in this article as well, where it was praised for its ability to move you to tears.
2. 12 Angry Men (1957)
 - a. Ranking 2nd in this IMDb list and 4th in this article, 12 Angry Men is loved by lawyers because it “accurately depicts how jury rooms never follow the rules and juries are a dice roll.”
3. Inherit the Wind (1960)
 - a. Placing 5th on the IMDb tier list but 2nd in the article, this film is described as a “deeply compelling depiction of an historic, and historically accurate courtroom drama” due primarily to the fact that it was apparently “based largely on actual transcripts from the original trial.”
4. Anatomy of a Murder (1959)
 - a. Placing 8th in this article but 4th in our IMDb list, Anatomy of a Murder was praised for being “one of the more accurate trial movies.”

5. On the Basis of Sex (2018)

- a. Taking 3rd in this article but not placing at all on our IMDb list, this biopic is loved by lawyers because it “will make you remember why you entered the profession in the first place.”

6. The Verdict (1982)

- a. Placing 6th in this article and 10th on the IMDb list, The Verdict is described as “a classic worth watching.”

7. The Trial of the Chicago 7 (2020)

- a. Ranking 5th in this article and not placing in our IMDb list (perhaps because it came out too recently), this film is praised for being “a masterful blend of serious and ridiculous” - but based in fact nonetheless! Most of the courtroom antics that occur in this movie apparently actually happened.

8. Witness for the Prosecution (1957)

- a. Ranking 6th in the IMDb tier list but not at all in our article is Witness for the Prosecution, which features a murder trial that “has surprise after surprise.”

9. Lincoln Lawyer (2011) & Breaker Morant (1980)

- a. Both of these films placed 7th in the article and on IMDb respectively, but neither managed to make it onto the other. Lincoln Lawyer is loved by lawyers because it “addresses the sometimes-complicated role of a defense attorney trying to do their best by their client.” Breaker Morant, on the other hand, focuses more on military court and the conflicts that can occur within it.

10. Philadelphia (1993)

- a. Taking 8th on our IMDb list, Philadelphia was ““inspired in part” by the real life and litigation of Geoffrey Bowers, an attorney who died of [AIDS].”

References

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PRE-LAW SOCIETY



EST. 2019

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