

**Philosophy 338**  
**Philosophy of Law**  
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**Note One**

BACKGROUND READING AND VIEWING

The material cited here is discretionary\*

- CPAC (channel 123 in my package) runs sessions of the Supreme Court. These give a glimpse of the submission phases, (but not of the finding phases), of S. C. C. proceedings. Saturdays at 10:00 p.m. were a good time to check, a year ago, but more recently viewings are more frequent and timing more variable. See also CPAC.CA, as well as S. C. C. online.
- Consider spending Reading Week in the public gallery of a Vancouver Court House courtroom at 800 Hornby Street. Check the Court's webpage for what's hot that week.
- The technology of jury selection that tracks biases favourable or otherwise to the parties is well-advanced in the U. S., and menacingly in prospect in Canada. For some terrific fiction about U. S. jury-fiddling, see John Grisham's 1996 novel *The Run-Away Jury*, and the not quite as good movie it inspired in 2003, starring Gene Hackman, Dustin Hoffman, and other notables.
- By far the best movie about the ups-and-downs of jury deliberations is the golden oldie, *Twelve Angry Men* of 1957, starring Henry Fonda, and a superb cast of the best American character actors of the day. Highly recommended.
- Two excellent (but also oldish) cinematic glimpses of how the English bar works are the 1957 film adaptation of Agatha Christie's 1953 *Witness for the Prosecution*. Pretty standard Christie fare, but marvellously performed by Charles Laughton and a stable of magnificent English character actors (together with the cross-type castings of Tyrone Power and Marlene Dietrich). Also great fun are the "Rumpole" TV shows, which beautifully capture the goings-on of a criminal hack in an Inns of Court chambers, based on the excellent stories (and scripts) of John Mortimer. Rumpole is played to perfection by Leo McKern, and is supported by a gorgeously English cast of eccentrics.
- The best contemporary fiction about modern-day criminal investigation, in Los Angeles at least, are the Harry Bosch novels of Michael Connelly. There are Canadian novels of like stripe, the best of which are by Giles Blunt. But I give the edge to Connelly, by a hair.
- The best novels about the present state of criminal defence manoeuvres, also Los Angeles-based, are the Micky Haller stories also by Michael Connelly. Pretty hot stuff by Canadian legal standards

- The best Canadian account – albeit not a disinterested one – about American prosecutorial chicanery is Conrad Black’s *A Matter of Principle* (2011), whose author was sent to the federal slammer following a trial in Chicago on charges of corporate misconduct, several of whose convictions were reversed on appeal. Hair-raising.
- For some newer material of interest, “Serial” was the most popular material on iTunes a year or so ago. This year, I don’t know. I haven’t looked.