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Carolyn Patty Blum

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Images of Lawyering and Political Activism in *In the Name of the Father*

By Carolyn Patty Blum *

The lawyer film is a now familiar genre to the American movie-going public. For the most part, the protagonist-lawyer is portrayed as a lone warrior, battling the well-armed forces of greed, corruption, and power. This quest may represent an opportunity for personal redemption by a lawyer who has strayed from the values of compassion, embodied in the profession’s justice mission. It may also represent an opportunity to showcase the lawyer’s talent and ingenuity, thereby achieving a heightened measure of personal success.

I. Introduction

*In the Name of the Father* is a singular and refreshing departure for this genre. While not a “lawyer movie” per se, I write about it here as a “movie no lawyer should miss” because it provides one of the few filmic glimpses into the special relationship between client and lawyer painted on the canvas of a larger political movement. Emma Thompson portrays British civil rights lawyer, Gareth Pierce. Daniel Day-Lewis portrays Gerry Conlon, one of four people accused of the bombing of a Guildford, England pub during the beginning of the Irish Republican Army’s bombing campaign in 1974.

* Lecturer, Boalt Hall School of Law, University of California, Berkeley. J.D., Northeastern University, 1976. I want to express my deepest appreciation to Harry Chotiner, my most favorite movie-going partner, for his insightful comments, and to Ann Lucas and Andrea Suter for their research assistance.

1. *Class Action* (Twentieth Century Fox 1990); *True Believer* (Columbia 1989); *The Verdict* (Twentieth Century Fox 1982).


3. *In the Name of the Father* (Universal 1993).

4. The central character in this film is client Gerry Conlon; his lawyer is a secondary character. In 1993, Daniel Day-Lewis was nominated for Best Actor for his portrayal of Conlon. Emma Thompson was nominated for Best Supporting Actress for her role as lawyer Gareth Pierce.
This essay explores the ways in which the screen portrayal of the lawyer in *In the Name of the Father* uniquely combines qualities—not seen in most other film lawyers—that enable her to successfully defend the unpopular client. First and foremost, Pierce’s work is responsive to, intertwined with, and informed by the larger political movement seeking justice for the Guildford Four. Second, she is a tireless and meticulous worker, doing the “homework” of a serious and well-prepared advocate. She is quietly determined and persistent. Third, she is emotional. She does not park her feelings at the prison gate or courthouse door. She has and demonstrates true compassion for her clients.

II. The Story

The movie first introduces the audience to Gerry Conlon’s story via the device of his tape-recorded voice. Lawyer Pierce is listening to the recording as the film flashes back to Conlon in Northern Ireland.

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5. This essay examines the lawyer’s role as portrayed in the film. I have not interviewed Ms. Pierce nor made any attempt to determine the accuracy of Emma Thompson’s portrayal of her. Pierce has been described as becoming “involved in human rights questions through exposure to the civil rights movement in the United States . . . . She has been involved in most of the major miscarriage of justice cases that have gone through the English legal system (including the Birmingham 6, Guildford 4, Judith Ward, and Cardiff 3 cases).” COMMITTEE ON THE ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, HUMAN RIGHTS: THE AGENDA FOR CHANGE 31 (1995); see also infra note 7 (discussing artistic license taken by director).

6. In addition, Pierce never makes herself the center of attention. For example, in the film she is seen as one of many thousands marching in the streets. In the final dramatic close to the movie, her client commands the media microphones.

7. I recognize that while this movie deals with actual events, the director inevitably exercised artistic license in its retelling. See Jonathan Freedland, *The Lying Game?: Film on Unfairly Jailed Irishman Has Conservative England Seething*, WASH. POST, Jan. 19, 1994, at C1 (quoting director Sheridan’s statement that the changes were “born of the necessity to boil down a 15-year odyssey into two hours of moving pictures”); Emma Thompson, in response to the conservative critics, said “I don’t give a [expletive], quite frankly”); Janet Maslin, *Review/Film: In the Name of the Father: The Sins of a Son Are Visited on His Father*, N.Y. TIMES, Dec. 29, 1993, at C11 (stating that the film is “faithful to the larger facts while taking minor liberties with the Conlons’ case”). Screenwriter and director Sheridan (and co-writer Terry George) drew much of the story from Conlon’s autobiography, *GERRY CONLON, PROVED INNOCENT* (1990) (published in the United States under the title *In the Name of the Father*). Other principals have expressed their own views of the events. See generally PAUL HILL & RONAN BENNETT, STOLEN YEARS: BEFORE AND AFTER GUILDFORD (1990); ANNE MAGUIRE & JIM GALLAGHER, MISCARRIAGE OF JUSTICE: AN IRISH FAMILY’S STORY OF WRONGFUL CONVICTION AS IRA TERRORISTS (1994); VICTOR DAVIS, *The Guildford Four Policemen Give Their Verdict on the Movie Generating Anti-British Hate, MAIL on SUNDAY*, Jan. 2, 1994, at 48. For an excellent discussion of the meaning of *In the Name of the Father* as a “real life” film, see Steve Greenfield & Guy Osborn, *Outlaw and the Without Laws: Film and Miscarriages of Justice in the United Kingdom* (unpublished paper delivered at Symposium, PICTURING JUSTICE: IMAGES OF LAW AND LAWYERS IN THE VISUAL MEDIA, University of San Francisco School of Law (Mar. 22-23, 1996)).
Conlon is portrayed as an irreverent “screw-up.” He carelessly stands atop a Belfast home, twanging on a fake guitar. The jittery British soldiers below think he is a sniper and try unsuccessfully to apprehend him. But Conlon is castigated by the local IRA for jeopardizing their operations with his behavior. To avoid the IRA-imposed punishment of kneecapping, Conlon’s father Guiseppe sends his son to London.

Conlon renews a friendship with schoolmate Paul Hill, and they find lodging in a hippie crash pad. Unfortunately, Conlon and Hill are forced to leave their lodgings and spend the evening in a local park with a homeless man on the same night of the bombing of Guildford’s Horse and Groom Pub. Conlon, Hill, and two other residents of the squatter house, Carole Richardson and Patrick Armstrong, are arrested.

The four are put through harrowing torture to extract confessions from each. Conlon finally breaks down when one of his interrogators threatens to kill his father. He signs a confession that he does not even read. The “confessions” of the four implicate each other and lead the police to investigate other members of the Conlon family. Soon thereafter, seven others are arrested, including Conlon’s father, his aunt Anne Maguire, and her husband and two sons. All eleven are convicted, based on the confessions, and the testimony of the police officers who extracted the statements. The testimony of a forensic expert links the seven to the four chief defendants because of traces of nitroglycerine, the bomb material, on their hands. Gerry Conlon is sentenced to a minimum of thirty years.

During the film’s second act, the focus shifts to the father and son’s struggle to make sense of this injustice and to survive their incarceration. Guiseppe Conlon decides that they must publicize their plight, involving everyone who will listen. He encourages his wife Sarah to campaign for them. When an IRA man is arrested on other charges, he confesses to the Guildford bombings.

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9. The torture depicted in the film is mild in comparison to Conlon’s autobiographical description of his experience. According to his account, the police threatened to kill his mother and sisters, not his father. CONLON, supra note 7, at 66-81.

10. This is one example of how the film takes dramatic liberty with the case. The Guildford Four were tried and convicted in a trial separate from that of Anne and Patrick Maguire, their sons Vincent and Patrick, Guiseppe Conlon, Sean Smith (the Maguires’ lodger), and Patrick O’Neill (a family friend who happened by on the night of the arrests). See generally ROBERT KEE, TRIAL AND ERROR: THE MAGUIRES, THE GUILDFORD PUB BOMBINGS AND BRITISH JUSTICE (1986).

11. When the Chief Judge sentences Conlon, he says that he wishes that Conlon had been charged with treason so that he could have imposed the death penalty.

12. IRA Man Says Three Men and Girl Are Innocent of Public House Bombings, THE TIMES (London), Oct. 12, 1977, at E4. At the trial of the leader of the IRA unit that carried out the other
The movie introduces the audience to lawyer Pierce as she visits the prison as part of a team inspecting prison conditions. She begins working with Guiseppe Conlon. She is confronted by Gerry Conlon and accused of giving his father false hope. Nonetheless, she persists in her representation of the father. Gerry Conlon finally joins in to assist with the political campaign and legal strategy. The first step is for Conlon to tell his whole story, and Pierce is shown listening to the tape recording, as the audience has throughout the film. However, Pierce’s request for Guiseppe Conlon’s release because of his failing health is rejected; soon after, he dies.

In the film’s final act, Conlon and Pierce quickly move to step up the pressure in the wake of Guiseppe’s death. Conlon gets into physical shape, receives bundles of mail, and unravels a poster for a mass rally. Pierce participates on the frontlines of a massive demonstration.

Pierce requests permission to review Guiseppe Conlon’s files. To thwart the political momentum around the case, the police agree. The film intercuts Conlon’s prison transfers, with law books in hand, and Pierce’s meticulous perusal of the police files and court appearances, with mass demonstrations on the Guildford Four’s behalf.

Pierce also obtains access to Gerry Conlon’s file. She discovers that the police knew at the time of his trial that his alibi for his whereabouts on the night of the Guildford bombing was a good one. When Pierce gets a new hearing in court, she questions the chief inspector on the case. She produces the police interview of the alibi witness, with its inscription “not to be shown to the defense.”13 The judge dismisses the case against Conlon and the other Guildford Four defendants. Conlon triumphantly leaves the courtroom. He declares to the press and his supporters, “I am an innocent man; I spent fifteen years in prison for something I didn’t do.” He pledges to clear his father’s name as well. In a postscript, the audience learns that Conlon, Pierce, and Sarah Conlon fought to clear Guiseppe Conlon’s bomb

13. In a letter to the New York Times, screenwriter Terry George states:

Jim Sheridan and I did not invent the note and its suppression, for the convenience of the film. Both are real . . . . The note was attached to a bundle of statements that included one taken from the alibi witness Charlie Burke in January 1975, a month after Mr. Conlon was charged with the Guildford bomb [sic].

name,\textsuperscript{14} that a government inquiry questioned the forensics evidence,\textsuperscript{15} and that three ex-detectives accused of coercing the confessions were acquitted of charges of conspiring to pervert justice.\textsuperscript{16}

III. Images of Political Activism

Very early in the film, the director introduces the audience to the power of mass action. British soldiers storm Conlon's working-class Catholic neighborhood—with its rows and rows of small homes, blighted streets, murals, and graffiti—declaring support for the republican struggle. Everyone, from the smallest child to the aproned housewife rattling her trashcan lid, join to protect Conlon and the armed Irish Republican Army members who are seen quickly moving weapons to a new location. This universal antipathy for the British and broad collaboration with the IRA provides the first revealing glimpse of the strength of concerted political action.

When Conlon moves to England, the audience is reminded of the violent repression of Northern Irish Catholics (through newspaper and television accounts), as well as the prejudice against the Irish in England (Conlon and Hill are often jeered at and called "paddies," a derogatory term for the Irish). This provides an important context for the events to follow. But the filmmakers also evenhandedly demonstrate the horrific consequences of the IRA's bombing campaign, which had only recently moved to England.\textsuperscript{17} In fact, the opening scene of the movie is the Horse and Groom Pub bombing.\textsuperscript{18} It depicts young people enjoying a night out and then being blasted

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{14} Guiseppe Conlon's conviction was quashed in 1991, along with the convictions of the rest of the Maguire Seven. However, this outcome was only a partial success for the Conlons and Gareth Pierce—rather than address the full range of police misconduct in the case, the court simply stated that the convictions could not be upheld because it had been proven as a possibility (contrary to scientific evidence given at trial) that the defendants' hands, gloves, and fingernails could have been innocently contaminated with nitroglycerine. This ruling was labeled a "whitewash" by the Maguires' supporters; one critic stated, "They have invented a new verdict for this country, not very guilty." Robin Young, Court Clears Maguire Seven Over Bomb Factory, The Times (London), June 27, 1991, (Home News), available in LEXIS, Nexis Library, Times File.
\item \textsuperscript{15} Francis Cowper, Long Miscarriage of Justice, N.Y. L.J., Aug. 3, 1990, (The London Letter), at 2 (discussing the interim report of Sir John May, a former Lord Justice of the court of appeal, who concluded that the scientific evidence forming the basis of the convictions of the Maguire Seven was impaired); Steven Prokesch, Convictions Overturned for 7 in I.R.A. Blasts, N.Y. Times, June 27, 1991, at A7.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Toolis, \textit{supra} note 12 ("Guildford was the opening attack in a new I.R.A. bombing offensive on the mainland.").
\item \textsuperscript{18} The pub was targeted evidently because it was popular with local soldiers. \textit{Id.}
\end{itemize}
in a violent explosion. Because of this situation, as the defendants enter the court for their trial, an angry mob of demonstrators demand conviction.19

As the trial unfolds, the defendants still seem to have faith that the judicial system will correct the injustice of the accusations against them. But the judicial system fails them, and they are all convicted. Guiseppe Conlon realizes much sooner than his son that they need to build political support for their case. At this moment, the film transforms the parameters of the lawyer film genre. Instead of a dyadic structure of "good guys" (lawyer and client) and "bad guys" (corrupt, uncaring, or lying police, prosecutors, or judges), the film exemplifies a triadic structure: the political movement is a third protagonist that modifies the action and transforms and shapes the "good guys." The audience sees Guiseppe Conlon and his wife, Sarah, begin the slow process of building support. He encourages her to talk to their priest or "anyone who will listen."20 Thus, a key moment in the film occurs when the younger Conlon joins his father's campaign to publicize their innocence. He is transformed from a passive victim to an active participant in the struggle to clear his own name. Ironically, it is the father, whom the son has accused of being passive, that determines that activism is the road to victory.

What becomes increasingly clear to the protagonists is that they must indict the whole of the British justice system in order to clear their own names. Their convictions were premised on the integrity of the police officers who were responsible for taking their confessions. From the moment Conlon and the others were allowed to have contact with lawyers or family,21 they protested that their statements had been coerced. At their trial,

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19. After the wave of IRA bombings, including two in crowded pubs in Birmingham, England, and as a "wave of horror, revulsion and anger swept over England, Irish people were openly attacked in the streets of Birmingham." Id.; Anti-Irish Violence Mounts in Britain, WASH. POST, Nov. 24, 1974, at A23.

20. Mary McGrory, 14 Years 'in Cold Storage', WASH. POST, Nov. 26, 1989, at 1, 5 ("Sarah Conlon is the heroine of her son's sad story . . . . She buttonholed everyone she met . . . . She met two priests who passed the word to Britain's Roman Catholic primate, Basil Hume. He became a champion of her son's cause."). In 1978, Cardinal Hume had a series of pastoral visits with the Guildford Four in prison. According to press accounts, he became convinced of their innocence and was able to recruit Lords of Appeal Devlin and Scarman and former Home Secretaries Jenkins and Rees as well. Wendy Holden, Cardinal Calls for Reopening of Pub Bombers' Case, DAILY TELEGRAPH (London), Nov. 18, 1988, at 3. In 1988, family and lawyers approached Dr. Runcie, the Archbishop of Canterbury, who examined the record and also decided to intervene on the Four's behalf with Douglas Hurd, then the Home Secretary. A.J. Mcllroy, Guildford: The Fight for Freedom, DAILY TELEGRAPH (London), Oct. 18, 1989, at 23.

21. In response to the IRA's bombing campaign, Parliament passed the Prevention of Terrorism Act on November 28, 1974. Among other provisions conferring sweeping authority on the police to combat terrorism, the Act empowered the police to detain a person incommunicado for 48 hours; the Home Secretary was authorized to extend the detention for five more days as well. Bill Bans the IRA and Widens Police Power, THE TIMES (London), Nov. 28, 1974, at 1; see also
they testified that their statements had been the result of abuse, which they
described in graphic detail.

The film makes it evident that neither the prosecutor nor the court
made any attempt to determine the truth of the defendants’ statements. No
serious investigation ever occurred to determine if, in fact, the defendants
had suffered torture.22 Indeed, the Chief Prosecutor knew that the confes-
sions of the Guildford Four were riddled with inconsistencies that should
have raised serious doubts about their veracity. Prosecutors also knew that
the IRA continued to carry out bombings in England, which were consistent
in all important respects with that of the Guildford bombing; these occurred
when the Guildford Four were in custody. The prosecutors and the police
ignored these connections.

The police, the prosecutors, and the judges all participated in the cha-
rade of confession, indictment, trial, and sentence.23 Of course, this reality
made it extremely difficult to build widespread support for the Guildford
Four. In the mid-1970s, British horror at the IRA’s bombing campaign out-
weighed concerns for the protection of the rights of those accused of the
bombings. It was not until significant time had elapsed, Giuseppe Conlon
had died, and Gerry Conlon and other family members became more ac-
tively involved in the protest campaign, that it began to pick up steam.24
Soon after Guiseppe’s death, another particularly revealing scene unfolds in the film. As Pierce struggles with her grief over Guiseppe Conlon’s death, Conlon urges her to “keep up the pressure” and “keep looking them in the eye.” In the next scene, Pierce is shown on the front lines of a massive demonstration demanding freedom for the Guildford Four. Here, the film suggests the political complexity of the situation. Conlon and his lawyer have galvanized sentiment for their defense. But the audience understands that these sentiments have been nurtured for years by the Republican movement seen in the beginning of the film. Conlon and his lawyer are not superstars who can create their own mass movement; they build on an existing one. But simultaneously, that political movement is strengthened and given moral power and passion by the courage and integrity of Conlon, Pierce, and the other defendants. In this way, the film is both politically accurate and artistically rich. It is no small achievement.

Next, the audience sees Pierce toiling tirelessly in her review of the police files and appearing in court to demand access for her client. The legal work is portrayed as inextricably bound up with the political work of organizing demonstrations, confronting the police, and building mass support for the Guildford Four. The film makes clear that public pressure can be instrumental in affecting the actions of officials. In the film, the lawyer does not hold herself aloof from these public displays of outrage, but incorporates it as an integral part of her representation.

In the film, when Pierce finally succeeds in getting the case reheard in court, the courtroom is filled with supporters. As the Chief Inspector

the convictions. Toolis, supra note 12. Alastair Logan is the Guildford solicitor who represented several of the Guildford defendants. He was described by Lords Devlin and Scarman as “one of those pilgrims of the law who, when Justice beckons, pick up the staff and the scrip and walk. Legal aid has long since dried up. He is walking still.” Lord Devlin & Lord Scarman, Justice and the Guildford Four, THE TIMES (London), Nov. 30, 1988, at 16.

25. In the film, when Guiseppe Conlon dies, Conlon is moved by the spontaneous protest of the inmates in the prison. They stage a dramatic show of solidarity as each lights a flame and sends it sailing out their tiny prison windows. The symbolic action is another indication that Conlon must seek the help of others—many others—to secure his freedom and to prove the Four’s innocence.

prevaricates regarding the alibi witness, he is confronted with many voices, not just Pierce's, demanding an answer; when the cases are dismissed, Conlon celebrates with his lawyer, but also with the hundreds of supporters who pack the courtroom and the streets outside. The concerted action of many people who demonstrated, wrote letters, and pressured the police and the government, as well as the skill of Conlon's advocate, are portrayed as intrinsic to the victory in this case. Pierce's lawyering is seen as intertwined with the political campaign.  

She must work on all fronts—as a lawyer and as an activist. She must use the tools of her trade to confront the police—court orders to see the Giuseppe Conlon files—as well as the tools of the vocal activist who is not afraid to confront the police in the streets. The integrity of the British justice system is at the heart of the Guildford Four case; thus, it would be naive for Pierce to assume that law books alone could successfully arm her clients in this battle. The masses of English people from all walks of life must also shine a spotlight on the injustice of the convictions. As this film brilliantly demonstrates, that glare, not the work of one lawyer, is what ultimately gets results in this case.

IV. Images of Lawyering

A. Work

From the audience's first encounter with Gareth Pierce to its last, she is seen as a dogged, tireless worker. She listens to her client's tape recording in her car, never losing a moment to help him with his case. She goes out to the park bench, where Conlon sat on the evening of the bombings, to examine whether it has the initials carved in it that Conlon claims are there. And when the audience really gets a close look at her, as she tours the prison to examine its conditions of confinement, she is persistent in her request to see Giuseppe Conlon, in the quiet yet tenacious fashion that characterizes her non-courtroom persona.

Later in the film, she obtains a court order to review the police files on Giuseppe Conlon. She returns to the file room (in its unpleasant dank basement setting) on a number of occasions. She meticulously takes notes on the files, following the rules set forth for her. Yet when the regular file

27. For interesting comparative accounts of the work of several prominent civil rights lawyers in the United States, see, for example, Jack Greenberg, Crusaders in the Courts: How a Dedicated Band of Lawyers Fought for the Civil Rights Revolution (1994); Arthur Kinoy, Rights on Trial: The Odyssey of a People's Lawyer (1983); William M. Kunstler & Sheila Isenberg, My Life As A Radical Lawyer (1994).

28. As Gerry Conlon has remarked, "If it hadn't been for English people, I'd have still been in jail. They become like a terrier when they realize a wrong has been done." In the Name of the Son, PEOPLE, Feb. 14, 1994, at 79.
room officer is absent for the day and the substitute refuses her request to peruse the files, she again persists. When he is unaware what Conlon file she seeks, she grabs the opportunity to review Gerry Conlon’s file. It is then that she makes the discovery of the suppressed alibi witness’ statement.

The film portrays both the high drama of courtroom moments and the intimacy of the lawyer’s relationship with a client, but it also shows the day-to-day drudgery of legal work. Being a lawyer is as much about sitting in a dank basement and going through endless piles of documents, as it is about giving brilliant speeches about injustice in courtrooms. In the Name of the Father, like few other films, provides a screen portrayal of an attorney that accurately depicts what practicing law is really like. The glamour here is the exhilaration of knowing that hard work, persistence, and political organizing has led to a more just result.

B. Emotions

In the film, when Pierce meets with Gerry Conlon after his father’s death, she says, “They ought to take the word compassion out of the English dictionary.” She is referring to the fact that officials refused to release Guiseppe Conlon even though they knew he was extremely ill. This moment is a telling one because it reveals so much about Pierce’s compassion for her client. She is not afraid to feel emotionally about her clients and to let that compassion be part of what drives her representation.

Later, when the court finally agrees to hear the Guildford Four appeal, she begins slowly and dispassionately to question Inspector Dixon, the supervising inspector during the defendants’ interrogations. With the revelation of the alibi witness’ statement, the courtroom becomes tumultuous. When Dixon does not recognize the photo of Charlie Burke, Pierce persists. As she holds Burke’s picture aloft, Pierce cries out:

Someone—either that man [Dixon], or his superiors, or his superiors’ superiors—ordered that these people be used as scapegoats by a nation begging for blood in return for the spilling of innocent blood on the streets of London, and, by God, you got your blood. You got the blood of Guiseppe Conlon, you got the life blood of Carole Richardson and you got fifteen years of [the] blood, sweat and pain of my client whose only crime was that he was bloody well Irish and he was foolish and he was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

This emotional statement shows her concern both for the innocents who were killed by the bombs, and for her innocent client and the other defendants who were wrongfully convicted.

29. See, e.g., Class Action, supra note 1; Reversal of Fortune, supra note 2.
After this outburst, she composes herself and, returning to her dispasionate tone, repeats the statement made by the sentencing judge about wishing he could have Conlon hanged. She skillfully juxtaposes her own rational-sounding words with the stinging reality that these young people came dangerously close to being executed for a crime they did not commit.

After the prosecutor demands a recess, Pierce persists, revealing the note (attached to the picture of Burke), which stated that the Burke evidence should not be shown to the defense. She pointedly asks Dixon to explain. When the judge orders a recess after conferring with the prosecution, Pierce's emotions are unleashed again. She yells, "No, no, he's the one [Dixon] who should be under arrest."

The important point about Pierce's compassion is what motivates it. A lawyer's concern for her client's well-being is not unusual in film. But usually that compassion is seen as being necessitated by something other than the client's simple humanity. In lawyer genre films, a lawyer's compassion is often linked to the lawyer's need to overcome a fall from grace. Other times, it is an emotion used to establish the heroic qualities of the star. But Pierce's compassion is not revealed in order to serve larger dramatic purposes. Rather, it is a simple human decency, mirrored in the larger political movement and in the audience. It keeps her going. It is not more dramatic, grandiose, or heroic than the drudgery of her legal work, but it is fundamental to her commitment to the kind of lawyering she practices.

From law school forward, law is presented as a system based on rational thinking. Emotions are banned from this arena. But as any practicing lawyer knows, emotions are a critical part of what drives legal work and what keeps a lawyer going. This ethic of care is alive and vivid in Thompson's portrayal of Gareth Pierce. It stands in stark contrast to many

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30. See, e.g., The Accused (Paramount 1988); Primal Fear, supra note 2.
31. See, e.g., To Kill a Mockingbird (Universal-International 1962); The Client (Warner Brothers 1995).
other film portrayals where emotions either get in the way of a lawyer's duty—for example, when lawyers are shown falling in love with their clients\textsuperscript{34}—or must be kept in check, so as not to diminish the lawyer's ability to function.\textsuperscript{35}

Conclusion

\textit{In the Name of the Father} is a compelling display of the symbiotic relationship between political activism and lawyering. As such, it pushes the boundaries of the lawyer film genre. It presents clients and lawyers who are neither larger than the political movement that saved them, nor are simply soldiers in the larger struggle. Their individuality is developed, but in the context of social forces that transform them. Their struggles are immensely dramatic, but also made up of the most mundane kind of work. And their successes, while certainly their own, are unimaginable without the help and support of a larger political movement. There are few films that ever convey a sense of what it means to be part of a larger political struggle: placing that insight and artistically-realized depiction in a film about a legal battle truly makes \textit{In the Name of the Father} a film no lawyer should miss.

\textsuperscript{34} See, e.g., \textit{Jagged Edge} (Columbia 1985).

\textsuperscript{35} See, e.g., \textit{A Few Good Men} (Columbia 1992); \textit{And Justice For All} (Columbia 1979); \textit{A Soldier's Story} (Columbia 1984).