

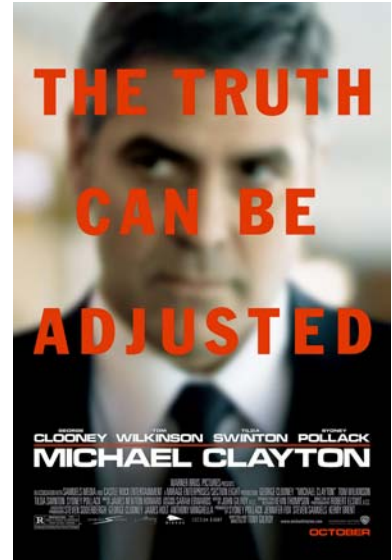
Michael Clayton (MA)

About the film

"The truth can be adjusted"

Michael Clayton (George Clooney) is an in-house "fixer" at one of the largest corporate law firms in New York.

A former criminal prosecutor, Clayton takes care of Kenner, Bach & Ledeen's dirtiest work at the behest of the firm's co-founder Marty Bach (Sydney Pollack). Though burned out and hardly content with his job as a fixer, his divorce, a failed business venture and mounting debt have left Clayton inextricably tied to the firm.



At U/North, meanwhile, the career of litigator Karen Crowder (Tilda Swinton) rests on the multi-million dollar settlement of a class action suit that Clayton's firm is leading to a seemingly successful conclusion.

But when Kenner Bach's brilliant and guilt-ridden attorney Arthur Edens (Tom Wilkinson) sabotages the U/North case, Clayton faces the biggest challenge of his career and his life.

Review

"Michael Clayton is not a film of pizzazz, pulse-pounding action, or fireworks. It is a deliberate and measured look at what happens when you wake up one day and realize you can no longer recognize the man staring back at you from the bathroom mirror. While the film's title is certainly lackluster, in a way it is the ideal designation. For in the end, what's important is not the case or the conspiracy. It is a man—and the choices the man makes." *Brandon Fibbs – Christianity Today*

Filmmakers Statement

"Given the infinity of destructive moral choices that are made every day by people who know what they're doing is wrong, it's always amazed me that there aren't more whistleblowers.

"When you consider how much is wrong, how deep that wrong is, and how much of it's done by people who go home and pay their taxes and love their children, isn't it astonishing how few actually go off the deep end?" offers writer/director Tony Gilroy.

Discussion Questions

1. The film's tagline is, "Truth Can Be Adjusted." Do you agree, or disagree? Why? Are there any circumstances under which that might be true?

2. At one point, Clayton's in-car navigation system is unable to show him the correct direction to proceed. Could the malfunctioning computer be a metaphor for anything else in Clayton's life and, if so, what does it mean?

3. While Clayton plays poker, a reckless game of chance, his son is obsessed with the fictitious fantasy book series and game, Realm and Conquest. Why does this story of epic journeys and virtuous heroes so appeal to the imbalanced Arthur Edens when he hears about it?

4. Discuss the ways in which noble intentions can erode over time, eaten away by small compromises that consume our idealism and resolve. What leads to this collapse and what can we do to prevent it?

5. What would you have done in Clayton's shoes?