

## President's Message

By Lee J. Morehead



I hope all of you took some much needed time off and relaxed for at least a little bit this past Labor Day weekend. Over the weekend, I was asked by a longtime friend how practicing law in real life compares to television's depiction. I think we all know the answer but it made me think about some of my favorite television lawyers of all time. In the spirit of Labor Day, I thought this month's Bar Call could use some levity and entertainment. So without further ado, here is WatchMojo's list of the top 10 television lawyers of all time. Most of these lawyers should NOT be emulated.

### **#10 Theodore "Ted" Buckland (Sam Lloyd); Show – [Scrubs].**



Ted is an attorney, but not a very good one. He is, in fact, a rather horrible one. He took the bar exam in Alaska, where, according to him, there are only ten laws. He is always worried about the hospital getting sued. "Finally, doctors, if there is a mistake, don't admit it to the patient. Of course, if the patient is deceased – and you're sure – you can feel free to tell him or her... anything."

### **#9 Lionel Hutz (voiced by Phil Hartman); Show – Simpsons.**



Hutz is a stereotypical ambulance chasing lawyer in Springfield with questionable competence and ethics. He is nevertheless often hired by the Simpsons. Hutz's law firm is named "I Can't Believe It's a Law Firm!" where he also offers expert shoe repair. "Here's my card. It turns into a sponge when you put it in water."

### **#8 John James "Jack" McCoy (Sam Waterson); Show – Law and Order.**



McCoy often bends – and sometimes breaks – trial rules to get convictions. His underlying motivation, however, is a sincere desire to seek justice. "We are doing what the law requires. No more, no less."

**#7 Allison Marie “Ally” McBeal (Calista Flockhart); Show – Ally McBeal.**



After leaving her previous job due to sexual harassment, McBeal joins the firm of Cage and Fish where she learns she will be practicing with her ex-boyfriend, Billy Thomas who is now married to a fellow lawyer, Georgia, who also works for the firm. Although ostensibly a legal drama, the main focus of the series was the romantic and personal lives of the main characters using legal proceedings as plot devices. “I have a friend who refuses to get a pet because he says in the end they die and it’s just too hard... maybe it’s the same with relationships.”

**#6 Jackie Chiles (Phil Morris); Show – Seinfeld.**



Chiles is a parody of famed attorney Johnnie Cochran; both are bespectacled, mustachioed, well-dressed, African-American lawyers with the same initials and penchants for grandiose vocabulary. “It’s an infringement of your constitutional rights. It’s outrageous, egregious, preposterous.”

**#5 Reinhold Daniel “Dan” Fielding Elmore (John Larroquette); Show – Night Court.**



Fielding is a sex-obsessed narcissistic prosecutor. He is the source of many witty and sometimes cruel remarks regarding almost every other character, although he occasionally shows a decent sized streak of compassion on critical occasions. “All right, maybe I wasn't able to afford some snooty Ivy League education. But let me tell you something. When you get your degree from the Bayou Academy of Law & Agriculture, you learn something else: a fighting sow-belly has to WORK for what he wants.”

**#4 – James Morgan “Jimmy” McGill dba “Saul Goodman” (Bob Odenkirk); Shows – Breaking Bad and Better Call Saul.**



Goodman is a criminal lawyer and accomplice to the New Mexico methamphetamine kingpins Walter White and Jesse Pinkman. He is known for his low-budget television commercials and print advertisements with the tag line “Better Call Saul.” “You are now both officially represented by Saul Goodman and Associates. Your secrets are safe with me under threat of disbarment. Alright? Take the ski masks off. I feel like I’m talking to the weather underground here.”

**#3 – Alan Shore (James Spader) and Denny Crane (William Shatner); Show – Boston Legal.** Two for the price of one.

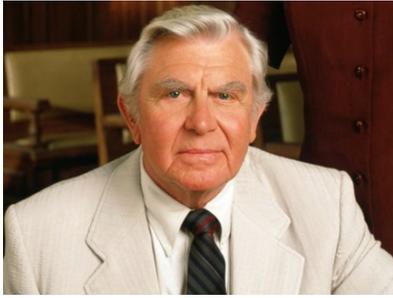


Shore is a brilliant lawyer with a strong moral core who nevertheless is not above obtaining ethical outcomes through unethical means. Computer hacking, blackmail, disguise and bribery are all tools he uses without hesitation. “Yes, I did see someone’s things here. I moved them to a less desirable location. I’m sorry. We’re not territorial about that sort of thing around here are we?”



Crane is a renowned attorney of some fifty years of practice who claims he has never lost a case. He considers himself a legend and loves to say his own name to “sign” his verbal utterances. “Sally, that was not a pleasant meeting. Typically when associates are unhappy, I give them a hug.”

**#2 – Benjamin Leighton “Ben” Matlock (Andy Griffith); Show – Matlock.**



Matlock is a renowned, folksy and popular though cantankerous attorney. Usually, at the end of the case, the person who is on the stand being questioned by Matlock is the actual perpetrator, and Matlock will expose him, despite making clear that his one goal is to prove reasonable doubt in the case of his client's guilt or to prove his client's innocence. "It's very strange. If it happened on the street it would be strange. But in his chambers, it's very strange."

**#1 – Perry Mason (Raymond Burr); Show – Perry Mason.**



Hollywood's first weekly one-hour series filmed for television, Perry Mason is one of T.V.'s longest-running and most successful legal series. Mason is the archetype of all future lawyers on television. Mason is a distinguished criminal defense attorney practicing in Los Angeles. Most of his clients have been charged with murder. Mason typically establishes his client's innocence by dramatically demonstrating the guilt of another. The murderer often breaks down and confesses to the murder. "Remember Cartwright, don't have secrets from your lawyer. I won't betray your confidence."

I hope you found the list as entertaining as me. Please check the announcements section of this Month's Bar Call for upcoming events. See you in the fall.

Lee J. Morehead, Esq.  
President, Weld County Bar Association.