



The [William S. Paley Television Festival](#) was held March 15, 2005 in Hollywood at the [Directors Guild of America Theater](#). Attending were René Auberjonois, William Shatner, James Spader, Mark Valley, Betty White and production creatives Bill D'Elia, Scott Kaufer and David E. Kelley. The moderator was David Wild. The two-hour program began with a pre-broadcast airing of Boston Legal episode 17, "Death Be Not Proud", introduced by David E. Kelley. Following the screening, the moderator introduced each cast member and executive, then led a discussion about the show, its production and storylines. The final thirty minutes engaged the audience, soliciting about a dozen questions. This is a transcript of the discussion, transcribed by 'Imamess'.
[<http://Boston-Legal.org>]

[Note: this is an ongoing work in progress that will continue to be edited as time permits. If you are listening and reading along and can decipher any words that are currently represented as "???", please email corrections to bostonillegal@gmail.com. The audio of the entire event can be streamed from <http://boston-legal.org/tvfest.shtml>. Thank you.]

David Wild to William Shatner: I think I speak for a lot of people, you know, as much as we've loved you and watched you, we're seeing new shades in you as an actor, working with David E. Kelley. What is it like to have him writing for you?

William Shatner: Well, that is exactly it, the shades that he writes. David is... David's... I've been asked frequently about heroes of mine, and I can't, I can never think of one, and tonight I've found one. David's a hero of mine. I mean to say, he's an unusual writer, evidenced by the good taste of the academy voting for him, for a comedy and a drama at the same time, all of which he wrote. So, he enters into the area of genius, I think, and in doing that, we look at his words with such respect that we don't change them. You know actors like to play around with words. Not only do we not change them, we're not allowed to change them. Today I had the choice between something he'd wrote earlier called, I'm supposed to say, "What was that lady? That's nasty and I love it." And then he rewrote it and said, "That's wicked and I love it." So I said, "Well I thought 'nasty' was better." And David sent down word from on high, that 'wicked' was the word he'd chosen because it had ramifications he saw further in the character. So it was that kind of level of writing that we're talking about that is probably unique in television.

David E. Kelley: That's a wicked story.

David Wild to James Spader: Mr Spader? From your point of view, what was... the decision to go into television and to work with David E. Kelley? What attracted you to this collaboration?

David E. Kelley: Yeah. Make this a short story now.

James Spader: It took three or four meetings. Just that, was David. We got together, and I think I eked several cups of coffee out of him. And, it was just his imagination for this character and last year on *The Practice*, which was what we were talking about at the time. I sort of was drawn to the tumultuous nature of what going to be unfolding during the course of the season. And the fact that this character was to a great degree going to be the catalyst of this change. And in terms of David and his writing, there's many things that are difficult about doing hour-long drama that I had never thought of or expected, and some that I had. But one that I was taken completely by surprise, that is the thing that for me is what carries me through the whole season. And that is waiting with tremendous anticipation for next week's episode. And that I'd

never experienced, on any level. I'd never been a TV watcher really, and I now understand why people like to watch a show on a regular basis, because I look so forward to getting the script when it comes in for the next episode and find out what the hell all these people are gonna be up to.

David Wild: Along this line David, do you wanna tell us what's gonna happen the rest of this season?

David E. Kelley: Uhm.

David Wild: You don't have to.

David Wild to David E. Kelley: This show had a slightly unusual and unusually successful birth. Can you explain how this show evolved for you? Because I mean we've actually sort of seen this show evolve in this unusual way.

David E. Kelley: Well, it was *The Practice* last year and in an effort to rejuvenate and renew *The Practice* creatively, we brought in this new character, Alan Shore, and the series quickly began to devolve around that character. And I found myself, in writing the series last year, in trying to spread the wealth, because it was an ensemble show, that when I had written episodes through the prism of other characters, I had felt an element of sameness, we had been there in some version before. So I ultimately became, I kept gravitating back to this character, Alan Shore. I had a tremendous luxury with the character because when we devised him, it was not a character that was gonna have to live on in perpetuity in TV Land. I thought *The Practice* had maybe 1 or 2 years left, so that was a tremendous license to story-tell. Wow! You've got a character now, you don't have to keep likeable, or maintain his redeeming qualities. You can just play with him, let him go.

5:00

James Spader: You can kill him! If you want.

David E. Kelley: So we let him go. And he embraced that. He said, "I'm willing to do anything." And we just sailed. And I really thought by the end of the season, last year, we would end up with his disbarment. I wasn't gonna kill you.

James Spader: It was worse.

David E. Kelley: But we kept going with it, and by show 15 or 16, I had a meeting with the executors at ABC, and we talked about going forward as *The Practice* or going forward as a new beast around Alan Shore's character. And by that time the series had already sort of declared itself what it wanted to be, and that was a new animal. So we came up with a new series which started with this character, with that franchise we had to populate it with others. We initially brought Bill in because we went to this new firm Crane, Poole and Schmidt where he was the senior partner. And then over the back 4 or 5 episodes at the end of *The Practice* we were doing two things, we were closing out one series and giving birth to a new one.

David Wild to William Shatner: Can you discuss the decision to do the show? Was it a difficult choice at all for you?

William Shatner: It wasn't difficult to act, to wanna be a part of the show. What gave me thought was to do another series, which I didn't, it's so time consuming, I don't have to tell anybody the labor, of hours, even in an ensemble piece, of what it takes, how it takes, what it takes from the rest of you life. But David had always intrigued me as an artist, and then when James' name was brought into it, I knew I had to give this one more try. The character that David outlined was even in its early stages was unique and so I thought I had to do this one more time.

David Wild to David E. Kelley: Was he always by the way, Denny Crane?

William Shatner: Yes.

David E. Kelley: We had a breakfast meeting, cause I had never met Bill, and I'm always suspicious of icons because sometimes they're not always able to laugh at themselves. And we had this meeting at this breakfast and this character we definitely have to be willing to laugh at this character and with this character, and sometimes we're not gonna know the difference. And when Denny speaks we won't always know if he knows what he's talking about.

William Shatner: And unfortunately that goes with the actor as well.

David E. Kelley: His eyes lit up right then and there, and then, day one, he came and inhabited this character and started walking around saying Denny Crane, Denny Crane. And it took...

David Wild: Any chance Denny Crane will record an album at any point?

William Shatner: I already have.

David Wild to Betty White: Betty, your decision to work with David, initially in *The Practice*, what drew you to working with David?

Betty White: I would crawl on my knees and beg to be part of this show. I had no idea that I would ever... and I'm such peripheral part, such a little bitty part, but people use it as a conversation starter. They say, "Oh I saw you on *Boston Legal*." And then like its one sentence, "Oh I saw you on *Boston Legal*, that's my favorite show." It's all hyphenated. David somehow sees a different side of Betty White. In *Alley McBeal* he had me a pill-pusher I had ??? pills. I was trying to get Ally to take pills, so we could take them together. I especially liked the suppositories cause they give you a little jiggle. But then on *The Practice* I was this old woman up in the wilds of Maine with a mouth like a truck driver, and little grandmothers across an airport will say, "Oh, loved you in Lake Placid." I always apologize for the language. "Oh no. That was... Well..." When I heard I was gonna get a shot at *The Practice*, just a small part, I was your friendly neighborhood blackmailer. Then when *Boston Legal* came along and I found out I was still Catherine Piper, it's a very small part but I'm still rotten. You know David, you see a whole new side, a ??? side.

10:00

David Wild: Speaking of a whole new side, I wanna direct this question, anyone please chime in to any of these questions, but start up with Bill and Scott. To me *Boston Legal*, although it obviously has this connection to *The Practice*, is a very different show visually, tonally, stylistically, pace, colors. There's a difference. How would you describe the difference for you between the two shows?

Bill D'Elia: They're completely different. David called me right toward the latter part of *The Practice* and his very words to me were, he wanted to create a show that was bald and dazzling, and visually???, and as different from *The Practice* as we could make it look. Then when we began to talk about the characters and how they would live in this world, it seemed to me that these are lawyers and people of enormous wealth who shoot from the hip and are quite crazy. The palette of colors that they would inhabit, we really chose to bring out different colors in the wood as opposed to the dark browns that you see in most courtroom dramas. We created a courtroom look that was much brighter and more modern than any courtroom drama that I've seen. And then we decided that these guys shoot from the hip. That's what we're gonna do to. And we created this style with... we always shoot with two cameras and quite often, all the time in the courtroom with three cameras, wanna make it feel as if we're capturing these guys as they're making this stuff up. We wanna just feel like we're capturing what's really going on, which is quite different than the feel and the look of *The Practice* which is very serious, quite gritty. We went for a real gloss in our look, and tonally I wanted the visuals to capture that style that I knew was gonna go from enormously funny to quite serious, that you witnessed here tonight.

David Wild: Scott? From your point of view?

Scott Kaufer: The reason I wanted to get involved in this is, as a viewer of David's work over the years, I always saw this sort of Dickensian quality to his view of the law. I always felt that *The Practice* unbound would be a terrific show and that's apparently what he wanted to do here so I signed on willingly for that. The thing I remember the first time I met David was, we had like a twenty minute interview, he was having a casting crisis that day and had to cut it short, and he said, his last question to me was, "Can you write fast?" And I said you know I don't write David Kelley fast. I write fast. He said, "Okay. Good." The next thing I know my agent called me and said I was hired. Cut to three or four months later, David was writing his first script of the season and he said, "I have an idea for something I'd like to do." And I said, "Okay do you know what it is?" And he says, "Well... I haven't... not really. I'm gonna kinda think about it this afternoon. I said, "Well, do you have any idea when it's gonna come in?" He said, "I have no idea. But I mean, I'll have something for you, you know, on paper tomorrow, you know, some ideas." So I said to my assistant, the next day, I said, "You know David's gonna fax us down an outline, and when you get it, you know, let me see it." A couple of hours later she said, "His script just came in." And I said, "No, it's the outline that came." She said, "No. It was the script that just came in." So that was my introduction to...

David Wild to René Auberjonois: Rene? Can you describe what drew you to the firm?

René Auberjonois: What drew me to the firm? I do not, I hope I'm not telling tales out of school, but then I guess that's what this evening is about. Actually... I was actually, I think, an afterthought because I had been working in New York in a play and I came back, it was in August, and I really didn't expect to get back to work for a while. Then I got a call from Bill D'Elia, who is an old friend, who I've worked with before and there was a part in this show that had already been shooting for 3 or 4 episodes, I'm not sure, and would I consider it?

???: Oh my God!

14:44

René Auberjonois: So. Because your agent always says, "Well you should read the script." Well I had been fortunate enough to do a *Chicago Hope* and a couple of episodes of *The Practice*.

Actually now, tonight it occurred to me I also did a ????. I played a poster, I played Einstein, a picture of Einstein that ????. Anyway, so I was thrilled at the idea, and originally I just came in to do five episodes and the first few of these shows that were already shot, I would stand there and Bill would look at the monitor and say, "Okay, you could walk in now!" Because they would look at what they'd already shot, and then I would walk in and do whatever I was supposed to do. The truth is that's sort of the nature of my character still. I sort of sit on the bench and there's a scene in tonight, this episode that you just saw, which I thought we shot yesterday. When this came on I do get a little confused sometimes about what I'm doing in each episode. When we sit down to watch it on Sunday night I'm not sure I'm in it. I go, "I think I'm in this one." In this case there was a scene where I walk in to talk with Rhona, and I shot it a few days ago.

???: We just shot it Friday morning.

René Auberjonois: Yeah. Right. That's where I am. I sit on the bench and wait. And I'm thrilled to be doing it.

David Wild: I should explain that the other members of the case all wanted to be here, but because of production reasons couldn't. Candice Bergen. Rhona Mitra you just mentioned. Monica Potter.

David Wild to Mark Valley: Mark, a question for you. I honestly loved you on Keen Eddy. I thought you were great! Still, you're sitting at the point of making a very obvious point; you're sitting between William Shatner and Betty White. There are icons on this shows that just must be... Were you at all daunted by the people you were working with?

William Shatner: Daunted?

Mark Valley: I was a little daunted today. We were doing a scene and things were moving a little bit slowly and Bill looked over at me, and he goes, "Energize." Just when I thought I'd gotten used to everything, you know? I could deal with anything that came up. No it's... yeah, it's pretty incredible. I thing one day were working, it was Candice was there, and Bill was there, and Shelly Long was there. These are the people that... You know and Betty...

William Shatner: Don't say you grew up with them.

Mark Valley: These are all shows my parents would tell me about. It was fabulous. And there's Shelly, Shelly Long, and the grip almost ran her over, and I thought, "God if this was *Cheers* they'd be like rolling out a carpet for her." And Betty as well, I remember saying to Betty once, I said, "Betty? I heard that you did live television?" She said, "Oh dear, that's all we had back then." So it's just been really phenomenal to go to work and to see all these people. ???

David Wild to David E. Kelley: David, talk a little about your cast and what drew you to these people, and what you as a writer, what, you know, what kind of pleasure it is writing for the kind of talent you have.

David E. Kelley: Well it's an incredible pleasure because there's such a diversity of talent, when you sit down as storytellers, we're not limited. If we wanna do, like you saw tonight the story on nymphomania or going into the death penalty, we're equipped with the acting talent to be able to tell those stories. That is, that's just a joy for all of us. In terms of what drew me to them, or drew them to the show, casting is very very inexact; and you, you know, we started with James, and then Bill, and then you begin to populate the franchise and you start to think of the multitude

of equations, and those equations can be with two characters, they can be with three characters, four characters, and it's very unscientific. You just kind of sit; scratch your head, and kind of figure out the population. This is a very, you know disparate group with respect to what they bring to the show and they talk about... oh you have one line, two lines here and there, but that's a very very difficult thing, If you're gonna go out there and look for an actor who can walk into a scene and have an immediate impact, make you laugh and walk off, there aren't many of them. In a comedic show everyone has to have comedic sensibilities, and yet one of the things that we've found, at the beginning of the show, is we weren't really rooted in a reality. We had a bunch of loonies running around in the colluder of eccentrics, but nothing really to ground it. That's why we went back and got Rene and started sprinkling him in all these early episodes, because when he came on he had such an integrity to his performance, you said, "Okay. It's a real law firm." After that, he has wonderful deadpan qualities. When he's staring at Denny Crane for the latest utterance that's come out of his mouth. When he's squinting at Alan Shore, he allows the audience to share with him incredulity at the on goings of these kooks. They all play their parts. Mark we'd use for straight man on so many occasions and yet he's gotta be able to step off an elevator dressed as an elf, and make us laugh. And he's able to do that. We want him to lead in the courtroom. We also want to be able to laugh at him and with him like we do with Denny Crane. They all have their individual strengths, and as producers, what Bill and Scott and I will try to do is try and make the equation add up to an ensemble that works as a group.

21:33

David Wild to audience: We're gonna get to your questions after one more question from me, so don't lose hope.

David Wild to David E. Kelley: You mentioned being limited. I just... to be topical, I have to ask, I know you like to be fair and balanced, in the current media environment, do you feel at all limited? You know recent events being...

David E. Kelley: You're referring to the episode that just aired? I've never felt limited as a storyteller on network television. I know, you know I'll have lunch with David Militch, he'll talk about HBO, he'll say, "The words! The words!" Well, he has his vocabulary and I have mine. I've never felt constrained by network television. I get jealous of the commercial time; our episodes are fragmented and interrupted all the time. I sometimes feel limited as a storyteller, emotionally, because it's very tough to tell a slow emotionally building story on network television, when every nine minutes a Darth commercial is gonna ram in there with a jingle. It puts a tremendous impetus on us to then come back ramming in when we come back from a commercial. We sometimes feel the burden to be big to compete with the noise between our acts. That's the biggest thing. In terms of ideas, I've never felt limited. What you refer to is last week with the Fox News episode.

David Wild: Is that what it was?

David E. Kelley: That was first time in 18 years, that was the first I've ever had a network try to squelch an idea. We've certainly had them come and say, "Well you can't say this word, that violence is gratuitous, you can't show that nudity." This was the first time we really got the feeling that the network just did not want us to tell this story. They first said, "You can't say Fox because that mentions a competitor. We don't like to give them any publicity, good or bad." We pointed out to them that we had said CBS three episodes before that. Alan Shore is constantly reminds us he wants to be on HBO. They've never had a problem with that. They first

maintained it was a sales issue, then the entertainment division said, “No, it’s just we don’t want to speak badly of another network.” We never quite figured out what was going on. All we were able to tumble through is that the idea of the story that there is a bias in the news industry was not one that they were wild about telling. We were ultimately able to tell it but I would be dishonest if I didn’t say we all took a deep breath and said, “What’s going on here, when all of a sudden this isn’t just an exposed breast of Janet Jackson or something else. This is a story idea that they’re trying to the crimps on.” And it did give us all pause.

David Wild to the audience: Great. Let’s go to your questions now.

Audience member: Two things Mr Shatner, everyone here is never gonna forgive you if just don’t say it at least once. Please.

William Shatner: Denny Crane. And that’s not the only way.

25:00

Audience member: How did the deal come up with you constantly saying, “Cuckoo for Coco Puffs” in the press lane?

William Shatner: Cuckoo for Coco Puffs? That’s David’s.

David E. Kelley: I like Coco Puffs.

William Shatner: At one point I misread the line, I said, “Cuckoo for Cuckoo Puffs.” Somehow that appeared in the scripts, I don’t know how I was ??? a bad taste.

???: I’ll tell you how that appeared. When we had “Cuckoo for Coco Puffs”, we got the network note that we can’t say it, because of commercial considerations. It was a sales issue. So the next time David wrote it, he wrote “Cuckoo for Cuckoo Puffs”

William Shatner: How strange fate is.

???: Not everyday you can open up a script and read, “Cuckoo for Cuckoo Puffs”.

???: Quite wonderful.

???: It did work in a ??? I believe.

Audience member: A question about the Denny Crane... Is it for you existential cry? Is it... How do you... The importance of the phrase... Where did that start for you?

David E. Kelley: The importance of... It was really... It started with... This was a character who believed saying his name would be enough to win an argument at court. It would start a legend and an icon as litigator, that the name Denny Crane would stir awe in his opponents, and it was currency for him. So he got used to saying Denny Crane, and cases would sometimes settle. Now he’s at the point in his career where he’s forgotten a legal argument so he just says, “Denny Crane.”

Audience member to David E. Kelley: I'm a college student at ??? University and me and my friend and I are both writing, and have considered *Boston Legal* in our TV Writing class. Mr Kelley, what advice would give to new writers trying to break into series television?

David E. Kelley: Breaking into television? Write, write, write and write. And after you write, get a bunch of friends and hear the words aloud. Because I think the biggest mistake from young writers, they... We all speak two languages. We speak one orally and we write one verbally, and when we write, the biggest mistake can sometimes... Since you're writing, you write verbal characters, and they don't sound like dialog. So I would encourage you to say it aloud. Does it sound like people talk? Does it sound like the characters talk? Then, the second piece of advice is be as true to your own instincts as you possibly can, don't subjugate them to other, because, to other people's opinions, because if you... You have to find you own voice, and no one else is gonna tell you what that voice is. So you've gotta write, you've gotta write, say the words aloud, find the stories, the ideas, the characters that are in you and give voice to them.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: I know this ????. Can I ask you? I know while you were still a lawyer I believe you wrote from the hip? Is that true?

David E. Kelley: Uh hum?

Audience member to David E. Kelley: Was that your first attempt at a screenplay, or is it something you've been working on for years?

David E. Kelley: No that... Well I'd worked on it over the course of about a year and a half, and then it was my first attempt.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: Mr Kelley, I'm just wondering after seeing this episode tonight, I'm wondering how accurate the information was about Texas, and if that was fiction, or, you know, if you researched that... I'm hoping that you made it up.

David E. Kelley: Well. It was pretty accurate. Jonathan Shapiro, who co-wrote that episode with me, did most of the research, was a former US attorney... he... Jonathan? Are you here? After we, I'll tell you, after we finished the episode we sent it to Texas, to one of Jonathan's colleges who worked in the Justice Department in Texas, and we asked for his notes for his accuracy. He came back with one note! Which is a credit to Jon whose research is... They would never get a cell phone into the death's into the ????. That is... We had to take license. If you remember, someone says to Chelina, "How'd you get that cell phone? No cell phones in here." to accommodate it. But everything else was pretty accurate.

James Spader: I had read an article that actually, funny enough, David and I had spoken about, in the LA Times... about... several months ago, it was just before you would write, while you were writing the episode, and it had a... there was little table in there that talked about executions in the United States since 1978 because of an execution that was gonna happen in California. And the figures... I can't recall exactly what the figures were, but the figures were not out of line at all with what was depicted in the episode. The figures in Texas since 1978 were 300 some odd executions, and I think the next highest state was maybe just over 100? Or less?

30:18

Audience member to James Spader: I do have a question for James. Your character is so deep and so complex, and you know, I was just wondering if like, did it take you a long time to get used to that character? I mean, or is that just you right off the bat?

???: Are you deep and complex?

James Spader: I blame it all on David. I tell him as often as I can that Alan Shore is all from him, and I'm just saying it. He really is a lot like Alan Shore, and I'm just pretending.

Audience member to James Spader: If I could follow up on that. Do you like Alan Shore?

James Spader: Very, very much.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: First of all thank you very much for such great shows every Sunday night. Just enjoy it every week.

David E. Kelley: Thank you for watching.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: Two questions. This is not the first show that you've blown up and recreated, you also did that to the next to last season of *Chicago Hope*, Mr Kelley, and I like to see if you would draw any parallels between the two experiences. And the second question is, since you began this show at the end of one season and continued it into the next, I'm curious if anything unusual happened in the rehearsal process to create... flesh out the characters and their relationships?

David E. Kelley: *Chicago Hope* though, there was, at the end of, I think it was the 5th season, we made huge wholesale changes. It was basically still the same franchise, so it wasn't quite so, different, I guess the word is, as *The Practice* and *Boston Legal*. Here were really were giving rise to a completely new series, new tonally, new look. I mean *Chicago Hope* we had the same sets, we had... a few characters came back, but it was basically the same old show with new people. *Boston Legal* was a completely new show. In terms of finding the show... I think your question was finding the show last season while we were doing *The Practice*. It was a little tricky, because... had to walk down to the set and announce to the crew, a crew that was devoted to *The Practice*, a cast that was devoted to the show, and tell them that the series would not be coming back. That we would be morphing into a new series, *Boston Legal*, that nobody's job's were guaranteed, because it was going to be a new show with a new look, with new cast and yet I was going to rely on them to help give birth to it. We needed their devotion, their effort all over again with the creation of this new series, and to their professional credit, they did so. It couldn't have been easy, especially for the cast members, because they were acting what they were living, a little bit. They were being displaced by new characters coming in to take their jobs in a way. So it was a little tricky. Bill could probably speak to it more than I could because he was there, but we were all taken with the professionalism and the dedication of that *Practice* crew, and the actors, as we went through the transition. Bill? Anything?

Bill D'Elia: Well. I was there for both of them. The episode at the end of *Chicago Hope* where most of the cast changed, and I was there for the beginning of this. This was extremely challenging, daunting and difficult. Because, just speaking for myself, I came in... David just asked to come in and try to help him figure out what this new show was. The challenging and wonderful part is that we had six episodes to do that. The difficult part is what David just talked about. I mean, having this crew that had been together for nine years, and this cast, most of them had been together for that entire nine years, help us do that, knowing that they quite

possibly would be out of a job, was a very difficult, speaking for myself, it was a very difficult leadership role to take. But having those six episodes and having those talented people help us create a new show was an extremely unique opportunity, because usually you get your shot at, here's the script, here's the pilot, take your best shot, we'll look at it, let you know if you're on the air. We had six episodes to do that, after which we destroyed all those sets, created new ones, inhabited a new world, and basically shot a pilot, again! So this was a... I don't know of a television show that actually started this way, ever.

35:31

David E. Kelley to James Spader: It was probably the most difficult for this guy right here, because, here you came on to a series, the new player.

James Spader: Yes.

David E. Kelley to James Spader: On a show that had been together seven, eight years, and now at the back end of the year, we're announcing that the show is stopping, and we're creating a new franchise to devolve around this character. That couldn't have been easy for you?

James Spader: I kept to myself.

???: I think you said, "It could be worse."

William Schatner: At least you had good company.

Dana Greenlee to Mark Valley: My question is for Mark Valley. I enjoyed ??? in the wagers ??? Brad has a little bit of a gambling problem, so I want you just to imagine if you, as Mark, had a wager with David, and you won, and what you win was you get to suggest a storylines, to commission to write a script that is Brad Chase centric. And what would your storylines be?

Mark Valley: Well, I'm gonna make this brief. I think I would like to have Brad go to Paris, cause there was some case about these three beautiful Bulgarian models, they've been accused of some legal thing. Then he came back and went to rehab for gambling, and other, you know, things that you probably can't show on network television.

Dana Greenlee to Mark Valley: 'Kay.

Mark Valley: Now, um, that's a strange thing to ask.

Dana Greenlee to Mark Valley: We need more Brad.

Betty White: I need the present company.

Mark Valley: Yeah. Exactly. I'd better stop now.

Audience member to James Spader: I'm from Texas, but I've had my shots. That episode being completely utterly realistic to me. My first college dorm room was down the street from where they execute people. It happens all the time. I have wondered this every since James Spader came on *The Practice*, and I wanted to ask Mr Spader, you're one of my very favorite actors ??? media tag. We loved *Secretary*. Maybe they don't have any relationship with whoever, but I

wanted to ask if the character, the ??? loveable Alan Shore was affected in any way at all in terms of creation, or testing, or portrayal by the first lovable E. Edward Gray?

James Spader: I'd like to think so. I... Had you seen *Secretary*?

David E. Kelley: I had.

James Spader: There you go. I know that I think about that a lot when I'm on the set. Especially in the scenes with Betty. There's food for thought.

???: I thought both characters were tough, but fair, as bosses.

Audience member to William Shatner: I want to just thank you because I want you to know, my mother, this is her favorite show, and I love this show, and it's the only show we have in common. It's such a pleasure, and to Mr Shatner, I have never grown up, I'm still Peter Pan, and I feel like you're the same way because I've watched you so much over the years, and I love the imp in your eyes.

William Shatner: Thank you.

40:00

James Spader: It's not just in his eyes.

William Shatner: Well, I was gonna retort to that, but I thought I'd leave it alone.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: It seems like in the last season of *The Practice* when Alan Shore goes to Crane, Poole and Schmidt you kinda tone it down, the character a little in order to play up Denny Crane eccentricities, I was wondering, and I'm very happy that in *Boston Legal* that you've kinda brought Alan Shore back to what he was. What was your thinking about that, and did Mr Spader mind at all?

David E. Kelley: I think I was conscience of toning down the character, maybe I did, but my experience of it was that, having gone to a less rigid place, and sort of a more eccentric venue, from a relative standpoint he's seemed less eccentric. It was very easy. He could be a disrupter, so easily at *The Practice*, opposite Eugene Young and Steve Harris, just by looking at him cross-eyed. Once we moved over to Crane, Poole and Schmidt, since the firm itself was a little bit awry, I think he stood out less as a disrupter. That was one of the things that we battled with the early part this season, is we needed to get some sense of structure and rigidity to this firm and let Alan Shore orbit around it, and that's one of the reasons we had brought Rene in. To give that firm credibility, to give it structure, to give it a little bit of jeopardy for Alan Shore's character.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: I should ask this. She's not here. Candice Bergen. What was the spark to bring her to the show?

David E. Kelley: Well, that's just... When you have an opportunity to get Candice Bergen you just do everything you can to get her. She's going to benefit any franchise that she joins; she can move a show dramatically. She's very comedic. She's very classy. She's beautiful. That was just a real no-brainer to want to get her. The more difficult to sign her was convincing her to come aboard.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: How hard a process was...?

David E. Kelley: It didn't turn out to be that hard. She lived in New York. We'd got the message that she was going to do television; it was going to be on a limited basis, she has a very active life back there. Fortunately for us she really responded to the character. Once she came out and did a few episodes with this group, she wanted to stay. So, I'm probably grateful to the team here for showing her such a good time.

David Wild: We have time for just a couple a more questions. The lady in the center here please.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: I'd just like to say that it's such a great show that you don't need any clients? I'd just like to see ??? walking around in the office, walking around interacting. I know you have to have other stories but I'd like to see more of a Lori and Brad and the Alan triangle, Lori's interest in Alan. Are you gonna do any more of this?

David E. Kelley: Well, we get them to...We're not... Lori's interest in Alan we're not servicing so much, but we certainly get into these characters a little bit more as we go down the home stretch. You touched on an interesting problem about clients and other people. Because these characters seem to be so individualistic, I guess to say it, because they all talk in their own way, it's a tremendous burden on our casting directors to cast the guest stars on each show that don't get lost with them. We have, I think I see Ken and Nikki over there? There they are! Over there! They should stand up! Ken Miller and Nikki Valko. Every week they'll get a script on a Tuesday, for a part that shoots Wednesday or Thursday. Not only do they have to find the actor, but they have to find an actor who can hold their own with these guys. It's a difficult assignment for them, and it's tough for us too, when creating characters. The characters have to sort of be a little wilder or more eccentric so they don't get lost.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: And there's a tradition on your shows of guest talent also winning Emmy's and already they know Carl Reiner was on last week and coming up Rupert Everett I guess has already been filming.

45:05

David E. Kelley: He started today.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: Someone else is coming up. Anyone else we can announce? Coming up?

David E. Kelley: Heather Locklear, also started today.

???: I'm not a lawyer like Mr Kelley, but I believe the firm does need clients. And maybe, I could be wrong.

Audience member to David E. Kelley: Have there been any thoughts about bringing back some of the cast from *The Practice*? And guest stars, and updating us on their storylines?

David E. Kelley: No. We haven't truly explored that. I always like the idea of Eugene Young coming back as a Judge, because it would be a great ??? for brother Shore. But we really haven't pursued it. It's a tough thing to do because...

James Spader: I miss the mean man.

David E. Kelley: We certainly don't rule it out. I think the first year of the series you're still intent on establishing your new characters, but it is something. I think we all sort of rub our hands together, to think of seeing Eleanor Frutt come back, or Eugene.

James Spader: That would be great.

David Wild: Is there someone, yeah there's some people in the back row who I feel like I haven't seen till just now. Can we go to the, one of the two people in that little corner over there. Anyone who grabsthe mic first.

Audience member to William Shatner and David E. Kelley: I have two things. First of all has *Boston Legal* has been renewed for a second season? And second, my family collects ketchup bottle, and we actually have a bottle with a William Shatner coat on it and we're wondering if you could possibly sign it.

William Shatner: I'd like the answer to the first question.

David E. Kelley: We have not been officially picked up.

William Shatner: Sorry. Can't sign the bottle.

David E. Kelley: I'm hoping the bottle gets signed eventually.

William Shatner: Bring it up. Bring it up.

Audience member to William Shatner: I have two questions, one directed towards Bill Shatner. What the heck ever happened to *Barbary Coast*? Love that show. The other thing is the first time you and James got together, did a scene together for the first time, what's it feel like?

William Shatner: Well I... First of all *Barbary Coast* got lost in the miasma. This is like turgid. It just got lost. We needed David Kelley. He was swathed in diapers at the time. What scene did you and I do? What did we do first? In *The Practice*?

James Spader: In *The Practice*? Hiring to represent me in the lawsuit with the old firm.

William Shatner: I remember. I had seen... I like all of you I'm sure had followed his career from *Sex, Lies and Videotapes*... Right?

James Spader: There's been quite a few that have those, some of those words.

William Shatner: Well that wonderful movie he did, started with *Sex*. That was your first movie wasn't it?

James Spader: No.

William Shatner: I've followed his career quite a bit. In any case, I admired him as an actor for the longest time and it was a delight to be in a scene with him, and I must say the delight has continued, and enriched and I admire him even more than I did before I worked with him.

David Wild: I think that's enough questions and I guess I would like all of you to join me in thanking the cast and crew of *Boston Legal*.

[50:00]

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