

# television



HELEN CROMPTON

## BOSTON LEGAL

Monday, 10.35pm, Seven and GWN

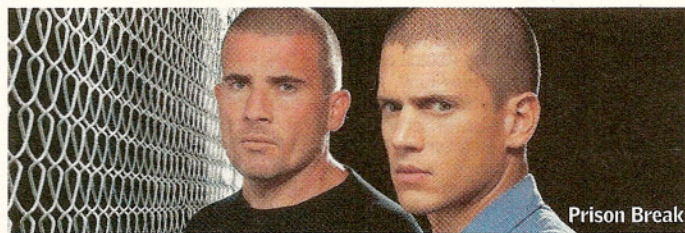
When a show is pushed to the max in terms of smart dialogue, production polish and character actors, it can teeter on the edge of excellence and baloney. (Q: how far can you push the envelope before you are static?) So it is with my fave legal collective. Tonight Crane shoots a homeless guy with a paint gun. (Remember he kneecapped a murderer/rapist the other week.) Not appreciating

the free cosmetic treatment the man sues and Alan Shore steps in as his legal rep. Even when this is silly, it's good.

## PRISON BREAK

Wednesday, 8.30pm, Seven and GWN

I got all excited because this ep is called The End of the Tunnel and I thought goody, finally, the guys are breaking free. But what's this? The missing Lincoln? That's right, Michael's bro, the point of all his body art, has got himself locked up in solitary just as the boys plan to break free. Bugger. Can his sibling genius pull off another plan bristling with logistical smarts and cunning? Meanwhile, estranged partner Veronica is



Prison Break

doing all she can to prove Linc's innocence. It might be the longest-running prison break in history, but hey, they've had setbacks. Watchable.

## THE SAVING OF ANDREW MALLARD

Thursday, 8.30pm, ABC

It's rough enough when an innocent man is wrongly imprisoned. It's worse when that man is vulnerable with a child-like sense of truth. I confess I cried witnessing the grief Andrew Mallard's mother and sister suffered as they battled for over a decade to clear Andrew, who has a bipolar disorder, of the 1994 murder of Mosman Park shop owner Pamela Lawrence. Journalist Colleen Egan, MP John Quigley and QC Malcolm McCusker joined the fight to free Andrew. Note: they had to leave WA to find some justice through Canberra's High Court. Important TV and pertinent viewing for those who would see justice served.

## LOST

Thursday, 8.30pm, Seven and GWN

Michael takes off to look for Walt, with Jack, Locke and Sawyer in hot pursuit. Which is when they meet the leader of The Others. This bearded half-man, half-mystic is expectedly malignant and has far more clout than Jack likes. No faffing around this time for the

good doc, tonight his obsession turns to pragmatism. Yes, producers have eked out this marooned tale by adding new characters and ever more detailed pieces to their past, but it's deftly done and rarely an irritating obstacle to getting on with the job of telling the story.

## MEDIUM

Thursday, 8.30pm, Ten

I've seen a thousand scream moments on telly where a vulnerable young woman is alone at night in her house into which a psycho killer has come waiting to cut her to bits with a dirty great big knife. I hope if it's ever me I don't scream my lungs out and run into the nearest room where there's no way out only to slide to the floor sobbing. I hope instead I'm really, really smart and cool. Watch this scenario tonight repeated to reveal different outcomes.

A decent show thanks to Patricia Arquette and the way the spook factor is downplayed to lend it an ordinary quality.



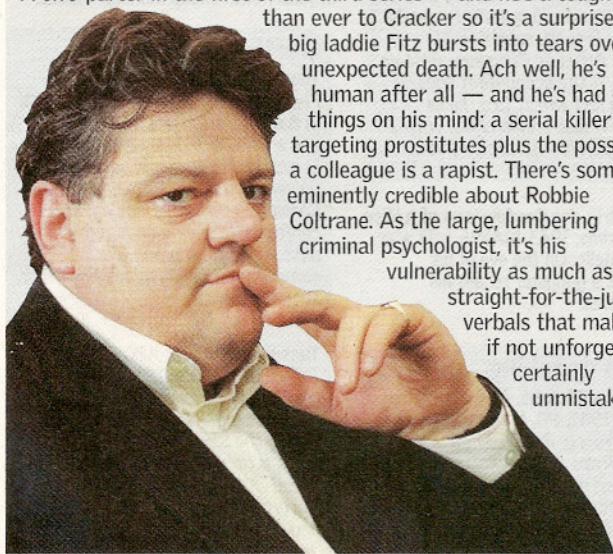
Medium

## The big laddie cracks

### CRACKER

Saturday, 9.25pm, ABC

A two-parter in the first of the third series — and he's a tougher nut than ever to Cracker so it's a surprise when big laddie Fitz bursts into tears over an unexpected death. Ach well, he's human after all — and he's had other things on his mind: a serial killer targeting prostitutes plus the possibility a colleague is a rapist. There's something eminently credible about Robbie Coltrane. As the large, lumbering criminal psychologist, it's his vulnerability as much as his straight-for-the-jugular verbals that make him if not unforgettable, certainly unmistakable.



## BITCH OF THE WEEK

(Old cockney song: Any old iron, any old iron, any any any old iron . . .) Which leads me to golf. Which I don't get. (I don't get banks, Martha Stewart, Telstra, or jetskis either, so no big surprise.) Anyway: Golfing WA returns (Sunday, 2pm, Nine) for season four which tells me someone in Perth is watching and therefore interested. But unless they invent a caddie who doubles as a coffee machine, hair stylist and DIY poster boy, I don't care which way or how anyone's old iron swings.

I've been wondering what, if anything, comes after hip. Or whether you get to the stage you're so fabulously beyond trend, so utterly above Paul Weller, that your hipness dislocates you from any known genre, musical or otherwise. I thought this as I watched a new nine-part series SET (Tuesdays, 10pm, ABC) which allows a forum for Australia's bold new experimental music scene, kicking off with the Necks. After 20 minutes the background

lighting changed from electric blue to fluoro green. That was good because the drummer, pianist and double bass player were stuck in an eternal riff of barless, featureless sound which I knew was truly intense because the trio had their eyes shut. I was spiralling into a trance of undisputed unorthodox mesmeric musical ideology. Then my eight-year-old came downstairs and said: "Turn that racket off I'm trying to read."