

Of Reboots, Remakes, and Rip-offs: Inside Television's Fall Lineup

By Paula Tudor

With summer coming to a close and fall just around the corner, it's time to take a look at the fall television lineup for the three major networks. This season we are looking at a lot of reboots, remakes, and rip-offs, with very little to write home about. After watching the extended previews of the new shows I now have a pretty good idea of what you should see and what you should skip. So here goes!

It looks like CBS will be airing fewer new shows this fall than ABC or NBC, but most of them seem fairly solid, particularly the dramas. These include Code Black, starring Marcia Gay Harden, Super Girl, starring Glee's Melissa Benoist, and Limitless, starring Jake McDorman from my dearly departed Manhattan Love Story. Limitless is the series adaptation of the movie so it will also guest star Bradley Cooper. Since there is already a built-in audience for Limitless it will likely succeed, but obviously a lot of that will depend on the cast and how well written it is. Supergirl is one of the most highly anticipated shows of the new fall season. I assumed it couldn't possibly live up to the hype so I had already written it off. I found it surprisingly engaging though, so much so that I plan to add it to my DVR. As for Code Black I would describe it as Grey's Anatomy meets ER, with much more intensity. If it isn't lost in the shuffle with all of the other medical dramas, Black may just have a chance.

Poor NBC still seems to be struggling for original ideas, or any ideas if their fall lineup is any indication. For starters they are bringing back Coach, the Craig T. Nelson comedy that aired on ABC in the 90's. The new Coach will also star Nelson, but it will take place eighteen years after the original ended. NBC is also revisiting their hit show Heroes, with a miniseries titled Heroes Reborn. I have a feeling though that if Heroes Reborn is successful, which it likely will be, its run will be extended beyond the planned thirteen episodes. NBC's other new shows are barely worth mentioning. Their two most promoted dramas are Blindspot and The Player. Of these two I would say that The Player, starring Wesley Snipes, has the best chance at finding success. It looks more like an action film than a television series and seems like it will be much easier to follow than Blindspot.

ABC also seems to be having difficulty finding original ideas. Their new drama Blood and Oil is clearly a Dallas rip-off. That much is clear from the title, and I have to wonder if this was already in development before TNT's Dallas reboot was cancelled. Starring Don Johnson, Blood and Oil seems like it will be worth checking out; and it will be airing on Sunday nights, which is a historically successful night for ABC dramas. The network will also be revisiting The Muppets in primetime. This is a documentary type series, which will take the audience into the private lives of the Muppets. This show will be fun for a while. I have no doubt that people will tune in for the nostalgia, but I don't see much potential for long-term success. Sadly, I think

our favorite puppets have already had their hay day in primetime. Taking a cue from CBS, the alphabet network is also doing a television adaptation of a movie, Uncle Buck, the John Candy comedy from 1989. Unlike the original, the new Uncle Buck has an African-American cast and stars Mike Epps in the title role. It has been twenty-five years since the movie premiered so the series may have a shot at finding an audience, but I predict it will be a long shot at best.

A premiere date has not been set for Uncle Buck or Coach, but the other aforementioned shows will begin airing in late September. Supergirl, however, does not begin until late October.

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