

# Fall TV season starts strong

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Autumn is when leaves turn brown and fall, animals begin their treks southward for the winter, and television networks unveil their new lineups.

Some programs are brand new and show a great deal of promise; others are old favorites returning for another year. Whether shows are starting new or returning, only some can be

The highly-anticipated first episode of *The Office* resolved the cliffhanger from season two's finale. With Jim confessing his love for Pam in the last minutes of season two, the new season premiere revealed that Jim had moved to Connecticut to take advantage of a promotion and Pam had called off the wedding during the summer. The distance separating the two potential lovers, the third season promises to add further dynamism to their story.

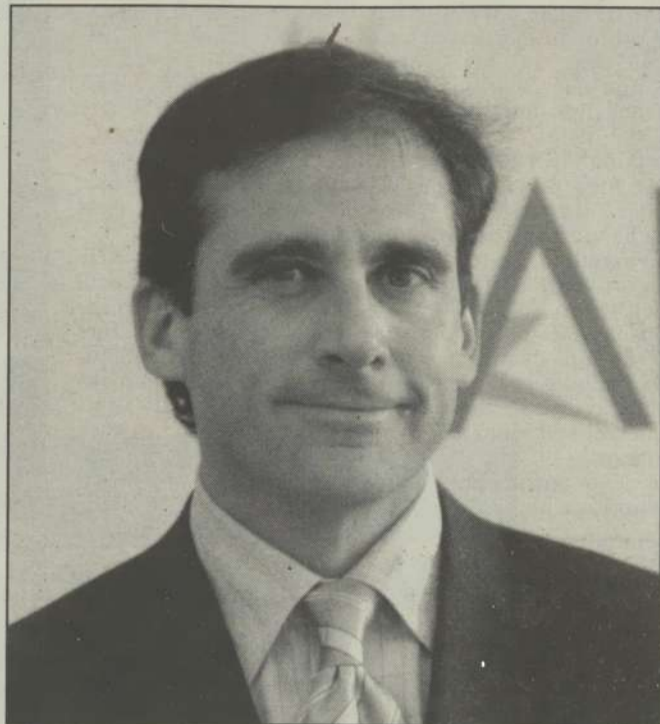
Back in the Scranton office, the setting of the first two seasons, Michael (Steve Carell) covers one of his employees. Taken off guard by this information, he goes on a "Witch Hunt," which is the plot of the premier episode. A series of events gives us a classic "The Office" type of awkward social situations and hilarious physical comedy.

The new CW Television Network, the merger of the UPN and CW,

series of unimpressive premieres. Comedies are abysmal in nature, writing is lacking, and

and, in fact, be avoided like the plague. The CW's most popular shows, *Smallville* and *Heroes*, did well, but, *Smallville*'s first two episodes of the season, while not really bad, weren't that good either. This left many of the wondering where the magic had gone. But hopefully with the inclusion of Oliver Queen, known as Green Arrow, the show will return to great-

The Fox Network's only action show of any merit, *Lost*, premiered well, and the episodes of the current season have been up to



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FAR LEFT: Steve Carell flashes a smile on the first episode of the new season of "The Office." LEFT: Ali Larter stares at her reflection on NBC's "Heroes."

the show's high standards, a remarkable feat considering the network's normally lowbrow entertainment. The sophisticated medical drama continues to impress both new viewers and avid fans.

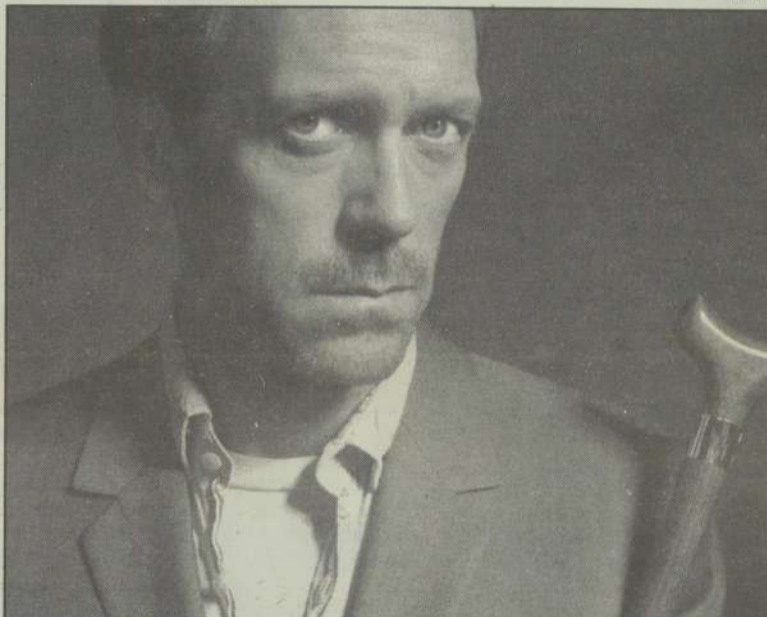
Many a blockbuster show arrived with accolades, but what about the less publicized of series, such as the *Simpsons*. The *Simpsons*' new season arrived a few weeks ago, and the episodes had definitely lost something. Why do all of the new episodes involve some great plot or action

sequences? Whatever happened to the days when Homer was ignorant of the machinations of

the likes of Hank Scorpius? Sadly, many fans find the new seasons lacking. But maybe this year will bring something new.

*Heroes* is a brand new show on NBC that is a refreshing blast of fresh air. It's fun, creative and very well written. Its basic story of normal people developing superhuman powers is inventive and well worth watching. The apocalyptic drama promises to develop a conspiracy-heavy plot with plenty of government paranoia-inducing men in suits.

*Lost*'s return to the ABC network was accompanied by fanfare, and while the first episode was good, viewers can only



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LEFT: Hugh Laurie, the title character on "House M.D.," solves medical mysteries with his signature cane.

BOTTOM LEFT: The cast of "Stargate SG-1" is ready to depart through the gate, and depart TV on their tenth and final season.

BOTTOM RIGHT: Edward James Olmos as William Adama on the remake show "Battlestar Galactica."

hope that it keeps the measure of excellence that has earned the show its fierce fanatical following. The Hawaii-based show continues to develop the story of the castaways, with the premier of the third season examining the seemingly suburban lifestyle of "The Others."

The Sci-Fi Channel got a jump on the competition by starting a few shows during the summer. *Eureka* is a new show about a town inhabited by the best minds in the United States. The premise is fun and original, but sadly the writing leaves

something to be desired.

*Stargate SG-1* and *Stargate Atlantis* premiered impressively and were well worth the wait. But not all news is good; on Aug. 21, the executive producer of *SG-1*, Robert C. Cooper, announced that the Sci-Fi Channel would not be renewing *SG-1* for an eleventh season, although Cooper assured viewers that *Stargate SG-1* would continue in one form or another. A cast member, who wishes to remain unnamed, stated at Gateworld.net that the show would continue as a series of

TV movies.

The eagerly-awaited return of the *Battlestar Galactica*, with all of its myriad themes, was greeted with a great deal of fanfare. No small part included SciFi.com's webisodes titled "Battlestar Galactica: The Resistance" - four-minute mini-episodes that chronicle the occurrences between *Battlestar Galactica*'s second and third seasons.

The new season of television is off to a good start, but only time will tell if it continues to maintain the high road.



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