

The 'Good' spinoff

CBS pulls no punches in 'The Good Fight'

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TV Media

Upon beginning research for the article you are currently reading, the first thing I did was ask my mother if she had ever watched "The Good Wife" or "The Good Fight." She replied to my text message instantly and wrote simply: "Love them both." Perhaps a mom's glowing three-word review isn't typically the thing to set someone on a 10-season-long law-drama television binge, but this is a show that is almost impossible to talk about without mentioning strong, intelligent and empowered women, and my mom fits that bill to a T, so why not take her word for it?

"The Good Fight" is actually a CBS All Access series, and it wrapped up its third season on the streamer in mid-May. But this summer, CBS itself has graciously started airing Season 1 in a prime-time Sunday slot, which allows new viewers (and fans who just miss the series) to watch it from the beginning. The ninth episode, titled "Self Condemned," airs Sunday, July 28, on the eye network, and I, for one, and my mother, for two, strongly suggest tuning in to catch Christine Baranski ("Mamma Mia!", 2008) as lawyer Diane Lockhart, Cush Jumbo ("Vera") as Reddick Boseman & Kolstad law firm associate Lucca Quinn, and Rose Leslie ("Game of Thrones") as Maia, who recently passed her bar exam and got herself and her godmother, Diane, mixed up in a whole heap of trouble.

In the very first episode ("Inauguration"), the liberal politics of "The Good Fight" are laid bare, as Diane decides to retire in the wake of Donald Trump's election and prepares to move south for some well-earned rest and relaxation.

Unfortunately, a wrench is thrown into Diane's plan in the form of an elaborate Ponzi scheme, and voilà — we have



Christine Baranski as seen in "The Good Fight"

everything we need for one of television's greatest spinoffs. A couple of arrests, a few affairs and plenty of bad tweets later, we find ourselves one episode away from the Season 1 finale, and Diane is prepared to lay it all on the line for the FBI and uncover some distressing repressed memories.

The current political and social climate can often push media towards an extreme attempt at sitting on the fence, which can make a series feel bland or fake instead of having the desired effect of making it seem sensitive or unbiased. "The Good Fight" doesn't have that problem. While both sides of socioeconomic and political debates are often shown, the

series doesn't shy away from having an opinion. The bias towards social liberalism and democratic political leanings may alienate some viewers, but the show's honest and unapologetic nature is exactly what grasps many fans in the first place, including those who felt "The Good Wife" tended to be a bit weaker in that department — its social commentary was often overshadowed by romantic storylines.

"The Good Fight" isn't all talk, either. Not only is "The Good Fight" the first television show ever to be based in an African-American-owned law firm, more than 50 per cent of its technical crew members and set staff are women or

people of color (or both). In an interview with Collider, Jumbo said that "the [showrunners'] starting point is always just to have the best actors that they can have. I want to be in the best show on television, and I want to do the best work that I can ... none of us wants any of that to do with the way we look or who we are, but it also should be commented on and should be talked about because we're one of the only shows doing it."

Showrunners Michelle and Robert King, who also created "The Good Wife," were allowed much more creative freedom with their new series on CBS All Access, and the show has a shorter, 10-episode

season, which is why "The Good Fight" is able to hit harder and pull fewer punches than "The Good Wife" could; don't be surprised to see much darker subjects explored, or to hear a little bit of foul language.

The only film trope more consistent than the bad sequel is probably the terrible spinoff, but "The Good Fight" came out swinging and continues to beat both of those assumptions into the dust. The show's predecessor, "The Good Wife," which ended after seven seasons in 2016, was consistently well-reviewed, despite many fans feeling the show had already run its course by the end of the fifth.

Apparently, what the Kings needed was a bit of a fresh

start, because while it makes use of characters and storylines from the prequel, "The Good Fight" stands strong on its own. Since many people are already caught up with the show on CBS All Access, you're going to want to be quick on your feet in order to dodge spoilers; the best way to avoid them is to make sure you catch the most recent episodes as they come out, so tune in to CBS on Sunday nights. The best part is, you still have two whole seasons to watch after the season finale airs, and trust me (and my mom), you won't want to miss what happens next.

A new episode of "The Good Fight" airs Sunday, July 28, on CBS.