

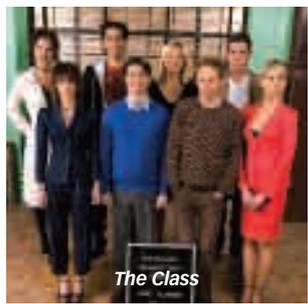


Déjà View

When the networks discover a winning formula, they tend to stick with it. This season is no exception. *O* takes you through prime time's most anticipated new shows—which bear a striking resemblance to old shows. And to each other. —RACHEL BERTSCHE

THE IMITATORS

THAT'S WHAT *FRIENDS* WAS FOR



At CBS, *Friends* cocreator David Crane is producing *The Class*, a show about pals who reconnect at their third-grade reunion. And high school chums regroup at a hospital in ABC's *In Case of Emergency*, directed by regular *Friends* guest star Jon Favreau.

NOT EXACTLY *WITHOUT A TRACE*



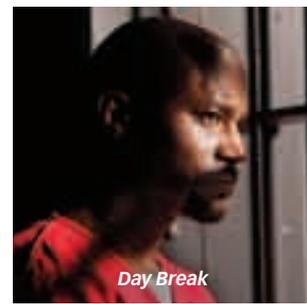
How about a serial thriller investigating a mysterious disappearance? *Kidnapped* (NBC) stars Dana Delany and Timothy Hutton as a high-society couple whose son is abducted. In *Vanished* (FOX), the wife of a senator (*24*'s John Allen Nelson) goes missing.

OCEAN'S 11 FOR THE SMALL SCREEN



Both CBS's *Smith* and ABC's *The Knights of Prosperity* follow thieves plotting one last score. In *Smith*, the always lovely Virginia Madsen is married to the always stellar Ray Liotta. In *Knights*, a group of misfits plans to rip off—no joke—Mick Jagger.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE *24* MADE



Day Break (ABC) is *Groundhog Day* for thrill seekers, as an L.A. detective (Taye Diggs) lives the same bad day over and over and over and over again. *Big Day* (ABC) takes an entire season to track the events of one wedding day.

THE VERDICT

A cast of unknowns and a whiny central character bode ill for *The Class* (whose best joke involves a white family with a daughter named Oprah). But Favreau's direction gives us hope for an inspired state of *Emergency*.

No clear standout. Delany, Hutton, and Jeremy Sisto (*Six Feet Under*) give superb performances in *Kidnapped*, while *Vanished*'s forgettable acting is rescued by the writing and deft plot twists.

Great actors—and action—give *Smith* real promise. But while *Knights*' bandits are endearing, and cameos by the fossilized Jagger are hysterical, the show needs to define its audience: stoned collegians or aging classic-rock fans?

Two flops. In *Big Day*, Wendie Malick leads a cast of caricatures (overbearing mother of the bride, terrified wedding planner, fratty groomsmen). And though *Day Break*'s Diggs is fun to look at, his nightmare is exhausting.



TiVoThis

■ **Eyes on the Prize** (left), the landmark six-hour documentary about the civil rights movement, returns in three installments this month on PBS. The Oscar-nominated film, an essential for teachers and historians since its 1987

release, has been unavailable on TV or video, due to copyright issues, for 13 years. ■ Just in case four hit Food Network shows, 12 books, and a magazine weren't enough to ensure world domination, Rachael Ray has added another notch to her media empire belt. For her syndicated talk show,

Rachael Ray, which debuted on September 18, Ray takes the accessible and perky approach to cooking that made her a star (even her goofy signature "Yum-O!" has managed to steal our hearts) and applies it to fashion, fitness, beauty, and celebrity dish. (Check local listings.) —R.B. O-ZONE>74

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MONTY BRINTON/CBS, NBC PHOTO/VIRGINIA SHERWOOD, ABC/ERIC LIEBOWITZ, ABC/VIVIAN ZINK, AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS.