

88 Minutes

We finally saw the movie [88 Minutes](#) the other night. I don't know what we were so busy with when it came out in the theaters, but we somehow didn't get around to seeing it then. The reviews were so unfavorable that I forgot we had missed it; I guess I just wrote it off. I've learned time and time again to go opposite what most reviewers say, so I don't know why I let them get to me this time...

So anyway, the movie is about a very well known forensic psychiatrist played by [Al Pacino](#). A serial murderer he testified against is hours away from execution when Pacino receives a phone call saying he has 88 minutes to live – tick tock tock. Much action and plot twists ensue, and at the conclusion, I found myself very satisfied with this movie as a thriller – something I can't say about the last few thrillers I've seen. There are a whole bunch of characters, and the movie manages to make all of them interesting and VERY suspectable. What surprised me was my ability to keep them all straight – that is usually something I have a problem with when watching movies – I tend to mix up characters especially when the actors playing them look the slightest bit alike, and I also have trouble remembering names. Although I can't put my finger on what was different about this movie, I was able to differentiate between all the characters; not only remembering who was who but their names and relationship to the main character – rarities for me. Adding to my enjoyment of the movie was the fact that it kept you on the edge of your seat, and its many plot twists and turns kept you guessing and didn't come out too cheesy in the end, which can sometimes ruin a good action movie. Al Pacino was good and believable in his role, though believe it or not I don't think I've seen him in anything else. [Lee Lee Sobieski](#) and [Amy Brenneman](#) also rounded out the supporting cast with strong performances. Overall, a very good action suspense film and I would

definitely recommend it to fans of the genre. Others who might enjoy it are true-crime buffs and CSI fans.

Even More Of A Great Thing?

Fans of the popular NBC comedy *The Office* will have even more to love in [2009](#). The network has just greenlit a spinoff series which will have its debut in February in the highly coveted post Super Bowl XLIII timeslot (sounds like another party to me). Little has been revealed about the series, but one possible plot seems to be giving Dwight his own series to head. Hey, it worked for [Frasier](#).

Spinoff series are either hit or miss. The earliest example I can think of would be *The Danny Thomas Show* giving birth to *The Andy Griffith Show*. *Happy Days* (which was a spinoff of *Love, American Style*) begat *Laverne & Shirley*, and [Mork and Mindy](#). Today, it seems nearly impossible to find a show whose title does not include *Law & Order* or *CSI*. So, there are times when spinoff series are a good thing.

However, there have been failures to the genre. Although [Happy Days](#) did give way to two very popular shows, there was also the dreadful attempt to give Joanie and Chachi their own timeslot. While [Cheers](#) gave Kelsey Grammer's character Frasier Crane his own series, there was also the show known as [The Tortellis](#).

So whatever path the new series based upon the successful show takes, here's hoping that it is another *Frasier* and not *Joanie Loves Chachi*.

Anyone have a favorite spinoff series?