

TV Review: ABC's Disappointing 'Body of Proof' With Dana Delany

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on September 20, 2011 - 2:42pm

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CHICAGO – I had some serious issues with the first-season premiere of “Body of Proof,” a modest hit for ABC that they’ve decided to give another shot at developing into a major one with a second season. Having not watched an episode since Matt Fagerholm’s [2-star review](#) [14] (one which I agreed with wholeheartedly and echoed on my weekly WGN-AM radio segment), I was curious to see if they had fixed the problems with the show. Would tonight’s season-two premiere be an overhauled, new-and-improved version of what we watched six months ago? Nope.



TV Rating: **2.0/5.0**

Star Dana Delany is still easily the best thing about “Body of Proof” and if there’s one thing that HAS improved season to season it’s that she seems even more confident in her character’s expensive shoes. Delany experienced a career resurgence after getting a gig on “Desperate Housewives,” and her performance on “Body of Proof” too often echoes that suburban satire with its family drama and ridiculous fashion sense (Delany is always the best-looking person on the crime scene).



Body of Proof
Photo credit: ABC

into a tree. Was it another texting-and-driving accident? Or something more sinister? When it is quickly determined that the driver was unconscious before impact, the mystery-of-the-week kicks off, complete with a cliched "*This was no accident.*"



Body of Proof
Photo credit: ABC

It's not long before the great Joelle Carter ("Justified") appears as the weeping widow, arguing that her husband was a cautious driver. Carter is a stellar actress (underrated on the FX Emmy-winner) but she's not given enough to do here to keep it interesting. When our heroine walks the neighborhood (another element straight out of "Desperate Housewives," which is even vaguely referenced) and sees the prying eyes of the neighbors, it becomes clear that this picket-fence cul-de-sac isn't quite right. Maybe the blood actually ON one of the picket fences is a clue?

There is an increasing number of procedurals on the air with each passing season. There's not a night that goes by that you can't watch someone be cured, arrested, or both. The glut of programs like "Body of Proof" has created an interesting double-edged sword. These shows have blended together so completely that I think people are less critical of them than they should be. Oh, it's just another procedural. Solve the crime. Move on. Who cares if the writing and acting aren't that good? The bad guy gets what he deserves and we feel better about the world before we brush our teeth and prepare for another day.

But the glut has also made it harder to stand out and so I worry that TV creators aren't trying as hard. Dana Delany, John Carroll Lynch, Joelle Carter — I'm happy to see talented actors get work but there are too many procedurals providing steady paychecks instead of meaty characters. "*This goes above and beyond even for you.*" Seriously? Is there a quota of cliched dialogue required for each episode? And the dynamic between Megan and the police is just silly.

Why come down hard on "Body of Proof"? Delany is good. Lynch is always fun. The supporting cast, under-used as they may be, isn't bad. Maybe I'm just being too critical but when there are so many great programs on the air right now, why settle for a merely-average one just because it fits so snugly in a proven formula? "Body of Proof" is such a frustrating show because it plays it safe — it doesn't do anything wrong by virtue of not doing anything much at all.

"Body of Proof" stars Dana Delany, John Carroll Lynch, Jeri Ryan, Nicholas Bishop, Sonja Sohn, and Geoffrey Arend. The second season premieres on ABC on Tuesday, September 20th, 2011 at 9pm CST.



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [16]

Content Director

HollywoodChicago.com

brian@hollywoodchicago.com [15]

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