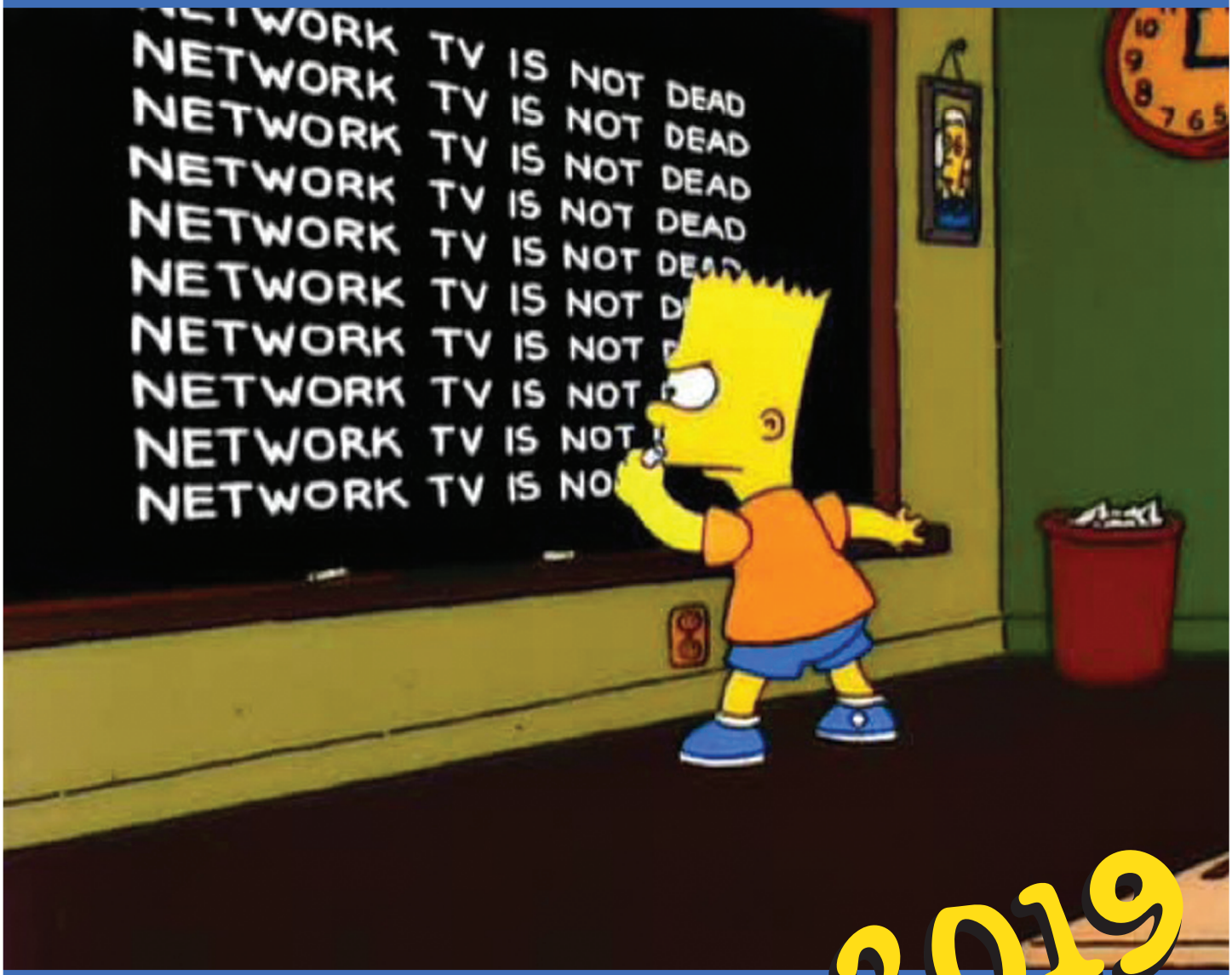
LA SCREENINGS



2019

PREPARED BY CRISPIN LEYSER FOR CHANNEL 4

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SCREENING SCHEDULE

Saturday, 18 May — MGM	**MGM STUDIOS**
Check-in: 9:30 am Screening: 10:00am - 12:00 pm	245 N. Beverly Dr. Beverly Hills, CA 90210
Saturday, 18 May — eONE	**FOX STUDIOS LOT**
Check-in: 3:45 pm Screening: 4:15 pm	10200 W Galaxy Way Century City, CA 90067
Sunday, 19 May — LIONSGATE	**LONDON HOTEL**
Screening: 12:00 pm	1020 N San Vicente Blvd. West Hollywood, CA 90069
Monday, 20 May — NBC / UNIVERSAL	**UNIVERSAL CITY LOT**
Breakfast: 7:30 am Screening: 8:30 am	3900 Lankershim Blvd. Studio City, CA 91604
Tuesday, 21 May — WARNER BROS	**WARNER BROS. STUDIOS**
Check-in: 8:00 am Screening: 9 am	Steven J. Ross Theater 4000 Warner Blvd. Burbank, CA 91505
Wednesday, 22 May — CBS / PARAMOUNT	**PARAMOUNT PICTURES**
Check-in: 8:00 am Screening: 9 am	5555 Melrose Ave. Los Angeles, CA 90038
Thursday, 23 May — DISNEY	**WALT DISNEY STUDIOS**
Check-in: 8:00 am Screening: 9 am	500 S. Buena Vista St. Burbank, CA 91521
Friday, 24 May — SONY	**SONY PICTURES** (Motor Gate)
Screening: TBA	10401 Culver Blvd. Culver City, CA 90232

TOP DRAMA PICKS



BATWOMAN (CW)
Likely to be the hottest property of the year on the basis of the title, the genre (with a lesbian twist) and the auspices. This will be a hit for the CW.



NEXT (FOX)
Reluctant though I am to pick a heavily serialized show as a top pick, this was my favorite network drama script and reportedly turned out well. It has pace, energy and a sense of tension sorely lacking from other efforts this season.



LOOKING FOR ALASKA (HULU)
Hulu's answer to Netflix's *13 Reasons Why*. Josh Schwartz (*Gossip Girl*) has turned in another strong, albeit dark, script in the popular young adult genre.



RESIDENT ALIEN (SYFY)
A wildcard pick as Syfy shows rarely turn out well, but the script for this quirky thriller made me laugh more than most comedies this season.

TOP COMEDY PICKS



THE UNICORN (CBS)
A fine cast and a script with humor and heart. It has been given the best slot on the CBS schedule.



DOLLFACE (HULU)
Still a work in progress (casting changes are afoot), but if they can capture the distinctive tone and quirky wit on the page, it'll be highly appealing to a younger skewing audience.



RAMY (HULU)
This has already aired here, received A+ reviews and been renewed.

MARKET ANALYSIS

OVERVIEW

For most of the history of television in the United States, there has been a dominant "Big Three" – ABC, CBS & NBC – controlling the vast majority of television broadcasting. In 1986 Fox was formed, and since achieving major ratings success on the back of *American Idol* and NFL during the 2000's, the phrase has morphed into "The Big Four".

Go back just ten years and the number one series on TV by a long way was *American Idol* with an average of nearly 27 million viewers and a 9.2 A18-49 rating. There were a total of 11 unscripted shows in the top 20 live ratings charts.

In the ten short years since then, everything in the world of television has changed. Well, not quite everything. Just like the 2008/9 season, in 2018/9 there were a total of 11 unscripted shows in the top 20 live ratings charts. Many of the highest rated shows of 2009 are still the highest rated shows today (e.g. *Greys Anatomy, NCIS, Survivor, The Bachelor*) – albeit with much lower numbers now.

The failure of network TV to launch a single new hit scripted series last season coupled with the networks' overall ratings decline highlights that the days of ABC, CBS, NBC and FOX's dominance are over. And they know it, increasingly settling for a schedule dominated by (high volume low demo) procedurals, soaps, family comedies, reality competitions and sport. Meanwhile premium-scripted content is reserved for pay cable and the ever-expanding SVOD services.

Netflix, Amazon, Hulu and CBS All Access may be the current market leaders in the SVOD field, but with Disney, WarnerMedia, NBC/Comcast and Apple joining the party in 2019/20, the streaming wars are about to begin in earnest. As CBS's Head of Digital noted, "There's a limited number of seats on the rocket ship". Ultimately the next few years are likely to see the emergence of a new "Big Four", with some better placed than others to survive and thrive. Predicting how this will all play out is a minefield, not least because the playing field is a constantly evolving, as evidenced by Disney's purchase of the remaining 30% of Hulu, just hours before going to press on this booklet!

These upcoming changes to the TV landscape are bound to affect the acquisitions market, but there are too many unanswerable questions at present to know how dramatic the impact will be. And while some doors to content may close, other windows will open.



MARKET ANALYSIS

THE PAST YEAR

Reality TV had a resurgence last season. As in 2008/9, the highest rated show on TV was a Fox competition series. *The Masked Singer* had a live + same day rating of 2.59 in the coveted adult 18-49 demo - well ahead of its nearest competitors, and miles ahead of every new series -

ABC

Top Scripted series – *Greys Anatomy* (1.6)
Top New Scripted Series - *The Conners* (1.56)

NBC

Top Scripted series – *This is Us* (2.26)
Top New Scripted Series - *Manifest* (1.25)

CBS

Top Scripted series – *The Big Bang Theory* (2.02)
Top New Scripted Series - *The Neighborhood* (1.12)

FOX

Top Scripted series – *9-1-1* (1.42)
Top New Scripted Series – *The Passage* (0.92)

CW

Top Scripted series – *The Flash* (0.63)
Top New Scripted Series - *Legacies* (0.31)



You would be hard pressed to describe any of the new network scripted shows (screened for us last May) as a hit. Instead, And in addition to *The Masked Singer*, other unscripted offerings, NBC's *America's Got Talent: The Champions* (1.7) and *The Titan Games* (1.29), were among the season's highest-rated newbies. In short, it's not a pretty picture for scripted programming across the board for the Broadcast Nets.

MARKET ANALYSIS

REALITY RULES

Survivor, Big Brother and *60 Minutes* out-rate every single scripted series on CBS bar *Big Bang Theory* (which is ending) and *Young Sheldon,* which will likely decline next season without *BBT* as its lead-in. *The Bachelor* is ABC's highest rated series and even a flagging *American Idol* has a higher live rating average than all but two ABC scripted series. With the exception of *This is Us*, on NBC *The Voice*, *America's Got Talent* (summer edition and Champions), *Ellen's Game of Games* and *Titan Games* are beating every single scripted series' average live ratings.

And that's before we even get to sport. The highest rated telecasts of 2018 were football, football, football, football and more football (34 of the top 100 rated telecasts were NFL games); basketball; baseball; a splattering of award shows (notably the Oscars and the Grammy's); and the occasional episode of what could be called 'The Trump Show' – the sitcom/soap/horror anthology series that consumes every minute of cable news and occasionally cuts into Network Primetime with, for example, the Stormy Daniels interview on *60 Minutes*. With the exception of Fox, all networks have seen significant declines this year, especially with younger viewers –

18-49 Rating
1. NBC: 1.6 (down 27%)
2. (tie) Fox: 1.5 (even)
2. (tie) CBS: 1.5 (down 6%)
4. ABC: 1.3 (down 13%)
5. CW: 0.4 (down 33%)

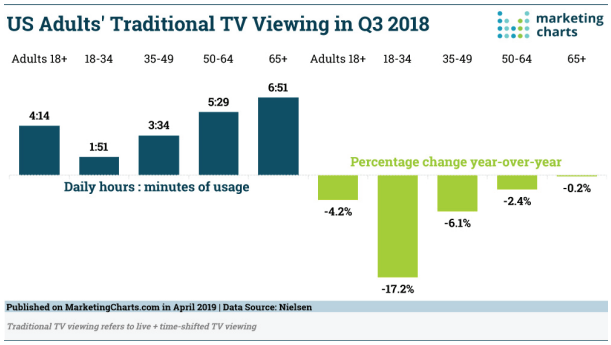
Total Viewers
1. CBS: 9.0 million (even)
2. NBC: 7.3 million (down 20%)
3. ABC: 5.7 million (down 7%)
4. Fox: 5.5 million (up 10%)
5. CW: 1.3 million (down 24%)

Of course this is a very linear and outdated way of measuring ratings. Take NBC's *Manifest* for example, which is averaging 6.5 million total live viewers and a 1.25 in the 18-49 demographic. But counting 35 days of linear and projected non-linear viewership, Manifest grows to a 4.86 rating in 18-49, nearly quadrupling its next-day L+SD 1.25 rating. Or consider that about 11 million viewers watch *Game of Thrones* "the traditional way" but once you throw in HBO Go etc and that number rises to 33 million. And while we have reason to be skeptical of their secretive ratings statistics, Netflix claims that 40 million households have viewed *Umbrella Academy*.

But despite all of that, the fact remains that the prime raison d'etre of the so-called Big Four is to make money from advertisers writing large checks – and those checks depend on viewers, especially those in the coveted 18-49 demo, watching the shows live (with adverts). So how do they do that?

In the short term the Broadcast networks can carve out enough viewers by getting back to basics – broad procedurals, soaps, remakes, spin-offs and family comedies - as I outlined in my market analysis last year. NBC's most consistent performer has been their *Chicago* franchise, which are three of the only shows that saw audience growth last season. CBS continues to churn out high-volume, low-demo procedurals. *The Last Man Standing* revival was an unashamed and successful play for middle-American viewers. Slowly but surely Networks are realizing there is little to gain in trying to copy cable/streaming shows. The cool/younger/coastal crowd has largely abandoned watching network scripted shows in their regularly scheduled slots and they are not coming back.

MARKET ANALYSIS



But in the longer term, the resurgence of unscripted programming and sport provides a roadmap for the future of network television. Fox is leading the way, partly out of necessity. Since Disney bought 20th Century Fox (the studio), Fox (the network) is now independent. Even with the surprising news that Fox managed to strike co-production deals with the studios on its new scripted shows, it still has less stake in the back-end profitability of these shows than it used to. Fox is now free to make its decisions based on linear ratings performance and the numbers for *The Masked Singer* - unprecedented in the current landscape - must surely reinforce the belief that a schedule dominated by unscripted programming is a winning strategy.

The same has been true in cable, where many cable networks that chased the golden goose of scripted content, have quickly abandoned that strategy as unworkable and unprofitable in the current overcrowded landscape. In their place they have found reality gold instead. Notably examples of this are A&E (with Live P.D) and MTV (with a return to *Jersey Shore* shows); they are two of the few cablers to see ratings growth in the last year.

The successful cable nets provide a roadmap to the broadcast networks on how to survive in an overcrowded landscape. Cablers that have a clear brand identity - like HGTV, Food Network, Investigation Discovery and others - are able to make themselves heard above the noise. Those that try to be all things to all people, struggle. This is best exemplified by the demise of ABC network. When Paul Lee took over a few years ago he espoused what he called "Four Quadrant TV" – meaning shows that target male/female/young/old viewers. It didn't work and ABC is now in fourth place amongst the "Big Four". The new president, Karey Burke, has made it a stated goal to reclaim the mantle of ABC being the number one destination for female viewers. It is a smart move for ABC to try to reclaim its identity. It's why CBS has always been the most consistent of the broadcast nets, embracing its role as the home of mainstream older-skewing procedurals. Meanwhile NBC has done a good job of branding specific nights of the week, with Monday/Tuesday showcasing *The Voice* + a big drama; *Chicago Fire/PD/Med* have been a hot on Wednesdays; Thursdays are for comedies; and Sundays are for football. As *The Voice* starts to struggle, NBC, also under new management, may need a rethink in the next few years, perhaps leaning even more on the Dick Wolf brand of programming. CW clearly and successfully targets the 18-34, while we still await clarification on what 'new' Fox look like.

2018 Basic Cable Rankings, Total Viewers

Rank	Network	Viewers (in millions)	% Change
1	USA Network	1.48M	-9%
2	HGTV	1.45M	-5%
3	TBS	1.32M	-9%
4	TNT	1.26M	0%
5	History	1.21M	-7%
6	Hallmark	1.18M	4%
7	Discovery	1.14M	-13%
8	Investigation Discovery	1.10M	0%
9	TLC	1.03M	8%
10	A&E Network	1.03M	5%
11	Food Network	.98M	1%
12	AMC	.88M	-15%
13	FX	.86M	-14%
14	Bravo	.86M	-3%
15	Lifetime	.69M	-15%
16	Adult Swim	.68M	-12%
17	TV Land	.65M	-10%
18	VH1	.64M	-1%
19	MTV	.63M	12%
20	Hallmark Movies & Mysteries	.61M	-11%
21	Nick at Nite	.60M	-13%
22	Freeform	.60M	-17%
23	Syfy	.56M	-11%
24	INSP	.54M	4%
25	Animal Planet	.51M	-9%
26	Travel Channel	.50M	3%
27	National Geographic	.50M	11%
28	Paramount TV	.50M	-12%
29	OWN	.47M	-14%
30	Nick Jr.	.44M	-27%

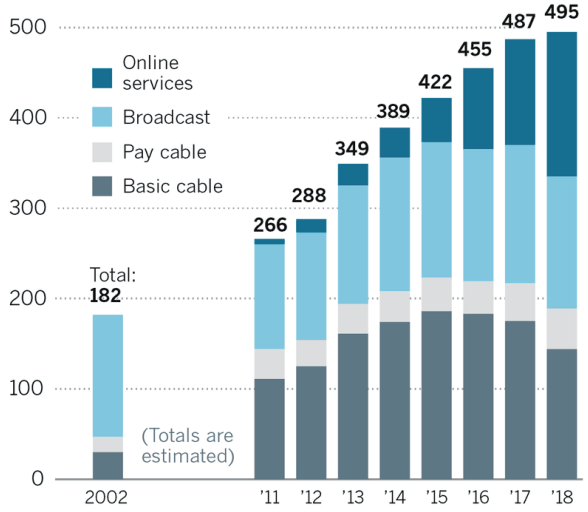
MARKET ANALYSIS

DIGITAL DOMINANCE

That's not to say that there aren't a few 'cool' series on network TV, but their presence and survival increasingly depends upon two things. Firstly they are created by the few respected and 'cool' producers that haven't jumped ship and signed a deal with a streaming service – such as Mike Schur who recently agreed a big contract to stay at Universal TV. Their presence at the helm also ensures that their shows attract top-notch casts. And secondly their digital performance. NBC's critically acclaimed *The Good Place* and *Brooklyn Nine Nine* series (both from Mike Schur) are weak live ratings performers but profitable for their studios thanks largely to their strong digital performances leading to large off-network sales to the likes of Netflix.

With increasing frequency, digital performance is becoming critical in determining a show's success. That is true for the entire CW line-up, a network whose profits depend on their 2nd window Netflix deal. Despite a steep ratings drop across the board, CW recently renewed every single scripted series. But it's true for a number of individual series too. In 2018 the Lifetime series You flopped despite strong reviews. Netflix picked it up and it has become a huge hit for the streamer. Here again, the importance of a show being 'on brand' for its broadcaster is key. Even a good show, like *You*, couldn't find an audience on Lifetime, whose viewers are more attuned to a frothy movie-of-the-week. CBS knows this and reserves their more grown up, serialized material, like *The Good Fight* and *Twilight Zone* for CBS All Access.

Number of scripted TV original series



Source: FX Networks Research @latimesgraphics

Streaming services have ramped up their original programming slates and all broadcast series are available on various digital platforms. As a result the audience for live-watching scripted TV on ABC, CBS, NBC and Fox is getting smaller and smaller; and older and older. As the ratings increasingly prove, few scripted programs demand to be watched in their regularly scheduled slots. Meanwhile, as we all know, Disney+ is launching in November to be followed in 2020 by WarnerMedia and NBCUniversal's streaming services and whatever it is that Apple are doing, which despite a glitzy presentation, is still not entirely clear.

There will be winners and losers; not everyone can survive because viewers have choices... and budgets. Simple economics determine that there's only so many content providers that people can subscribe to. About four, I'd say. With the mergers of ATT & Time Warner, of Comcast and Sky and the Disney purchase of 20th, perhaps in the future we will be talking about a very different "Big Four"...

MARKET ANALYSIS

IS THIS THE NEW BIG FOUR?

NETFLIX

Netflix has a massive head start on the competition with 148.86 million subscribers, 61.97 million of them in US. This has been achieved with astronomical levels of investment in acquired and original programming to build a library of TV and Film that will far outstrip Disney+ when it launches. But there are frustrations for producers and viewers alike; quantity has become more important than quality; good shows are being canceled (usually after two seasons) to make way for new ones. And while their acquisitions have been excellent (such as *The End of The F***ing World, Bodyguard*), many producers with whom I've spoken have vented about their lackluster development process leading to a plethora of mediocre new shows. Furthermore, questions remain about the sustainability of their investment in programming ($15 billion a year). Their long-term debt is now 12.3 billion. Perhaps Netflix will also suffer from lacking the clear brand identity that Disney has. In 2017 Reid Hastings declared that Netflix's biggest competition to Netflix is sleep. That's about to change. Still, they are the current market leader and everyone else is playing catch-up.

DISNEY +

Though Disney + will launch with just 16% of Netflix's content, the service and brand has many advantages notably a much smaller price point of $6.99/month and enviable IP with brands like Star Wars, Marvel and The Simpsons. In surveys, Disney's top content beats both Netflix and Amazon in consumer perceptions of quality. Though Disney+ will be family friendly, the company also owns FX, Nat Geo, ESPN and has just now claimed full ownership of Hulu, where it can push different kinds of material without impinging on the Disney brand. So though it may take a while to build, it's clear Disney has the content assets, powerful brands and the financial wherewithal to make a big run at SVOD. The ability of Disney to bundle Disney+, ESPN+ and now Hulu at a discount price makes them a force to be reckoned with.



WARNER MEDIA

Launching in 2020, we have less info on what this service looks like. But we do know they have a massive 42,000 hours of content in their library. And though HBO will be a standalone part of the service initially, it is potentially the premium jewel in their crown. Throw in TNT, TBS, CNN, half of The CW and the DC Universe and it's clear they will be entering the market with some serious muscle. Moreover, they can hurt Netflix by removing highly popular classics – notably Friends and Seinfeld – off Netflix and exclusively onto their new, as yet unnamed, SVOD service.

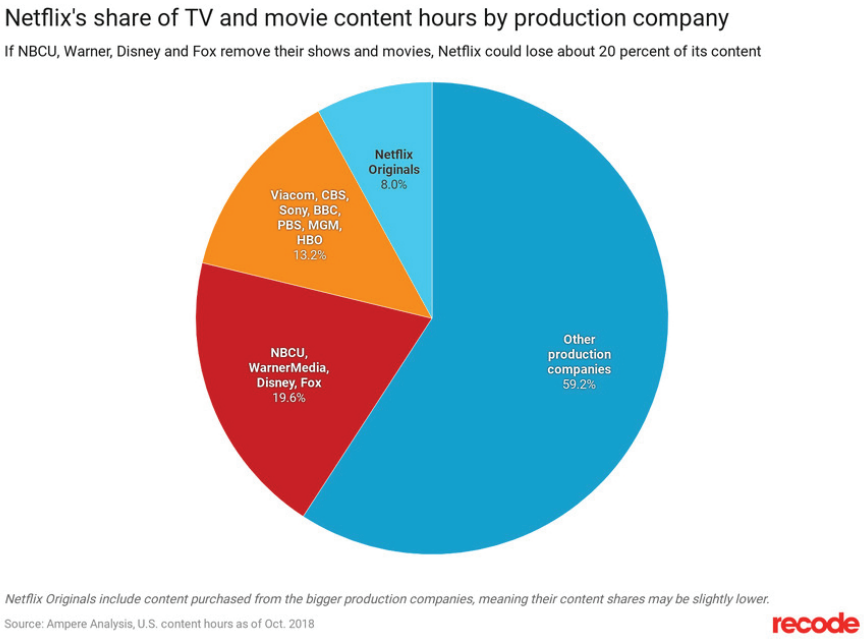
NBC UNIVERSAL

NBCU's streaming plans are different from its competitors as the offering will be free to NBCU pay-cable subscribers in the U.S. and will be supported by advertising. They believe this will make their streaming outlet more accessible and give the company a fighting chance against established players. The service will be made available to subscribers of both Comcast, NBCU's parent company, and Sky, a combined total of 52 million subscribers. The streaming offering is expected to feature content from outside partners as well as material from the company's archives and exclusive 2020 Olympic material.



Like WB, they are expected to take back popular series such as The Office to be exclusive on their platform.With the sale of their Hulu stake to Disney, they will now also be taking back their NBCUniversal content licensed to Hulu by 2024 at the latest.

MARKET ANALYSIS



STOP PRESS - Just a few hours ago The CW announced it was ending its output deal with Netflix and its new shows will now be shopped to streaming services individually. Netflix can still bid for these shows, but this is a blow for them and another sign of the new competition they face. It's also possible that WB will earmark *Batwoman* for their new streaming service.

One could easily argue that it'll be a different big four; or three; or five. Amazon, Apple, CBS All Access and YouTube might certainly make that case.

Despite its recent star-studded presentation, there's reason to be skeptical that Apple will be a key player, at least in the content business. I've spoken to producers who are making priority shows for Apple and they are deeply unconvinced by the development process, the rollout and lack of coherent strategy at Apple. Frankly the presentation was confusing in differentiating between Apple TV Plus (original exclusive content) and the Apple TV App. It's within the App that Apple may prove successful, as a one-stop shop to watch some live TV and get all the other streaming services and content you want in one place (as long as you subscribe to them). Apple is a tech company and might be better off concentrating on inventing hardware that does for TV what the iPhone did for telecommunications.

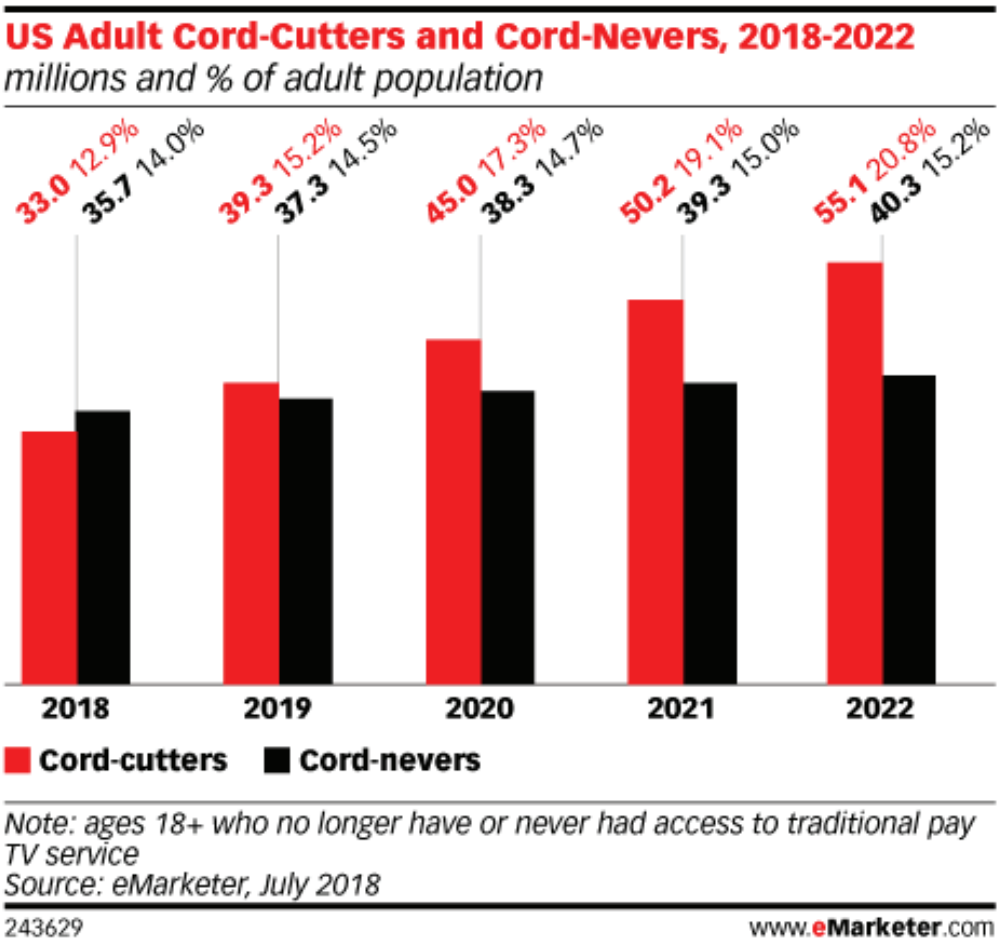
Amazon obviously has deep pockets and could certainly be a major factor here. But it still feels to me that people sign up for Amazon Prime for quicker deliveries rather than TV/film content and there's evidence that Amazon Prime Membership has reached saturation point in the US. As for CBS All Access, besides Star Trek and some of the Showtime series, right now it does not feel like an essential service to have, though they do also offer NFL games to stream.

Meanwhile, Disney's purchase of the remaining 30% Hulu from Comcast has happened much quicker than expected and gives them added muscle. With full operating control, Disney will have the latitude to set a new strategic road map for Hulu — including launching the service internationally. It's a place where Disney can place its more adult material - they recently moved the series High Fidelity from Disney+ to Hulu for that very reason. It's unclear how long it will take for Hulu to roll out internationally, but it's a blow if/when Hulu material is no longer available to acquire.

Predicting how this will play out in the next few years is tricky and there are other factors that could help win the streaming wars such as the user interface experience, acquisition of key sports rights, exclusive movie access and further consolidation. There's a running debate in the industry for example about whether Apple should or will eventually buy Netflix.

Consolidation seems a certainty in the cable landscape. Cable networks make much of their money as follows. They negotiate with the cable/satellite providers to get a dollar amount per subscriber to that service. If you are an important cable network like ESPN, this can by as much as $4 per subscriber. If you are a small player, it could be as a little as $0.10 per subscriber. The more the cord-cutting trend continues, the less money cable networks can make. As such, the cable landscape is likely to be decimated in the coming years. Those that do survive are the ones mentioned earlier that have carved out a clear user-friendly identity in the market. Meanwhile many cable nets are already owned by 'the new big 4' and may simply be folded into the respective SVOD platforms – such as Freeform, FX, ESPN (all Disney); Bravo, Syfy, USA (Comcast); TBS, TNT, TruTV (Time Warner).

There's clearly much to resolve and many unanswered questions the answers to which may be years away. But in the short term, there's one big question to ask right now.



MARKET ANALYSIS

THE BIG QUESTION

Let's bring this all back to why we are here - the LA Screenings. All the major industry changes – the takeovers, mergers and streaming announcements - happened mid-development cycle, so their impact is not yet being felt. In fact the biggest surprise this season is how many scripted shows Fox has picked up alongside their unscripted and new sports offerings. New Fox is experimenting, and canceled many shows expected to return in favor of shows in which they managed to negotiate a financial stake.

So despite the trend towards more unscripted and/or event TV, it's clear broadcast networks are still going to want to have a diversified portfolio that includes scripted programming. And increasingly, the studios offer their scripted wares to the Broadcast Networks at reduced prices. Why? Because money. The studio can afford to take the upfront hit because of the profits that come from selling the 2nd window SVOD rights to Netflix/Amazon/Hulu in the US, or to Netflix/Amazon globally, or to international broadcasters like us.

But what happens in 2020 when the WB, Disney and Universal streaming services are up and running? Are all their shows automatically going to be placed on the platforms and no longer be available to the international market? In order to compete with Netflix, Amazon and each other, Disney +/Warner Media/Universal's streaming services need fresh content and it would be logical that new shows made by the respective studios end up on the companion streaming service. Will that spell the end of the LA Screenings? Probably not, because this 'doomsday' scenario won't happen in practice.

The studios are unlikely to have the resolve to sacrifice the immediate profits that this move would entail in order to service the long term streaming needs. Sometimes it's just easier to take the bird in the hand. I spoke to a senior VP at Disney Distribution last week who indicated that as far as they are concerned, it's not going to happen for a number of reasons –

A) They will simply have too much content for it all to go to Disney +, and much of it will be off brand for the new platform

B) In many cases they will be the ones happy to take the 2nd window internationally

C) They are in the middle of output deals that would be impossible to undo

D) They are not sure when Hulu rolls out internationally, so material for Hulu (like *Dollface*) is currently available

That's not to say it won't happen in the future, and the intentions of the other studios need to be examined. For example, I recently met the producer of Universal's Brave New World TV series, which he revealed has been selected to be the launch show for Comcast's new platform in the UK. It's clear therefore that we will miss out on some content, but how much is yet to be revealed. The long term aspirations with regards to studio content and their streaming platforms is the big question to be asking at all those studio lunches this screenings.

MARKET ANALYSIS

WHEN ONE DOOR CLOSES, A WINDOW OPENS

Let's take the "worst-case" scenario, that Disney, WB, and Universal all eventually cease to offer their shows on the open acquisitions market. It sounds bad in theory but I would make two key arguments –

A) Losing out on all the guff that's made for network TV is really not that much of a loss. The chances of another Big Bang Theory coming along are slim to none.

B) It will also present a tremendous opportunity to foster and grow relationships with the other content-hungry networks, platforms, studios and distributors.

Hulu in particular seem like a natural partner for us – see *Handmaids Tale*, *Catch 22* and upcoming series such as *High Fidelity, Little Fires Everywhere* and two new Marvel series. It may be worth exploring whether we can strike a deal now to secure the best upcoming content while Hulu's international plans are in flux.

In the new TV world order, we can become an essential partner with US independent studios, such as Sony, eOne, MGM, Lionsgate, Paramount, Gaumont, Fremantle, Endeavor Content and others. Sony has recently aggressively sought and secured some major talent deals, notably with Howard Gordon/Alex Gansa (both *Homeland*) and with Oscar winning writer/producer/ directors Phil Lord and Chris Miller (*Spiderman: Into the Spiderverse*). The way for the likes of Sony to survive is to develop and produce content that is too good to ignore.



Lionsgate owns Starz, while MGM owns Epix and all need content to compete. Epix recently paid $750,000 an episode to be the US home of *Deep State* and with *Godfather of Harlem* they are clearly upping their game. Paramount is also making big plays in the scripted space. It makes solid business sense for all of these players to form alliances with European partners.

Our options are plentiful ranging from some kind of output deal, to co-productions, to an Acquisitions+ model, to just waiting to see what remains available to acquire. Proactive options are preferred and likely necessary to prepare for the arrival of the streamers.

The landscape is ripe for co-productions with the potential for tremendous strategic, economic and creative upside. It's an opportunity to develop tailor made content and share in the back end rewards. Granted, there are risks that come with co-productions, notably that you can end up with a product that is a creative hybrid, trying to satisfy two partners and territories and ending up not quite satisfying either. We need to be smart with our selections.

The attractive alternative to a full-on co-production is the 'Acquisition +" model – essentially an early pre-buy with enhanced rights, in which we take a step back from the creative process and trust the producers to deliver on scripts that we have collectively read and are enthused by. These projects often come packaged with key talent in front and behind the cameras, as was the case with *Catch 22*.

MARKET ANALYSIS

Creative selection is obviously critical and in the current market, there is a 'sweet spot' to aim for. There's a temptation at the moment to look at the chaos of the world and produce television that holds a mirror up to society, as *Handmaids Tale* did so brilliantly in its first season. But the appeal of this is limited. Audiences are exhausted. Anecdotally, almost no one I know managed to endure the misery of the second season of *Handmaids*. Instead, in the "premium" scripted market, audiences are gravitating to what might be dubbed "intelligent escapism". It's material that is smart enough for a Guardian/New York Times reader, but thrilling enough for a Sun/New York Post reader. *The Bodyguard* and *Killing Eve* are two examples in the last year that have hit the mark, but there's still a vacuum to be filled in this creative space

Furthermore, these types of show can benefit from a more linear experience, in which (radically) only one episode is dropped per week. You only have to look at *Game of Thrones* to see that a week-to-week release has created the kind of anticipation and hype that is hard to achieve on Netflix. It's impossible to have a watercooler moment when everyone is on a different viewing schedule. And talking of *Game of Thrones*, it's worth emphasizing what that show has done for its network and its streaming platform. It's not just on brand, it pretty much IS the brand of HBO and HBO Go. For the right network, only a big scripted show can do this.

CONCLUSION

This isn't the first LA Screenings report in which I've written about the TV revolution– the impact of Peak TV, cord-cutting, SVOD and the who/what/when/why/where of watching content. But with the announcement of the new SVOD services, it's the first year where we are beginning to get a picture of what the future will truly look like and who the winners and losers in the long run will be. Spoiler alert, it isn't the linear broadcast networks. There are still many issues to be resolved and it'll take years to see where the dust settles and how this affects screenings and the traditional acquisition model. But it also presents opportunities and we must be prepared and ready to adjust to the new landscape in order to secure - and/or develop - the best material.



FALL TV SCHEDULE

TVLine

FALL TV GRID 2019

New series are listed in RED

SUN	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
ABC	KIDS SAY THE DARNEDEST THINGS		SHARK TANK		THE ROOKIE	
CBS	GOD FRIENDED ME		NCIS: LOS ANGELES		MADAM SECRETARY	
FOX	THE SIMPSONS	BLESS THE HARTS	BOB'S BURGERS	FAMILY GUY		
NBC	SUNDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL					
CW						

MON	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
ABC	DANCING WITH THE STARS				THE GOOD DOCTOR	
CBS	NEIGHBORHOOD	BOB ♥ ABISHOLA	ALL RISE		BULL	
FOX	9-1-1		PRODIGAL SON			
NBC	THE VOICE				BLUFF CITY LAW	
CW						

TUE	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
ABC	THE CONNERS	BLESS THIS MESS	MIXED-ISH	BLACK-ISH	EMERGENCE	
CBS	NCIS		FBI		NCIS: NEW ORLEANS	
FOX	THE RESIDENT		EMPIRE			
NBC	THE VOICE		THIS IS US		NEW AMSTERDAM	
CW						

WED	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
ABC	THE GOLDBERGS	SCHOOLED	MODERN FAMILY	SINGLE PARENTS	STUMPTOWN	
CBS	SURVIVOR		SEAL TEAM		S.W.A.T.	
FOX	THE MASKED SINGER		NOT JUST ME			
NBC	CHICAGO MED		CHICAGO FIRE		CHICAGO P.D	
CW						

THU	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
ABC	GREY'S ANATOMY		A MILLION LITTLE THINGS		HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER	
CBS	YOUNG SHELDON	THE UNICORN	MOM	CAROL'S SECOND ACT	EVIL	
FOX	THURSDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL					
NBC	SUPERSTORE	PERFECT HARMONY	GOOD PLACE	SUNNYSIDE	LAW & ORDER: SVU	
CW						

FRI	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
ABC	AMERICAN HOUSEWIFE	FRESH OFF THE BOAT	20/20			
CBS	HAWAII FIVE-0		MAGNUM P.I.		BLUE BLOODS	
FOX	WWE SMACKDOWN LIVE					
NBC	THE BLACKLIST		DATELINE			
CW						

SAT	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30
ABC	SATURDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL					
CBS	CRIMETIME SATURDAY (drama series encores)				48 HOURS	
FOX	FOX SPORTS SATURDAY: COLLEGE FOOTBALL					
NBC	DATELINE SATURDAY NIGHT MYSTERY				SNL ENCORE (SNL at 11:30)	

MGM

Saturday, 18 May



TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	PREMIERE DATE
Four Weddings and a Funeral	Comedy	Hulu	31 July 2019

FOUR WEDDINGS AND A FUNERAL

CAST

Zoe Boyle, Nathalie Emmanuel, Guz Khan, Sophia La Porta, Harish Patel, Nikesh Patel, John Reynolds, Rebecca Rittenhouse, Brandon Mychal Smith

WRITER

Mindy Kaling, Matt Warburton (*The Mindy Project*)

LOGLINE

Four American friends reunite for a fabulous London wedding. But after a bombshell at the altar throws their lives into turmoil, they must weather a tumultuous year of romance and heartbreak. Relationships are forged and broken, political scandals exposed, London social life lampooned, love affairs ignited and doused, and of course, there are four weddings... and a funeral.

NOTES



HULU | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

The film creates a high bar for the TV series to live up to. There are moments of promise, but the script reads too much like an American sitcom - by which I mean they are straining at the leash to shovel three jokes per page into the script rather then letting the humor pour more naturally from the characters. Though many of the jokes are good, the net effect is that it doesn't flow as naturally as it might, so it feels less authentic and charming than a romantic comedy should. It's a minor quibble but It also tries too hard to prove its culturally diverse bona fides. Finally, it's packing an awful lot into the first episode – a common fault and difficulty many shows face resulting in the set up and exposition becoming a tad overwhelming. Hopefully they show us a second episode so we can see if the characters and comedy settle into a more natural rhythm.

eONE

Saturday, 18 May

TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	PREMIERE DATE
Albedo	Drama	CTV	TBA
Deputy	Drama	FOX	Midseason

ALBEDO

CAST

Evangeline Lilly



WRITER

Adam Greydon Reid & Max Reid

LOGLINE

One-hundred-fifty years in the future, detective Vivien Coleman is dispatched to the edge of our solar system to investigate a scientist's mysterious death on board an isolated space station. She soon finds herself trapped and cut-off from Earth, along with the station's small crew of brilliant scientists – all murder suspects – all harboring their own secrets… What begins as a classic murder mystery evolves into a fight for survival that may threaten the future of our species.

NOTES

CTV | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

No script available yet and no pilot to show, but this recently picked-up Canadian drama will be presented to us at the eOne screening

DEPUTY

CAST

Stephen Dorff, Yara Martinez, Brian Van Holt, Siena Goines, Jasmine Kaur, Shane Paul McGhie

WRITER

Will Beall (*Aquaman*)

LOGLINE

Deputy Bill Hollister is a career lawman who's very comfortable kicking down doors and utterly lost in a staff meeting. But when the L.A. County sheriff drops dead, Bill becomes acting sheriff of Los Angeles County, in charge of 10,000 sworn deputies policing a modern Wild West. Produced with the cooperation of the L.A. Sheriff's Department.

NOTES



FOX | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

"Look I don't know if I was born to be Sheriff. But I was born to catch bad guys". So says our protagonist Bill Hollister about his unlikely new role that forms the premise of the show. It's a line that tells you everything you need to know. Here is an unreconstructed tough guy hero whose dialogue is as hokey and old fashioned as the show itself. And while I've argued before that this kind of procedural has a place on network TV and its increasingly aging audience, it still needs to be better than this and not riddled with quite so many clichés of the genre. For example, Bill carries the guilt and scars from the death of his partner many years ago; this is a character trait we've seen a million times in network cop shows. The show is so old-fashioned that it comes as no surprise when they contrive to find a way for our hero to save the day on horse-back. It's like they wanted to do a modern western and even touch on some hot button issues of the day, but ultimately did a bad job with the 'modern' part.

LIONSGATE

Sunday, 19 May



TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	TIME SLOT
Zoey's Extraordinary Playlist	Drama	NBC	Midseason
Ramy	Comedy	HULU	Premiered 19 April 2019

RAMY

CAST

Hiam Abbass, Mohammed Amer, Mal Calamawy, David Merheje, Laith Nakli, Amr Waked, Steve Way, Ramy Youssef

WRITER

Ari Katcher, Ryan Welch, Ramy Youssef

LOGLINE

Ramy Hassan is a first generation Egyptian-American who is on a spiritual journey in his politically-divided New Jersey neighborhood. Ramy will bring a new perspective to the screen as it explores the challenges of what it's like being caught between a Muslim community that thinks life is a moral test and a millennial generation that thinks life has no consequences.

NOTES



HULU | COMEDY

SHOW REVIEW

Ramy Hassan (Ramy Youssef) is a first-generation Egyptian-American Muslim trying to balance the challenges of family expectations and what he wants in life in this comedy co-created by Youssef. The show's only real flaw is being weighed down by the label of being a comedy. Yes it has some funny dialogue and comedic situations, but what sets it apart from the pack is that it's a family TV show about a family that's never fully shown on TV. The jokes that do exist emerge from the natural dialogue from the characters. There are no forced set ups in search of a punchline and that makes the show as poignant and thoughtful as it is funny. Muslim characters (good and bad) and Remy's ongoing struggle between commitment to his culture and assimilating in the US are at the core of the show. But the challenges he faces and humor that emerges manage to feel both personal and universal. Based on the episodes I've watched so far, Ramy is a highly effective rebuttal to stereotyping for the simple reason that it's good TV.

ZOEY'S EXTRAORDINARY PLAYLIST

CAST

Jane Levy, Skylar Astin, Alex Newell, Mary Steenburgen, Peter Gallagher, John Clarence

WRITER

Austin Winsberg (*9JKL*)

LOGLINE

An innovative musical dramedy about a whip-smart but socially awkward girl in her late 20s who is suddenly able to hear the innermost thoughts of people around her as songs and even big musical numbers that they perform just for her. With this new ability at her disposal, she is able to use her "gift" to not only help herself understand people in her life, but also to help others around her.

NOTES



NBC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

I confess. I'm a sucker for a bit of musically charged emotional manipulation, the like of which this episode has in buckets. But even allowing for the many slightly predictable yet also effective and heartwarming moments, it's hard to escape the feeling that this is an idea that sounds great on paper but will be hard to execute and sustain in practice. It's a premise that might make a great romantic comedy movie, but its originality may wear thin over the series, as the writers struggle to shoehorn in different musical interludes, which one by one are likely to come across as increasingly gimmicky. I admire the escapist feel good factor on display here – it's a good fit for these depressing times - but ultimately view the idea as a law of diminishing returns. I hope I'm wrong.

NBC / UNIVERSAL

Monday, 20 May



TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	TIME SLOT
The Baker & The Beauty	Drama	ABC	Midseason
Bluff City Law	Drama	NBC	Monday 10:00PM
Council of Dads	Drama	NBC	Midseason
Not Just Me	Drama	FOX	Wednesday 9:00PM
Resident Alien	Drama	SYFY	TBA
Duncanville	Animation	FOX	Midseason
Sunnyside	Comedy	NBC	Thursday 9:30PM

THE BAKER & THE BEAUTY

CAST

Nathalie Kelley, Victor Rasuk

WRITER

Dean Georgaris (The Meg, The Brave)

LOGLINE

Daniel Garcia is working in the family bakery and doing everything that his loving Cuban parents and siblings expect him to do. But on a wild Miami night he meets Noa Hamilton, an international superstar and fashion mogul, and his life moves into the spotlight. Will this unlikely couple upend their lives to be together and pull their families into a culture clash?

NOTES



ABC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

Forgive the upcoming baking metaphors and puns; I can't help myself. This is a script in which all of the ingredients are present and correct for a successful soap. It's a love conquers-all-story in which we root for the unlikely pairing; it's a frothy, telenovela-style show centered on a loveable close knit family, each member of which is hiding a dramatic secret. It's also a wish-fulfillment glimpse at the high life filled with money and improbably sexy people. Yet somewhere in the cooking, the pastry didn't rise and the whole thing came out a little flat. The title tells you everything you need to know about the story and there are not enough surprises in the telling. Every character has a fairly predictable part to play and the dialogue is merely functional. The director and cast will need to work hard to add sugar and spice to bring this to life.

BLUFF CITY LAW

CAST

Jimmy Smits, Caitlin McGee, Barry Sloane, Michael Luwoye, Maame Yaa Boafo, Jayne Atkinson

WRITER

Dean Georgaris
(*The Meg, The Brave*)

LOGLINE

A character-driven legal drama that follows the lawyers of an elite Memphis law firm that specializes in the most controversial landmark civil rights cases. Led by legendary lawyer Elijah Strait and his brilliant daughter, Sydney Keller, they take on the toughest David-and-Goliath cases while navigating their complicated

NOTES



NBC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

I've read worse legal procedurals. All the beats are present and correct - family tensions; rousing (if rather over-written) speeches; the good/little guys taking on the evil/big corporations; a tension-inducing ticking clock deadline; lost causes dramatically won at the last through a combination of the protagonists' tenacity and a legal Hail Mary. It's all competently stitched together but it still doesn't feel like enough. It's hard for a new show to get itself onto viewers must watch lists, and in the crowded TV landscape this will struggle to stand out. Perhaps if NBC had named this Chicago Bluff City Law, it would stand more of a chance.

COUNCIL OF DADS

CAST

Sarah Wayne Callies, Michele Weaver, J. August Richards, Clive Standen, Michael O'Neill, Steven Silver, Emjay Anthony, Thalia Tran

WRITER

Tony Phelan, Joan Rater (*Grey's Anatomy, Doubt*)

LOGLINE

Based on Bruce Feiler's memoir of the same name, the drama revolves around a father whose life is thrown into upheaval when he is diagnosed with a terminal illness. Facing his morality, he and his wife assemble a group of friends to support his family and guide them through life's challenges.

NOTES



NBC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

This is another show hoping to snag some of those *This Is Us* viewers with an unabashed, emotionally manipulative, tear-jerking soap. For it to succeed, two things have to be spot on - the script and the cast chemistry. On the first front, I give the writing a solid B. It doesn't have a gimmick such as the time jump trick that made *This is Us* feel so fresh and compelling. It's a more straight-laced episode setting up the characters, whose tragic plot lines (cancer/death) are suitably balanced with plenty of heartwarming moments (new baby/wedding). Tonally it has more in common with last season's *A Million Little Things*, and I wouldn't be surprised if this scored a similarly small but devoted following.

RESIDENT ALIEN

CAST

Alan Tudyk, Sara Tomko, Corey Reynolds, Alice Wetterlund, Levi Fiehler

WRITER

Chris Sheridan (*Family Guy*)

LOGLINE

Dark, twisted and comedic fish-out-of-water story follows a crash-landed alien named Harry who, after taking on the identity of a small-town Colorado doctor, slowly begins to wrestle with the moral dilemma of his secret mission on Earth — ultimately asking the question, "Are human beings worth saving?" Based on the Dark Horse comics series by Peter Horgan and Steve Parkhouse.

NOTES



SYFY | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

When you read as many scripts as I do, the element of surprise is hard to achieve. Another alien show on the Syfy channel does not seem the place to find a hidden gem, but this may be just that. The writer cut his teeth on *Family Guy*, and it's the humor here that elevates this above the norm. It's not a new joke - to examine the nature of humans and earth from the perspective of the ultimate outsider, but it's done to great aplomb here. It's also narratively, a murder mystery and thriller, with the comedy weaved in - and the challenge will be to find the right balance so that the humor doesn't undermine and overwhelm the tension and jeopardy. Tone, look and acting will be critical for it to succeed, but it's one of the few dramas I'm excited to see.

NOT JUST ME

CAST

Brittany Snow, Emily Osment, Megalyn Echikunwoke, Timothy Hutton, Mustafa Elzein, Mo McRae

WRITER

Annie Weisman (*The Path*)

LOGLINE

Only child Julia Beckley has her life turned upside down when it's revealed that her father, a pioneering Nobel Prize-winning fertility doctor, used his own sperm to conceive dozens of children over the course of his career. Reeling from this explosive revelation, Julia discovers two new sisters -- her former best friend and an ex-Olympic athlete. Against all odds, the women attempt to form an untraditional family and lean on each other as they grapple with their own identity crises. Based on the original Endemol Shine Australia series Sisters.

NOTES



FOX | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

It was inevitable that the popularity of DNA testing kits would form the basis of a new kind of family drama in which characters discover immediate family that they had no previous knowledge of and then have to deal with the aftermath. The template for the show writes itself. First comes the shock horror of disparate family members being thrust together for the first time. Next comes the anger and contempt that they have for each other. And finally comes the 'heartwarming' emotional connections that are made. The problem is that it feels contrived - an awfully convenient way to create high-stakes tensions and get a group of characters to butt heads and bond. It also begs various questions, notably... what next? Are there enough reasons for me to care what happens to the characters going forward? And are the characters' problems universal and identifiable enough? I'm sceptical, but Fox clearly think so as it's given this their prime slot in the schedule, post *The Masked Singer*.

DUNCANVILLE

VOICE CAST

Amy Poehler, Rashida Jones, Wiz Khalifa

WRITER

Amy Poehler, Mike Scully, Julie Thacker Scully (*The Simpsons*)

LOGLINE

Animated comedy series following Duncan, a spectacularly average 15-year-old boy, along with his friends and family. His high-strung mom, Annie, constantly is trying to prevent her son from ruining his life.

NOTES



FOX | ANIMATION

SCRIPT REVIEW

Animations are hard to judge on the page as the execution is so central to the show's look, tone and overall comedic success. But as far as the script goes, it's does a good job of conveying teen angst and is packed with many funny moments. Its cultural references to the modern age are mostly on the money and the generational confrontations and disparities are well captured. Note, it's not ready and only a teaser reel will be screened, but it's worth keeping an eye on.

SUNNYSIDE

CAST

Kal Penn, Kiran Deol,
Moses Storm, Diana Maria Riva,
Samba Schutte, Poppy Liu,
Joel Kim Booster, Tudor Petrut

WRITER

Kal Penn,
Matt Murray (*The Good Place*)

LOGLINE

Revolves around Garrett Shah, a former New York city councilman, who finds his calling when faced with immigrants in need of his help and in search of the American Dream.

NOTES



NBC | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

High concept sitcoms can be the hardest to land. That's because when you are building a show around an original and quirky concept - which this undoubtedly is - then an audience has less to latch onto in terms of identifying with both the situation and more importantly the characters. The writer Matt Murray (Good Place) is an outstanding talent and has penned some fine jokes here, but the whole thing doesn't quite hang together. It's hard to know exactly who to root for yet, and when our monstrous protagonist has his moment of redemption at then end, you are left wondering where exactly this show can go from here. To its credit, it has diversity is spades and is about something uniquely American and relevant to 2019, but at times it feels a little bit too 'on the money' in terms of trying to make its point, and as a result the humor suffers.

WARNER BROS

Tuesday, 21 May



TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	TIME SLOT
All Rise	Drama	CBS	Monday 9:00pm
Batwoman	Drama	CW	TBA
Katy Keene	Drama	CW	TBA
Prodigal Son	Drama	FOX	Monday 9:00PM
Swamp Thing	Drama	DC UNIVERSE	Premiere Date 31 May 2019
Veronica Mars	Drama	HULU	Premiere Date 26 July 2019
Bob Hearts Abishola	Comedy	CBS	Monday 8:30
Harley Quinn	Animation	DC UNIVERSE	Premiere Date Mid-October 2019

ALL RISE

CAST

Jessica Camacho, Wilson Bethel, J. Alex Brinson, Marg Helgenberger, Lindsay Mendez, Ruthie Ann Miles

WRITER

Greg Spottiswood (*Frontier*)

LOGLINE

Follows the dedicated, chaotic, hopeful and sometimes absurd lives of the judges, assistant district attorneys and public defenders as they work with bailiffs, clerks, cops and jurors to bring justice to the people of Los Angeles.

NOTES



CBS | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

The temptation in reviewing this script is to simply write, "it's fine", and move on. There's little else to add, It's just one of those scripts that's not bad but not great either. It reads like a more grown up version of ABC's just-canceled *For The People*, with the "fresh" angle of a judge being the lead character. There are a lot of characters to introduce here and for the most part they are decently drawn. Cases of the week are competently interwoven with some more soapy elements. Is this the show that will set network TV on fire this season? No. It's a mediocre show that can expect no more than mediocre ratings. CBS will be happy if it achieves the usual high volume/low demo ratings.

BATWOMAN

CAST

Ruby Rose, Dougray Scott, Elizabeth Anweis, Meagan Tandy, Camrus Johnson, Nicole Kang, Rachel Skarsten, Camrus Johnson

WRITER

Caroline Dries (*The Vampire Diaries*)

LOGLINE

Revolves around Kate Kane, who, armed with a passion for social justice and flair for speaking her mind, soars onto the streets of Gotham as Batwoman, an out lesbian and highly trained street fighter primed to snuff out the failing city's criminal resurgence. But don't call her a hero yet — in a city desperate for a savior, Kate must overcome her own demons before embracing the call to be Gotham's symbol of hope.

NOTES



C W | D R A M A

SCRIPT REVIEW

The script is being kept under lock and key, but let's summarize this show's assets. It's a huge DC title. It features TV's first lesbian superhero protagonist. I've worked with the writer and she's terrific. Greg Berlanti - the most successful hitmaker of all of TV – is a producer on this. CW renews (nearly) all of its shows. In summary, this is as close as one can ever gets to predicting a slam dunk hit and a guarantee for renewal for the 2020/21 season.

KATY KEENE

CAST

Lucy Hale, Ashleigh Murray, Jonny Beauchamp, Julia Chan, Camille Hyde, Lucien Laviscount, Zane Holtz, Katherine LaNasa

WRITER

Roberto Aguirre-Sacasa, Michael Grassi (*Riverdale*)

LOGLINE

A Riverdale spinoff, Katy Keene follows the lives and loves of four iconic Archie Comics characters — including fashion legend-to-be Katy Keene (Lucy Hale) — as they chase their twenty-something dreams in New York City. This musical dramedy chronicles the origins and struggles of four aspiring artists trying to make it on Broadway, on the runway and in the recording studio.

NOTES



C W | D R A M A

SCRIPT REVIEW

I can't vouch for the affection or not of the comics on which this *Riverdale* spin off is based. What we do know is that *Riverdale* did well for CW and in its second window on Netflix, making it a valuable property for the studio and network. Like *Riverdale* I think this will also find an audience. If you asked a group of writers to pen a by-the-numbers version of *Sex In The City* for 16-34 year olds, this is exactly what it would look like. The characters are all chasing their various dreams in the worlds of fashion, music, art, dancing and sport...just to make sure all the bases are covered for audiences. Each character faces predictable obstacles, has a cliché-ridden nemesis and has to endure all the trials and tribulations of New York City. Throw in some drinking, sex and relationship woes and voila.... one tailor made young soap that's so unashamedly obvious, it might just work.

PRODIGAL SON

CAST

Tom Payne, Michael Sheen, Lou Diamond Phillips, Aurora Perrineau, Frank Harts, Bellamy Young, Keiko Agena, Halston Sage

WRITER

Chris Fedak, Sam Sklaver *(Deception)*

LOGLINE

Revolves around Malcolm Bright, the son of a notorious serial killer called The Surgeon who understands how killers think. The criminal psychologist uses his skills to help the NYPD solve crimes and stop killers while balancing his manipulative mother and annoyingly normal sister and a homicidal father still looking to bond with his prodigal son. The drama is described as a fresh take on the crime franchise with a darkly comedic tone.

NOTES



FOX | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

There's a market on network TV for this kind of cat and mouse detective/serial killer show. But for all the boxes that this ticks the show is simply too derivative and predictable to make any impact. It's like a badly written and much darker version of *The Mentalist*. While that show was formulaic, it also had humor and the considerable charm of Simon Baker. This one is dour and dark and seemingly devoid of any escapist fun. Put bluntly, it falls short in every key department - dialogue, plotting, characters - and leaves me with no desire to keep watching.

SWAMP THING

CAST

Crystal Reed, Maria Sten, Jeryl Prescott, Maria Sunderland, Will Patton, Andy Bean, Derek Mears, Henderson Wade, Kevin Durand, Ian Ziering, Leonardo Nam, Jennifer Beals (recurring)

WRITER

Mark Verheiden (*Daredevil*), Gary Dauberman

LOGLINE

When Centers for Disease Control researcher Abby Arcane returns to her childhood home of Houma, LA, in order to investigate a deadly swamp-borne virus, she develops a surprising bond with scientist Alec Holland — only to have him tragically taken from her. But as powerful forces descend on Houma, intent on exploiting the swamp's mysterious properties for their own purposes, Abby will discover that the swamp holds mystical secrets, both horrifying and wondrous — and the potential love of her life may not be dead after all.

NOTES



DC UNIVERSE | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

The fledgling streaming network DC Universe kicked off life with the rather splendid and offbeat *Doom Patrol*. What's most disappointing about *Swamp Thing* therefore, is how boringly traditional it is as a show. It almost feels like a network show (ABC's *The River* from a few years ago comes to mind). The show opens predictably with the obligatory swamp victim scene. Meanwhile, cliche alert/yawn, our protagonist from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) is returning to her small town roots to not just discover the mysteries of the swamp but also confront the demons of her past. Oh well. Perhaps the special effects will be good.

VERONICA MARS

CAST

Kristen Bell, Francis Capra, Enrico Colantoni, Percy Daggs III, Jason Dohring

WRITER

Rob Thomas
(*The Original Veronica Mars*)

LOGLINE

Spring breakers are getting murdered in Neptune, thereby decimating the seaside town's lifeblood tourist industry. After Mars Investigations is hired by the parents of one of the victims to find their son's killer, Veronica is drawn into an epic eight-episode mystery that pits the enclave's wealthy elites, who would rather put an end to the month-long bacchanalia, against a working class that relies on the cash influx that comes with being the West Coast's answer to Daytona Beach.

NOTES



HULU | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

The script has been kept a closely guarded secret, but it's certainly one I'm excited to see. The original series was great and the show's two key assets return here for the follow-up – Kristen Bell (an A-list star now) and writer/creator Rob Thomas. Much anticipation, and I'm sure it will be a big hit for Hulu.

BOB HEARTS ABISHOLA

CAST

Billy Gardell, Folake Olowofoyeku, Christine Ebersole, Maribeth Monroe, Shola Adewusi, Barry Shabaka Henley, Matt Jones, Travis Wolfe Jr.

WRITER

Chuck Lorre, Eddie Gorodetsky, Gina Yashere, Al Higgins

LOGLINE

Follows Bob who, after having a heart attack, falls in love with his Nigerian nurse and sets his sights on getting her to give him a chance.

NOTES



CBS | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

Chuck Lorre is an EP and writer on this and there's no bigger behind the camera name in the network comedy world - at least when it comes to churning out hits. British comic Gina Yashira is also one of the writers, and I'd like to think she is responsible for some of the fine jokes and sparky attitude on display here. The show has heart, humor and it's clearly one to watch. If there's a caveat it's that it's been really hard to land a romantic comedy on network TV in recent years. Perhaps that means one is overdue, and aided by a fine cast, this has as a good shot. As a note of caution it's a multicam and does not feel like a particularly young skewing show. Still, it was a confident and effective script.

HARLEY QUINN

VOICE CAST

Jason Alexander, Lake Bell, Kaley Cuoco, Giancarlo Esposito, Ron Funches, Tony Hale, Christopher Meloni, Natalie Morales, JB Smoove, Wanda Sykes, Alan Tudyk

WRITER

Justin Halpern, Patrick Schumaker (*Powerless*)

LOGLINE

Harley Quinn has finally broken things off once and for all with the Joker and attempts to make it on her own as the criminal Queenpin of Gotham City in this half-hour adult animated action-comedy series. The series features Harley Quinn, Poison Ivy and a whole cast of heroes and villains, old and new, from the DC Universe.

NOTES



DC UNIVERSE | ANIMATION

SCRIPT REVIEW

No script was available for this animated series, but it's obviously a big title and has a star-studded voice cast.

CBS / PARAMOUNT

Wednesday, 22 May

TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	TIME SLOT
Evil	Drama	CBS	Thursday 10:00pm
FBI: Most Wanted	Drama	CBS	Midseason
Nancy Drew	Drama	CW	TBA
Tommy	Drama	CBS	Midseason
Broke	Comedy	CBS	Midseason
Carol's Second Act	Comedy	CBS	Thursday 9:30pm
The Unicorn	Comedy	CBS	Thursday 8:30pm



Looking For Alaska	Drama	HULU	TBA

EVIL

CAST

Katja Herbers, Mike Colter, Aasif Mandvi, Michael Emerson

WRITER

Robert and Michelle King (*The Good Wife*)

LOGLINE

A drama about the battle between science and religion, Evil focuses on a skeptical female clinical psychologist who joins a priest-in-training and a blue-collar contractor as they investigate supposed miracles, demonic possessions and other extraordinary occurrences to see if there's a scientific explanation or if something truly supernatural is at work.

NOTES



CBS | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

The fact that this is from the writers of *The Good Wife* sets a high expectation bar for me. Unfortunately that bar was not cleared. At its core, it's *X-Files* for exorcisms – in other words another way of dealing with a science v paranormal debate. But for all the manufactured efforts at laying out complex definitions of the nature of evil, it's pretty one-dimensional. Mutton dressed as lamb. The characters are hard to root for and there are plenty of moments that strike me as frankly too nasty for Network TV. Perhaps the nod to the horror genre will attract a hardcore fanbase, but that genre has had a lot more luck on cable and streaming platforms than it has on Network TV.

FBI: MOST WANTED

CAST

Julian McMahon,
Keisha Castle-Hughes,
Alana de la Garza, Kellan Lutz,
Roxy Sternberg, Nathanial Arcand

WRITER

Dick Wolf, Rene Balcer

LOGLINE

Revolves around the division of the FBI tasked with tracking and capturing the notorious criminals on the FBI's Most Wanted list.

NOTES



CBS | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

It's a measure of the state of Network TV that CBS was happy enough with the so-so ratings of *FBI* last season to go for an immediate spin-off. It's a resigned acceptance that they can expect no more than a large-ish older crowd to watch their shows. Better to be safe in that expectation than gamble on a new brand whose odds are worse.

NANCY DREW

CAST

Kennedy McMann, Leah Lewis, Tunji Kasim, Maddison Jaizani, Alex Saxon, Freddie Prinze Jr., Alvina August, Pamela Sue Martin

WRITER

Noga Landau (*The Magicians*)

LOGLINE

Set in the summer after her high school graduation,18-year-old Nancy Drew (Kennedy McMann) thought she'd be leaving her hometown for college, but when a family tragedy holds her back another year, she finds herself embroiled in a ghostly murder investigation — and along the way, uncovers secrets that run deeper than she ever imagined.

NOTES



CW | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

CW has long dabbled with the idea of finding a detective procedural that works for their target 18-34 demo, so I understand the intention here. But for much of the script, It reads like its target audience is 13-year-olds in its simplicity of dialogue, plotting and characterization. Like many scripts, the pleasure is further diminished by an annoying, lazy and unnecessary voice over, used to painfully spell out our protagonist's thoughts and feelings. However the pilot is somewhat redeemed in the last 10 pages by not one, but four major plot twists and reveals that added some mystery that had been sorely missing up until that point. I'm not sure it's enough to save this - it might just be too irredeemably cheesy and uncool for CW viewers. But Kennedy McMann in the title role has been getting rave reviews, so I'll reserve final judgment.

TOMMY

CAST

Edie Falco, Michael Chernus, Adelaide Clemens, Russel G. Jones, Olivia Lucy Phillip, David Fierro, Joseph Lyle Taylor

WRITER

Paul Attanasio (*Bull*)

LOGLINE

When a former high-ranking NYPD officer becomes the first female chief of police for Los Angeles, she uses her unflinching honesty and hardball tactics to navigate the social, political, and national security issues that converge with enforcing the law.

NOTES



CBS | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

Tommy is written by Paul Attanasio, a veteran scribe with credits as diverse as the high brow movie *Quiz Show* to the low brow procedural *Bull*. Nancy seems to want to straddle both those audiences and may end up satisfying none. On the one hand, it's a character led drama dealing with issues of sexuality, police brutality, immigration, corruption the "me too" movement, media bias and other hot button issues in these politically divided times. On the other hand it's a standard cop procedural with a 'twist' (a woman is in charge). Given CBS's aging and conservative (small c) audience it may be trying too hard to tick liberal boxes and not enough time simply catching the bad guys in a bit of mindless escapist entertainment. At best this is a variant on *Madam Secretary* and will attract a similar audience. On the plus side, Edie Falco stars and might elevate the material.

BROKE

CAST

Jaime Camil, Pauley Perrette, Natasha Leggero, Izzy Diaz

WRITER

Alex Herschlag (*Will & Grace*)

LOGLINE

When an outrageously wealthy trust-fund baby is cut off by his father, he and his wife move into her estranged sister's Reseda condo, forcing the two siblings to reconnect.

NOTES



CBS | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

I appreciate that not all sitcoms have to be grounded in reality to be funny (see *Arrested Development* and others). But it'll be a hard job for the director to land this one. it's laden with characters that are completely over the top and, almost by definition, hard to identify with. A tone this big, needs jokes to match, and the script does not deliver on this front.

CAROL'S SECOND ACT

CAST

Patricia Heaton , Kyle MacLachlan, Sabrina Jalees, Jean-Luc Bilodeau, Ito Aghayere, Bonnie Dennison

WRITER

Emily Halpern, Sarah Haskins (*Trophy Wife*)

LOGLINE

Revolves around Carol Chambers, who, after raising her two children and retiring from teaching, embarks on a unique second act: becoming a doctor.

NOTES



CBS | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

There was a point while reading this script where I needed to check if this one was being billed as a drama or a comedy. Partly because the script ran to over 50 pages - making it closer to drama territory than comedy. But mostly because, likeable and charming though it is, it was hard to pinpoint where the actual laughs were supposed to come. Call me a cynic, but some might say that's a problem for a sitcom. Still, this has Patricia Heaton in the title role and she will doubtless bring extra charm, humor and eyeballs to the series, and maybe those factors alone will be enough to see this succeed. CBS is reportedly very hot on it.

THE UNICORN

CAST

Walton Goggins, Rob Corddry, Michaela Watkins, Omar Benson Miller, Maya Lynne Robinson

WRITER

Bill Martin, Mike Schiff (*Fam*)

LOGLINE

A widower is eager to move on from the most difficult year of his life, only to realize he's utterly unprepared to raise his two daughters on his own, and equally unprepared for the dating world where, to his shock, he's suddenly a hot commodity.

NOTES



CBS | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

By and large, death isn't funny (!) but there have been a few network comedies that have tried and failed to deal with the 'humor' of the aftermath. This is by far the best network effort I've read on the subject as it manages to combine some genuinely touching moments, with several laugh out loud scenes. It succeeds because the characters are well drawn and authentic - they don't feel like sitcom tropes or functions of the plot. It's a solid basis on which to build a comedy and is in the top tier of the comedy efforts this season...at least on paper.

LOOKING FOR ALASKA

CAST

Kristine Froseth, Charlie Plummer, Denny Love, Jay Lee, Sofia Vassillieva, Landry Bender, Uriah Shelton, Jordon Connor, Timothy Simons, Ron Cephas Jones

WRITER

Josh Schwartz (*Gossip Girl*)

LOGLINE

Miles "Pudge" Halter enrolls in boarding school to try to gain a deeper perspective on life. He falls in love with Alaska Young, and after her unexpected death, he and his close friends attempt to uncover the truth behind her death and make sense of it. Based on the novel by John Green.

NOTES



HULU | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

Writer Josh Schwartz (*Gossip Girl, The OC*) is one of the best in the business at creating teen characters and he doesn't disappoint here. This is an edgier and smarter version of a CW-type high school series, and the writing captures the joys, angst and confusions of coming of age in this compelling adaptation of the critically acclaimed book of the same name. It's perhaps not the most commercial of pieces, lingering on its heavy themes - amongst which are the search for meaning, death, grief and loss. In that sense, you could call this Hulu's answer to Netflix's *13 Reasons Why*. Hulu will be very happy if it can create the same kind of buzz as that one. If the cast can capture the emotional nuances of the script, this has a good chance. Note, it's a limited series only.

DISNEY

Thursday, 23 May



TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	TIME SLOT
Emergence	Drama	ABC	Tuesday 10:00PM
Filthy Rich	Drama	FOX	Midseason
Godfather of Harlem	Drama	EPIX	TBA
Motherland: Fort Salem	Drama	FREEFORM	TBA
neXT	Drama	FOX	Midseason
Stumptown	Drama	ABC	Wednesday 10:00PM
Bless This Mess	Comedy	ABC	Premiered 16 April 2019
Dollface	Comedy	HULU	TBA
Mixed-ish	Comedy	ABC	Tuesday 9:00PM
Outmatched	Comedy	FOX	Midseason
Perfect Harmony	Comedy	NBC	Thursday 8:30PM

EMERGENCE

CAST

Allison Tolman, Ashley Aufderheide, Robert Bailey Jr., Clancy Brown, Donald Faison, Zabryna Guevara, Alexa Swinton, Owain Yeoman

WRITER

Michele Fazekas,
Tara Butters (Law & Order SVU)

LOGLINE

A character-driven genre thriller that centers around a police chief who takes in a young child that she finds near the site of a mysterious accident who has no memory of what has happened. The investigation draws her into a conspiracy larger than she ever imagined, and the child's identity is at the center of it all.

NOTES



ABC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

Mystery and intrigue are naturally useful pillars on which to build a show and engage an audience. But this one seems to have nothing to layer on top of that foundation except further mystery and intrigue. Long lasting shows need more than that - notably characters that aren't just functions of the plot. Furthermore, the central mystery element here is a 9-year-old girl, possibly with strange powers, and that's a device we've seen before in too many other network series that, like this one, promise much but ultimately fail to deliver. Often these series devolve into a repetitive pattern of the good guys trying to protect the girl from the bad guys for reasons that aren't fully explained. This isn't awful - it may even entertain for a few episodes - but I doubt they have much clue as to what episode 5 looks like much less episode 25.

FILTHY RICH

CAST

Kim Cattrall, Gerald McRaney , Aubrey Dollar, Benjamin Levy Aguilar, Corey Cott, Mark L. Young, Steve Harris, Melia Kreiling, David Denman, Olivia Macklin

WRITER

Tate Taylor

LOGLINE

A Southern Gothic dramedy revolving around two strong, sharp women who will go to any length to protect their loved ones and get their due. When the wealthy CEO of the world's largest Christian network dies in a plane crash, his wife and adult children are stunned to discover he has grown, illegitimate kids who are also in his will. When the steel azalea matriarch of the family tries to pay them to go away, these newly legitimized heirs have very different ideas and insist on not only staying in town, but becoming part of the family empire.

NOTES



FOX | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

From *Dallas* to *Dynasty* etc, Network TV has often dabbled in the playground of the super wealthy as an enticing backdrop for a sexy soap. The setting for this one - a Christian broadcasting empire - is at least original and provides the obvious ability to expose 'shocking' moral hypocrisy amongst the protagonists. However it also creates a problem for the show. It's not always clear if the series is celebrating the evangelical life or lampooning it. As a result this runs the risk of alienating evangelicals and atheists alike. The premise is a wildly contrived way to gather extreme polar opposite characters under one roof to provide the obvious tensions, flirtations etc. Though the characters do have some zest and the world and journey are fun, I'm concerned that audiences will find the media empire setting alienating.

GODFATHER OF HARLEM

CAST

Forest Whitaker, Antoinette Crowe-Legacy, Nigél Thatch, Kelvin Harrison Jr., Lucy Fry, Giancarlo Esposito, Kathrine Narducci

WRITER

Chris Brancato (*Narcos*), Paul Eckstein

LOGLINE

True story of infamous crime boss Bumpy Johnson, who in the early 1960s returned from 10 years in prison to find the neighborhood he once ruled in shambles. With the streets controlled by the Italian mob, Bumpy must take on the Genovese crime family to regain control. During the brutal battle, he forms an alliance with radical preacher Malcolm X – catching Malcolm's political rise in the crosshairs of social upheaval and a mob war that threatens to tear the city apart.

NOTES



EPIX | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

It's probably inevitable that this show will earn the label "The African American *Sopranos*". If it reaches half the levels of that show it will be a hit and the early signs are promising. The script is good, but not quite as surprising and impactful as it might have been if shows like *The Sopranos* hadn't come before it. There are a few beats in the show that feel a little too familiar. But adding extra intrigue and depth to the proceedings is the true historical background to the series, notably the intersection of the lead character with Malcolm X. The director and the performance of Forest Whiteker will play a big part in the show's ability to deliver on the potential of the script. I'm told Mr Whiteker had to go back into the edit to add voice over as his initial performance was a little too 'mumbling'. Naturally, it's an open question as to whether this slice of American history works for the international market.

MOTHERLAND: FORT SALEM

CAST

Amalia Holm, Demetria McKinney, Ashley Nicole Williams

WRITER

Eliot Laurence

LOGLINE

Set in an alternate America where witches ended their persecution nearly 300 years ago by cutting a deal with the U.S. government to fight for their country, "Motherland: Fort Salem" follows three young women from basic training in combat magic into early deployment. In this world, the traditional roles of gender and power are flipped, with the more dominant women on the front lines fighting looming terrorist threats that are familiar to our world - but with supernatural tactics and weapons.

NOTES



FREEFORM | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

With vampire shows largely exhausted now, networks seem to be moving on to witches as their subject matter. In this one, *Motherland* presents an alternative version of history to try and tell a modern day allegorical tale. At least I think that's what it's trying to do. I found the script messy, complicated and hard to follow with too many characters introduced simultaneously. As a result it was hard to care about them or their journey. In a show about witches, I'd hope there might be time for a little bit of fun, but It's tonally one-note and takes itself too seriously.

neXT

CAST

John Slattery, Fernanda Andrade, Eve Harlow, Aaron Moten, Gerardo Celasco, Michael Mosley, Jason Butler Harner

WRITER

Manny Coto (*24*)

LOGLINE

A propulsive, fact-based thriller grounded in the latest A.I. research that revolves around a brilliant but paranoid former tech CEO who joins a Homeland Cybersecurity Agent and her team to stop the world's first artificial intelligence crisis: the emergence of a rogue AI with the ability to continuously improve itself.

NOTES



FOX | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

neXT is the most interesting network drama project I've read this season. Thematically, it's a mainstream version of C4's *Humans* - a deep dive into the what-if possibilities of AI, and the worst case scenarios. Whereas *Humans* came at the premise from a nuanced character-led standpoint, for Network TV the stakes are inevitably raised to doomsday levels with a show that is much more plot heavy. That might make it unsustainable and even a better prospect as a movie - but at least the plot is smart, topical, fast moving and thrilling. It's from one of the original writers of *24* and the show has the same edge-of-your-seat pace and energy that made it a page-turner to read. It left me wanting to see and read more.

STUMPTOWN

CAST

Cobie Smulders, Michael Ealy, Adrian Martinez, Camryn Manheim, Cole Sibus, Tantoo Cardinal

WRITER

Jason Richman (*Detroit 187*)

LOGLINE

Inspired by the Oni Press graphic novels, the drama follows Dex Parios, a strong, assertive and unapologetically sharp-witted Army veteran working as a P.I. in Portland. With a complicated personal history and only herself to rely on, she solves other people's messes with a blind eye toward her own.ability at her disposal, she is able to use her "gift" to not only help herself understand people in her life, but also to help others around her.

NOTES



ABC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

I have mixed feelings on this one. It starts out well and has a good amount of fun escapist elements. There's a likeable female protagonist - flawed but cool to hang out with – and portrayed by the talented Cobie Smulders. But at times it's clunky. There are too many scenes in which our heroine extracts crucial information from suspects who spill the beans for little other reason than she knows that they are lying. Furthermore, there's a lot of typical pilot exposition to cram in here - and the weaving together of the case of the week with the longer running story arcs gets messy. Still, if Smulders can pull off the lead role, she'll be the kind of character that network audiences will enjoy going on the ride with. It fits with ABC's goal of reclaiming female viewers and the trailer looks promising.

BLESS THIS MESS

CAST

Ed Begley Jr, Lake Bell, Madison Curry, Pam Grier, J.T Neal, Dax Shepard

WRITER

Lake Bell, Elizabeth Meriwether (*New Girl*)

LOGLINE

This new single-camera comedy follows newlyweds Rio and Mike as they make the decision to move from big city New York to rural Nebraska. After dropping everything to make the move from skyscrapers to farmhouses, they soon realize that the simpler life isn't as easy as they planned. Rio and Mike must now learn how to weather the storm as they are faced with unexpected challenges in their new life as farmers.

NOTES



ABC | COMEDY

SHOW REVIEW

This has been airing on ABC and was recently renewed after a short 6-episode run. It's being screened as many international buyers have not seen it yet. When I read the script of this show, I couldn't quite get over the contrived premise and the fish-out-of-water clichés that inevitably followed when a recently married couple quit their New York lives to move to Nebraska to a newly inherited farmhouse, where they plan to grow crops and live the simple life. This despite having zero experience in such matters and without even checking out the condition the farmhouse (inevitably very run down). The fact that I mildly enjoyed watching it is a credit to the charm and likeability of its stars – Dax Shepherd and Lake Bell – and a strong supporting cast of quirky scene-stealing characters that provide the stand-out comedic moments of the episode. If they can cast aside the predictable elements here – that we've seen not only in other sitcoms but also the old reality series The Simple Life – then there's a good chance of this growing into something, if not groundbreaking, then at least perfectly enjoyable. And that's better than most network sitcoms can say.

DOLLFACE

CAST

Kat Dennings,
Brenda Song, Shay Mitchell

WRITER

Jordan Weiss

LOGLINE

After being dumped by her longtime boyfriend, a young woman must deal with her own imagination in order to literally and metaphorically re-enter the world of women and rekindle the female friendships she left behind.

NOTES



HULU | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

A script that's hard to judge on paper but if well executed there's much to like here. It's young, modern, characterful and quirky. The action veers between scenes that provide authentic snapshots of friendship and relationships to surreal metaphorical imaginations and flashbacks that add both comedy and pathos. Much of the potential comedy will come from the nuances of both the performances and direction. Both will need to be spot for this to fulfill its potential. A recast is happening, indicating they didn't quite get it right the first time. But it's well worth tracking.

MIXED-ISH

CAST

Arica Himmel, Christina Anthony, Ethan Childress, Mykal-Michelle Harris, Tika Sumpter

WRITER

Kenya Barris, Peter Saji (*Black-ish*)

LOGLINE

In "mixed-ish," Rainbow Johnson recounts her experience growing up in a mixed-race family in the '80s and the constant dilemmas they had to face over whether to assimilate or stay true to themselves. Bow's parents Paul and Alicia decide to move from a hippie commune to the suburbs to better provide for their family. Bow and her siblings navigate a mainstream school in which they're perceived as neither black nor white. This family's experiences illuminate the challenges of finding one's own identity when the rest of the world can't decide where you belong.

NOTES



ABC | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

Black-ish has already spun-off one hit show (*Grown-ish* for Freeform), and ABC is taking the tack that it's easier to launch a show like this with a built in audience than to try and launch a new one. They had modest success with this tactic with *Schooled* last season, and can expect only modest success again with Mixed-ish, especially as the ratings for Black-ish have stared to wane.

OUTMATCHED

CAST

Maggie Lawson, Jason Biggs, Connor Kalopsis, Tisha Campbell-Martin, Jack Stanton, Ashley Boettcher

WRITER

Lon Zimmet (*L.A. to Vegas*)

LOGLINE

A family comedy about a blue-collar couple in South Jersey trying to get by and raise four kids, three of whom just happen to be certified geniuses.

NOTES



FOX | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

Imagine Big Bang Theory as a family sitcom; or perhaps imagine *Young Sheldon* but with three geniuses. That's the basic set up - a traditional family sitcom about a very untraditional family. This was a strong pilot script – with funny characters, a well-constructed plot and a heart warming conclusion. The central plight of the parents bemoaning the challenges of raising 3 kids too smart for their own good created some funny moments. My worry is that it's a one-trick pony and there is only so much you can eke out of these characters without treading the same comedic ground again and again. Furthermore, it's a multicam and based on the trailer, the fomat has not helped deliver on the comedy.

PERFECT HARMONY

CAST

Bradley Whitford, Anna Camp, Will Greenberg, Geno Segers, Rizwan Manji, Tymberlee Hill

WRITER

Lesley Wake Webster (*Speechless*)

LOGLINE

A rural church choir gets the director it never thought it needed when a salty, Ivy League music professor stumbles through their door.

NOTES



NBC | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

The quirky premise is a contrived way to interweave a group of disparate characters who would otherwise have no reason to interact. Each character is one dimensional - and those dimensions are rather flogged to death for some easy laughs. The plot, with its heartwarming denouement lends, itself to being a movie rather than a long running sitcom, and it's hard to know where they go from here. On the plus side, Bradley Whitford is capable of eking maximum comedy out of any situation.

SONY

Tuesday, 21 May



TITLE	GENRE	NETWORK	TIME SLOT
For Life	Drama	ABC	Midseason
Lincoln	Drama	NBC	Midseason
Pandora	Drama	CW	Premieres 9 July 2019
Party of Five	Drama	FREEFORM	TBA
Reckoning	Drama	AXN	TBA
Indebted	Comedy	NBC	Midseason
United We Fall	Comedy	ABC	Midseason

FOR LIFE

CAST

Nicholas Pinnock, Indira Varma, Joy Bryant, Boris McGiver, Tyla Harris, Mary Stuart Masterson, Dorian Missick

WRITER

Hank Steinberg (*The Last Ship*)

LOGLINE

A serialized legal and family drama about a prisoner who becomes a lawyer, litigating cases for other inmates while fighting to overturn his own life sentence for a crime he didn't commit. His quest for freedom is driven by his desperate desire to get back to the family he loves and reclaim the life that was stolen from him. The show will also, through the window of his ferocious struggle and complicated relationship with a progressive female prison warden, examine the flaws and challenges in the penal and legal systems.

NOTES



ABC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

Well written and compelling, this is a cable show wrapped in a network package. Prison life, politics, race relations and the criminal justice system are at the heart of the show but can't be handled with the same intensity and brutal honesty as could be achieved on cable or streaming. These complex themes are thus crammed into a more formulaic courtroom drama to satisfy network needs. The result still reads well and to its credit there's a strong and compelling lead character to root for. But the conflicting mix of tone and narrative - part *Good Wife* part *Power* feels like a tough sell on ABC.

LINCOLN

CAST

Russell Hornsby, Arielle Kebbel, Michael Imperioli, Ramses Jimenez, Brooke Lyons, Roslyn Duff

WRITER

VJ Boyd (*Justified*)

LOGLINE

Based on the bestselling Bone Collector book series, the drama follows legendary forensic criminologist Lincoln Rhyme, who was seriously injured during his hunt for the diabolic serial killer known as the Bone Collector. Called back into action when the killer re-emerges, Lincoln forms a unique partnership with Amelia Sachs, a young beat cop who helps him hunt the deadly mastermind while also taking on the most high-profile cases in the NYPD.

NOTES



NBC | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

The Bone Collector was a mediocre movie that no one was crying out to be made into an equally mediocre TV series. Though there is a procedural element here, the main premise and format involves a team trying to track a serial killer over a season. This does not lend itself well to network TV as by definition and necessity they will spend 21 episodes nearly - but then not quite - catching the killer. Meanwhile the body count piles up in ever more gruesome ways. The hook of the lead detective being a paraplegic cannot salvage the situation. The show is more disabled by the leaden dialogue and stereotyped characters.

PANDORA

CAST

Raechelle Banno,
Martin Bobb-Semple,
Oliver Dench, Noah Huntley,
John Harlan Kim,
Priscilla Quintana, Ben Radcliffe,

WRITER

Mark A Altman, Steve Kriozere
(*Castle*)

LOGLINE

Set in the year 2199, Pandora is a futuristic drama about a resourceful young woman, Jax, who has lost everything, but finds a new life at Earth's Space Training Academy where she and her friends learn to defend the galaxy from threats, both alien and human. When secrets about the nature of her own identity begin to surface, Jax must uncover the truth, and whether she will be humanity's savior or the instrument of its destruction.

NOTES



FREEFORM | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

I know very little, though it's hard to imagine it will be anything other than a cheap summer time-filler for CW.

PARTY OF FIVE

CAST

Nathalie Kelley, Carlos Gomez, Lisa Vidal, Dan Bucatinsky, Belissa Escobedo, Victor Rasuk, Michelle Veintimilla, David Del Rio

WRITER

Amy Lippman (*Masters of Sex*)
Christopher Keyser (*Tyrant*)

LOGLINE

Described as a modern twist on the 1994-2000 Fox series, it follows the five Acosta children (fka Buendia) as they struggle to survive together as a family after their parents are deported to Mexico.

NOTES



FREEFORM | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

The cynical me notes that this is a remake of a show that nobody was yearning for. And I certainly can't judge it against an original of which I have no memory/knowledge. So I'll judge it on its own merits. To my surprise, it's pretty good, in part because rather than just rebooting the original, they've retooled it to create a story that is highly relevant to this moment in time. The cruel and broken immigration system of America is laid bare through the heart-wrenching struggles of one family dealing with the aftermath of their parent's deportation. Emotion - fear, anger, devastation and hope - is writ large, but in a way that feels mostly authentic rather than manipulative. It doesn't wear its politics on its sleeve - it doesn't need in order to make its point about the real impacts to people's lives. And yet although immigration is a global problem, this particular strand of it - Mexico and America - is unique and probably does not translate with the same impact to the international market.

RECKONING

CAST

Aden Young, Sam Trammell, Simone Kessell, Laura Gordon, Gloria Garayua, Mitzi Ruhlmann, Milly Alcock, Ed Oxenbould , Finn Little, Anthony Phelan, Diana Glenn

WRITER

David Hubbard (Noel)

LOGLINE

Reckoning explores the darkest corners of the human psyche through the eyes of two fathers, one of whom is a serial killer. Mike and Leo try to do what's best for the people they love and the families they protect. But as both struggle to suppress their inner demons, the murder of a local teenager sets them on a course of mutual destruction that will emanate through every facet of their quiet, suburban community.

NOTES



AXN | DRAMA

SCRIPT REVIEW

I know very little about this Australian show, other than to name drop that I know the star of the series who tells me that it's very good and he's proud of the work. What else is he going to say...but he's smart and honest enough to tell me otherwise if it were not the case.

INDEBTED

CAST

Adam Pally, Fran Drescher,
Abby Elliott, Steven Weber

WRITER

Dan Levy
(*The Goldbergs*)

LOGLINE

Young parents Dave and Rebecca are ready to reclaim their life after years of diapers and sleepless nights. However, things take an unexpected turn when Dave's parents show up unannounced and broke, leaving Dave with no choice but to open the door to the people who gave him everything. But these boomerang parents aren't great with boundaries and the question of who's parenting who quickly become blurred in this multi-generational comedy.

NOTES



NBC | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

I have two personal bugbears regarding comedy pilots and sadly both of them are at the heart of everything on display here. Firstly, I am tired of sitcoms that find contrived ways for parents to live with their kids (or vice versa) even though it's patently a terrible idea - but one that the writer believes leads to "hilarious consequences". Secondly, it's always a red flag for me when a script is overly peppered with exclamation marks, whose purpose seems to be to highlight where the jokes are. A good joke needs no punctuation. In scene after scene here, hilarious consequences ensue with added punctuation. It's a network sitcom formula - nightmare parents + bad decisions = forced comedy. And of course if all concludes with some heartwarming redemption at the end. A good cast is wasted here.

UNITED WE FALL

CAST

Jane Curtin, Will Sasso,
Christina Vidal
Emma Grace Helton

WRITER

Julius "Goldy" Sharpe
(*Dads*)

LOGLINE

A family sitcom that follows the trials and tribulations of Jo and Bill, parents of two young kids, as they try to make it day-to-day as a functioning family. Bill's very judgmental live-in mother and Jo's large Latinx Catholic family will never hesitate to let our couple know they're seemingly screwing up, but Bill and Jo will always have each other's backs, united against everyone – other parents, teachers, doctors, specialists, coaches, co-workers, and especially their kids.

NOTES



ABC | COMEDY

SCRIPT REVIEW

This is another in the far too long line of family comedies in which the parents are permanently bemoaning the trappings of parenthood. Predictably, they are constantly striving to put out the 'hilarious' fires that spring up around them in a sitcom-land, that are driven by dysfunctional family dynamics. It's no worse or better than other shows of its ilk, and even has some funny moments, but it's hard to see how this cuts through the noise in the crowded family comedy space. It's a reflection of how bad ABC's comedy development season has been that this has been picked up to series.