

If you are anything like me, you know the worst part of a truly great book is the abrupt end in the story — not knowing what happens next.

When I finished reading Atwood’s book, I wanted more. Hulu’s series gave me just that with season two of *The Handmaid’s Tale*, even involving Atwood in the writing of the script. The second season is darker than the first. It’s not for the faint of heart. The opening sequence of season two, also on Hulu, left me speechless and feeling an array of emotions — all without a single word being spoken. It was the best 15 minutes of television I have watched in a very long time, and each episode gets better as the season continues.

Elisabeth Moss’ portrayal of Offred, the main antagonist, is worthy of every award in the book, and truly places her as one of the greats in the acting community. *The Handmaid’s Tale* certainly has some trigger-worthy scenes and delves into a world of darkness, but it is a must-watch. — *Elisha Young*

What Happened to the Real-life Franklin Expedition

Based on the excellent bestselling novel by Dan Simmons of the same name, AMC’s limited series ***The Terror*** is engrossing historical fiction blended with elements of fantasy and suspense. The story speculates about what happened to the real-life Franklin expedition, which disappeared in the 1840s while attempting to find the Northwest Passage through the Arctic region. To our knowledge, nobody survived.

Was it lead poisoning from badly soldered canned rations that killed the crew? Was an enormous, polar bear-like creature drawn from the traditions of the native people of the region responsible for the sailor’s unfortunate demise? Or had the arrogance of the British Empire and the folly of the very concept of empire itself finally gone too far?

Starring Tobias Menzies and Jared Harris, the show is part man-versus-the-elements survival porn (with



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cannibalism!), part engrossing character drama with great historical detail, and part meditation on what happens when the hubris of man crosses a line with the dark recesses of the natural world — a place of which we still know so little. Available AMC and Amazon Prime. — *Will Kennedy*

Time Travel Romance

Are you an intellectual feminist woman who tries to keep her love of romance novels in the closet? I’m not saying that’s me, but if that’s you, then let’s talk ***Outlander***.

Why yes, I have read every single one of Diana Gabaldon’s voluminous tomes about the adventures of World War II nurse Clare who time travels back in time

to Scotland before the battle of Culloden where she finds herself needing to marry a super-hot Highlander.

And no, the premise makes no sense. But it works, and the writing and historical research are deeply satisfying. I wasn’t sold at first when I head that *Outlander* would be a Starz series, but I dubiously watched the first episode. And loved it. Gabaldon is actively involved in the series and the episodes are as sexy, smart (and sometimes violent) as the books.

Outlander aficionados call the time of year with no episodes Droughtlander, and the latest drought will end in November when season four kicks off. — *Camilla Mortensen*

It’s Still Real to Me, Dammit!

My childhood was filled with the wonders of the World Wrestling Federation (now WWE). I was a wild Hulkamaniac, cheered on Stone Cold Steve Austin as his boss continually screwed him over, and I still get excited whenever WrestleMania happens. So, wrestling is deep in me. When I heard about ***GLOW***, I worried that the adaptation of the women’s wrestling show from the 1980s would be bastardized into something for the Netflix mainstream. I’m glad I was wrong. Chavo Guerrero, Jr., who belongs to a long line of dynastic professional wrestlers, had the actresses train like they were attending a wrestling school. And, as he said on the *Steve Austin Show*, the actresses now don’t like having stunt doubles take their place in the ring. Their dedication to the art shows, since *GLOW* doubles as a drama and just damn good wrestling. Besides presenting tensions among female wrestlers on the show, it shows the kind of commercial adversity that would have emerged when putting on a women’s wrestling TV show, seeing as humongous male wrestlers like Hulk Hogan, Macho Man Randy Savage and Andre the Giant ran the scene. Season two is out now on Netflix, so download away — and make sure to catch the documentary about the real Gorgeous Ladies of Wrestling. — *Henry Houston*

PODCASTS

Behind the Episodes

If you haven’t heard of the HBO series *Westworld*, you may be living under a rock. The series, based on the 1973 movie of the same name, began in 2016 and recently finished airing its second season. The show is about an amusement park-like facility in which the world’s rich and elite can interact with humanoid androids (kill them, have sex with them, go on adventures — you name it). The show puts forth philosophical questions of mortality, morality, consciousness and what it means to be human — but it also can get confusing due to its multitude of timelines and complex themes. That’s where ***Decoding Westworld*** comes in. The podcast follows the show episode-by-episode, offering explanations and fan theories, all with no spoilers for future episodes. It’s the perfect listen-along experience to keep up with one of the most talked about shows of the last few years. — *Meerah Powell*

Conversations with a Comic

You may know Marc Maron better from the hit Netflix show *GLOW*, now in its second season. But years ago, Maron chased his standup career with a successful podcast that mixed comedy and armchair psychoanalysis. ***WTF with Marc Maron*** feels like just what we need in the era of Trump. In a time of tweets and sound bites, it’s refreshing to hear Maron’s in-depth discussion with guests, ranging from young comics and President Barack Obama to mainstream superstars like Jennifer Lawrence and Paul Rudd. Maron often seems to get an “I’ve never told anyone about this before” confession from his guests, opening each show (famously recorded in his garage) with a confessional, comedic, observational monologue. And lately, while many of my favorite comics have fallen from



grace in the age of #metoo, it’s nice to have Maron: a man honest about his own struggles in the past and continued shortcomings as a person remaining open to continued growth as a human. — *Will Kennedy*

Cultural Discussions

With near-constant notifications about news happening throughout the world, it’s easy to get frazzled and feel like you don’t have a handle on what’s going on. The same can be said about culture as well. Did you keep up with *Rosanne* getting canceled, what wacky things Kanye tweeted about or Beyonce’s revolutionary Coachella performance? ***The New York Times’ Still Processing*** offers thought-provoking discussion about the latest cultural happenings with a critical lens around race and gender from two black

NYT culture writers. *Still Processing* touches on a plethora of topics, from specific events like the Oscars to more broad cultural occasions like Pride month. The hosts, Wesley Morris and Jenna Wortham, are warm, lovable and, at times, hilarious. They offer insight into their own lives, while focusing on the bigger picture of how art and culture affect us all as human beings. — *Meerah Powell*

You Said ‘Dick’

I’m really not that much of a true crime person. (I say that, but I also binge-listened both seasons of *Serial* as well as *S-Town*, which one could say lean a little true crime-y.) So I don’t know what got me hooked on ***Small Town Dicks*** — it wasn’t the name.

Maybe despite its attempts at anonymity — everything takes place in “Small Town, USA” — the cases from the first season are all clearly Eugene and Springfield. Or maybe it’s the minutia of behind-the-scenes police work that hosts Yeadley Smith (aka Lisa from *The Simpsons*) and Zibby Allen (*Grey’s Anatomy*, among other shows) delve into with detectives Dan and Dave.

Despite the fictional feel the use of pseudonyms gives, the show relies on actual recordings, records and conversations with the officers involved. The four-part episode “The Sociopath and the Whistleblower” is notable in its exploration of the hideous case of Eugene cop-rapists Roger Magaña (aka Officer Blowjob) and Juan Lara, not only from the crime perspective but also from the personal perspective of Lt. Scott McKee, now with the Springfield police. McKee was given the uneasy task of investigating officers in his own department.

Small Town Dicks doesn’t hold back on sad and gory details of the crappy things people do to each other, even in “small towns” like Eugene and Springfield, so it’s not for the faint of heart. — *Camilla Mortensen*