

# The top 4 TV shows on right now

By Alex McCracken  
Staff Reporter

## 4. **Fringe:** *Fridays 9:00 PM Fox, Hulu.com (week delay)*

You'd think that a high budget serial that eagerly learned from all of *Lost*'s and *The X-Files*' story telling mistakes would have gone over like gang busters by now. You could think that. But sadly, you'd be wrong.

It's a minor miracle this is even on the air this season, and if you started watching now you'd be able to follow the case of the week well enough, but you'd never appreciate the intricate and lovable world that was built from the ground up four years ago. Yeah, I said lovable and I meant it. So rarely does science fiction create characters of this caliber (I'm looking at you, terra nova), something new and interesting to do every week, with a stomach drop twist at the end of each season. In fact, I'll go on the record and call the first season finale the greatest cliffhanger in television history. It gave me chills and I don't get chills.

This is top tier sci fi and I understand that means very different things to very different people. But for those willing to give it a chance and you know who you are; Netflix the hell out of this under watched, gorgeous gem of a show and meet me when you're done. We'll both argue over which Walter would win in a fight.

## 3. **Parks and Recreation** *Thursday, NBC, Hulu.com*

The Office always rubbed me the wrong way for some reason, and it wasn't until I gave Parks and Rec a chance before I understood why. The Office is a show you laugh at, Parks and Rec is a show you laugh with.

Every main character could carry their own show on their shoulders. Amy Poehler's Leslie Knope is the most effortlessly lovable government bureaucrat ever conceived. Dwell on that, this show has a lovable government bureaucrat. But it doesn't stop at a rock solid lead character, first there's her secretary, Aziz Ansari's Tom Haverford:

Who also moonlights as a promoter for The Snakehole lounge: Pawnee Indiana's Sexiest, most dangerous nightclub.

This show has grown so much since it began three years ago, becoming more focused and surprising then the office ever was. For one, their "will they/won't they" romance was actually funny as well as emotionally satisfying. Plus they nipped it in the bud in

the middle of last season. And what's more, they still have places to go story wise. That's amazing.

So if you never cared for the office or even if you did, there's still plenty to like about Pawnee Indiana, and even more to love.

## 2. **Community:** *Thursdays NBC, Hulu.com*

There isn't a show on this list that has gone after my heart with more conviction or dedication than NBC's community. I could try to explain what makes this surreal satire of American education like literally nothing else on television, but like all memorable experiences, you kinda have to see for yourself.

Maybe you'll like it, maybe you won't. It won't change my personal opinion of you, but choosing the latter would make me sad . . . so very sad. It's hard to pin point specific reasons why my feelings for Greendale Community College are so strong, but here goes.

First off, it's story based. It cares more about having comedy arise from situations and dynamic characters then murdering some entitled jerk in a bowling shirt off camera\*. I also can't tell you what episode in particular won me over, because it honestly started off decent, but it was also pretty cynical and uneven.

But gradually, things started to pile up. Actors became comfortable in their roles. Writers settled into winning formulas, a campus wide mafia was formed over fried chicken, Jack Black was dragged kicking and screaming and pant-less from a library, post-apocalyptic paintball wars were waged, a Christmas special was filmed entirely in stop motion from the perspective of a possibly schizophrenic student, a blanket fort became a blanket city-state, a documentary style episode was made purely to satirize documentary styles, and a well-meaning, but crippling depressed boy was saved from thoughts of suicide with the greatest game of D&D ever played.

That and Donald Glover is the next Will Smith.

## 1. **Breaking Bad: Season Finale,** *Sunday 10:00 AMC*

I'm Tired. I've been banging the Breaking Bad gong for almost three years now and no one seems to be listening. I'd make the argument that this may be the greatest series ever aired on television so you bet your ass I think it's the best thing on right now.

Turning people on to on to a show about crystal meth is an uphill battle, but I'm gonna keep swinging because Vince Gilligan (the show's creator) hasn't let me down yet. That's four seasons of a white knuckled psychological thriller perched on the razor's edge of plausibility, an unmatched creative tightrope walk bolstered by a universally praised cast of consistently surprising acting geniuses.

Bryan Cranston didn't win the best male lead Emmy three years in a row because they thought it'd be funny. He won because his Walter White character has been a gradual evolution. He has been inching, little by little, away from Ward Cleaver all the way to Tony Montana.

By the end of this season he has become a completely different person. A character I now no longer watch with my previous feelings of sympathy but with disappointed fear. Walter White used to be my hero, but he could easily become the show's villain . . . maybe he already has and I just choose not to see him that way.

But this isn't a show I can keep throwing purple prose at and expect people to line up with bells on. This is not for the faint of heart, or for those with strong feelings for the kind of Laissez-faire attitude the show has toward meth pushing. Though it's never shied away from the horrific nature of meth addiction, the drug has always been a metaphor for power and abuse. This isn't a show about catching drug dealers; this is a show about desperation and greed and the varying degree of innocent people that get caught in the way.

But I guess the ace up my critical sleeve would be a three minute scene that ended "Crawl Space" two weeks ago. It's the kind of scene countless other shows have bragged of having but never had the stones to follow through. It's a moment that the entire series has lead too, where every decision and mistake over Walt's legendary blue meth recipe collides and implodes in a single performance. If the next lead actor Emmy goes to someone else, he will know he doesn't deserve it

So if you think you'd like to check out a season or two on Netflix then I wouldn't suggest plugging "Crawl Space-Ending scene" into YouTube, but if you think people like me, the Emmy awards, and a standing army of television critics are just screwing with you, then by all means, spend three minutes of your life on this show then call us all liars.