

“Orange is the New Black” tells the story Piper Chapman, well-heeled suburbanite who gets convicted of money laundering and spends 15 months in a federal prison for woman. Chapman must quickly learn the ropes of life behind bars. The series is based on the memoir by Piper Kiernan, but series creator Jenji Kohan took her story and ran with it, creating a richly textured fiction from Kiernan’s experience. Kohan created memorable characters and expertly cuts from present to past to reveal their backstories, maintaining a fine balance between black humor and pathos. Performances from the ensemble are terrific and the production team expertly sets the scene. The Washington Post called ORTB a “magnificent and thoroughly engrossing series”

“Copper” is a period crime drama set in the Five Points region of NYC during the Civil War. Angry young detective Kevin Corcoran deals with crimes high (a Confederate plot to burn New York) and low (child abuse by well-heeled citizens) while searching for information on the disappearance of his wife and child. Like “Foyle’s War”, “Copper” adds gravitas through its period setting and themes, but be forewarned that Corcoran is a much more rough-hewn character than the soft-spoken Foyle.

Also recently added in series is the second season of “House of Cards.” Frank Underwood has fought his way to the Vice-Presidency, but his ambitions do not stop there. Frank manipulates the President, his advisors, Congressman and the press by means both fair and foul in pursuit of his goal, leaving the debris collateral damage in his wake. The third season of “Game of Thrones” carries the power game back to a mythical Westeros, where Geoffrey the boy king continues his reign of misrule, battling the rival Stark and Baratheon clans while, in the north, a new danger emerges.