



# 20 TV Dramas That Had Us on the Edge of Our Seats in 2019



Who needs drama in your own life when there is so much delicious drama to help you escape real life on the small screen, right? From family dramas to medical ones to ones that escape further classification – we’ve compiled a list of the 20 best dramas of 2019 for your reading pleasure.

Since there were so many new and limited series in 2019, this list only includes veteran dramas of the network, cable, and streaming varieties. Our choices are listed in no particular order.

*Note: we have an entirely separate list dedicated to sci-fi, fantasy, and horror series, so you won't see those shows listed here.*

## Here are our favorite TV Dramas from 2019:

### 1. The Resident (FOX)



THE RESIDENT: L-R: Matt Czuchry, guest star Jace Millican and guest star Adam Stephenson ©2019 Fox Media LLC Cr: Guy D'Alema/FOX

FOX's veteran medical drama **The Resident** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/the-resident/>) has always distinguished itself from its competitors by focusing on medical ethics above all else. Elements like romantic ships and the doctors' personal lives are also present and important, but it forces viewers to ask difficult questions about the healthcare system first and foremost.

The show has had a bit of a bumpy start finding itself but has never been better than Season 3. Most of Chastain's doctors are against the hospital's acquisition by Red Rock Mountain Medical (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bP7KsIOZbNM>). Like it or not, the company is in charge now and they value profit over people. This brings out some of the most nuanced storytelling **The Resident** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/the-resident/>) has ever done, centered by Conrad and Devon's conflict over morality.

The romantic and personal storylines have never been better. CoNic is happy, but the show is still finding ways to tell their stories as they grieve Jessie's death together and apart.

Fans continue to wait patiently for Mina to realize she's in love with the Raptor, but until then both of their individual stories are engaging. In the past year, the show has brought attention to important issues like maternal mortality among black women in Season 2, and the consequences of a nursing shortage in Season 3.

## 2. This Is Us (NBC)



THIS IS US – “Unhinged” Episode 403 – Pictured: (l-r) Milo Ventimiglia as Jack, Mandy Moore as Rebecca – (Photo by: Ron Batzdorff/NBC)

The beloved family drama kicked off Season 4 by announcing 10 new additions to the cast (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/08/this-is-us-adds-10-cast-members-including-jennifer-morrison-omar-epps-nick-wechsler-and-timothy-omundson/>). On lesser shows, this may be a recipe for disaster but *This Is Us* (<https://telltaletv.com/category/this-is-us/>) has masterfully woven these new characters into the fabric of the show to tell important stories about veterans' issues (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/10/this-is-us-military-advisor-james-laporta-discusses-the-inspiration-for-cassidy-sharp-and-season-4s-military-storylines/>), disability, coming out and more.

In flashbacks to The Big Three's teenage years, there are hints that Kate is entering into an abusive relationship. But present-day stories are making a particular impact. It's both heartbreaking and beautiful to watch Tess (Eris Baker) struggle with her sexuality.

Plus, Mandy Moore proves why she earned an Emmy nomination for playing Rebecca this year in the present-day scenes as the character struggles with an illness that is beginning to resemble Alzheimers Disease.

### 3. Succession (HBO)



Season 2, episode 9 (debuts 10/6/19): Brian Cox, Jeremy Strong. photo: Zach Dilgard/HBO

We're pretty certain there's no more realistic way to portray what dysfunctional family life is like than a satirical dramedy. Far too few networks realize that, but it explains the popularity of HBO's *Succession* (<https://telltaletv.com/category/succession/>).

Season 1's finale, of course, leaned completely into drama. But after the Roy family recovers from the tragedy that sent Kendall right back under Logan's thumb at their summer house on the Season 2 premiere, the show quickly returns to the satirical power-grabbing storylines we all love to hate to watch.

There's a company retreat, commentary on clickbait headlines, and even a kidnapping before the ultimate power shift within Waystar Royco and the Roy family that you probably didn't see coming at the beginning of Season 2.

#### 4. 9-1-1 (FOX)



9-1-1: L-R: Ryan Guzman, Oliver Stark, Peter Krause and Kenneth Choi in the “Fallout” episode of 9-1-1 airing Monday, Nov. 25 (8:00-9:01 PM ET/PT) on FOX. © 2019 FOX MEDIA LLC. CR: Jack Zeman / FOX.

Members of the 118 are delivering surprisingly riveting stories in Season 3 of the hit FOX show **911** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/9-1-1/>). From the tsunami that hit the Santa Monica pier and had us all worried about Christopher, to Hen’s heartbreaking breakdown in the street after she’s involved in an accident that kills a young musician, fans barely have time to catch their breath before the next potential crisis pops up.

That’s not to devalue the show’s Season 2 episodes that aired in 2019. There was Shannon’s shocking death of course. But we’d be remiss not to praise Jennifer Love Hewitt for her performance in “Fight Or Flight,” where her character Maddie is forced to kill her ex-husband Doug in self-defense. Maddie is still dealing with the PTSD that the trauma caused in Season 3 of **911** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/9-1-1/>).

#### 5. New Amsterdam (NBC)



NEW AMSTERDAM – “The Denominator” Episode 204 – Pictured: (l-r) Ryan Eggold as Dr. Max Goodwin, Demi Mills as Harmony Cannon – (Photo by: Virginia Sherwood/NBC)

From Max’s denial of his cancer reaching dangerous proportions to Georgia delivering Luna to the crash that resulted in Georgia’s death, ***New Amsterdam*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/new-amsterdam/>) ended its premiere season in a big way in 2019.

They’ve carried that momentum into Season 2 by portraying Max’s grief process in an authentic and heartbreaking way. But the show doesn’t stop there. They’ve continued to tell stories about important issues like the inadequacies of the healthcare system, addiction, abortion, and disability – just to name a few.

**Related [Preview – Grey’s Anatomy Season 15 Episode 17: And Dream of Sheep](https://telltaletv.com/2019/03/preview-greys-anatomy-season-15-episode-17-and-dream-of-sheep/)**  
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***New Amsterdam*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/new-amsterdam/>) does its best to inspire trust from its viewers through mature storytelling, making it stand out in the crowded sub-genre of medical dramas.

## 6. All American (The CW)



All American – “Speak Ya Clout”– Image Number: ALA202a\_0492b.jpg – Pictured: Daniel Ezra as Spencer – Photo: Eddy Chen/The CW – © 2019 The CW Network, LLC. All Rights Reserved

In 2019, *All American* (<https://telltaletv.com/category/all-american/>)’s Beverly Eagles won a state championship and lost a coach, but this show about so much more than football.

They’ve tackled addiction issues, explores complex issues for LGBTQIA youth, and comments on family issues in a uniquely relatable way, while still providing all of the ship drama that drives every good teen drama.

## 7. Elite (Netflix)



Photo Courtesy of Manuel Fernandez-Valdes/Netflix

**Elite** is the kind of show that has all of the soapy drama you would expect from a **Gossip Girl** (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/07/gossip-girl-reboot-ordered-by-hbo-max/>)-esque show with more than a healthy dose of murder mystery. Season 2 delivered on more than answers to its season-long mystery. It also drew all of the characters further into a messy web of romance, heartbreak, and so much scandal.

From star-crossed love to lying about being rich to even (a lot) of family dysfunction, **Elite** Season 2 held nothing back and brought the drama to the internet's pre-fall season.

## 8. The Handmaid's Tale (Hulu)



The Handmaid's Tale (Photo by: Jasper Savage/Hulu)

The custody battle for Nichole is at the core of **The Handmaid's Tale** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/the-handmaids-tale/>) Season 3. She's safely in Canada, but of course, the fight for Hannah keeps June in Gilead.

But a new Commander gives June the pure guts to help save as many women and children from Gilead as she can, even if the consequences are dire.

**The Handmaid's Tale** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/the-handmaids-tale/>) continues to be a brilliant, chilling dystopian drama that prompts us to ask questions about women's rights in modern society.

## 9. Big Little Lies (HBO)



Big Little Lies Season 2, episode 7, debut 7/21/19: Nicole Kidman, Cameron Crovetti, Nicholas Crovetti. photo: Merie W. Wallace/HBO

A custody battle for Celeste’s twins between her and Perry’s mother Mary Louise bonds the Monterey five in unexpected ways on **Big Little Lies** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/big-little-lies/>) Season 2. Do you really blame us for putting a battle between Meryl Streep and Nicole Kidman on a “Best Of 2019” list?

While all of the women have their own individual struggles – Jane is falling in love while Bonnie watches her mother die – it’s Renata Klien who almost literally steals the show as she deals with the consequences of her husband’s actions. She may be losing all of her money, but she’s not going to make anyone’s life easy while it happens.

She was an annoying fly we always wanted to shoo away in Season 1, but after this season we are positively rooting for her, whether we see her story on screen in the future or not. We know Laura Dern already won an Emmy for this role in 2017, but it’s still surprising her performance didn’t garner at least a nomination in 2019.

## 10. Killing Eve (BBC America)



Shows have one chance to revolutionize television. In its second season, even the most revolutionary show is just more of what we've seen before. This rule holds true for ***Killing Eve*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/killing-eve/>), but it earns a spot on this list because of Jodie Comer and Sandra Oh. Even though Season 2 of the show is Season 1 lite, it still captivates.

It's still got the cat-and-mouse feel to it, though "sexy" has turned from pinning each other against kitchen walls to stabbing each other with knives disguised as lipstick and tricking each other to kill for sport. Villanelle is to blame for both of those things, of course.

Eve isn't a completely innocent victim in her own transformation, though. She has come to expect "fun" from the other assassin targets she's chasing and willingly kills someone to save the life of the assassin she loves.

The season's cliffhanger is a lot of things, but boring isn't one of them. So, here's hoping that ***Killing Eve*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/killing-eve/>) continues to twist the media's portrayal of women inside out and upside down for years to come.

## 11. SEAL Team (CBS)



"Ignore and Override" – Pictured: David Boreanaz as Jason Hayes. Photo: Aleksandar Letic/CBS 2019 CBS Broadcasting, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

David Boreanaz has come a long way since his ***Buffy The Vampire Slayer*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/buffy-the-vampire-slayer/>) and ***Angel*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/angel/>) days. But even with ***Bones*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/bones/>) under his belt, none of his roles have been more complex than Master Chief Special War Operator Jason Hayes on ***SEAL Team*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/seal-team/>).

In Season 3 of the show, Boreanaz continues doing the best work of his career as Jason deals with PTSD from the stress of his duties – one of which includes seeing more death than any human being should.

The hardest death he's had to deal with has nothing to do with his job. When his estranged wife Alana died, he was suddenly forced to become a single parent. In Season 3, he's still trying to balance parenthood with the demands of a job that might literally kill him. That is, if he can even keep his job after an injury threatens to sideline him for good.

**Related** [The Crown Review: There Is Only One Queen \(Season 3 Episodes 8-10\)](https://telltaletv.com/2019/11/the-crown-review-there-is-only-one-queen-season-3-episodes-8-10/)  
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Jason is just one character on the show dealing with *a lot*. There are still plenty of other reasons to love **SEAL Team** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/seal-team/>) including the visibility it gives service members, the badass females, and of course a little bit of relationship drama thrown in between action-packed, unpredictable missions sometimes.

## 12. Grey's Anatomy (ABC)



(<https://telltaletv.com/2019/04/atx-television-festival-adds-greys-anatomy-and-euphoria-to-this-years-lineup/camilla-luddington-linda-klein-khalilah-joi-kim-raver-elisabeth-r-finch/>)

GREY'S ANATOMY – “Silent All These Years” – (ABC/Mitch Haaseth)

CAMILLA LUDDINGTON, LINDA KLEIN, KHALILAH JOI, KIM RAVEN, ELISABETH R. FINCH

**Grey's Anatomy** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/greys-anatomy/>) is still going strong in its 16th season. The series doesn't shy away from tackling tough issues, and this year, it aired one of its most notable with Silent All These Years, a ground-breaking episode centered on a rape victim (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/03/greys-anatomy-review-silent-all-these-years-season-15-episode-19/>).

That episode also served as the catalyst for a change in Jo's story, which allowed Grey's to dive deep into mental health. The show also remains unafraid of changing things up, even if it means having original characters moving on to work at a different hospital.

### 13. Pose (FX)



FX

FX's groundbreaking series *Pose* enters the 1990s in Season 2 and continues to shine a light on the issues that affect LGBTQ and gender non-conforming people of color in the ballroom community.

Houses continue to battle for dominance while their members battle HIV and AIDS, and begin new, sometimes dangerous careers. As voguing becomes mainstream thanks (or no thanks) to Madonna, Ricky and Damon audition for her Blonde Ambition tour.

New romances fire up and rivalries literally burn down to new lows.

### 14. Chicago Fire (NBC)



CHICAGO FIRE – “Best Friend Magic” Episode 809 – Pictured: (l-r) Kara Killmer as Sylvie Brett, Alberto Rosende as Blake Gallo, Christian Stolte as Randy “Mouch” McHolland, Monica Raymund as Gabriela Dawson, Miranda Rae Mayo as Stella Kidd – (Photo by: Adrian Burrows/NBC)

We have to represent the One Chicago franchise on this list, and this year, the veteran wins.

Members of **Chicago Fire** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/chicago-fire/>)’s Firehouse 51 began 2019 with Casey and Naomi escaping a house fire in Season 7. They go on to be accused of arson, solve arson cases, and save kids involved in an accident during a road trip, to name a few of their journeys this season.

On the personal side of things, Severide and Stella break up in Season 7, but they thankfully get back together and are now stronger than ever. Tragically, the crew loses Otis in Season 8 after an injury at the mattress factory fire.

Another highlight of 2019 is Season 8 Episode 4, “Infection: Part 1” (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/10/one-chicago-crossover-review-infection/>) in which **Chicago Fire** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/chicago-fire/>) crosses over with **Chicago Med** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/chicago-med/>) and **Chicago P.D.** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/chicago-p.d./>) for a case involving flesh-eating bacteria.

## 15. Mr. Robot (USA Network)



MR. ROBOT – “Request Timeout” Episode 408 – Pictured: Rami Malek as Elliot Alderson –  
(Photo by: Elizabeth Fisher/USA Network)

Given the nearly three-year hiatus leading up to *Mr. Robot* (<https://telltaletv.com/category/mr-robot/>)’s final season, one might forget how big of a deal this Rami Malek lead hacker drama was at one point. Thankfully it’s not difficult to remember with a whole new batch of mind-bending twist and phenomenal performances to devour with every new episode.

Creator Sam Esmail isn’t afraid to take risks as he burns the world he created to the ground with a satisfying precision that could only come from planning your show’s ending in advance.

With fewer wardrobe changes and a narrator who is more unreliable than ever, *Mr. Robot* (<https://telltaletv.com/category/mr-robot/>) will win you over once again with its stellar cast of misfit hackers and writing that is still smarter than even the most intuitive tv watchers. If you’re looking for a story that will challenge your idea of what exciting television should look like, look no further than Season 4 of *Mr. Robot* (<https://telltaletv.com/category/mr-robot/>).

## 16. Vida (Starz)



Salud! Season 2 of Starz's Latinx drama **Vida** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/vida/>) begins with Emma quitting her job and permanently moving from Chicago to Los Angeles to try and run the bar. Lyn takes a huge step to try to prove to her sister that she can be independent and responsible – she makes a vow of celibacy and breaks up with Johnny.

The sisters learn that Eddy and Vida may not have been legally married after discovering the cost of her medical treatment from when she is queerbashed in Season 1.

Lyn acts as a mediator between Emma and Eddy while both she and Eddy still grieve Vida.

In one of our favorite episodes of the season, Emma goes to a gay vaquero wedding where there is an important conversation on queer policing and labels.

But she also meets Nico at this big party celebrating queer, Latinx love.

Qué bueno! Qué rico! Qué emocionante!

## 17. Madam Secretary (CBS)



Of course, we have to pay homage to President Elizabeth McCord and **Madam Secretary** as the CBS political drama airs its final season. It's the first season that the McCord family and the show's viewers see the former Secretary of State as President of the United States and the new title brings the scrutiny of their lives to a level no one is prepared for.

**Related [Preview -- Grey's Anatomy Season 15 Episode 16: Blood and Water](https://telltaletv.com/2019/03/preview-greys-anatomy-season-15-episode-16-blood-and-water/)**  
**(<https://telltaletv.com/2019/03/preview-greys-anatomy-season-15-episode-16-blood-and-water/>)**

There are baseless investigations into Elizabeth's past, talk show appearances by Henry that result in media scrutiny of him and Elizabeth's marriage, and Elizabeth must deal with extreme public outrage over issues like fuel costs.

That's just the beginning of the administration's troubles. Elizabeth's campaign manager is questioned about whether her campaign conspired with Iran to win the election. But he's not the only member of the campaign under suspicion. Blake is questioned by a senator about campaign finance violations, and Daisy is implicated in the leak of hacked information during the campaign that might bring down Elizabeth's presidency for good.

Plus, there's a fake video of Elizabeth and Henry mocking a foreign dignitary that may affect trade agreements. Yeah, it's a lot, and one of the scandals results in impeachment proceedings. And we haven't even talked about how their mom's new title affects Jason, Stevie, and Alison. The last season of ***Madam Secretary*** is one you shouldn't miss!

## 18. La Casa De Papel (Netflix)



Netflix

***La Casa de Papel/Money Heist*** is a thrilling bank heist wrapped in a thick blanket of rapturous relationship drama. With Netflix delivering epically bingeable season of the Spanish series to thirsty viewers, ***La Casa De Papel*** storms audiences and is the topic of obsessive conversation for the weeks of release.

The show earns our avid attention. There are plot twists and exciting action sequences like any good heist story, but character study is truly the core of the series. Flashback sequences peppered provocatively throughout Season 3 illuminate the depth of love and pain between the characters.

On the third season of the sexy drama, we come to see the whole cast, especially Berlin, Nairobi, Lisboa, and The Professor, as more than the sum of their parts. And we can't forget to mention, the ships on this show are five-star!

## 19. The Crown (Netflix)



The Crown

Since 2016, **The Crown** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/the-crown/>) has expertly examined historical events through the lens of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II. Their latest offering is no exception. Featuring strong performances from Olivia Colman and Tobias Menzies, as well as the other actors involved in the recast, Season 3 continues to create an immersive world that the viewer can get lost in.

It shines a personal light on historical events that viewers may have read about, and delivers a human perspective on an institution that may be seen as emotionless.

With Season 4 already in the works, **The Crown** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/the-crown/>) Season 3 does its job well, entertaining the audience while still leaving us on the edge of our seats to see how events we may be more familiar with will be depicted.

## 20. A Million Little Things (ABC)



(ABC/Jack Rowand) GRACE PARK, TRISTAN BYON, DAVID GIUNTOLI

***A Million Little Things*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/a-million-little-things/>) began its second season with the same grounded storytelling that made its Season 1 finale – where fans got answers about Barbara Morgan – so sad and wonderful. Katherine finds out Eddie is Charlie's dad and makes the more difficult, yet less explosive choice to stay in her marriage. Any show that can see the value in telling the less overtly dramatic story to portray an outcome that is rarely seen on TV should be commended.

The core of ***A Million Little Things*** (<https://telltaletv.com/category/a-million-little-things/>) is mostly secrets so it's not completely void of superfluous drama, but along the way they tell some valuable stories about healing after a loved one's death, illness, coming out, and friendships. It's one of ABC's shining stars, especially since it was awarded a Thursday timeslot at the start of 2019.

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What are your favorite dramas from 2019? Share your thoughts in the comments below!

*\*Additional contributions by Ashley Bissette Sumerel, Alicia Gilstrof, Janelle McCammack, Brianna Martinez, and Lauren Busser.*

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## 20 TV Comedies We Loved in 2019



Here's a look at some of the TV comedies we loved most in 2019. See if your favorites made the list!

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## Esme Mazzeo (<https://telltaletv.com/author/esme-mazzeo/>)



(<https://twitter.com/EsmeMazzeo>)

Esme Mazzeo is a lifestyle and entertainment journalist from Long Island.

When she's not writing for work, she's writing for fun, or searching for something to satisfy her sweet tooth. She thinks rainy days are the best kind of days. Certified night owl.



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Judy says:

December 12, 2019 at 8:31 am (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/12/20-tv-dramas-that-had-us-on-the-edge-of-our-seats-in-2019/#comment-79120>)

I watch 4 of the top 5 and some other shows sprinkled throughout the list. Where is S.W.A.T., Blue Bloods, How to Get Away With Murder, Law and Order SVU, and Manifest? Also, I am disappointed that The Village was not renewed...js

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Isla says:

December 16, 2019 at 4:50 pm (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/12/20-tv-dramas-that-had-us-on-the-edge-of-our-seats-in-2019/#comment-86233>)

Bones? ❤️ 🧠

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Laura Gipple says:

December 16, 2019 at 6:51 pm (<https://telltaletv.com/2019/12/20-tv-dramas-that-had-us-on-the-edge-of-our-seats-in-2019/#comment-86342>)

Chicago PD should also be on that list but the rest are good

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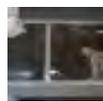
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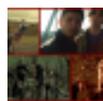
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