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## What We're Watching





## Greetings from The Paley Center for Media's Education Department!

### Hearst High School Media Interns Takeover!

For the next couple of weeks, *What We're Watching* will be taken over by the Paley Center's Hearst High School Media Internship cohort!

Each week different interns will share their thoughts on the 2024 media landscape along with personalized recommendations. This week we hear from **Siona Lewis-Coffey**, a rising senior at The High School for Math, Science and Engineering and **Owen Carlin**, a rising senior at CSI-High School for International Studies. Enjoy this unique educational opportunity to hear directly from young voices about media that impacts them!

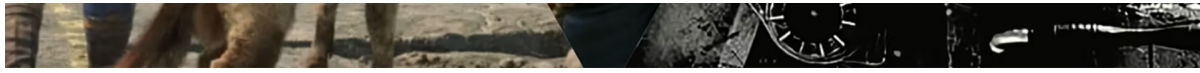
As always, if you have any questions, thoughts, or ideas, don't hesitate to reach out to us at [eduny@paleycenter.org](mailto:eduny@paleycenter.org).

Happy viewing,

**Rebekah Fisk**, Director of Education

**Carlos Pareja**, Manager of Education





## What We're Watching: Apocalyptic Stories to Satisfy Your Chaotic Cravings

Sometimes, it feels like the world is ending, like everything is heading along a downward trajectory, and will eventually completely collapse in what we like to call “The Apocalypse.” 🎵 Dun dun duuuuun! 🎵 While this hopefully won’t actually happen for a long time to come, there are definitely some similarities to our lives today. Several stories explore this eventuality, either before, after, or during its occurrence. We put together various forms of media—TV, games, audio—that we feel take on this scenario in interesting and engaging ways. Whether it’s about tackling our existentialist fears or warning us about the dangers of our future, the apocalyptic context always makes for an interesting story.

### **Fallout (TV and Game Series)**

*Age Recommendation: 16+*

*Available to Watch: Prime Video*

*Available to Play: XBOX Game Pass*

What will the world be like in 200 years? Zombies, nukes, crazy people, no one knows, but why not experience it all? *Fallout* is a game series, later adapted into a TV show, that takes place in a post-nuclear war America. The world of *Fallout* is filled with many strange characters and factions trying to survive the wasteland. What I love about this franchise is the world that was left behind. The remnants of the old world are ever-present, whether that be buildings, technology, weapons, anything. All of it is a reminder that history can never truly be forgotten.

What’s the difference between the TV show and the game series? Choice. The TV show is a very railroad experience, you follow the main characters from point A to point B with the intention of only progressing the plot. The show only explores a few story lines that have relevance to the greater story. While in the games, however, there are just so many things to do and so many characters and groups of people to learn about. In *Fallout: New Vegas*, (my favorite *Fallout* game) you learn about the different factions trying to take control of Nevada. You can choose to work with them... or completely wipe them off the map... or don’t and instead help fly ghouls into space for some reason. It’s the little things like sending ghouls to space and

other things you can do that have very little to do with the overall story of the game that make it unique.

*Fallout* is a great series and both the TV show, and the game display a "what if" future that *hopefully* never comes to be.



### **Zom 100: Bucket List of the Dead (TV Show)**

*Age Recommendation: 16+*

*Available to Watch: Crunchyroll*

Our protagonist, Akira works a dead-end advertising job in Japan and is under constant pressure from his abusive and exploitative boss. He feels no fulfillment from his job and has no freedom until the zombie outbreak. While most people were fearing for their lives, all Akira could dream about is that a zombie outbreak means no work, and no work means freedom. Akira was finally set free and can complete his bucket list, alongside friends both old and new, while avoiding becoming a zombie. *Zom 100* is about life during the zombie apocalypse without the struggles of surviving and instead trying to live the life that people never had. It's goofy and lighthearted, breaking away from the seriousness that frequently comes with other apocalyptic shows.



### **The Last City (Fiction Podcast)**

*Age Recommendation: 13+*

*Available to Listen: Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music, and Wondery*

It's the year 2072 and the world has been decimated by the effects of climate change. As the world burns outside, the city of Pura is the last safe haven. There the inhabitants live within a highly engineered reality, but this perfect world is built on rocky foundations.

This wonderfully designed audio adventure explores what our not-so-distant future could look like. With sound effects, music, and interesting characters, we follow Demetria as she learns more about the dystopian side of the seemingly utopian Pura. While this audio play is an artistic adventure, it's also a criticism of our society's systems as well as the mistreatment of our planet. If you're looking for an immersive audio experience as well as an entertaining take on our world's problems, this audio play is for you!



### **Carol & the End of the World (TV Show)**

*Age Recommendation: 16+*

*Available to Watch: Netflix*

In seven months, the world is going to end, when planet Kepler-9c will crash directly into Earth. As the meteor looms larger and larger in the sky, the inhabitants of the world all handle this situation in their own ways. Mostly by freaking out and doing all the things they've always wanted to, like skydiving, traveling the world, or learning to surf. Carol Kohl stands in the middle of it all—she's not interested in having crazy adventures, and just wants to continue her life as normal. The show follows her understated adventures and the characters she meets along the way who are also interested in a nontraditional response to this impending catastrophe. Although the story line is slow and patient, that's part of the point: it's all about appreciating the little moments. The show combines sweet messages, existentialist questions, comedic elements, irony, and lots of relatable moments. A fair warning, there is a good amount of nudity, some sex, and drinking, definitely making it a young adult/adult animated show. All in all, it's a wonderful example of what a mature animated show can look like, provoking deep thoughts while also entertainingly depicting seemingly boring situations.

Happy watching and hopefully the world won't end any day soon...

## Owen and Siona

Photos—*Fallout*: Bethesda Softworks; *Zom 100: Bucket List of the Dead* – Viz Media; *The Last City*: Wonderly; *Carol & the End of the World*: NetflixA24



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