

EVENTS

When fictional couples break up, why does it hurt?

BY ALYSSA ROSENBERG
WASHINGTON POST

2016 is young, but already, the year in pop culture is full of epic relationship drama.

The latest edition of “The Bachelor” is afoot, complete with crazy eyes and stripteases, and next week, FX is premiering its own account of the death of Nicole Brown Simpson in “The People v. O.J. Simpson,” the first installment of its hotly anticipated new anthology series, “American Crime Story.”

Even as new conflicts — or new takes on old tragedies — grace our screens, I’ve found my thoughts turning back to a couple of old relationships and the surprising sadness of a pair of fictional breakups.

“The Force Awakens” was marked in part by the revelation that Han Solo (Harrison Ford) and Leia Organa (Carrie Fisher) had broken up after their son turned to the dark side. And now on “The X-Files,” we’ve learned that while Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) and Fox Mulder (David

Duchovny) may have had a child together, it wasn’t enough to keep them a couple.

There’s something striking — and welcome — about seeing two pieces of genre fiction ground their drama in the kinds of grown-up conflicts more often depicted in the sort of mid-budget movies that constantly seem in danger of going extinct. The power of the Sith and the existence of extraterrestrials add extra gravity as these two couples try to negotiate their relationships. But the issues that have divided them aren’t fantastical creations: They’re deeply human.

Part of what makes it hurt to see Han and Leia apart in “The Force Awakens” is the fact that they clearly still like each other so much.

There’s none of the sniping that characterized our early glimpses of their relationship. This is not a case of two people who are better off apart than together — in fact, it’s possibly the reverse. It may be entertaining to see Han trying to gull another set of customers and saving himself thanks to a



Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny in “The X-Files.”

combination of luck and sheer audacity. But if Han was at his best when he was with Leia, and when she convinced him to give up his cynicism and fight for a cause rather than for money, to see him back in the game is to see a man who’s backsliding, and who’s lost the most noble part of himself.

And in the original “Star Wars” trilogy, Han gave Leia permission to be vulnerable,

flawed and passionate. “The Force Awakens” may not do as much to fill us in on what Leia’s been up to and what she’s become during the years since she and Han broke up, but seeing a smile flood back against her face is a genuine delight and makes us wonder what she’s lost as well.

And while “The Force Awakens” has plenty of parallels with the original trilo-

gy, there’s one that mostly escaped mention. One of the quieter, more powerful moments in the original trilogy comes when Luke Skywalker (Mark Hamill) goes to meet his father, Darth Vader, (voiced by James Earl Jones), taking the wild risk that he might be able to salvage whatever good is left in the older man. It’s a gamble, but one that has a good result.

“The Force Awakens” may have been conservative in trying to deliver old thrills to new audiences, but it took its one real risk in echoing that scene when Han, at Leia’s behest, tries to bring their son home. This time, the hopeful gesture fails: A parent sacrifices himself, but he can’t save his child with the gesture. It’s a mature choice in a sometimes deliberately youth-oriented movie.

In its first two episodes, the revival of “The X-Files” has been rather more of a jumble than “The Force Awakens” turned out to be. But if the miniseries doesn’t always feel like the same show from

one episode to the next, dropping threads and spinning out new ones, the air of melancholy between Scully and Mulder has been one of the most compelling elements of the revival.

Like Han and Leia, Mulder and Scully had ideological differences before they had personal ones. Scully has always been the scientist and skeptic to Mulder’s believer. Mulder is eager for evidence that will validate what he badly wants to be true, while Scully is inclined to doubt — if she doesn’t affirmatively want Mulder to be wrong, her threshold for confirmation is much, much higher.

Neither of these stories are done: It’ll be years before we see the full conclusion of Leia and Han’s story in “Star Wars,” and the new “X-Files” still has four episodes to go. But other pop-culture phenomena could take a valuable lesson from the idea that marriage is as mysterious as the Force, and grief is as vast and unfathomable as any alien conspiracy.

Things to Do

BANGOR — Downtown Bangor Public Humanities kickoff event PechaKucha, 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29, COESPACE, 48 Columbia St. Doors open 6:30 p.m. Presentations on music, art, history, travel and literature by four UMaine faculty and four local nonacademic practitioners. Free. Food and drink provided.

BANGOR — “The Winter Landscape,” pastel and oil works by Barbara Adams, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. through March 3, The Sohns Gallery, in The Rock & Art Shop, 36 Central St. 947-2205 or therockandartshop@gmail.com.

BANGOR — “Limited Edition: Maine Printmakers,” 9 a.m.-7 p.m. daily, through Jan. 31, Boyd Place Gallery, 21 Boyd St. 941-2820.

BELFAST — Cold Comfort Theater hosting stage combat intensive class, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 30-31, Belfast Dance Studio. \$50. ColdComfortTheater@gmail.com.

BELFAST — “Bodies” opening reception, 6-8 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 2, Perimeter Gallery, 96 Main St. Exhibition through March 10. 338-0555 or perimeter96@gmail.com.

BLUE HILL — Exhibit of colored pencil drawings, “Crystal Gems” by 7-year-old Bean Fitzpatrick, during library hours through February, children’s Larchwood exhibit case, Blue Hill Public Library, 5 Parker Point Road. 374-5515.

BLUE HILL — “The Art of the Book” exhibit, during library hours through March, Howard Room glass cases, Blue Hill Public Library, 5 Parker Point Road. 374-5515.

BREWER — Relay For Life of Penobscot cocktail party fundraiser, 8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Jeff’s Catering, 15 Littlefield Way. Silent auction, h’ors d’oeuvres, DJ ZLite, Photobooths of Maine, cash bar. Benefits American Cancer Society’s Relay For Life. Tickets, \$20, available at Fork and Spoon, Nash’s Health, Fitness and Wellness, Frank Webb’s Lighting and Bath Center, and Generations Boutique and Art Studio in Brewer, at the door or relaynighttohope@gmail.com.

BREWER — Bangor Singles Club dances, 8 p.m.-midnight Fridays, Brewer Eagles Club, 22 Atlantic Ave. Allison Ames, Jan. 29; Marilyn, 827-5751.

BREWER — Work on knitting group’s community service project in part-

nership with Brewer Police Department or bring yarn projects of any sort, 9:30-11 a.m. Friday, Jan. 29, Brewer Public Library, 100 South Main St. Experienced or new knitters, crocheters or needle-workers welcome. 989-7943.

BREWER — Beginner’s yoga program, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Brewer Public Library, 100 South Main St. Free and open to all. Space is limited. 989-7943.

CAMDEN — Camden Garden Club Winter Horticulture Series, 10 a.m. Tuesdays, through Feb. 23. Free and open to all. 236-3440.

EASTPORT — Sunday Afternoons at the Eastport Arts Center series, 3 p.m. Sundays, except Easter: Don Dunbar on how he shoots wildlife photographs, Jan. 31. Free and open to all. Hot drinks and refreshments offered. Donations accepted.

ELLSWORTH — High-definition simulcast of Puccini’s “Turandot,” 1-4:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, The Grand. Reserve tickets only, \$27, \$25 Grand members, \$20 for students 15 and under. Box office, 667-9500, grandonline.org or Facebook.

ELLSWORTH — 2016 Banff Mountain Film Festival, Friday through Sunday, Jan. 29-31, The

Grand. Culture collection, 7 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29; Extreme Sports section, 7 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30; Best of Festival program, 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31. General admission tickets, \$15. Box office, 667-9500, grandonline.org or Facebook.

MILLINOCKET — Birthday of Scottish Bard Robert Burns celebrated with music and poetry, 7-9 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, 40 Highland Ave. Musicians Wally Paul and Don Pudney will perform. Donations accepted; refreshments available. Benefits Friends of Millinocket Memorial Library. 723-4146 or bbarr@myfairpoint.net.

MOUNT DESERT — Pemetic School PTO second annual adults only Blizzard Bash, 6-10 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Camp Beech Cliff, 264 Beech Hill Road. Silent auction, raffles, appetizers, cash bar, dancing and live music. Tickets, \$10, available at the door, Pemetic School, McKay’s restaurant and Carroll Drug Store.

BANGOR

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THE FINEST HOURS (PG-13)		1:30	4:05	6:35	8:45	
DIRTY GRANDPA (PG-13)	12:20	2:30	4:40	6:50	9:00	
THE 5TH WAVE (PG-13)	12:30	2:40	4:50	7:00	9:10	
THE REVENANT (R)	12:15	3:00	5:45	8:30		
DADDY'S HOME (PG-13)	11:30	1:20	3:10	5:00	7:10	9:00
THE GOOD DINOSAUR (PG)	11:55	1:45	3:30	5:15	7:00	8:45

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Dancing: 10:00-12:00 | Creative Entertainment

Cover: \$15 | DJ-Darrell Cyr

Tickets can be purchased at www.spectaculareventcenter.com
or Tickets will be sold at the door

OLD TOWN — Friends of Sunkhaze Meadows National Wildlife Refuge and nature-based educator Deanna Fahey hosting Sunkhaze Cafe, 10-11 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Old Town Public Library, 46 Middle St. Topic: Nature Fun and Learning. Informal and informative discussion series geared toward adults and students. Free and open to all. Donations accepted.

ORONO — University of Maine School of Performing Arts third annual fundraiser pops concert, Astonishing! The Songs and Stories of Broadway’s Best, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Collins Center for the Arts. Reception, 6 p.m., Hudson Museum. \$25. \$12 with MaineCard. Snow date, 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31. 581-1755.

PORTLAND — Spirits Alive at Eastern Cemetery 2016 Winter Lecture

Series: Emerson “Tad” Baker, author of “A Storm of Witchcraft and the American Experience,” discussing connections between Salem witch trials and Maine frontier, 1:30-2:30 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Wishcamper Center, Bedford Street, University of Southern Maine. spirit-salve.org.

ROCKLAND — 12th annual Pies on Parade Pie Tour, 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31, at historic inns and other businesses. Benefits Area Interfaith Outreach Food Pantry and Fuel Assistance Program. Advance tickets \$30, \$15 age 10 and under. 596-6611.

ROCKLAND — Silent auction, 4-6 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Trackside Restaurant, benefits area food pantry programs.

SOUTH PORTLAND — Mad Horse Theatre Company production of

“Trevor,” 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, Jan. 28-30; 2 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31, 24 Mosher Road. Thursdays are pay-what-you-can performances. \$20, \$17 students and seniors. madhorse.com.

STEUBEN — “Mary Poppins,” 6 p.m. Friday, Jan. 29, Henry D. Moore Library and Community Center. Free and open to all ages. Refreshments available by donation. moorelibrary.org.

UNION — RuthAnn Mackinnon talking about “The Beauty and Meaning of African Masks,” 2 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 30, Vose Library, 392 Common Road. Camden Conference Community Partner event. Free and open to all. 785-4733.

For a complete listing of calendar items or to submit your event, visit www.bangordailynews.com.

Friday prime time

	7 PM	7:30	8 PM	8:30	9 PM	9:30	10 PM	10:30	11 PM
BROADCAST	2 NBC 207 Inside Ed. Undateable (N)				Grimm (N) (HD)		Dateline NBC (N)		News
	4 CBC marketplace Hello the fifth estate (N)				The National (N)		CBC Bookaboo		Daniel Tiger
	5 CBS Big Bang Broke Girl Undercover Boss (N)				Hawaii Five-0 (HD)		Blue Bloods (HD)		News
	5.2 CW Family Guy Family Guy The Vampire Diaries (N)				The Originals (N) (HD)		News Seinfeld		Cougar
	6 NBC 207 Inside Ed. Undateable (N)				Grimm (N) (HD)		Dateline NBC (N)		News
	7 ABC Wheel Jeopardy! Last Man (:31) Dr. Ken				Shark Tank (N) (HD)		(:01) 20/20 (HD)		News
	7.1 WAGAM FOX The Insider Ent. Tonight MasterChef (N) (HD)				(:01) Second Chance (N)		News Big Bang		Big Bang
	8 ABC Wheel Jeopardy! Last Man (:31) Dr. Ken				Shark Tank (N) (HD)		(:01) 20/20 (HD)		News
	MPBN PBS PBS NewsHour (N) (HD)				Washington Charlie Masterpiece Classic		American Masters (N)		C. Rose
	9 IND Blue Bloods (HD)				Grimm (N) (HD)		News-Lisa CTV News		Big Bang
	13 CBS Ent. Tonight The Insider Undercover Boss (N)				Hawaii Five-0 (HD)		Blue Bloods (HD)		News
	22 FOX Mod Fam Mod Fam MasterChef (N) (HD)				(:01) Second Chance (N)		FOX 22 News at 10 (N)		Bones
	33 IND M*A*S*H M*A*S*H Andy Griffith Andy Griffith				Happy Days Laverne Bones (HD)		Hogan Hero Hogan Hero C. Burnett		
	38 IND Big Bang Big Bang Bones (HD)				Bones (HD)		WBZ News (N) (HD)		Seinfeld
KIDS	NICK Make It Pop (N)		Odd Parents Harvey		Full House Full House		Full House Full House		Friends
	DISN Bunk'd Mako		Star Darl. K.C. Under.		K.C. Under. Girl Meets		Gravity Falls Gravity Falls		K.C. Club
	FAM (6:00) ** Twilight (2008) Kristen Stewart. (PG-13)				Recovery Road		Shadowhunters		700 Club
LEARN	HIST Pawn Stars Pawn Stars Pawn Stars Pawn Stars				American Restoration		(:03) Pawn Stars		Smartest
	DISC Gold Rush				Gold Rush - The Dirt (N) (:01) Gold Rush (N)		Deadliest Job Interview		Gold Rush
	TLC Say Yes Say Yes Say Yes Say Yes				Say Yes Say Yes		Love; Lust First Swipe		Say Yes
	A&E Duck D. Duck D. Duck D. Duck D.				Duck D. Duck D.		Jep Jep		Duck D.
	ANPL Treehouse Masters				Treehouse: Out on a Limb Treehouse Masters		Treehouse Masters (N)		Treehouse
SPORTS	CSNE Celtics Pre. NBA Basketball Orlando Magic at Boston Celtics. (L)						Celtics SportsNet		Sports
	ESPN Winter X Games Snowboarding, Snowmobile Freestyle, Women's Skiing. (N) (L)						Globetrotters 90th		Re-Take
	ESPN2 College Basketball NBA Coast to Coast (N) (L)								
	NBCSP NFL NHL Top 10 NHL All-Star Friday Night Center of Attention						Curling From Eveleth, Minn. (N)		Sports
	NESN Beanpot College Hockey Princeton at Harvard. (N) (L)						Sports Sports		Sports
NEWS	CNBC White Collar American Greed				American Greed		American Greed		Greed
	CNN Erin Burnett OutFront (N) Anderson Cooper 360				CNN Tonight		CNN Special Report		Sp. Report
	FNC Greta Van Susteren The O'Reilly Factor (N) The Kelly Factor (N)						Hannity (N)		O'Reilly
	MSNBC Hardball Chris Matthews All in With Chris Hayes Rachel Maddow Show						Lockup		Lockup
VARIETY	AMC (5:30) *** Bad Boys (R) ** Rocky IV (1985) (ESP) Sylvester Stallone. (PG)						*** First Blood (1982, Action) (R)		
	BRV Housewives/Atl. Housewives/Atl. Housewives/Atl.						The People's Couch (N)		Couch
	CMT Last Man Last Man ** Raising Helen (2004, Comedy-Drama) Kate Hudson, John Corbett. (PG-13)						News-Lisa CTV News		Glove Floats
	COM Archer (:24) Archer Archer (:26) Archer (8:57) * Mr. Deeds (2002) Adam Sandler. (PG-13)						Adam Sandler. (PG-13)		The Ringer
	E! E! News (N)						** Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous		E! News
	FOOD Diners Diners Diners Am. Diner Diners Diners						Diners Burgers		Diners
	FX (5:00) The Avengers ** The Wolverine (2013, Action) Hugh Jackman, Hiroyuki Sanada. (PG-13)						Wolverine		
	GAC Top 20 Countdown Flea Market Flea Market Flea Market Flea Market						Flea Market Flea Market		Flea Market
	HALL Last Man Last Man Home Imp. Home Imp. The Middle The Middle						The Middle The Middle		Golden Girls
	HGTV House Hunters Reno Love It or List It Love It or List It						Hunters Hunters Int'l		Dream
	LIFE The Rap Game Bring It! (N)						(:02) The Rap Game (N)		Little
	MTV (:10) Catfish: The TV Show (:20) ** Employee of the Month (2006) Dane Cook. (PG-13)						Friday After		
	OXY Sex-City Sex-City *** Pretty Woman (1990, Romance-Comedy) Richard Gere, Julia Roberts. (R)						Pretty Woman		Friday
	SPIKE Cops Cops Cops						Bellator MMA Live (N) (L)		The King
	SYFY (6:30) ** From Dusk Till Dawn (1996, Horror) (R) ** I Know What You Did Last Summer (1997) (R)						I Still Know		
	TBN Supernat. Potters Trinity Hal Lindsey End/ Age Perry Stone						Praise the Lord		
	TBS Seinfeld Seinfeld Broke Girl Broke Girl Broke Girl Broke Girl						** We're the Millers (2013) (R)		
	TCM The White Cockatoo (NR) *** The Quiet American (1958) Audie Murphy.						(:15) **** Hearts and Minds (1974)		
	TMC (6:00) The Brothers Bloom *** Around the World in 80 Days (2004) (ESP) (PG)						After Words (2015) Marcia Gay Harden.		
	TNT Bones (ESP)						*** The Blind Side (2009, Drama) Sandra Bullock. (PG-13)		** Flightplan (2005)
	TRAVEL Mysteries at the Museum Mysteries at the Museum Mysteries at the Castle						Mysteries at the Museum		Mysteries at
	TRU Carbonaro Carbonaro Genius Genius Funniest Funniest						Funniest Funniest		Genius
	TVL Andy Griffith Andy Griffith * Big Daddy (1999) Adam Sandler. (PG-13)						Raymond Raymond		King
	USA Mod Fam Mod Fam Mod Fam Mod Fam Mod Fam Mod Fam						Mod Fam Mod Fam		Mod Fam
	VH1 (6:30) *** Drummie (2002) Nick Cannon. (PG-13) ** Space Jam (1996, Comedy) Michael Jordan. (PG)						Little Man		
	WGN-A Person of Interest						Person of Interest		Outsiders
PREMIUM	ENC (6:05) *** City of Angels (1998) Nicolas Cage. ** Gone Baby Gone (2007) (ESP) Casey Affleck. Two investigators search for a kidnapped girl. (R)						(9:55) *** Backdraft (1991, Action) (ESP) Kurt Russell, William Baldwin. (R)		
	HBO (6:20) Peacock (2010) Cillian Murphy. (PG-13) ** Horrible Bosses 2 (2014) Jason Bateman, Nick, Dale and Kurt plot revenge on a thieving investor. (R)						Real Time With Bill Maher (N) (L)		Real Time, Bill
	MAX (5:45) X-Men X-Men: Days of Future Past (2014) (ESP) Hugh Jackman. (2000) (ESP) X-Men and their earlier selves must alter a pivotal event. (PG-13)						*** Bad Lieutenant (1992, Crime-Drama) (ESP) Harvey Keitel. (NC-17)		
	SHOW ** The Hundred-Foot Journey (2014, Comedy-Drama) (ESP) Helen Mirren, Om Puri. (PG)						(:15) Backcountry (2014) Missy Peregrym. A couple become lost in a predatory black bear's territory. (R)		Shameless (ESP)
	STARZ (:10) *** Cinderella (2015, Fantasy) (ESP) Cate Blanchett, Lily James, Richard Madden. (PG)						* Paul Blart: Mail Cop 2 (2015, Comedy) (ESP) Kevin James. (PG)		(:40) Black Sails Eleanor is offered clemency.