

GANGLAND

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SERIES BIBLE

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The Fundamentals of Gangland

Our show is built on the idea that a solid drama series can include science fiction elements and settings, dark/sinister humor, realistic situations, believable characters, and explore social and political issues based on today's society, all the while communicating dramatic tension on a weekly basis.

The pilot should introduce an intense structure that deals with the plot, not only as a piece of fiction, but should tease the idea that events within the show are not as far-fetched as they might seem to the audience in the day and age in which they live. That raw realism should be touched upon in each episode, in a variety of unique ways, with the hope of taking the audience to another place. A higher level of viewing and thinking, through constant character development, plot twists, thrills and cliff-hangers included in the dual central plot of a criminal island, full of socially ambiguity and "alpha dog" based hierarchy, as well as a police run "civil society" on the outside, that operates in a strangely similar way.

On that note, Gangland employs a tightly serialized structure to maintain tension and suspense each week. Similar to the **HBO** series, "*Game of Thrones*," the series features an ensemble group of characters, separated by miles of space but followed with equal amounts of focus. Each new episode will be directly connected to the last in some way, and there would rarely be long or short time jumps from episode-to-episode. However, seasonal time jumps may occur. The long-term continuing storyline makes way for a smoother style of storytelling, and gives the audience a clear, uninterrupted journey as they follow the lives of each character and arc.

The series, per episode, will be told from two parallel sides, as well as from the multiple factions from within each point of view. One side of the story takes place on the criminal run island ("*Gangland*") and deals with the lives of the inmates as they attempt to survive through the inevitable gang war, constantly on outs with rival gangs, and facing the reality that they are running low on supplies and must fend for themselves, while the other takes places on the outside, in the civil society of New York City, where government officials and police factions take back their streets, in unconventional ways that should make readers question who the criminals really are.

While those two locations represent two sides of a never ending battle, good versus the evil, lines will be blurred, as we will follow criminals currently living in the civil society, as well as some cases of innocent people being sent to the island, as well as the over-arching theme of absolute power, and how it can corrupt even the noblest of causes and people. The key to the success of this series is to never, ever allow our characters to breathe easy, on, as well as off-island. *Gangland* is home to the worst of the worst, the state of crisis is constant. While off the rock, the police-run world, dead set on authority and structure will cause even the innocent to go weak in the knees with fear of what might come to them if they step out of line, in even the slightest of ways.

This series is about power. Who has it? Who wants it? Or wants to get away from it? And what happens when the balance of powers shifts to one side, above the other. What might it mean, or not mean, when both sides are equally guilty of abuse?

At some point in the show, the audience will have to ultimately pick a side.

MISSION STATEMENT

(Hybrid Genre, Parallel Storytelling & Realism)

Our goal is nothing less than putting in a real mixture of different genres of television, and creating something completely original and ground-breaking as a result.

Hybrid Genre

When you think of a television series, one may ask “what genre is the series set in?” The answer to this question, in regards to Gangland, should be the question of “what genre isn’t it?” We do not want to rob this series of a specific identity, but instead, reinvent what the “identity” of a television series necessarily has to mean. Can a series be a mixture of drama, comedy, science fiction, action, western, adventure, thriller, horror, etc... why not? Labeling the show is the easy part; making the audience believe the series can be all of these things, without being a mess or suffer from “identity crisis”, is another thing entirely.

If it’s so hard, why are we doing it? You may ask. Well, the thing about television is, it’s been around a very long time. Original ideas are running low these days, and with the film industry just as Popular, or more popular than television, creative and ground breaking ideas for media production, no matter what medium (television, film, book, etc...) are out of sight. What we must focus on now, is harnessing an idea that has been touched on in the past, and telling the story in a different way; Find new ways to tell the same story, which can be just as fulfilling as creating an original idea from scratch, if not more. When an audience can say a series is a mixture of so many others, but works in its own right because the storytelling is both creative and original, and constant genre-messing take the show to new heights each week, you’ve got something special, and that’s what we want Gangland to be.

Parallel Storytelling

To that end, Gangland takes the idea of “Good and Evil” and showcases it literally with equal focus, and no prejudice. It also employs the gray-area between good and evil, and supports the idea that no one person or group of people can take the stance of either side, without having moments in between. The series’ parallel storytelling is most evident in the on/off island separation. World peace is not possible in this place, and now that criminals do not have power in society any longer, the power passes to politicians, police forces and everyday citizens. With that power comes the door to corruption, and the criminal ideal begins again, which begs the question, are the people that have been sent to the island any less or more suspect than their captures? Two sides of the same coin will be stressed quite often on the show.

Realism

- *Visual Impact to Story*. Though the most visual elements of the series are rooted in science fiction, with technology unknown to modern society, and a central plot, seemingly, far away from the present day, our show is first and foremost a drama. It is about people; Real people that the audience can identify with and become engaged in. It is not a show about hardware or fantastical creatures. It is a show about us. It is an allegory for our own society, about what our society could easily become. It is about our own people and it should be immediately recognizable to any member of the audience.

- *Realistic Characters*. TV is host to many pitfalls of character development. We do not have character archetypes in this show. There will never be the “noble hero” “the brain” “the wacky sidekick” “the cocky guy” or any of the other usual characters that can populate any given series. Our characters are people, just like us, with real emotion, real conflict, and real complexity. One character personality should not resemble a straight line. The curves in each character’s personality are what make them realistic.

THE CONTAINMENT ISLAND



History

The initial idea of a criminal run containment area was first introduced by US State Senator Daniel Larkin, who was shunned by his fellow political heavyweights at the very mention of it. Over the course of four years, and many stressful pitches and meetings with members of his own and other governments of the world, the project was finally considered after The Insurgence occurred. In 2020, The Insurgence, a successful plot by an organized crime ring based in West Virginia to assassinate the United States Vice President, sparked fear within the people of the United States, as they demanded the, then, untitled containment project, to be put into development.

With the lack of public updates, the general public went on strikes, boycotts and riots around the world began. However, the government did, in fact, have a plan. One year after the Insurgence, the US government began The Collection. In the course of three weeks, every citizen with outstanding criminal records both outside and inside state prison facilities were transferred to a remote island, the location only being known by key members of the government.

The island, before the arrival of its new residents, had been marked down with signs, separating the inmates by sex, race and criminal history and capability. From that point on, on their arrival to the island, they were given the freedom to create their own set of rules, political views and societal hierarchies. The idea was to not create a prison, but to create a world by which these people can live the way they want, due to the fact that their behavior is unacceptable in civil society. They were literally given the chance to form their own society, and that is what they did. The island lacked one thing... a named, and would soon be known, simply as, **Gangland**.

Politics and Society

The political hierarchy and norms of society on the island are somewhat based on that of modern civil society, only, less civil. These are criminals we're talking about. There is no feasibly government. No diplomacy. There are factions. There are leaders in each faction. And there is one rule: Do not invade another faction's territory if you want to hold on your life. Though, this rule is broken quite frequently, which is the cause of many deaths on the island.

There are those on the island that believe in a structured society, and only wish to live out their lives in peace. These people often set up camp in non-violent areas of the island, though no one space there is truly void of violence. The average citizens keep to themselves, rarely participating in gang politics and spend most of their days trying to find refuge, supplies, and bringing order to their lives.

Gangs/Factions

Gangland is made up of five major gangs. They are as follows;

- **The Blood Pack:** A large group of murderers, thieves, rapists, etc... Over 96% of the gang is African American, and they are the most dangerous gang on the island... arguably. The Blood Pack is headed by Lawrence Cannon.
- **The Latin Knights:** A Latin based gang of both men and women. They are currently in a turf war with the Blood Pack, as they fight over land, as well as supplies. Currently run by a Maria "Gata Loca" Ortiz.
- **Raknog:** One of the most exclusive groups on the island, made up of European drug lords, smugglers, and yes... killers.
- **Red Suns:** The most populated gang on the island, run with the most order, as the group, instead of having one leader, has a council. They can be said to be the most open to change, but that does not mean they are a force to be messed with.
- **Fatales:** An all female gang, with a mysterious connection to The Blood Pack. This gang will be mentioned in season one, but not heavily focused on until later in the series.

These five gangs are not the only groups and factions on the island, but they are at the top of the islands hierarchy, which means new gangs are always forming with the goal of taking another ones place to the top, which keeps everyone on their toes.

Technology

When the government chose the location for the containment area, they purposefully made it remote, meaning electronics cannot be used or powered from or to the island. There are, however, clean energy run devices that provide daily uses such as running water, light and heat, which are all on timers and ship by the outside work via survival packages. These packages come in bunches and are dropped each month the several different drop zones of the island, but no such package has been dropped in weeks, which starts a chain of new crimes, thefts and betrayals between rival factions.

There are parts of the island that have been mysteriously blocked off by energy-powered walls, or force fields. Speculation on the island has been made about the blocks, and they've come to many conclusions. One being, whatever is behind the shields will aid them in getting back to society. But, no one quite knows for sure. Others believe they are hubs for police; thinking there is actually an outside government presence on the island, watching their every move.

THE REST OF THE WORLD

History

Let's not start at the beginning of American history, but instead begin at the rapid rise of criminal activity in the year 2020. Crime was always a problem, but it had never been so violent, so constant, than in 2020, when organized crime bosses rose to power, above the law. Corrupt politicians were at the source of the takeover, and by the time the world knew anything about it, criminals had already gained too much power.

After The Insurgence occurred, and The Collection came and went, society was put until military control, to make the ongoing collection of suspected criminals quicker and less violent. The government developed a national covert task force called The Fist (see page ???) to be the face of justice for the United States of America.

Soon after their creation, the so-called "Protectors" turned corrupt, as one-sided rules and the idea of diplomacy in America began to disappear. Rules are stricter than they have ever been, and the country is extremely close converting to a monarchical government. In a sense, the gangs have not gone away completely, but instead, have been replaced by a new force with questionable goals and tactics.

A civilian resistance has been rumored, but not confirmed or located by government officials, or Fist operatives. The resistance is said to be small at the moment, but they believe that the current government has been taken over by corrupt politicians.

Politics and Society

After his development and action plan for the containment island, former US State Senator, Daniel Larkin was voted into office as President of the United States of America in the 2025. He elected Thomas Parker, a former supreme judge as his V.P. and is currently in his second year in office. Larkin has made his self the face of The Fist organization, firmly positioning himself as Admiral, overseeing the entire operation.

Technology

THE FIST

History

In an effort to rid the United States of crime for good, the Federal Bureau of Intelligence, Central Intelligence Agency, as well as the US Military, combined their branches and made a country-wide police force, named 'The Fist' by the US President himself.

Officially launched in 2024, The Fist has multiple facilities in every major city in the United States, as well as embassies in countries outside of North America. In each city or providence, The Fist is split up into wards, or precincts. There are a total of fifteen precincts in New York City. A Fist officer's job is very much like that of any normal police operative; keep the peace, and uphold justice.

Rankings

The Fist borrowed military-like rankings to their operatives and leaders. From lowest to highest, they are as follows;

Recruit: All Fist officers began as trainees/recruits at the Fist Academy. To even be considered for the recruit position, you must go through a series of both physical and mental tests, before completing a six-month training course. Only a small number of trainees are promoted to Fist apprentices or officers.

Officer: When a recruit graduates from the academy they are promoted to Fist officers. These are the “grunts” the force, and are usually sent on street patrols or desk jobs, rarely being pulled out of the precinct for high-importance missions.

Apprentice: Recruits that get taken up for apprenticeship are considered lucky, because they are able to have all the power and freedom of officers, but instead of being partnered up with another recruit, get to work with an officer of higher ranking.

Lieutenant: When an officer proves himself out in the field, or believes they are ready for the next step, they may register for a promotion, though this rarely ends with them acquiring one. The Lieutenant’s job is to lead officers on missions. There are usually multiple operatives that hold this position in each precinct.

Commander: Each individual precinct has one commander. The Commander’s job is to assign missions, and lead the day-to-day operations at their precincts. Usually, Commanders spend their days behind a desk, though some prefer a more “hands on” role in their precinct and city.

Captain: One captain is assigned to each Fist operating city. Captain’s lead each precinct in their particular city. Their job is to oversee all activities that their precincts undergo, and serve as liaisons to the government.

General: There are a number of Generals throughout the United States that serve as combat leaders, and are the highest ranking officers of the Fist, aside from the admiral. They are rarely seen associating with those of lower ranking, and only include themselves in matter of national security.

Admiral: The leader of the Fist and all of its branches and precincts. Currently, Daniel Larkin, United States President, holds the title of “Admiral,” but that position does not always have to fall to the President.

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES

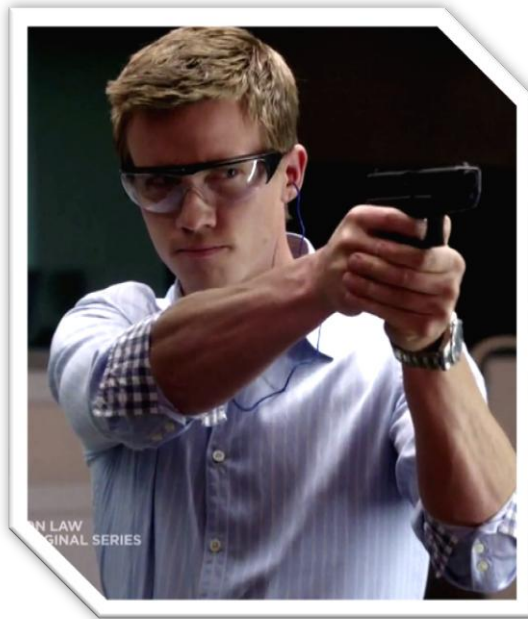
Commander Catherine Rinehart
(Portrayed by Kristin Bauer Van Straten)



Rinehart was born and raised in New York City. Her mother, Julia was a high school English teacher and her father, Henry, was a prominent attorney who specialized in criminal defense. From her mother, she inherited the desire to learn and teach others what she has learned, and from her father, the determination to stick to her beliefs, no matter how much the people around her believe something else.

Catherine's mother was killed by gang violence when she was thirteen years old.

App. Officer John Clarke
(Portrayed by Warren Kole)



John Clarke was born in the small town of Franklin, Idaho on January 21st, 1997. His mother, Tara, was unemployed and his father, Joseph was a drunken farmer and land owner. John was always the perfectionist, having to be the very best at whatever he set his mind to, but his parents, more frequently, his father, held him back from reaching his full potential. In grade school, John competed in the annual science fair, and came close to going to the national competition, but his father refused to sign a form, making him stay at home to help out with the farm. Joseph never wanted to see his son succeed, and he often punished him, both physically and mental, being firmly against the idea of John becoming a “better man” than he ever was.

In high school, he was on the varsity swimming team; one thing that his father was proud of, as he was also a swimmer in school before dropping out. For a brief time, John and Joseph found some middle-ground, and things between them began to look up. They even trained together. But all that changed when his team lost the championship swim meet. The aftermath of the loss was brutal, and old habits returned to their relationship.

Nevertheless, John was at the top of his class. No matter how hard his father tried to bring him down, he did not allow his future to be at risk because of a man he didn't even respect. At the end of his senior year in high school, John earned a four-year academic scholarship to Yale University, and he took that as a chance to leave his farm life behind, and start fresh.

John did not plan on telling his father he was going away for college, but when his acceptance letter came in the mail, he was forced to deal with the consequences. Joseph was strongly against his leaving, and at that point, John could care less about

what his father had to say. This led to a physical altercation, which ended in tragedy, as John's mother, Tara fell to her death at the bottom of the family well. That night, John packed his things and ran away from home, leaving behind his farm and his father.

After three bus rides, a train and a drive, he ended up in Connecticut, where he attended Yale University for two years, where he studied law. In the middle of his college career, he felt like Yale wasn't offering him what he truly wanted. There were so many great minds at the school, he never got the chance to make his mark, the way he wished to. His professor inspired him to make something of himself, in an environment more suitable for what he wanted to accomplish. So he dropped out of Yale, and decided to pursue a degree in criminal justice at a smaller university, John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York.

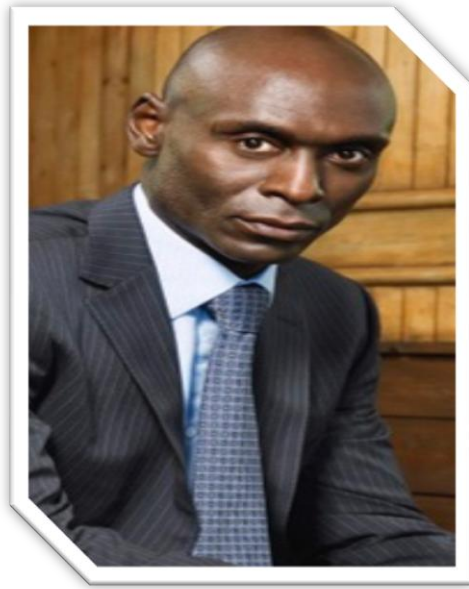
In 2017, during his first year at the new college, he received a visit from his father, who claimed got sober after he left home. John did not want anything to do with him, until he told him that he lost the farm in a bet months ago. Not that he cared, but he felt obligated to his father, and he wasn't one to hold grudges, so out of the kindness in his heart, he helped him get into a nursing home in New York, visiting him once a month, out of a sense of duty. They never speak of what happened the night he ran away, or the death of John's mother.

After graduating in 2019 with honors, he put his knowledge to good use, and signed up for the training program for the NYPD. He did exceptionally well, but he never was able to gain a position at the department due to the rise of criminal activity in 2020, and the state of emergency declared soon thereafter. You'd think the police department would be hiring people left and right, but instead, they wanted to control the public from inside the department, not letting any new parties in, at risk of putting untrained men and women on the streets at this desperate time.

In the midst of one of the many riots in downtown New York, John was attacked by a group of thugs on his way home. His injuries were not too fatal, but he does have a small scar on his neck from the bottle that was used to slash his throat. John's wounds were patched up by a nurse named Claire Worthington, who he could later call, his girlfriend. The two moved in together 2024, four years after they met at that hospital.

After the Insurgence, The Collection, and the launch of The Fist, John rediscovered his need to make a difference, and decided to enlist at the Fist Academy in 2025. In the present day of 2026, John has just completed the six-month training process, and is awaiting his graduation day and precinct assignment.

Captain Karth Davol
(Portrayed by Lance Reddick)



STORYLINES

Tension

The key to our stories is successfully maintaining a high level of dramatic tension. Simply put, we should never feel safe for any of our characters, on, as well as off the island. There is a constant threat and danger these characters can, and will face.

Plot-Driven Stories

Our plot-driven stories should come from reality based concepts and situations that our audiences can relate to and look upon as conceivable to their own lives as individuals.

Within this global political conspiracy, there are agents on both sides; this means that anyone can be corrupt. Characters should definitely experience the fear and paranoia that will become an ever-present result of this fact. A Fist precinct is attacked or destroyed, someone turns up in an elevator, a prison ship riots - all could be a result of rogue agents causing sabotage and mayhem among us. How the people react to this threat among them will be one of the primary storylines of the entire series — what will be their version of the Patriot Act? Where will liberty and security collide? How far will they be willing to go to ferret out the "traitors" among them?

On the island, finding food, fresh water, shelter and supplies are going to be never-ending problems as are dealing with the real-life difficulties involved with rationing those same supplies. The island itself is a vast space of new and old technology, so maintenance issues will always be a headache. Back in society, our stories should spring from within society whenever possible. Our goal is to tell human stories that serve as natural outgrowth of the premise of our show.

Character Stories

Our show is, first and foremost, a drama. It is about people.

Our characters should always be the most important element of every story. Breaking the traditional rule of the genre, we should sacrifice plot at every turn in favor of character. Time spent discussing the technical problems of outwitting the latest criminal plot will be better spent dealing with the emotional fallout of the Catherine/John relationship.

Do not be afraid to expose our characters' faults, for in their frailties, lay the seeds of their triumphs. Our people are deeply flawed, deeply human characters. They are not, by nature, innately heroic or noble creatures. They are simply ordinary people who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances.

They do not always make the right decision and they do not always do the right thing. They make mistakes, act out of pettiness and spite, and occasionally do things that are reprehensible. However, they are also capable of growth, of change, of learning to overcome their many flaws and rising to the challenges laid before them and performing great and mighty deeds.

They are human.

SEASON ONE

Story Arcs

Four major story arcs will play themselves out over the course of the first season:

1. The Fifteenth Precinct's manhunt for a faceless serial killer, simply known as The Skinner.
2. A group of criminals' squat in the home of a single mother and her son, as they adjust to life in the suburbs, and attempt to evade The Fist.
3. The lack of supplies on the island, and the rise in violence between rival gangs as a result. The war between the Blood Pack and Latin Knights.
4. Marcus and his group trying to find a way to escape the island by getting past the energy barriers.

Character Arcs

Catherine & John

They will form a personal bond forged in conflict, due to the fact that John likes to operate "by the book" and Catherine prefers to take a more renegade approach to her work. Both have very strong personalities that tend to clash out in the field. Catherine sees a little bit of a younger version of herself in John, which is why she chose him as her apprentice, though she'd never admit that to John. On the other hand, John does not always agree with Catherine's behavior, but he respects her position and her as a person, enough to follow her lead.

Catherine Rinehart

Catherine was critically injured not too long ago in a police raid that ended with a fatal explosion. She lost part of her left arm, suffered damage to her upper body and right shoulder, and had to have her left right removed. Yet, that did not stop her from doing her job. She was treated and implanted with cybernetic parts and enhancements that make her 35% machine. She is not quite aware of the extent of the enhancements she was given, but there might be some things her employers have not told her yet. Also, due to the brain damage in the explosion, her doctors had to remove parts of her brain, taking away part of what makes her human; emotion.

She's stronger, faster, both physically and mentally and smarter than she ever was, due to brain implants, but what compromises her ability to lead is her cold manner, and void of human emotions that a good leader needs. This also causes a strain in the relationship between her and her son, Noah.

The Skinner

A serial killer with many faces, literally. He leaves his mark by skinning the faces off of his victim while they're still breathing, and using advanced surgical technology to virtually change his face to avoid being captured by The Fist. Little is known about The Skinner; where he came from, his origins, or his one true face. If he is even a male is yet to be determined. All we know is that The Skinner out there, somewhere, which a city-wide manhunt in order to locate him because he kills again.

Forrest Holden

A calculated, some may say psychotic man who is serving life in detainment off the island. The only reason he has not been sent to the island, or killed is because he is more useful to The Fists' cause alive than dead, or in isolation. He is an information-broken, and we soon discover that Forrest is the father of Marcus Holden, who is currently living on Gangland. Holden will be introduced as a source in Catherine's manhunt for The Skinner, though his role in her life, from both the present and past, takes a very interesting turn.

Juanita & Danny

Joey & Lorrie

Marcus Holden

Maria Ortiz

Jonnie & Brett

Lawrence & Nikki

Lawrence is a very cruel and cold man, but Nikki is the only person he lets inside his head and heart. Nikki possesses all of the strengths Lawrence possesses, but none of his weaknesses. Although she likes for him to believe she is "his", and his alone, she is only in it for the power and respect. Some may even go as far as to say that Nikki is the brains behind the entire operation, and Lawrence is simply her puppet.