Alumni

5 True-Crime and Investigative Podcasts Worth Bingeing

These gripping series from Columbia alumni broadcasters will keep you hitting the play button.

By
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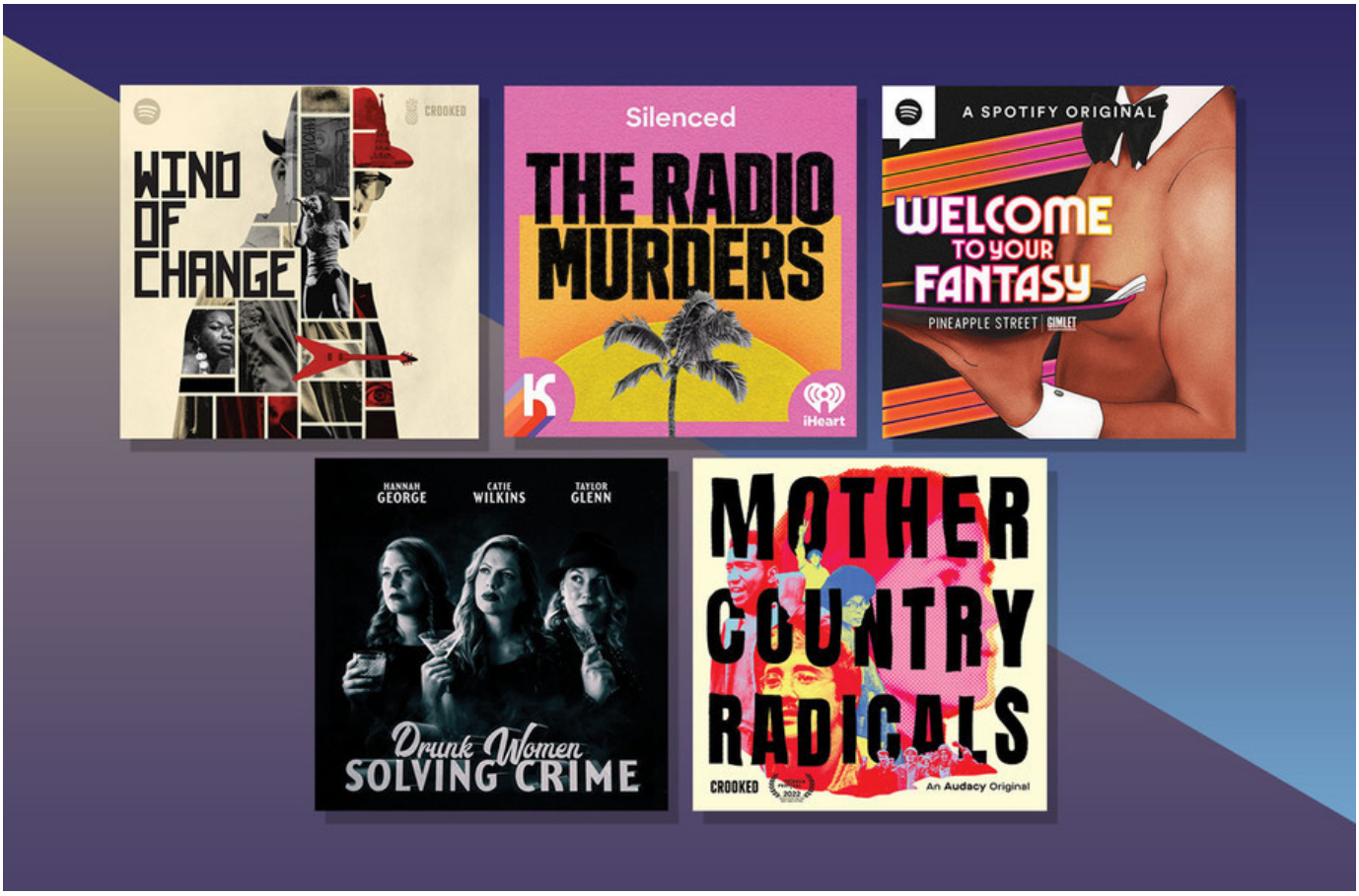

Silenced: The Radio Murders

In the early 1990s, investigative journalist Ana Arana ’81JRN began reporting on a string of assassinations — all involving radio broadcasters — in Miami’s Little Haiti neighborhood. The killers were never found. Now, in a new podcast, Arana and cohost Oz Woloshyn revisit this chilling cold case and attempt to untangle a complicated web of conspiracy, cocaine trafficking, and political upheaval.

Welcome to Your Fantasy

Chippendales, a male dance troupe founded in Los Angeles in 1979 by Indian immigrant Steve Banerjee, is best known for its iconic striptease performances and for hosting raunchy girls’ nights out. In the 2021 series *Welcome to Your Fantasy*, historian Natalia Mehlman Petrzela ’00CC joins coproducers Nicole Hemmer ’10GSAS and Neil J. Young ’08GSAS to look beyond the franchise’s muscle and mullets and expose a shocking tale of fraud, murder, and American hustle culture.

Wind of Change

Did the 1991 single “Wind of Change” by West German rock band the Scorpions help take down the Soviet Union? The song, released between the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the official end of the USSR, became a massive hit across Europe and an anthem for the end of the Cold War. Over eight episodes, New Yorker journalist Patrick Radden Keefe ’99CC travels the world to investigate a strange rumor that the power ballad was actually written by the CIA.

Drunk Women Solving Crime

Taylor Glenn ’01SW, an American comedian and writer based in London, cohosts this British comedy series advertised as a “true-crime podcast with a twist … of lime.” Glenn, along with Hannah George and Catie Wilkins, invite their myriad guests to share encounters with minor “crimes” — everything from personal slights to awkward situations — and also discuss more serious cases from the headlines.

Mother Country Radicals

In the 1970s, the Weather Underground, a far-left militant group spearheaded by Bernardine Dohrn and Bill Ayers, declared war on the US government and shocked the public by inciting riots, committing arson, and bombing public buildings. The activists' son, Zayd Ayers Dohrn '06GSAS, a playwright and professor who was born while his parents were hiding from the FBI, tells the complicated story of their radicalization and interviews his mother about the group's motivation and legacy.

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