

Richie Gureski

COME 389A

Kretz

January 5th, 2022

Netflix: Disruption within the Media

Television has impacted many aspects of our history as well as the media, such as the 1960 Presidential Elections, where the televised debate led to different opinions on who won. It also has impacted the speed of which information is released, such as when people were watching the 9/11 attacks through every news outlet possible. However, what people do not always recognize is that the shows seen on television and streaming platforms have also impacted the way people see society today. One of the most recent and more popular examples of this being *Netflix*, an independent company popular for streaming shows and films to audiences worldwide. *Netflix* utilizes a subscription model, which was not only new in its time, but has been copied and imitated on many occasions with other streaming platforms, with audiences having their own preferences of which one is the best to watch shows and films off of. Regardless of how people may choose to view it, *Netflix* has had a great impact within the last 25 years due to how it has disrupted the three major components of the media, content, production, and consumption within the media.

Firstly, the media component of content, within the context of the topic of *Netflix*, involves the media message itself that the audience watches and listens to shows on. *Netflix* has been able to impact and disrupt the media component of content through its ability to appeal to the consumers through many unique television shows and films that are not always on cable television. *Netflix* attempts to promote directly to their consumers by recommending many films

or television shows that they would like to see due to others that they had watched previously. By “knowing” their audience, it helps *Netflix* to make their consumers want to keep watching on the streaming platform, as they will keep finding more and more things they will watch on there, and they will keep coming back to watch more. With *Netflix* being the first to practice this type of preference selection amongst the streaming services, it helped to disrupt the content, as it got people to see that *Netflix* had what they wanted in more availability than its competitors. This is especially true when in comparison to *Blockbuster*, who did not always have what people were looking for when their consumers were selecting film or television shows from the now nearly-extinct store. This would give way to their consumers wanting to find a different platform that they would feel is better at having the content they prefer, with a platform or service that they would prefer as well.

The second media component, being production, involves the creation and distribution of messages within the media. It can be pretty apparent that with its current standing of 214 million *Netflix* subscribers across the world (Peters, 2021), it is very easy for them to distribute their messages across their platforms, as they can slip it within any film or television show of their choice. However, the creation of these messages could be different, as the message itself can rely on many factors, such as inspiration from current events. Many messages within the televised shows even take popular figures and controversies within today’s society to attempt to make messages within their episodes. One of these examples is from an episode of the fifteenth season of the popular adult animated comedy, *Family Guy*, where the plot revolves around vaccinations. While the episode initially attempts to dive into depth with the concerns people have for vaccinations, it ends up taking a giant turn in favor of vaccinations by showcasing a quarantined and dying society without anyone getting vaccinated, with the main message of the episode

attempting to showcase to viewers the importance of vaccinations (Goodman et al., 2016). While *Family Guy* is currently not on *Netflix* in the U.S. anymore, with it being taken off of *Netflix* platforms in the U.S. a few years ago, it goes to show how a message can be written with an intent or purpose, with the purpose of this episode being to persuade their audience to support vaccines. Another example of this is the horror television show *Slasher* (Carpenter et al., 2016-2021), which is currently on *Netflix*. In this series, they tend to take a certain societal concern at hand and bring light to it in some shape or form, with the most popular use of it being in their third season. Calling out these issues and showcasing a change for the better is something that *Netflix* has managed to accomplish the creation and distribution of many messages, regardless of the source, more than other streaming platforms just by the mere plots of their shows and movies when attempting to call out serious issues within society.

The third and final major component of the media, otherwise known as consumption, is the use of the media, which in this case would be the process of watching films and television shows on *Netflix*. With the knowledge of *Netflix* currently having around 214 million *Netflix* subscribers across the world (Peters, 2021), the consumption rate would have to be very high, even if people are not on *Netflix* on a daily basis. However, the consumption rate can also be impacted by new releases, such as the recent *Netflix* popular show, *Squid Game*, that sparked popularity amongst many viewers for its dramatic plot and incredible cast (Dong-hyuk et al., 2021). With popular content such as *Squid Game* also being heavily promoted on *Netflix* or on social media, the goal would be to get someone hooked on a show, as once they are hooked on a show, they will be sure to tune in every time a new episode comes up. This, in turn, would help the consumption rate go up and would increase the amount of viewers and potentially could help to increase the amount of *Netflix* subscribers. In comparison to other streaming platforms, there

is an obvious larger promotion towards *Netflix* as a streaming service in general, leading to more popularity with it. With it also being one of the first streaming platforms, *Netflix* has also had time on its side to increase its own popularity over many other popular and competing film and television platforms across the years such as *Blockbuster* and *Hulu*.

In conclusion, while many streaming services and media platforms have attempted to follow in their footsteps, *Netflix* has had one of the biggest impacts in the media in today's society. With its ability to disrupt the media in terms of content, production, and consumption, *Netflix* has been able to increase its popularity to secure its success. With its addition of many popular shows and many new shows, *Netflix* has not only been able to increase the consumption of their service, but has also been able to increase the amount of people they have been able to reach throughout the years they have been in service. With many more years to come, it is only expected that *Netflix* will continue to improve in its broad selection of films and television shows to watch and the messages they are able to encode within them. However, with the new age of technology coming, there is no guarantee at this time to how *Netflix* will fare when faced with new competition in the future, but it is known that *Netflix* will continue its reign within the world of entertainment for the foreseeable future.

References

Carpenter, S., Ford, J., Garvie, S., Jennings, C., Martin, A., Phillips, G. (2016-2021). *Slasher*.

TVA Group. <https://www.netflix.com/title/80105452>

Goodman, D.A., Holmquist, J. (2016, November 13). Hot Shots (Season 15 Episode 6). R.

Appel, S. Callaghan, S. MacFarlane, D. Smith, K. Vallow. *Family Guy*. Fuzzy Door Productions; 20th Television.

Dong-hyuk, H., Ji-yeon, K. (2021). Squid Game. Netflix. <https://www.netflix.com/title/81040344>

Peters, F. (2021). *Netflix Tops 214 Million Subscribers Worldwide, Beating Q3 Estimates*.

<https://decider.com/2021/10/19/netflix-q3-subscriber-growth/#:~:text=Netflix%20Tops%20214%20Million%20Subscribers%20Worldwide%2C%20Beating%20Q3%20Estimates,-By%20Fletcher%20Peters>