

BINGE WATCHING AND THE NEW DOMINANT WAY OF CONSUMING AND PRODUCING TV SERIES

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ABSTRACT

This article examines binge watching, also known as media marathoning, and related studies in television media consumption, and discusses how the popularization of such behavior has been modifying the model of producing television content. This phenomenon began timidly with the VCR and some special programming of cable television channels, and today happens explosively in the streaming of video over the internet, provoking a new way to produce and consume visual culture, in television or computer, smartphones and tablets displays. Netflix and YouTube are the leading exponents in the production and distribution of audience-driven content with bingeing features in a new programming distribution paradigm, by individual viewer demands. This has especially impacted the production of TV dramaturgy series, where the narrative is restructured with the new perspectives opened by technology, seeking different strategies, both for broadcast television and for peer-to-peer distribution, in resonance with this contemporary behavior, as it is presented in this work.

KEYWORDS

Binge watching; internet television; narratology; TV series; video marathoning

RESUMO

Esse artigo analisa o *binge watching*, ou maratona de mídia, e os estudos de compulsão no consumo de mídia televisiva, e discute como a popularização desse comportamento vem modificando o modelo de se produzir conteúdo para televisão. Esse fenômeno começou timidamente com o videocassete e algumas programações especiais de canais de televisão a cabo, e hoje acontece de forma explosiva na transmissão de vídeo pela internet, provocando uma nova forma de produzir e consumir a cultura visual, em telas de televisão ou monitores de computador, smartphones e tablets. O Netflix e o YouTube são os principais expoentes na produção e distribuição de conteúdo voltado para o engajamento da audiência com aspectos viciantes, em um novo paradigma de distribuição da programação, por demandas individuais do espectador. Isso tem impactado especialmente na produção de séries da teledramaturgia, onde a narrativa se reestrutura com as novas perspectivas abertas pela tecnologia, buscando diferentes estratégias, tanto para a televisão *broadcast* quanto para a distribuição ponto a ponto, em ressonância com esse comportamento contemporâneo, como é abordado nesse trabalho.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Binge watching; maratonas de vídeo; narratologia; séries de televisão; televisão pela internet

BINGE WATCHING AND VIDEO MARATHONING

In recent years, it has become possible to watch entire seasons of a television series without commercial interruptions, practically in any platform (screen), with the technology of distribution of videos by streaming through Internet. This has made it easier to access titles on a virtually global scale, including releases, through paid services, such as Netflix, Amazon, and YouTube, or illegally, as in torrent files. This innovation spread the consumption habit of watching several episodes of the series at one time, in a phenomenon called binge watching.

This form of consumption, which has existed since the popularization of videocassettes, since the late 1970s, has been gaining popularity and becoming increasingly common, acquiring a status of behavior. As a consequence, it has become a common practice for television series producers to release all episodes of a season at once. This was done primarily by internet television channels on video on demand (VOD) services, starting in 2013 by Netflix and more recently by broadcast television channels in their paid internet services, even before making each episode available in traditional programming.

Perks (2014) prefers the term media marathoning. According to her, the concept of binging carries itself a negative connotation, the idea of a pernicious action to the individual, and that was probably coined by journalists connected to the entertainment through the negative reaction to this new way of watching TV. According to the author, these journalists are based on the notion that “viewers are cast as unfeeling and unthinking, racing through what could be a more pleasurable, leisurely media experience” (Perks, 2014, p. 11).

Despite the possible negative connotation of it, the term binge watching will be used in this article, since it is more used in the literature. Because it has recently been identified as an object of attention, few scientific studies have been published so far, as can be seen in a search for scientific articles with that term.

Perks seeks to contextualize this behavior in her book, for any type of media, and states that this way of relating to the media object, written or audiovisual, is linked to three essential variables: distribution technologies, active behavior and increase complexity in the content of entertainment media:

by controlling the pace of the narrative journey and focusing on one story world, marathoners can maximize the emotional and cognitive that enhances emotional and cognitive connectivity to the story world. Reader affective investments transform the characters into pseudo-avatars, blurring the line between reader and character in their coordinated journey. (Perks, 2014, p. 12)

Since the last decades of the twentieth century, the distribution technology has been presenting new alternatives, showing profound changes in the viewer’s access to content, previously only found in cinemas and broadcast television channels. These changes began with specialized cable television channels, the distribution of VCR tapes, DVDs, blue-ray discs, and, more recently, the transmission of video over the internet, only possible with broadband internet, and which has been popularized and transformed all the

way to relate to the audiovisual text, with consequences also to the production of content itself.

In one of the pioneering studies on the phenomenon, (Jenkins, 2012), begins with the observation of consumer groups of TV programs and how they organized themselves and how this way of consuming influenced the production of content. One of Jenkins' seminal research collaborators, Meg Garrett, draws attention to one aspect of this new phenomenon:

using the VCR and the pre-existing fan network, the TV viewer is freed of the constraints of local programming. Want to watch *B7* or *Sandbaggers* or *Red Dwarf*, but your station ignores your letters? Ask around, and soon you've got your own copy and you can ignore the stupidity of the program director! (Meg Garrett, personal correspondent, 1990). (Jenkins, 2012, p. 72)

When we move away from the control of the program director of programming in the TV broadcast systems, allowing the viewer to dictate the consumption rhythm of the series, we can say that the viewer has the possibility to watch in an uninterrupted way or even to cut in, to interrupt the narrative much more often than it would normally happen by the advertisement. This can happen through breaks, to access relevant information to the series or to perform totally unrelated tasks in other screens, such as messages, Facebook and others.

The way of bingeing a series, or marathoning it, can be connected not only to the unlimited access to content, as in VOD services, or also in an uninterrupted way, but in the possibility of interruption, at any time in the plot, favored by the universe of other fields of meanings, or simply by the interconnectivity that the media of consumption allows the user. A survey commissioned by the company Netflix in 2013 has identified that binge watching is the new common way of watching TV. They found that 73% of the viewers who took part in the survey had a habit of consuming 2 to 6 episodes of the same program uninterruptedly (Netflix, 2013).

In the next section, we will analyze the first influential aspect to the video marathons, which is, distribution technologies through internet, to contextualize these innovations within this study without deepening in technical aspects. Then, the active behavior of the spectator will be debated with its consequences in group associations and in binge watching. In the fourth section, we will discuss the increasing complexity of entertainment media content and the changes in the development of scripts, the production and distribution of television series, and what the trends are. In the last section, we present the conclusions of the analysis of this phenomenon, which although not recent, has become dominant with the internet.

INTERNET TELEVISION

In 1994, three years before the launch of high-definition television (HDTV) ABC began broadcasting ABC News on the Internet. A year later, CBS broadcast channel started

adopting the same strategy with CBS News, reversing the existing plan to bring the Internet to television by bringing television to the internet (Huffingtonpost, 2015).

At that time, the video reception by the viewer was done by the telephone modem, with a data transmission speed that allowed a resolution of the video image of 320 by 240 pixels and half the amount of frames per second, much below of the HDTV signal, which would be 1920 by 1080 pixels in 1997. By the technological advances, which allowed to increase the amount of data transmitted through the Internet, new trends were being created, implemented and popularized, revolutionizing television on the internet. Currently, all households in Japan are connected to the internet via fiber optics, for example, and the 4096 by 2160 pixel 4K television resolution is standard on internet video broadcasts. Transmission tests of the 8K format, with videos of 7680 by 4320 pixels, via satellite and internet, have been carried out since 2014 (Nakamura, 2015).

In Sweden, since 2002, it has been possible to download feature films in a few minutes, with speeds that did not exist in the United States, for example, and making the physical rental of videocassettes and DVDs less useful (Grenouille, 2004). This reality is different from mostly every other country even today, where the speed of internet transmission is much lower. Therefore, the strategy of streaming video with variable resolution, adapting to the bandwidth of the viewer's receiver, is adopted and allows television streaming or download over the internet almost everywhere in the world.

In the West, television companies on the Internet have, with the possibility of broadcasting high-definition videos, become not only a way of distribution, but a media of producing content, with a own structure of consumption and production converging from many other media. We currently find different modes of internet television services, whether provided by television companies, film and game producers, such as BBC Three, Playstation, Vue and Globo Play, or by independent peer-to-peer distribution channels such as Netflix, Amazon Prime and YouTube.

Netflix is a benchmark in the production and distribution of television for the internet due to its pioneering services in facilitating access to audiovisual content for viewers. It began as an internet company that provided DVD rentals online in 1997, sending the media to anywhere in the United States. In 2007, it began to offer streaming movies to its subscribers, and in 2012, it also started producing content as well. It was the first television service on the internet to receive nominations for the Emmy¹ in 2013 with the House of Cards series, Orange is the new black, and The Square. House of Cards received three Primetime Emmy Awards that year (Netflix, 2017).

The way Netflix is expanding, currently present in 119 countries with more than 100 million subscribers, prompted its president, Reed Hasting, to make a provocation in 2014, predicting that broadcast television would disappear by 2030 (Digital TV Europe, 2014).

Companies such as Warner have launched 10 episodes of the Angie series all at once, streaming them for 25 hours and winning 1/3 new viewers. The series Impastor,

¹ Emmy Awards is the main award in the United States for professionals and television programs from around the world since 1949. Primetime distinguishes content as recognition for excellence in television programming.

from Viacom, has been modified as to its narratological structure to try to reach the binge watchers. TV Globo has launched series, which can be watched at once by streaming on its Globo Play internet channel before the serial broadcast. Some companies, such as CBS, are looking for ways to serialize ads so that the same ad is not shown several times to binge watchers, and they try to connect ads to stories (Reuters, 2016).

Michael Wolff compares the evolution of cable television, which began with the provision of cable transmission services, to the television on the internet, which began with the construction of the computer network:

cable began largely as the creation of infrastructure companies, and then surrendered, or its programming surrendered, for better or for worse, to entertainment companies. The laughable, low-income, and somewhat queer sensibility in the early years of the cable was first dedicated to broadcasting the scrap and less-profitable properties of television and building a new, extraordinary market for them (for example, cable TV became a recognizable but distinct form of television). And of course, this is what will happen with Netflix, Amazon, Yahoo, Google and Facebook. (Wolff, 2015, p. 158)

The traditional time formats for television, listed by Doc Comparato in his book, are the telefilm, which approaches the feature film, and the 25 minute and 50 minute formats, from soap operas and series, for example, which have a structure of their own, interrupted by commercial breaks and “hooks” or crucial situations, which are intended to prevent the public from turning off the TV. In addition to the structure of the story to be told, with pace and moments of creating a connection between a content block and another, there is another range of details, such as number of characters, environments and scenarios, that must be taken into account for the production of content for TV (Comparato, 1998, pp. 196-203).

This structural and dynamic logic of traditional television is not necessarily reflected in the video content of the internet. The content formats multiply in temporal structures from mere seconds, to entire seasons of 50 minutes per episode, with several ways of telling a story, such as the Artistically Challenged web series, made exclusively for Instagram (@actheseries, n.d.). We now see a new form of distribution, with the seasons of the series being made available with all its episodes, at the release, which began initially with Netflix and it is practiced today by all series television channels in their services paid on the internet. Advertising insertions and how the company’s billing structure differs also from traditional television with different business models such as the number of YouTube channel hits or the GloboPlay and Netflix subscriptions.

Despite the active off-screen time behavior, which is a component element of binge watching, the formats of the shows that cause binging have not undergone major changes in relation to the length of the episodes yet. What is changing is the pace of the narrative, to attend an audience that watches from two to six hours of a series uninterruptedly.

The programs continue, even though released for video on demand, with the standard television length, with 25 minutes or 50 minutes each episode approximately. There

are also 1 hour and 30 minutes telefilms. However, while the first moment of the web video has allowed a profusion of content sizes, those who most cause binge watching continue with the formats and temporal duration of classic television. The possibilities of interaction with the dramatic audiovisual object can be something possible and encouraged via streaming or VOD services, but it is not only this possibility of interaction that attracts the audience. “Netflix is bringing television programming, values and behavior – like passive observation – to screens that used to be interactive and computer-related”, says (Wolff, 2015, p. 87).

Although the script development for Internet television suggests that new content structures become relevant, some practices are common in the entertainment industry:

creators are still commissioned to deliver a certain number of episodes of a pre-determined length, albeit a length not bound by commercial breaks. By implication, this might suggest their script development practices likely remain aligned with the traditional processes discussed later. However, there is some evidence to suggest that, in this regard, Netflix shows might have more in common with other types of online content, such as the sorts of independent web series previously mentioned. (Taylor, 2015, p. 3)

BINGE WATCHING AND THE ACTIVE SPECTATOR

The way to associate with an audiovisual object changes from the moment the director of programming is replaced by full access to the programming. Going beyond the question of hours spent in front of the TV screen to characterize binge watching, the term also presents itself as a cultural phenomenon and a new form of association of people. The constitution of fandoms and the behavior of scrutinizing the series universe compose the process of getting addicted to an audiovisual-text. The fandoms, or group of fans of a particular cultural product, and the way these groups organize themselves, contribute to the understanding of binge watching.

Still in the early 1990s, Jenkins (2012) demonstrated in his research that the process of activism when consuming a TV program was an important part of engaging with the object of consumption. In this context, M. Jenner states that the online environment, on social networks such as Twitter, Facebook and others, encourages typical fan behavior, making participation an easy activity (Jenner, 2015, p. 15).

Perks points out that the practice of marathon media does not necessarily match fan-only behavior, but rather fan-like behavior about fan organization and media marathons, a fact that Jenner also addresses with description of non-fan engagement (Jenner, 2015, p. 12):

marathoners temporarily adopt fan practices and behaviors —frequently discussing, researching, and thinking about the story with which they are engaged. Less frequently, but nonetheless important, they will also form

rituals around the media engagement, memorialize their identity with media-related purchases, and undertake pilgrimages to sanctioned fan sites. (Perks, 2014, p. 54)

On one hand we have the technological availability of access to the content, without the intervention in the schedule by the director of programming, and on the other we have the incitement of the fan behavior to look for details of the plot that escape the less unsuspecting eyes, extending the experience of relationship with the media product, with the old neighborhood fandoms, which are nowadays organized online, either in the exchange of cassettes, DVDs and, also that nowadays, through the processes of online interaction in blogs, websites, forums and social networks. What connects these two sides is the text, which participates with a peculiar contribution to the bingeable consumption of media. The audiovisual-text is what permeates the technological access and consumption behavior.

Binge watching, as it can be seen from these observations, it is not only the act of spending hours and hours, without interruptions, consuming the same media product. To these long hours it must be added the time spent in the process of “off-screen” consumption in the construction of meaning in groups, as fandoms or online discussion forums, and also as an individual behavior of seeking information and more details of the fictional universe shown in the series.

We can say that binge watching is a behavioral phenomenon that comes to be diffused as the new way of watching, or as the cultural anthropologist Grant McCracken, in his study together the Netflix on the profile of the viewer who enters this process: “But this TV watcher is different, the couch potato has awoken. And now that services like Netflix have given consumers control over their TV viewing, they have declared a new way to watch” (Netflix, 2013).

Considering the Netflix reports, some series are more “devouring” while others are more “savory” as analyzed by the service subscriber database in more than 190 countries with access to over 100 series. It was analyzed only the profile of users who watched a full season, with a global average of five days to complete a season. In general, two hours and 10 minutes of the series were attended, and the series classified as “to savor” were consumed for less than two hours per day. Meanwhile the series classified as “to devour”, had an average greater than two hours per day. It is worth mentioning that the genres horror and thriller cause a more compulsive engagement than the others (Netflix, 2016).

From these statements, it can be concluded that binge watching is linked to an active behavior of the spectators immersed for hours, dedicating itself to a same show with cult textual features, in several platforms, in a universe of content, surpassing much more than the hours of the two to six episodes. There is a whole new industrial process of generating content aiming this audience, each day broader and more dominant, so in the development of more complex scripts than simply an episodic serial narrative, which aired on a periodicity according to the grid of television programming, as well as in the medium of distribution, and in the conception of narrative and advertising that eventually breaks it.

SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT FOR POTENTIALLY COMPULSIVE SPECTATORS

The treatment of the content of the series of binge watching is no longer just the narrative process that unfolds on the screen, either by the marathons provided by the conventional broadcast channels, or by the ease of access by the VOD services, but, it becomes also a universe of content that permeates, plays, adds, creates intertextualities information to the voracious viewer. When we address the three basic pillars that foster or provide engagement in series consumption, we are faced with the need for a contributing diegetic universe.

This universe of content is treated as a cult audiovisual text. Hills, paraphrased by Jenner, describes three basic principles of the cult text:

the author figure as a ‘subject-who-is-supposed-to-know’, an endlessly deferred narrative, meaning that the text is marked by certain enigmas and the resolution of these is deferred over many seasons (and in some cases never occurs), and hyperdiegesis, meaning ‘a vast and detailed narrative space, only a fraction of which is ever directly seen or encountered within the text, but which nevertheless appears to operate according to principles of internal logic of extension. (Hills quoted in Jenner, 2015, p. 10)

The narratives are no longer only related to the technological environment and become transmedia storytelling², either in the official construction of content off the screen or in the activist relationship of the fandoms. The complexity of narratives with external worlds outside the screen time is an invitation to devour content almost instantly. This semiotic universe, which is often beyond the apparent narratological structure and plot presented in the series, begins to create the spectator participant in the process of signification. Will Brooker goes deeper in this discussion:

as television narratives become increasingly transmedia, evolving into immersive worlds and challenges beyond the screen’s boundary, they increasingly become a matter for collective viewing and discussion, rather than individual engagement; but they also, (...), start to blur the boundary between viewer and participant. (Brooker, 2009, p. 10)

The basis of almost all audiovisual projects of fiction is a story developed in an argument and then in a script presented with a range of possibilities and considerations of several professionals and situations, that here we call script development, and most of the time it is only considered as a diagram, a blueprint of the finished audiovisual object, on the screen. From the idea to the screen there is a varied and complex set of processes and people, in a system of development in which authorship, development, production, distribution and consumption intertwine in search of an audience.

² According to Jenkins (2011), “transmedia storytelling represents a process where integral elements of a fiction get dispersed systematically across multiple delivery channels for the purpose of creating a unified and coordinated entertainment experience. Ideally, each medium makes its own unique contribution to the unfolding of the story”.

According to the article “How Network TV Figured Out Binge-Watching – They’re learning from Netflix”: “networks are changing the way they develop and release new shows, and even commercials, as they seek to adapt to new TV viewing habits and profit from the ‘binge watching’ made popular by video streaming services like Netflix” (Reuters, 2016, p. 1).

The script development process needs to deal with a large number of processes and stages in the production chain, such as marketing, financing, production, big data, and receiver. Several narratological principles and storytelling paradigms, currently branded as script-structuring tools, which are used in traditional display formats, now do not fully serve as a guide for these new series. The way in which the story and main and secondary characters are developed needs to find new ways to be attractive even after more than ten hours with the viewer in the same narrative. Thus, script development is undergoing an intense change when it comes to creating series with more engagement.

One of the central problems in a study of narratology and binge-watching is the complexity of how elements are related, considering from structuralist or poststructuralist linguistics of narratology in conjunction with the behavioral marketing response recognized in data collected by algorithms which could determine how different types of content are consumed. Facing the new perspectives of consuming the drama series, its format changed, in the form of content production and its distribution, with the release of all episodes of a season simultaneously.

The scrutiny of writing and developing, or the way in which the blueprint, the story and the script can become the audiovisual “text” already on the screen, and the organization of the elements, is of a systemic complexity contained within it:

certainly the practices of ‘story development’ and ‘script development’ are often used synonymously or, at least, conflated by the latter term. The widespread use of the word ‘development’ should be understood not as a mere shortening of the phrase ‘script development’, but rather as an overarching term collating the various processes deemed necessary to bring a particular script or idea to the screen – a practical understanding that might vary significantly between networks, studios, collaborations and individual practitioners. Often notions of development are tied up with funding imperatives. (Taylor, 2015, p. 5)

The main pillar of the development of the script is the story to be told. In the case of the audiovisual, this implies formats and structures of the professional writing and, in the case of the bingeable series, some aspects begin to be outlined, as much by the attempt and error as by scientific observations in the search for the engagement.

The narrative structures began to have new parameters. (Perks, 2014) analyzes the profiles of characters that are presented in the narratives that cause bingeing, for example the Technocrat Villain, the Improbable Hero, The Puppeteer, among others, and demonstrates that there are elements in the organization of the plot that may be contributing to the engagement, as well as there are some types of narratives that cause more this engagement.

The series, until then made exclusively to be broadcasted once a week, on a certain day and time with advertisement interruptions, had some elements of configuration in its text that were constituted in the course of the history of audiovisual entertainment: episodic or procedural series. Comparato (1998) suggests the series or the mini-series as a story closed each week, each episode, with beginning, middle and end, and with a macro structure. He explains the need for redundancy in the structure of the narrative so that the viewer does not lose in the process of consumption some past element.

From the moment the series are produced to be made available all episodes at once per season, creators can work directly on all episodes at the same time for a season, allowing them to design as a series, and not just as a pilot. The creators of the Netflix *Bloodline* series have described to the site Quartz some topics that guided the construction of addictive narrative structures according to their latest work. The following paraphrases some of these topics, without going deeper into them:

- instead of focusing on individual episodes, think of the whole season as a layered, three-act story;
- hook the audience from the start, by ending the early episodes with cliffhangers;
- don't worry about servicing all the characters at once;
- shake up the episode format to keep things interesting;
- there's no need to repeat key information in every episode (Lynch, 2015).

If a story is made to be consumed no longer in isolated episodes, “that means creators are increasingly viewing a season as a unit, free from the need to make every episode have its own story or theme” (Weinman, n.d.)

It is interesting to note that this possible freedom in designing a series in seasons approximates to the freedom of creation adopted in independent webseries, when video on the internet began to spread, especially with YouTube. The interactive process of creation, no longer in contact with episodes but with entire seasons, allows the author of the series to treat the characters according to the reaction and feedback of the viewers. “More than any other medium, web series allows content creators to receive feedback from, and interact with, their viewers almost instantaneously” (Williams, 2012, p. 143).

With the nature of the broadcasting medium of the series by the streaming services, arranged and adapted for the creation of universe of elements of the series outside the watching hours, together with the constitution of communities on the themes and elements of the series, and together with a narrative treated and developed for these elements to occur, we are gradually building the whole system of binge watching.

The narrative text of the bingeable series allows viewers to engage and have quicker and easier access to the diegetic memories of the series, not spending much energy in remembering details and being able to delve into the world of the characters. This is how Perks describes the trigger for spectator satisfaction, or reader as it defines, to “marathon” a TV series. From this access to the elements of the series a relationship between the spectator and the characters is born, a parasocial relationship, in which the

individual transports themselves into the world of the story, with the moral dilemmas and adventures within the world of the story:

this positive relationship between marathoning and parasocial interaction is one of immersive attachment that activates characters as pseudo-avatars. These pseudo-avatars do not need reader input to make decisions, but they do need reader's affective investments to make those decisions matter. Rather than forming the traditional parasocial relationship that is described as a pseudo-friendship, the immersive attachment was so strong that marathoners journeyed along with the characters, meeting their vicissitudes with as much emotional investment and impact as a member of the story world would. (Perks, 2014, p. 85)

Another element that can contribute and provoke the spectator's engagement in the series is the way how the series and the stories are edited, as Robert Kubey and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi quote on orienting responses³:

by watching how brain waves were affected by formal features, the researchers concluded that these stylistic tricks can indeed trigger involuntary responses and "derive their attention value through the evolutionary significance of detecting movement. (...) It is the form, not the content, of television that is unique". (Kubey & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002)

The series made to be binge watched, like *House of Cards*, allow a much more sophisticated development of the narrative, as attested by the chief scriptwriter Beau Willimo: "You don't have to sell yourself and audition week to week. You don't even have to think of it as television. And none of us did. For us, it was a 13-hour movie" (Romano, 2013) .

CONCLUSION

The compulsion to consume content in a medium is not something totally new because it is a cultural phenomenon known and studied even before the advent of television over the internet. Organizations in fandoms, the exchange of tapes, DVDs and torrent files over the last decades have caused the consumption of audiovisual contents for many hours without interruption. However, Internet television has allowed this phenomenon to propagate and spread, becoming one of the main forms of audience of television series and miniseries.

The technological issue, or rather the widespread access to the new technologies, might have been the first step for binge watching to become popular and no longer be a niche behavior. The possibility of easy access to additional information, both for fans and more passive viewers, whether to satisfy the curiosity of elements of the series or to exchange information about what one sees, building time off the screen, is one of the

³ Orienting responses are visual or sound instinctively reactions to any movement firstly studied by Pavlov in 1927.

elements that characterize today's media marathon runner. It would not only be the access to the technological environment or the technological environment, but the ability to live around what the series proposes as a diegetic universe. This behavior is easier to spread by the very nature of the internet, its communities and worldwide sites on a series and also with simultaneous worldwide launch of content for various markets.

The possibility of simultaneous access to geographically sparse groups would increase the possibility of engaging, by the ability of viewers to find resonance of their interests with ease on the internet, by the profusion of scale in what makes them engage. Hence the worldwide aspect of Netflix being one of the main diffusers of binge watching with worldwide success of preparing the message, or better saying prepare the series to foment this type of consumer.

It is in the format of the content, in this treatment of the message, that the main characteristics of binge watching reside. The freedom of access to content, which the popularization of video over the web allowed the viewer, opened the possibility of new ways of creating entertainment.

The professionalization of this entertainment, appropriating the business maturity that television has developed over the years, allows binge watching to be considered the new dominant form of TV viewing. Although the press sometimes differs that the binge watching series do not look like television, they are exactly the renewal or the professionalization that the web has brought to the medium.

By aligning the technological capacity of distribution through the internet, with no limit to the time and place, with the freedom of choice of the viewer, what to watch and how to watch, and the treatment of drama series, making the seasons in feature films of several hours, internet television began to deliver the product in the form that viewers would expect to consume, to be devoured in hours through the internet and on the internet, in the most different screen formats, such as television set and computer monitors, smartphones and tablets.

This change in the treatment of series, with the breaking of the narrative with complete stories in several episodes, as suggested by the authors of *Bloodline*, or as we observed in the seasons of Netflix, gives us a new form of production and consumption of the television series. Not only the complexity of the narrative, but the breakdown of the interrelated structure of the narrative, which before happened by the blocks of minutes for insertion of the advertisement, the end of the episode as a complete unit in itself, and the procedural series, are emerging as the new paradigm of structuring for television. The bingeable series are not the end of television, but the way it is appropriating the internet to create its entertainment and business models, just as it was with cable or subscription television. The binge watching series are the suggested narrative format for this distribution medium.

Some patterns begin to emerge facing this scenario concerning the form of treatment of the plot, the characters and the time or narrative pace. The structuring of the series and the narratology of the television elements, adapted to the freedom of meaning creation by the viewer of the story, counted as a long featured film of more than ten

hours, with parallel universes, as in phases of a game, with elements off the main screen, are examples in the construction of this new and popular way of telling a story.

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