

BINGE-WATCHING AND THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION RESEARCH:  
A WORKSHOP

<b>8.30</b>	Coffee/Registration
<b>9.00</b>	Welcome, Housekeeping
<b>9.30</b>	<p>Keynote Address: <b>Dr Lisa Perks</b>, Merrimack College, North Andover, Massachusetts, US</p> <p><b>Binge-watching and holistic engagement.</b></p> <p>Dr. Lisa Glebatis Perks is Associate Professor of Communication and Media at Merrimack College. Her work analyzes audience reception processes and new media engagement patterns. She published <i>Media Marathoning: Immersions in Morality</i> (Lexington Books) in 2015 and has since conducted spin-off studies on TV spoilers and media marathoning as a form of health coping.</p>
<b>10.30</b>	<p>Panel 1 – Netflix and Binge-Watching Chair: <b>Tanya Horeck</b></p> <p><b>Anisha Saigal, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), New Delhi (India)</b> Unfolding of the Originals: A View on Binge Watching and Commissioning of OTT media in India</p> <p><b>Novella Troianiello, University of Salerno (Italy)</b> Binge-watching non-fiction series: towards formats and genres convergence.</p> <p><b>Julia Havas, University of East Anglia, UK</b> Branding otherness: online television, binge-watching, and identity politics</p> <p><b>Mareike Jenner, Anglia Ruskin University, UK</b> Netflix as Transnational Television</p> <p><b>Tom Hemingway, Warwick University, UK</b> Binge-watching and Narrative in Post-Broadcast Comedy Television</p>
<b>11.15</b>	Break
<b>11.45</b>	<p>Panel 2 – Binge-watching and the everyday Chair: <b>Lisa Perks</b></p> <p><b>Deborah Castro, Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute, Portugal</b> What can physiological and self-reported data tell us about binge watching?</p> <p><b>Lothar Mikos, Filmuniversität Babelsberg Konrad Wolf, Germany</b> Binge Watching and the Organization of Everyday Life</p>

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	<p><b>Rhiannon Bury, Athabasca University, Canada</b> Binge-Viewing, Fandom and Everyday Life</p> <p><b>Ödül Gürsimsek, Independent Scholar</b> Binge-watching and other contemporary television literacies</p>
<b>12.30</b>	Lunch
<b>13.30</b>	<p>Panel 3 – Binge-watching as television practice Chair: <b>Julia Havas</b></p> <p><b>Martin Zeller-Jacques, Queen Margaret University, Edinburg, UK</b> Alma Maters and Lost Sisters: The Persistence of Narrative Stunts in Binge-able Television</p> <p><b>Robert Watts, University of Manchester, UK</b> Weekly ‘national’ TV as transnational ‘cinematic’ object: How binge-consumption frames the critical vocabulary.</p> <p><b>Lynn Kozak, McGill University, Montreal, Canada</b> “You know this: why do I have to tell you all this if you already know it?” : Recaps and the binge-watch</p> <p><b>Charlotte Stevens, Birmingham City University, UK</b> Historical Binge-Watching: 1980s 'Marathon Viewing'.</p>
<b>14.15</b>	<p>Panel 4 – Binge-watching and Time Chair: <b>Bärbel Göbel-Stolz</b></p> <p><b>Orcun Can, King’s College, London, UK</b> Where is the Supernarrator?: Understanding Narrative Design in Binge-Watched Series on Streaming Video on Demand Platforms</p> <p><b>Ri Pierce-Grove, Columbia University, New York, US</b> Suddenly It Was Three O’ Clock in the Morning: An Anatomy of Binge-Watching</p> <p><b>Nina Yakimova, University of Groningen, Netherlands</b> “Just One More Episode!” – The Experience of Binge-watching Television Series: A Phenomenological Description</p> <p><b>Miriam Czichion, Universität Bamberg, Germany</b> Cumulative TV show watching and its effect on narrative comprehension and narrative engagement. A model to explain the reception phenomenon 'Binge Watching'</p>

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<b>15.30</b>	Break
<b>16.00</b>	<p>Keynote Address: <b>Tanya Horeck</b>, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, UK</p> <p><b>“From Netflix and Chill to Netflix and Kill:” Reflections on the Cultural Construction of Binge-watching in the Streaming Era</b></p> <p>Tanya Horeck is a Reader in Film, Media &amp; Culture at Anglia Ruskin University in Cambridge, England. She is author of <i>Public Rape: Representing Violation in Fiction and Film</i> (Routledge 2004) and co-editor of <i>The New Extremism in Cinema: From France to Europe</i> (Edinburgh University Press, 2011). Her monograph <i>Capturing Crime in the Digital Age</i> is forthcoming from Wayne State University Press in early 2019.</p>
<b>20.00</b>	<p>Conference Dinner</p> <p>La Mimosa, Thompson's Ln, Cambridge, CB5 8AQ, United Kingdom</p> <p>Self-Pay, order off menu. For further information: <a href="http://www.lamimosa.co.uk/">http://www.lamimosa.co.uk/</a></p>

<b>8.30</b>	Breakfast/Coffee
<b>9.00</b>	<p>Keynote Address: <b>Bärbel Göbel-Stolz</b>, Coventry University, UK</p> <p><b>The Best Place to Advertise Netflix, is Netflix: Brand Activation, Taste Communities, and Conglomerated Audiences</b></p> <p>Bärbel Göbel-Stolz is a senior lecturer and program leader in Media and Communications at Coventry University. Her current work focuses on transcultural audience constructs and global television industries and the shifting expectations of specific groups of viewers. She has published work on Audience - Industry relationships, German Public Broadcasting and payTV productions.</p>
<b>10.00</b>	Coffee
<b>10.30-12.00</b>	Discussion strands/ Workshop
<b>12.00</b>	Lunch
<b>13.00-14.30</b>	Discussion strands/ Workshop

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<b>14.30</b>	Coffee Break
<b>15.00</b>	Publishing Plans/Closing Remarks

**Workshop Group 1 – Textual Structures**

Martin Zeller-Jacques  
Novella Troianello  
Orcun Can  
Tom Hemingway  
Lynn Kozak

**Workshop Group 2 – Binge-watching and the Everyday**

Lothar Mikos  
Ri Pierce-Grove  
Miriam Czichion  
Deborah Castro  
Lisa Perks

**Workshop 3 – Binge-Watching and Transnational Television**

Nina Yakimova  
Anisha Saigal  
Robert Watts  
Bärbel Goebel-Stolz  
Mareike Jenner

**Workshop 4 – Binge-watching, Identity and Fandom**

Rhiannon Bury  
Julia Havas  
Ödül Gürsimsek  
Charlotte Stevens  
Tanya Horeck

## Abstracts

ANISHA SAIGAL

I'm Anisha Saigal, a research scholar enrolled at the Department of Cinema Studies at the School of Arts and Aesthetics in Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU), India. I'm in the second year of my PhD research. In May 2018, I defended my PhD synopsis; I'm exploring the universe of internet television, and all that it encompasses in India. I'm working with Prof. Ranjani Mazumdar and this is the first of its kind research at our department. If granted a place, I will look at the role of algorithm, binge watching and the commissioning of media respectively to understand an imagined spectatorship. According to a report published in The Hindu, Indian audiences consuming internet television services are more likely to binge watch audio-visual media than the rest of the world. Netflix releasing all the episodes of their web series simultaneously is a tactic to capture a market like India where internet content creators have been very well received by the public. The VoD platform re-imagines spectatorship using data algorithm, encourages the user to binge-watch media and thus commissions web series that are based on the interpretation of this data. The actual production is commissioned to large scale production houses like Red Chillis Entertainment, Excel Entertainment, Phantom Films, RSVP amongst others who are in process of working on producing new OTT media for these platforms.

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NOVELLA TROIANIELLO

Binge-watching non-fiction series: towards formats and genres convergence.

Novella Troianiello, Ph.D. Department of of Political, Social and Media Sciences, University of Salerno, ITALY novella.troianiello@gmail.com, ntroianiello@unisa.it

Keywords: binge-watching, TV formats, Non-fiction, Storytelling, Convergence

After years of crisis, non-fiction genre is living a new age of gold, thanks, to over the top services such as Netflix. The age of plenty we are living in, is characterised by the changing of production and consumption. As central consumption model defined by OTT distribution, the practise of binge watching, as well as modifying spectator habits and their sharing experience in social contexts, traced a line in original content production, opening the road to a new way of writing shows.

This paper compares different transnational Netflix non-fiction shows, such as Chef's Table, Abstract, The world's most extraordinary homes, identifying continuities and discontinuities in the non-fiction series format about food, homes and lifestyle. More specifically, this paper argues that the loss of cliff hanger between episodes and the changing in length of both episodes and seasons are just few of the several shifts that occurred in scripted series production. Nevertheless, at the same time, non-fiction genre, which gained more attention in the last years, thanks to acclaimed shows produced by Netflix, is completely involved in this process of changing. Especially in their last stage, documentary formats about food, travel and living, are changing direction, leaving the challenging or reality dimension, in favour of more cinematic, symbolic language and storytelling. These shows rewrite the concept of

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documentary series, matching the high quality (as BBC taught) with global distribution and transnational production.

Comparing different transnational Netflix non-fiction shows, such as *Chef's Table*, *Abstract*, *The world's most extraordinary homes*, this paper identifies the continuities and discontinuities in the non-fiction series format about food, homes and lifestyle. For instance, what emerges is a clear convergence between genres. Travelling, cooking, design and lifestyle, represent the great categories of mass consumption on internet, especially on social media (Instagram, Pinterest). By putting together all of them in its series, Netflix offers a pool of original programs that have their roots in the digital culture and in the trends of internet cultural consumption. In light of this analysis, this paper concludes highlighting what is different in Netflix binge-series storytelling, and what to expect in the next future in non-fiction OTT production.

### Academic Biography

Novella Troianiello has obtained her Ph.D. in Communication Science from the Department of Political, Social and Media Sciences at the University of Salerno (Italy) with a research called "Over the top television: Netflix and local markets", a compared analysis of strategies adopted by Netflix in television and telecommunication markets between UK and Italy. After being a PhD visiting student at University of Nottingham (UK) for almost a year in 2016, under the supervising of prof. Roberta Pearson, she completed her doctoral studies in April 2018, and now collaborates with Digital Media tenure at University of Salerno, in Italy.

Her studies focus mostly on television and internet studies. She attended several international conferences as a speaker and a summer school (Media Mutation, Bologna 2017, ECREA Summer School, Milan 2016, MediaChange, Urbino, 2015). Among her publications: *Ipertesti, Transmedia e Nostalgia: S., La Nave di Teseo di V.M. Straka, di J.J. Abrams e Doug Dorst in "Romanzi e Immaginari Digitali. Saggi di Mediologia della Letteratura"* (Gechi Edizioni, 2017), *The Walking Dead: la distopia nel nuovo millennio*, in "Endo Apocalisse. The Walking dead. L'immaginario digitale, il post-umano" (AreaBlu, 2015), and, forthcoming, *#like4like, Categorie, strumenti e consumi nella social media society* (Rogas Edizioni, Rome, 2018) a volume on Instagram Studies written in collaboration with prof. Alfonso Amendola.

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### JULIA HAVAS

Branding otherness: online television, binge-watching, and identity politics

When Netflix debuted its first two self-produced series, *House of Cards* (2013-) and *Orange Is the New Black* (Orange 2013-), critics and the TV industry fixated on these programmes' solely digital existence and then-unique, "binge-able" distribution as likely challenges to traditional understandings of television as cultural form. However, it was *Orange's* unexpected success, attributed to its "pioneering" and "iconoclastic" (Netflix executive Ted Sarandos in Andreeva 2015) focus on diverse female characters, and narrativisation of US-American systems of inequality, that appears to have had the biggest cultural impact – this strategy's success has sparked competing companies' interest in thematising complex identity politics in original content to strengthen brand identity. Crucially, the putative interconnectedness of *Orange's* institutionally encouraged "binge-ability" and its provocative identity politics have become a benchmark for online television's configurations of narrative and political novelty.

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The chief aim of this study is to understand the links between the digital existence of programming produced by online platforms, the promotional-cultural prominence of “binge-watching”, and US-American television’s thematisations of identity politics. The emergence of Netflix, and rivals Amazon Prime and Hulu as producers of scripted programming has been marked by institutional and journalistic efforts to position their programmes as engaging with idiosyncratic identity politics. The analysis unpacks how online television mobilises this politics in a media convergence culture in which digitalisation has blurred ideas of control between media production and consumption, and boundaries between different aesthetic signifiers associated with specific institutional contexts of television. It further explores the television industry’s responses to the challenge of streaming companies beyond creating their own online platforms. The project situates online television’s foregrounding of progressive identity politics in the context of streaming companies’ cultivation of “outsider” brand profiles, their modes of locating target audiences via algorithmic information processing systems, and shifting narrative practices linked to viewer engagement strategies.

### Bio

Julia Havas completed her funded PhD research in 2017 at the Department of Film, Television and Media at the University of East Anglia, and currently teaches television and media modules at UEA as Module Convenor and Associate Tutor. Her doctoral project investigated the ways in which feminism is represented on contemporary American “quality” television by analysing four female-centred programmes. A specific concern of her work is the relationship between discourses of cultural value, aesthetics, and the politics of representation on American television. She is a contributor to the edited collection *Hysterical! Women in American Comedy*, has published on television and gender in the journal *Television and New Media*, and is currently turning her thesis into a monograph for Wayne State University Press. Her current research focuses on streaming television’s engagement with diversity politics. Additionally, she is developing a project with Anna Martonfi on the transcultural travel of Anglo-American media to Eastern European mediaspheres through examining Hungarian dubbing culture.

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### MAREIKE JENNER

#### The Binge Model and Netflix as Transnational Television

My research has involved conceptualising Netflix as transnational television, largely by drawing on a range of theories of nationalism and transnationalism. It takes as its starting point the binge model as publication model for Netflix and what this means for the way transnational media flows and attached practices in the organisation of transnational television trade. The approach taken is grounded in television history and the way television is integrated into culture.

### Bio

Mareike Jenner is a Senior Lecturer in Media Studies at Anglia Ruskin University. She has published on Video-on-Demand as TV IV as well as the concept of Binge-Watching. Her current

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research is on TV IV and the shifts in the definition of television. Her monograph *Netflix and the Re-Invention of Television* was published in 2018 by Palgrave. Her research interests are Video-on-Demand and OTT, television genre and representations of gender on television. Her monograph *American TV Detective Dramas* was published by Palgrave in 2015.

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TOM HEMINGWAY

Binge-watching and Narrative in Post-Broadcast Comedy Television

I am interested in researching the connection between binge-watching and narrative structure in relation to two post-broadcast comedy television programmes – *Love* (2016 – 2018) and the ongoing Netflix-produced seasons of *Arrested Development* (2003 – 2006/2014 – present). This interest arises from my current PhD research concerning the aesthetics of post-broadcast comedy television. Despite being one of the most popular genres of television, there is a significantly smaller amount of scholarship focused on comedy programming when compared to the serial drama. Moreover, despite the significant rise in scholarship focused on post-broadcast television, the majority of this work favours the examination of the various algorithms and production methods necessary to create and supply streaming content as opposed to dealing explicitly with the content provided by the texts themselves. My research is attempting to partially redress this gap.

There is a notable contrast between the way the two aforementioned comedy programmes approach narrative on their post-broadcast platform in relation to binge-watching. *Love* often features little to no time between episodes, instead flowing seamlessly into each other. On the other hand, the most recent seasons of *Arrested Development* are constantly referring back to events from previous episodes as if they are being broadcast on a weekly basis. I wish to explore how these types of narrative structures are in dialogue with the various tropes of the sub-genres from which the programmes emerge: the ‘dramedy’ and the sitcom. For example, the sitcom is frequently associated with the notion of being ‘reset’ at the end of each episode, yet in the case of *Arrested Development*, the narrative is in a constant state of increasing complexity, requiring longer amounts of time dedicated to explaining (and re-explaining) itself with each passing episode.

The ongoing developments and continuing production of numerous comedy texts on a variety of post-broadcast platforms underlines the timeliness and relevancy of this research in relation to current debates in the field of television studies, such as those surrounding binge-watching.

Bio

I am currently finishing the first year of my PhD course at the University of Warwick. My thesis is titled ‘The Aesthetics of Post-Broadcast Comedy Television’. At Warwick, I also completed my undergraduate joint-honours degree in Film and Literature, as well as my MA degree in Film and Television Studies. For the MA degree, I received the Film and Television Departmental Scholarship to fully fund my tuition and have recently been awarded a CADRE scholarship to fully fund my PhD research until completion. I have also been published in the *Offscreen* film journal. I’m aware that I’m not yet a late stage PhD student, but if my proposal

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fits well with the other strands of research, then I'd be very happy for the opportunity to attend.

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DEBORAH CASTRO

What can physiological and self-reported data tell us about binge watching?

Dr. Deborah Castro – Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute, University of Madeira

Internet has transformed the way people consume TV content, offering viewers the opportunity to build their own TV diet. In the last few years, several organizations as well as scholars have looked into how internet-distributed video services (Lotz, 2017) are changing viewing experiences and habits. When it comes to the consumption of several episodes in a row (the so-called binge watching), the former usually explore aspects such as the frequency of bingeing and the viewers' age (see Ericsson ConsumerLab, 2016) whereas academics aim to analyze the motivations and psychological factors behind it, and its effects on health (see Pittman & Sheehan, 2015; Sung & Kang, 2015). Heretofore, survey, diaries and focus group have been the most popular techniques used to explore this specific viewing mode.

This paper presents an interdisciplinary approach at the junction of Human Computer Interaction and Media Studies for conducting research on audience reception in-the-wild. To explore factors such as viewer's motivations, engagement and moods when binge-watching on internet-distributed video services (namely, Netflix), we designed a non-intrusive method that collects both subjective and objective data. Particularly, we designed a complex methodology whose main tools are:

- an e-diary, to explore participant's viewing experiences — e.g. emotional states through the usage of the Positive Affect and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1988);
- a chrome extension installed in participants' laptops to log-in their actions (e.g. pauses) on Netflix and synchronize the physiological data with the timeline of the viewing session;
- an app for a smartwatch to gather physiological data (heart rate) and inertial data to

understand people's excitement and movement whilst watching TV content.

The methodology designed, together with the results of a pilot study carried out in Portugal, will be presented and discussed.

Bio

Deborah Castro is a Post-Doctoral Researcher at Madeira Interactive Technologies Institute (M-ITI) where she conducts research primarily in the fields of television and audience studies. She received a Ph.D. in Communication (2016, Autonomous University of Barcelona, UAB) and has been a Visiting Scholar at the Department of Radio-Television-Film (University of Texas at Austin). She has also been a researcher with the Ibero-American Observatory of Television Fiction (2012-2015) and has participated in several (grant-funded) research projects on the construction of youth and female identities within the Observatory of Spanish Television Fiction and New Technologies (UAB). At M-ITI, she coordinates the project "B-WATCH: Studying motivation, engagement and emotional states during binge watching".

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LOTHAR MIKOS

Title: Binge Watching and the Organization of Everyday Life

Lothar Mikos

The term “binge watching” is a metaphor to describe an intensive form of consumption of television series. Charlotte Brunsdon (2010, 65) calls it “domestic viewing of multiple episodes sequentially.” In general we can say that binge watching occurs when a viewer watches two or more episodes of a series in one session. Binge watching is a form of “media marathoning”, which places emotional and cognitive demands on the viewers (Perks, 2015), and has its roots in home entertainment via VCR and DVD. The VoD industry has used the term “binge watching” as a marketing tool, exploiting this form of series reception as a unique selling point (Jenner, 2015; Tryon, 2015).

In an exploratory, qualitative study, a total of 16 people (11 female and 5 male) between the ages of 20 and 61 were interviewed about their consumption of television series and their “binge watching”, its conditions and its embeddedness in everyday life.

Binge watching of television series is a social and cultural practice that integrates viewers into their everyday lives and tailors them to their personal circumstances. It is planned as a social event with partners and friends. Therefore the experience of binge watching represents the festive and the spectacle in everyday life. My paper will discuss the results of the qualitative audience study and highlights the aspects of the integration of binge watching into the everyday lives of the participants.

References: Brunsdon, C. (2010): Bingeing on box-sets: The national and the digital in television crime drama. In

Relocating television. Television in the Digital Context. Edited by J. Gripsrud. London & New York: Routledge, 63-75 Jenner, M. (2015): Binge-watching: Video-on-demand, Quality-TV and Mainstreaming Fandom. In: International Journal of Cultural Studies (1367877915606485, first published on September 18, 2015, 1-17; retrieved November, 2, 2015) Perks, L. G. (2015): Media Marathoning. Immersions in Morality. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books. Tryon, C. (2015): TV Got Better: Netflix’s Original Programming Strategies and Binge Viewing. In

Media Industry Journal, 2, 2, 104-116.

Lothar Mikos, Professor of Television Studies, Filmuniversität Babelsberg, Potsdam, Germany. Contact: l.mikos@filmuniversitaet.de; his latest publications in English: Television Drama Series and

Transmedia Storytelling in an Era of Convergence. In: Northern Lights: Film & Media Studies Yearbook, 14, 1, 2016; Digital Media Platforms and the Use of TV Content: Binge Watching and Video-on-Demand in Germany. In: Media and Communication, 4, 3, 2016; Transmedia Storytelling and Mega-Narration: Audiovisual Production in Converged Media Environments. In: S. Sparviero/C. Peil/G. Balbi (eds.): Media Convergence and Deconvergence. Basingstoke 2017: Palgrave Macmillan.

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RHIANNON BURY

## BINGE-WATCHING AND THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION RESEARCH: A WORKSHOP

### Binge-Viewing, Fandom and Everyday Life

In *Television 2.0* (Peter Lang, 2017), I describe digital television as a tele-technological assemblage of domestic, national and transnational practices of production, reception and fan participation. These practices that are bound together in a still recognizable form but one that is marked by instability and hybridity. My work focuses on shifting patterns of viewer and fan engagement that is part of the most recent reassemblage of television, one that is afforded by downloading, streaming, and social networking technologies platforms and mobile devices. Since the days of radio to this era of multiple screens, this engagement continues to be shaped by both domestic and affective relations.

This understanding of television serves as the framework to my proposal for the workshop to further investigate the practice of binge-watching and its imbrication with everyday life as well as participatory culture. Binge-watching is not a new practice but streaming technologies and subscription streaming services such as Netflix have certainly made it more visible and popular (binge-watching also involves DVD sets and DVR recordings). Based on the analysis of my data, I argue that this practice is associated with affective intensity with particular series, particularly those produced by a subscription service, which releases all episodes of a season at once. In this context, binge-watching is the equivalent of watching a new episode of a favourite series as soon as it is broadcast—the most timely means to see much loved content. Unless they binge-watch, fans can end up being “spoiled” and/or unable to engage with other fans online or through social media. Second it can also be associated with the displeasures of seriality and segmentation as dictated by network schedules. Watching multiple episodes in one sitting is also a form of catch up viewing tied to the routines of everyday life and as such can involve less, not more, commitment to a series. Finally, binge-watching can be incorporated with repeat viewing of a favourite series, alone or with friends and other fans.

I am interested in conducting further qualitative research that takes these findings as a starting point. For example, a reception studies approach could be deployed that asks participants to keep diaries (perhaps using software or an app designed for this purpose.) This would more precisely get at the role of binge-watching in relation to other modes of viewing and its multiple meanings for the viewer/fan.

I was very excited to see the call for this workshop. I completed the empirical research upon which my *TV 2.0* book and other publications are based several years ago and I am looking forward to starting several follow up transnational collaborative projects. This workshop seems to offer a fabulous opportunity to share my expertise with qualitative and ethnographic research methods in television and fan studies as well as to learn from other researchers at all stages of their careers.

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ÖDÜL GÜRSİMSEK

### Binge-watching and other contemporary television literacies

Online television is multi-platform by nature: online websites of television channels, their content on social media platforms and Youtube makes television experience spreadable. This has transformed public access to television into a readily available, repeatable and spreadable experience. The result is a series of audience practices which mark the emergence of digital television as a viable alternative to broadcast television. Online streaming services like Netflix

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and viaplay offer series in full seasons ready for streaming at once. Such services help shape alternative television experiences: For example, Mareika Jenner defines the practice of binge-watching as a deliberate, self-scheduled alternative to 'watching TV', a viewing protocol associated with fan practices, industry practice and linked to 'cult' and 'quality' serialised content (2014).

A similar practice of streaming television is rewatching. Frank Bentley and Janet Murray (2016) study the social context of rewatching, arguing that access to on-demand video is transforming television from ephemeral to controlled experience where on-demand replay is now commonplace, marking a change in the cultural practice of viewing television. Online fan communities organize binge-watching and rewatching sessions where each member meet in online chatrooms turns on the television show simultaneously for a communal experience. Another noteworthy practice is making of reaction videos. Audiences who binge-watch show sometimes record their reactions to make YouTube videos. My research offers a framework to map how digital television and binge-watching isn't an isolated individual television audience experience but gives way to new connections and new practices such as those defined briefly here. In this perspective binge-watching is a digital literacy that can activate other literacies for the viewer to participate in the online television economy.

Bentley, F., & Murray, J. (2016). Understanding Video Rewatching Experiences. In Proceedings of the ACM International Conference on Interactive Experiences for TV and Online Video (pp. 69-75).

Jenner, M. (2014). Is this TVIV? On Netflix, TVIII and binge- watching. *New media & society*, 18(2), 257-273.

Ödül A. Gürsimsek has finished her PhD in media studies, where she analyzed transmedia audience practices including spoiler audience practices, animated gif design and discourse analysis. Her research interests include streaming television audiences, audience practices, user-generated content created by television audiences, semiotic meaning production, transmedia storytelling, discursive audience communities and other topics.

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MARTIN ZELLER-JACQUES

Alma Maters and Lost Sisters: The Persistence of Narrative Stunts in Binge-able Television

While bingeing as a viewing practice for television audiences, and even as an occasional programming practice for certain channels, long predates the era of streaming video, the easy availability of on-demand television in full-season blocks has normalized both the practice of binge-watching television and the strategy of producing television which is designed to be 'binge-able'. The popular and promotional discourses around 'designed-for-bingeing' television tends to emphasise its difference from conventional television narrative, citing its cohesive serialized narratives and emphasis on end-of-season closure. Even much of the academic and critical conversation around these programmes focuses on their completeness, often attributing this to their being prominently authored, branded, or novelistic in form. (e.g., Blakey, 2017; Klarer, 2014)

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However, another body of work has emerged which examines continuities between television of the pre-streaming era and now, emphasising the persistence of genre and other formal features across the pre and post online television divide. (e.g., Lima et al, 2015, Mac Sithigh, 2017) In this paper, I offer an examination of another of these continuities, not at the macro-level of genre or form, but at the micro-level of the single episode. Despite critical accounts of made-for-bingeing TV dramas which portray these shows as unified narratives which combine all of their episodes into cohesive serialized texts, many of these programmes continue to include episodes which are marked as separate from the rest of their narrative. Drawing on examples from Netflix originals including *House of Cards* (1.8), *Stranger Things* (2.7), and *Punisher* (1.10), I will examine the ways in which made-for-bingeing television series mark out particular episodes as special moments of highly self-conscious narration. I will examine the relation of this practice both to the forms and features of 'complex television' (Mittel, 2015) and to the historical form of the linear television season (O'Sullivan, 2017), the ghost of which continues to shape the narrative form of made-for-bingeing television.

### References

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### Bio

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### ROBERT WATTS

Weekly 'national' TV as transnational 'cinematic' object: How binge-consumption frames the critical vocabulary.

## BINGE-WATCHING AND THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION RESEARCH: A WORKSHOP

In January 2013, Jane Campion's 353-minute miniseries *Top of the Lake* premiered as a seven-hour programme (with two intermissions) as part of the Sundance Film Festival. Also screening at Berlin a month later, the series subsequently aired over six weekly instalments in the UK, and seven in the US. Its critical reception, in the wake of these festival appearances, emphasised its 'cinematic' qualities, playing up Campion's auteur status as evidence this was "not really a television show at all". The years hence have seen selected 'prestige' dramas increasingly screened at film festivals, promulgating a contentious discourse of 'cinematic television' that befits consumption as a singular, rather than episodic work.

Also in 2013, the BBC crime thriller *The Fall* was released in the US as a 'Netflix Original'. Whereas the (weekly) domestic criticism centred on plot, character and writer Alan Cubitt's depiction of sexual violence within a PSB context (evoking the familiar language of media effects), the US reception took a different tack. The 'bingeability' of the series manifested singular reviews stressing cinematic style and influence, with David Thomson calling it a 300-minute "work of great art" evoking the psychodrama of Hitchcock or Scorsese, best consumed "in one sitting".

This paper examines the discursive effects of processes that bypass or attenuate broadcasting's serial mode on the positioning and critical reception of TV drama. How might the kinds of critical language and frames of reference that binge-viewing encourages work to alter the symbolic capital of the same text as aesthetic object? Studying the discursive environment of nationally-rooted series not consciously designed for binge consumption — yet promoted as such in specific contexts — might enrich our understanding of the term "cinematic" as both a legitimisation discourse and a transnational constellation of shifting textual and consumptive practices.

Biography: Robert Watts is a PhD candidate at The University of Manchester. His research interests are in television drama aesthetics, discourses of authorship and quality, and media industry convergence. His current research examines an emergent transnational aesthetics within the 'prestige' TV drama, and the shifting status of the national audience within an increasingly global television market.

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LYNN KOZAK

"You know this: why do I have to tell you all this if you already know it?": Recaps and the binge-watch

The *Iliad* can be compared to contemporary television "season dumps" (Kozak 2016), as an approximately twenty-five hour long narrative work that most scholars posit would have been watched over just three days (Heiden, 1996). A weekly serial presentation of the *Iliad*, brings out how distant its recaps are: nearly a month goes by without any mention of Achilles' famous rage. This leads to questions in how recent changes in American television, which have produced full-season dumps of streaming services, the five-hundred-page script of *Twin Peaks: The Return*, and weekly episodes of *Horace & Pete* that mysteriously appeared through email notices, might be changing authorial reliance on and audience demand for recaps. A cursory comparison of diegetic recaps between *Stranger Things*, *Game of Thrones*, and *Twin Peaks: The Return* has shown a remarkable consistency in episodic recaps between shows that would otherwise suggest divergence, either due to their means of production or means of

## BINGE-WATCHING AND THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION RESEARCH: A WORKSHOP

delivery; all stand in stark contrast to the vastly irregular recap intervals of an epic like the Iliad.

This paper seeks to expand and refine this early research, clearly delineating types of both extra-diegetic and diegetic recaps (cf. Newman 2006 and Mittell 2009, 2015), with careful counts of recaps and measure of recap intervals between contemporary series, including *Stranger Things*, *The OA*, *Twin Peaks: The Return*, *Daredevil*, *Game of Thrones*, and *Horace & Pete*. This paper will consider how different production and distribution models might be changing television's narrative use of recaps and how it might fit with McCormick's "Netflix Poetics" (2017), and what this might tell us about expectations of audience binge-watching.

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### Bio

Lynn Kozak is an Associate Professor at McGill University in Montreal, Canada. Current research focuses on serial poetics, from epic performance to new media forms (especially television), building on their 2016 monograph on this subject, *Experiencing Hektor: Character in the Iliad* (Bloomsbury). Forthcoming work (2018-9) includes articles and book chapters on *iZombie* (CW, 2015-), supernatural television crime procedurals, *Hannibal* (NBC 2013-5), and Homeric fandom.

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CHARLOTTE STEVENS

Historical Binge-Watching: 1980s 'Marathon Viewing'.

## BINGE-WATCHING AND THE FUTURE OF TELEVISION RESEARCH: A WORKSHOP

I'm at the start of some archival research looking at fanzines and letterzines produced by female television fans in the 1980s and 1990s. Part of this is to chase down evidence of the context for the 'marathon viewing sessions' of off-air recordings at fan conventions that Camille Bacon-Smith mentions in *Enterprising Women* (1992). In this specific case, women in the US were watching decaying videotapes of UK programmes, which weren't available in syndication and in an era before DVD box sets or streaming.

This is still all very preliminary/speculative, but from reading convention reports written in the mid-1980s and examining schedules from World Science Fiction Conventions through the same period, I believe there are questions that can be asked about the historical precedents for contemporary practices. These semi-public exhibitions appear to have been about compensating for scarcity and sharing television with friends and associates, as much as they were about immersion in a storyworld. I have plans to conduct research in person and via remote digital access at archives in the US and Canada, where large volumes of fanzines and letterzines have been collected. This work could hopefully be developed in line with workshop themes around audiences, platforms, and historical/transnational concerns.

Biographical information: I have a PhD in Film & Television Studies (Warwick, 2015), and am currently an ECR at Birmingham City University. I've published articles in *Feminist Media Studies* and *Media History*, and have a monograph currently under review with Amsterdam University Press.

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### ORCUN CAN

I am a PhD student in the department of Culture, Media and Creative Industries, King's College London. My research focuses on the narrative structure of series produced for and distributed exclusively by Streaming Video on Demand services (SVOD). I mainly concentrate on the question of the extent to which narratives are constructed by the presumed mode of viewing: the fact that these series will be binge-watched.

Having undertaken an extensive literature review, I am currently focusing on the temporal dimensions within these narratives of the series. Drawing from Gerard Genette's work on duration, order and frequency on one hand (Genette, 1980), and Christian Metz' duality of time in film narratives a time in story and time in discourse on the other (Metz, 1974), I am attempting to identify the emergence of new narrative temporal conventions. For instance, Paul Booth proposes three levels of textual play with time in TV series narrative during 2000s (Booth, 2012). There is also significant research on broadcast TV, such as Sarah Kozloff's study on narrative structure that puts forward "schedule" as an element of time in TV series that is above discourse level, impacting the narrative structure (Kozloff, 1992). Kozloff further talks about networks as "supernarrators" that have ultimate control on the narrative. Whether or not the SVODs can be considered supernarrators is a question I am trying to tackle.

With these questions in mind, I employ visual analysis, textual analysis and auto-ethnography based on my personal binge-watching experiences in order to understand how these factors may influence the narrative design of an SVOD series. The opportunity to explore, extend and

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develop my own research with others who have an interest in narrative structure and binge watching within the context of this workshop is a very exciting prospect.

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### RI PIERCE-GROVE

When binge-watchers become immersed in a series, they often remark that they lose all track of time. Interviewees often use the word “suddenly” to describe the compression of duration they experience. “Suddenly” means both quickly and unexpectedly - the time passes so quickly that it surprises them. We have not yet seen research that directly addresses the peculiar experience of binge-watched time. This project draws on the neuroscientific and psychological literature to provide some useful conjectures in this area.

Neuroscientists generally agree that a human being’s perception of time can be easily manipulated. An individual’s perception of duration is longer when unhappy, longer when cognitively aroused, shorter when enjoying oneself, and shorter when stimuli are more predictable. Errors in estimated time intervals are proportional to the time interval, which is to say, if the duration of time you are estimating doubles, so does your inaccuracy in estimating it.

This offers a clue to understanding the “suddenly it was 4 o’clock in the morning” effect that some binge-watchers report. Perhaps as the conventions and characters of the show become more familiar, and the time spent watching becomes longer, the viewer’s ability to estimate time accurately decreases, and clock time seems to speed up. Since subjective time is a critical part of decision making, the alteration in binge-watchers’ experience of subjective time will affect their decision to watch “just one more.”

I am a PhD candidate at Columbia University, studying under Michael Schudson, in the final two years of my project. I am exploring this hypothesis through a series of data-prompted interviews, in which participants are encouraged to reflect on their own experiences as they look at their own behavioral data— in this case, automatically generated records of what they have watched over the past three years.

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### NINA YAKIMOVA

Abstract: I recently pulled off my own major TV binge-watch. While it wasn’t as impressive as going for almost four days straight, I watched all seven seasons of *Californication* in just five days. That’s 84 episodes — almost 42 hours of television. I basically spent more than a third of each day watching Netflix. While I might not have set any records, I was inspired to research binge-watching from a phenomenological perspective. Having a seemingly endless supply of media allows access of content for hours on end. By binge-watching and continuous-play TV, the binge-spectator enjoys a hyper-personalized media diet, with all the pleasures of on-demand spectatorship and participatory cultural citizenship, supported by new digital media services, technologies, and practices. Therefore, with this essay I seek to develop a better understanding of the concept of binge-watching, both in technical and phenomenological terms. Simultaneously, I offer a few definitions of what phenomenology, binge-watching, and binge-viewer categorize and I attempt to create a phenomenological description of binge-watching, in order to illustrate possible invariants of the binge-watching experience and

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spectators' experiential dispositions toward binge-watching television. The latter are understood in terms of the experience of time and pleasure when binge-watching television serials, the possessive binge-viewer, the fetishization of the object (where the object is the act of binge-watching itself), and the experience of nostalgia as possible stimulus for binge-viewing old television shows. In this essay, I provide several descriptions of what phenomenology is, in order to conceptualize the mechanics of binge-watching experience. Further, I regard Laura Mulvey's (2006) theory of the possessive spectator as one of the experiential dispositions of binge-viewers and Edmund Husserl's theory on experiencing the consciousness of time (to illustrate the differences in experience and perception of time when watching one episode to watching for hours on end, realized in continued time vs. discontinued time). In addition, I provide plausible answers to the questions: 1. what makes the experience of binge-watching for hours on end different from watching serials on a weekly basis, and 2. what are, possibly, the invariants of this mode of immediate gratification spectatorship, by arguing there is a loss of anticipation, to a degree, and prolonged pleasure of the viewing experience; an immediacy in a sense of enabled access to the object, and a greater state of immersion into the series while binge-watching.

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Proposals for position papers: In my PhD-thesis I examined what effect Binge Watching has on the audience regarding their narrative understanding of the story/show and their narrative engagement with the characters. In future research I would like to concentrate on the long-term effects which Binge Watching might have. Does Binge Watching change attitudes? Does it cultivate a certain conception of a country/society/group of people? Does it help reduce prejudices against minorities? Another field of research of mine is to create a typology of Binge Watching. Is there just one type of Binge Watching? If not, where are the differences in the reception process? Besides effects which Binge Watching might have on the audience and different types of Binge Watching I am also interested in how this reception mode changes the broadcasting system and the media landscape in general.

Biographical information: I am currently a PhD-student at the University of Bamberg. In September 2018, I will just have finished my PhD-thesis on Binge Watching. I then start my post-doc phase. I earned a BA degree in International Cultural and Business Studies at the University of Passau. My MA degree is in Communication Studies which I received from the University of Bamberg in 2012. The last six years I was an associate researcher and lecturer at the University of Bamberg. My research and teaching interests include media reception, persuasion and television studies.