

TV is no dead ting!

EDINBURGH OPINION TELEVISION

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Updated - Hi, my names Eilidh Charles and I am a Telly Addict. I've always been a Telly Addict and despite the rumours TV is not dead but how we watch it is changing.

I've always been a Telly Addict. My mum used to tell me off for sitting too close to the TV and saying I'd get square eyes. I would sit in my jammies, not get dressed all day, and watch hours of TV. I'd watch movies on repeat and watch anything from Saved by the Bell to The Fresh Prince; from Friends to Only Fools and Horses; or from Dawsons Creek to Cheers and Byker Grove. My perception of those who had really made it in life were those people who had Sky in the mid to late 90s. Haha, I was so jealous, Sky was sooooo boojie!

So it's kind of handy that I ended up in a job (and team) where I can talk about TV and watch all sorts of TV programmes in the name of 'research'. We love TV in the AV team. I reckon we chat about it daily, it's almost a requirement of the job. Over the last few months we've consumed a lot of TV, we've watched; GOT, the final episode of which reached 5.5 million people however let's not talk about the content of the finale, it's still too raw; Big Little Lies: the finale of which was insanely good and was watched by 226,000 people; Love Island, which on the 9th July episode reached 6.1 million people, 1.4 million of which were non-TV viewers – for a show which started with hundreds of thousands of people in 2015, that's doing not bad. The final aired last week and was watched by 4.45 million live (vs 4.1m in 2018) with 790,000 watching via catch up or on-demand services. The series trended consistently at no.1 on twitter for the duration of the series generating over 7.7m tweets. With a winter series in the pipeline, this is not going anywhere.

We've also watched Killing Eve, Handmaids Tale, TinStar, The Good Fight, First Dates, Greys Anatomy, Gogglebox, The Hills: new beginnings, Line of Duty, The Real Housewives of, among many other things. And these are before I even get to my list of things still to watch – Catch 22, itself a co-production with Hulu and Channel 4, which is another recent change in the TV marketplace and something we predict we'll see more of in the future; Riviera season 2, Chernobyl and Fleabag.

And we're not alone, the UK loves TV. We've all heard it time and time again how much TV viewing is declining and 'people don't watch it anymore' but those of us in the industry know this isn't true and all that's changing is the way we view it, but it's not decreasing or any less 'healthy' than it was 10 – 20 years ago, indeed UK content investment is at an all-time high of £7.5 billion. I'd argue it's healthier than ever – some of Hollywood's finest are now on our favourite TV shows – Meryl Streep, Nicole Kidman & Reece Witherspoon all star together on Big Little Lies; Rob Lowe & Kate Beckinsale have both starred in TV shows on ITV this spring, the latter of which was a co-production with Amazon and ITV. This would have been unheard of back in the 80s – TV was viewed as suicide for an actor, it signalled the end of their careers, but now TV is seen as a great opportunity and environment for actors both sides of the pond.

I recently attended the Thinkbox TV Event in Manchester and one of the main focusses was about was how healthy a position TV is in – the current commercial TV revenue stood at £5.1 billion across 2018, but one thing we have to be ready for is the commercialisation of Netflix & Amazon. These two platforms are performing so well that many feel it can't be long until they will be commercialised. Whenever we have had chats in the team about what TV we've watched, a Netflix show is always mentioned, possibly even more so than linear TV. So many of the '*young scamps*' in the office don't have the facilities to watch linear TV and only watch catch up through devices or connected TVs or paid for platforms such as Netflix or Amazon. It's the way things are moving and will continue to move.

And the numbers don't lie, Stranger Things 3 on Netflix (featuring an A list cast as all the stars have become A-listers since the first series, so big is the popularity of the show) has been watched by a whopping 40.7 million worldwide. Then there's the new Murder Mystery film with Jennifer Aniston and Adam Sandler – Netflix reported that this had been watched by a massive 30.8 million accounts in its first 3 days. Black Mirror featuring Miley Cyrus, a programme that Netflix has acquired from Channel 4, has been viewed 20 million times. This trend is set to continue for the foreseeable future. With trailers and teasers landing at Comic-Con this week for a variety of series across every platform and a slew of A-List celebrities in tow.

So the future is bright for TV, but one thing is for sure, it will continue to change and I am so here and ready for it. Once a Telly Addict always a Telly Addict...and that's any way you want to serve it to me.

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