

Your second blog entry, which you will post on www.NetflixStudies.com, is due before **5:00 p.m. Thursday, May 24**. Before posting your comments (which should be at least **600 words**), you should complete the following textbook readings (listed on your syllabus for Wednesday and Thursday):

- **WEDNESDAY READING:** Casey McCormick, “Forward is the Battle Cry’: Binge-Viewing Netflix’s *House of Cards*” (*The Netflix Effect*, p. 101-116)
- **THURSDAY READING:** Zachary Snider, “The Cognitive Psychological Effects of Binge-Watching” (*The Netflix Effect*, p. 117-128)

As mentioned in one of your assigned readings this week, Netflix has carved out a distinctive identity in the television industry as a “binge platform.” By releasing every episode of a given TV series simultaneously, the online streaming service is upending decades of received wisdom about the consumption patterns of audiences, who would otherwise usually be forced to endure a wait time of one week between episodes. But in adopting this new distribution model, Netflix is also fundamentally altering viewer-text relations, providing greater opportunities for story immersion while also presenting audiences with physical and psychological demands that might have lasting — perhaps deleterious — effects for years to come.

Having binge-watched the first six episodes of *House of Cards*, Netflix’s first self-commissioned original content series (premiering on February 1, 2013), you should describe your own experience of engaging the characters, narrative structure, and themes of this multi-chaptered political thriller. Why might it be significant that its episodes are called “chapters”? How, according to Casey McCormick, does *House of Cards* foreground the spectator’s own televisual cravings or obsessions through the theme of addiction? Besides the ones that McCormick mentions, are there any other characters who might function as spectatorial “surrogates”? Ultimately, do you agree with the author’s claim that binge-watching “is a productive, often deliberate, and potentially transformative mode of viewing”? Or do you see validity in Zachary Snider’s claim that, much like social networking applications are known to cause feelings of “loneliness, depression, and anxiety,” binge-watching Netflix series can be an isolating experience leading to “social and familial ostracization”?

Be reflective in your blog posting, and describe any feelings of bodily exhaustion or mental fatigue that you might have felt. Did you develop a strong attachment to particular characters because of the fact that you watched so many chapters of *House of Cards* back-to-back (or in quick succession)? How and where did you actually watch those episodes (i.e., On what kind of device/system? Were you at home? etc.), and does the concept of “screen intimacy” pertain to your experience (i.e., Did you feel “close” to the characters in any way? Could you imagine inhabiting the world of the show?)?

[NOTE: toward the end of the semester, in a later blog posting concerning recent controversies, you will have an opportunity to address the ways in which Kevin Spacey’s offscreen actions/behavior might affect our interpretation of his character’s onscreen actions/behavior]

You DO NOT have to answer all of the above questions, but you should write in such a way as to indicate that **you have read the assigned chapters**. Once again, feel free to **write in a more informal/playful way** than you do for the Reading Responses.