

Your eighth blog entry, which you will post on www.NetflixStudies.com, is due before **5:00 p.m. Saturday, June 23**. Before posting your comments (which should be at approximately **600 words**), you should [1] watch the first episodes of *Nailed It* (season one) and *Queer Eye* (season one) and [2] read the following online article:

- **Scott Roxborough, “How Netflix and Amazon Are Driving a Global Reality TV Renaissance,” *Hollywood Reporter* (April 9, 2018): <https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/how-netflix-amazon-are-driving-a-global-reality-tv-renaissance-1100793>**

Although Netflix is best known for the kind of scripted programming that we have focused on thus far in the semester (e.g., fictional programs fitting within particular genres, such as the political drama *House of Cards*, the cult comedy *Arrested Development*, the Western *Godless*, and the science fiction series *Lost in Space*), the online streaming service has recently ventured into the arena of **reality programming**. Following the February 24, 2017 launch of the obstacle course competition *Ultimate Beastmaster*, the company has found critical success with the reboot of Bravo’s *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* (2003-07), which it rebranded **Queer Eye**, as well as the release of the amateur bake-off program *Nailed It!*, which will be returning for a second season next week. The release of these and other examples of reality TV, including the celebrity-driven *Real Rob* and *Chasing Cameron*, suggests that Chief Content Officer Ted Sarandos and his team are pursuing a new demographic of customers (beyond those who might be drawn to “alternative” animation like *BoJack Horseman* and “quality TV” series like *Master of None*). As Scott Roxborough, the author of your assigned reading, notes, this shift is economically motivated. Indeed, as Netflix expands its distributive reach globally, it will likely continue to grow its catalog of non-scripted shows whose production costs are relatively low compared to those of more high-profile period dramas like *Marco Polo* and *The Crown*.

For this blog posting, you should reflect on your own experiences of watching reality TV programs, and then explain how the first episodes of *Queer Eye* and *Nailed It!* either conform to or depart from earlier examples of the genre. If reality TV can be considered a genre, then it is possible to divide non-scripted programming into various subgenres, including (but not limited to): **dating programs, docu-soaps, gamedocs, makeover programs, and talent contests**. Which of these subgenres do you find most appealing and why? Do *Queer Eye* and *Nailed It!* fit into or fall outside these categories?

As an example of what might more broadly be termed “**lifestyle television**,” what does *Queer Eye* tell us about changing attitudes toward **maleness** and **masculinity**? How does this reality TV program present the **cultural differences** between the show’s “Fab Five (Antoni, Tan, Karamo, Bobby, and Jonathan) and their first “test subject” (small town Georgia resident Tom)? Besides bringing their expertise in the areas of grooming, culinary arts, fashion, and design to bear on this recently divorced man’s physical appearance and surroundings, how do the hosts boost Tom’s low self-esteem? What “**lessons**” do they teach him and, presumably, many of the audiences watching this program? Do you think that their brief experience together — “staged” in front of cameras as well as Tom’s adoring friends and family — will have a lasting impact on his lifestyle choices? Why or why not?

To what can you attribute the success of the baking show *Nailed It!*, and how does it differ from other cooking competitions? Do you think that this program sends a **positive or problematic message about personal achievement and/or failure**? Is the episode that you watched “**disposable**” (as many critics of reality TV claim), or do you think that it can retain its value over time, resonating with diverse audiences for the foreseeable future?