

Your eleventh (and final) blog entry, which you will post on www.NetflixStudies.com, is due before **5:00 p.m. Friday, July 6**. Before posting your comments (which should be approximately **700 words**), you should [1] watch the Dave Chappelle standup comedy specials *The Bird Revelation* and *Equanimity* and [2] read any THREE of the following online articles:

- Jason Zinoman, “Dave Chappelle Stumbles Into the #MeToo Moment,” *New York Times* (January 2, 2018): <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/02/arts/television/dave-chappelle-netflix-special.html>
- Jamie Loftus, “Dave Chappelle Can’t Shock Jock His Way Out of the #MeToo Movement,” *Paste* (January 8, 2018): <https://www.pastemagazine.com/articles/2018/01/dave-chappelle-cant-shock-jock-his-way-out-of-the.html>
- Hannah Jane Parkinson, “Kevin Spacey Deserves To Be Scorned. But Can I Still Watch *House of Cards*?” *The Guardian* (November 2, 2017): <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/nov/02/kevin-spacey-deserves-scorned-watch-house-of-cards>
- Ben Travers, “One Last Season with Danny Masterson is Too Many, So Here’s What Happens and What’s Next,” *IndieWire* (December 17, 2017): <http://www.indiewire.com/2017/12/the-ranch-season-4-review-danny-masterson-rooster-netflix-recap-1201908218/>
- Sarah Solemani, “The Aziz Ansari Furore Isn’t the End of #MeToo. It’s Just the Start,” *The Guardian* (January 22, 2018): <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2018/jan/21/aziz-ansari-metoo-sexual-equality>

Since its launch as a DVD-by-mail company serving several thousand U.S. customers, continuing through to its contemporary incarnation as a streaming service providing original content for millions of subscribers around the world, Netflix has been embroiled in high-profile controversies that have threatened its standing as a major player in global media marketplace. Those controversies include: [a] the Netflix Prize Contest (an open competition to design a recommendation algorithm that began in 2006, and which led to breaches in customer data privacy); [b] pay disputes and contractual negotiations (including those involving English actress Claire Foy, star of *The Crown*, and American comedian Mo’Nique, who called for a boycott of Netflix based on what she called racial bias); [c] closed captioning, audio description services, and other accessibility issues; [d] autism spectrum stereotypes on the coming-of-age series *Atypical*; [e] the treatment of adult subject matter (suicide, sexual assault, substance abuse, etc.) on the teen drama *13 Reasons Why*; and [f] the Cannes Film Festival controversy (for information on this topic, please see my short article for *The Conversation*: <https://theconversation.com/from-nazis-to-netflix-the-controversies-and-contradictions-of-cannes-77655>).



The most sweeping controversy—one that extends well beyond Netflix and reaches into many sectors of the U.S. film and television industries—is undoubtedly the revelations about sexual misconduct and harassment that were brought to the world’s attention following allegations of rape leveled by many women against Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein. As a lightning rod for social change, the **#MeToo Movement** (a grassroots campaign initiated by community organizer Tarana Burke and made viral by Alyssa Milano, Ashley Judd, and other celebrities on social media) has resulted in significant shakeups at Netflix, including the firing of Kevin Spacey (star of *House of Cards*) and Danny Masterson (star of *The Ranch*), in addition to questions about the conduct of Aziz Ansari (star of *Master of None*).

For your final blog posting, you should first reflect on Netflix’s handling of the above controversies and then respond to the points put forth in any three of the five short articles listed on the first page.

The bulk of your posting, however, should comment on comedian Dave Chappelle’s references to Harvey Weinstein, Kevin Spacey, Louis C.K., and other individuals accused of sexual abuse in his standup comedy special ***The Bird Revelation***, as well as the content of his other Netflix show ***Equanimity***. How does Chappelle incorporate that material into his routine? Do you agree with what he says about audiences’ “brittle ears” (in *Equanimity*) and “brittle spirit” (in *The Bird Revelation*)? Are sensitive subjects like this appropriate within comedy acts? Might the incorporation of jokes about such topics be a “positive” or even “cathartic,” in terms of opening up spaces in the culture for serious conversations and healing? Or do you see this as being potentially harmful and hurtful to the victims of sexual abuse?



NOTE: If, given the perhaps-upsetting nature of Chappelle’s handling of difficult subjects, you would prefer to watch (and write about) a *different* Netflix original, then please use the following documentary as this week’s final viewing: ***Seeing Allred*** (2018). This feature-length film revolves around the feminist attorney Gloria Allred, who has represented over two dozen women accusing former TV star Bill Cosby of sexual assault and has been a major part of the #MeToo Movement. If you opt for this alternative viewing, you will still need to read at least three of the above online articles.