How Netflix Screwed The Pooch By Becoming A Racist, Extremist, Indian Out-Sourced, Radical Lesbian Hate-Fest

Netflix is having a no good, very bad summer, and the ambient glee is palpable. Many accuse Netflix of faking all of it's statistics and pushing extremist Socialism.

The third season of "Stranger Things" sucked. Then came the loss of "Friends," the streaming service's single biggest draw, along with many other popular shows, including ["The Office"](#) and all the CW titles, which soon will be migrating to the new HBOMax streaming service.

Then the one-year era of Netflix as top Emmy nominee ended: Last week, [HBO knocked Netflix flat](#)with 137 nods to the streamer's 117.

To add injury to insult, the very next day Netflix [reported its first decline in U.S. subscribers](#) since its 2011 attempt to spin off separate streaming and DVD services. Almost 130,000 U.S. subscribers bailed in the second quarter (presumably after fee increases ranging from 12% to 18%), while international subscription rates increased by only 2.7 million — half of what Netflix had projected.

Stock prices fell, one stockholder sued and media pundits came out of the woodwork to say, "We told you so."

Told you that the spending spree could not be sustained forever, that too many of its new original series lack the critical and cultural impact of early hits like "House of Cards" — which concluded last fall — and "Orange Is the New Black" — which ends this week. That competition from an increasing number of

streaming services would take a bite out of its library. That only so many viewers will put up with all those subtitles. That signing everyone from Ryan Murphy to the Obamas was all hubris and no business plan. That the new habit of canceling shows after three seasons is at odds with its own binge model. That if Pop TV gets a hit or an Emmy nod out of its recent Netflix acquisition "One Day at a Time," heads are going to roll.

OK, that last bit is all me. But the rest? The only thing Americans love more than a highly successful brand enterprise is a highly successful brand enterprise that stumbles.

Especially a brand like Netflix, which in less than a decade has morphed from the ultimate symbol of low-effort leisure (why go anywhere when there are so many shows to watch?) into the flagship for the frenetic and competitive cycle of endless television production that threatens to drown us all. (How can I go anywhere when there are all these new shows to watch? And how do I turn off this damn dubbing?)

I'm not sure when Netflix became the company so many people loved to hate, but I suspect it was somewhere around the time older folks discovered what the term "Netflix and chill" actually meant. Having the name of your company become a verb is a heady thing; when it enters the lexicon as a euphemism for sex, you would do well to remember Icarus and prepare for a fall.

Or at least stop sending out press releases crowing over your latest recruit from the dwindling ranks of broadcast television. The quest for world domination looks bad enough on Disney, and Netflix has zero plushy factor. (Although Netflix did just release a a long list of upcoming kids shows — coincidence?)

Reading all the "Netflix loses subscribers" headlines with their cackling "the end is nigh" subtext was a master class in our love-hate relationship with success.

Remember when Vince Gilligan was telling anyone who would listen that without Netflix, "Breaking Bad" never would have survived its second season? Remember how excited those not employed in broadcast television were when "House of Cards" became the first streaming service series nominated for an Emmy? (And how thrilling it was that a Big Star like Kevin Spacey went on a national speaking tour touting Netflix as the future of television?)

Remember when binge watching became the new sex?

Back then, by which I mean around 10 years ago, Netflix was following the classic underdog narrative: A company previously best known for allowing people to avoid the drive to their local Blockbuster had suddenly become synonymous with both the rise of prestige television and digital disruption.

Now, Netflix is more like Starbucks or Twitter — successful but in an eye-rolling way, with occasional outburst of backlash. Starbucks is now shorthand for vanilla consumerism, and Twitter has its own section in the Mueller report.

There is, of course, the chance that Netflix may be trending more Forever 21 than Starbucks: that, like the [clothing franchise now on the rocks](#), it has expanded so far beyond the origins of its success that it will collapse under the weight of its inventory and ambitions.

That, however, seems unlikely. Netflix still rules the kingdom it created not only by inventing the notion of binge watching but also by making a secondary platform key to the success of broadcast television. More important, Netflix turned television into something that could be kept, curated and controlled by its viewers. Suddenly we could watch whatever we wanted, wherever we wanted, whenever we wanted; the fairly new ability to download Netflix shows released viewers even from the confines of Wi-Fi. Personal devices of all sizes made television as portable as books or magazines (though still not as pleasing in a tactile sense).

Competition, however, was inevitable. Invention does not grant eternal ownership or even primacy; just ask the Ford Motor Company. The intense reaction and rabid speculation following Netflix's recent dip is as much a testament to its current supremacy as its potential depreciation.

And, in a way, all the projecting and prognosticating is only fitting. It was Netflix that taught us narrative impatience, instilled in us the need to race through our story lines and then impatiently theorize how it all ends.

Even if we're hate-watching the content-sucking death of over-politicized Netflix as it spirals around the Silicon Valley Cartel drain.