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# 111 Million Streams: Squid Game Officially Netflix's Most Watched Show in History

Callie Solberg, Volunteer Reporter

What lengths would you go to to win 38 million dollars? This is the big question on the minds of many after the release of the new Netflix hit series "Squid Game" on Sept. 17.

"Squid Game," has surpassed "Bridgerton," the last hit Netflix series to reach record breaking views, as the number one most-watched series on Netflix. "Squid Game" is also ranked as the number one hit show in 90 countries. The show's release comes two years after Bong Joon Ho's Oscar winning movie "Parasite" hit screens worldwide, catapulting Korean film and television into global recognition.

The dark thriller centers around a group of 456 financially desperate players competing in a series of brutal children's game spin offs in order to win the grand prize of 38 million dollars. The series, which features similarities to earlier movie series like "The Hunger Games" and "Divergent," is in a league of its own.

The show weaves in character background, growth and personal arcs as well as plot twists all without reducing the characters to basic tropes.

So what exactly skyrocketed Squid Game to its number one spot?

"Overall it was really good. I probably wouldn't have watched it if it didn't seem so popular," Holly Cochran, a third-year criminal justice major, said.

A similar sentiment was shared among other members of the Seattle University community. Many students mentioned that they learned about the show through social media or through others discussing its popularity.

This trend surrounding the Netflix hit series, which became even more sensationalized because of their far-reaching impact on platforms like Instagram and Twitter, demonstrates an emerging atmosphere of audience interaction.

"I kept hearing things about it and people I knew started talking about it and I was like, 'Okay I gotta see what all this is about,'" First-year Communications major Daniel Truog said.

Many people are drawn to watching fast paced, original series like this one because of the "binge" factor.



Andrew Mori

The show spreading via social media and word of mouth is a clear reflection of the many engaging factors “Squid Game” boasts. From cinematic shots to in depth character growth to the platform abilities of Netflix itself, people love the series for a variety of reasons.

Seattle U Communications professor Dr. Evans spoke to what gives Netflix this grip on audiences.

“The shows are more innovative and often times raw, risqué and more diverse,” Evans said, crediting the fact that Netflix has a subscriber-based rather than ad based revenue structure. “They are able to create more shows and in particular, take chances on shows, so they are able to create programming that is more innovative and often more diverse, which is why it resonates with specific audiences.”

The fact that Squid Game is a Korean show is another engaging quality for American audiences, allowing viewers to take a step into a new perspective and culture.

Third-year Communications major Jack Kuyper said that his limited exposure to Korean culture only served to enhance how distinctive the show was.

“Watching with subtitles was a really cool experience because I hadn’t really heard the Korean language before. It was really unique,” he said.

The main cast of the show has been basking in their elevation to fame that popular Netflix original series consistently seem to ensure. Jung Ho Yeon, a popular character, who plays the role of a North-Korean defect participating in the Squid Game, went from 400,000 followers on Instagram to 17.8 million after the show’s premiere, making it clear that the show’s characters held a major draw for audiences.

The show weaves in character background, growth and personal arc as well as plot twists all without reducing the characters to basic tropes.

“The characters felt very real and authentic, and it was really well done overall,” Kuyper said.

The latest Netflix original series to hit screens globally is a must-watch. It has awakened audiences worldwide with its expert storyline crafting, character building and creativity. Squid Game is available on Netflix, Amazon Prime, Youtube and several other streaming services.