

# **Canceled “Dangerous” Netflix Shows: The Society, Sense8, The Get Down**

By Gülin Kirman

Providing easy access to watch movies and shows in any language, anytime and anywhere Netflix is a platform loved and used by 193 million people all around the world. Adding hundreds of shows to its platform every year, Netflix offers a vast collection of movies, series, reality shows, and many more. However, most Netflix Original Shows do not last longer than two seasons. Although it is stated that the reasons behind these cancellations are low viewership and financial problems; the audience couldn't help but notice that there is a pattern regarding the canceled shows. Most of these shows have diverse characters and casts, plots that tackle controversial topics, and storylines that raise awareness of neglected issues and communities. Although Netflix does have many other great shows, it is saddening and a bit suspicious how most of the canceled shows are the ones that have diverse characters and casts, plots that tackle controversial topics and taboo subjects, storylines that raise awareness to neglected issues and communities. Although these shows are indeed necessary and important, it is no lie that they have both supporters and haters. Some people claim that the cause of Netflix's cancellations is more than financial issues and the real reason behind it is the fear of losing members and sparking controversy. This makes it seem like these shows are not only deemed “dangerous” by the ones who are opposing to it but also by Netflix. In short, for Netflix, if a show is controversial, it also might be “dangerous”. To further explore this issue, we will be looking at three of Netflix's canceled shows; The Society, Sense8 and The Get Down. All of these shows have been canceled after one or two seasons, have a diverse cast, and discuss controversial subjects.

## **THE SOCIETY**

Even though The Society may seem like a simple show about teenagers and supernatural events, it is a series that has a deeper meaning. The show tackles subjects such as gun control, sexual assault, teen pregnancy, mental health, systems of justice and punishment, sexism, and systems of governments such as communism, democracy, liberalism, capitalism, and more. Creator of the show Chris Keyser has said that William Golding's 1954 novel Lord of the Flies and the teenage activism that rose after the school shooting in Parkland, Florida in 2018 has influenced the show. Lord of the Flies has a similar plot to The Society as it is a book about a group of young boys stranded on an island and their actions.

The Society is about a group of high schoolers trying to survive upon returning from a school trip and realizing that everyone else but them, including their families, has disappeared. One of the characters, Cassandra tells all the women in town that an order is needed to ensure the safety of everyone and especially women. This draws attention to the fact that in a town where everything has disappeared including consequences, women can't help but feel unsafe. So, in order to create order, Cassandra takes on the role of the leader. She finds the solution in collecting and proportioning every single food in town, making people share their houses, and

assigning everyone jobs (cleaning, cooking, dishwashing, etc.). This system is, in a way, a representation of communism as everyone lives, works, and benefits from the opportunities equally. Although, some of the characters argue against this policy saying they don't want to share their privileges, in some way representing capitalists. However, in the third episode, Cassandra gets shot and dies leaving her little sister Allie to take charge. This incident draws attention to gun control and school shootings that have been happening in America. After finding out who the killer is, it is decided that his punishment is to get executed. This indicates that creating a new system of justice and punishment is also in the hands of teenagers. In addition, the show also featured characters who were dealing with teen pregnancy, depression, loss of family member, sexual and mental abuse.

The series was actually renewed for a second season in July 2019, just 2 months after its premiere. In August 2020, however, Netflix announced the cancellation of *The Society* among other shows. Even though fans of the show tried to save it with campaigns and open letters to Netflix, their efforts sadly didn't work.

## **SENSE8**

*Sense8* is a sci-fi and drama series created by the Wachowski sisters. The premise of the show is about eight people who have a psychic and emotional connection. The main characters include Capheus, a minibus driver from Nairobi who takes care of her mother in need of an HIV/AIDS medicine; Sun, a successful businesswoman and a kickboxer from Seoul; Nomi, a trans woman from San Francisco; Kala, a Hindu woman living in Mumbai with a passion for science and pharmacy; Riley, an Icelandic DJ in London who has suffered from the loss of her husband and newborn baby in a tragic accident; Wolfgang, an organized crime member from Berlin who has issues with his father; Lito, an actor in Mexico City who is in a secret relationship with his boyfriend Hernando due to hiding his sexuality from the public; Will, a Chicago police officer haunted by a murder in his childhood. As it can be understood, both the cast and the characters were diverse and inclusive. The series both had a complex and intriguing sci-fi plot and many storylines that celebrated and showed the problems of different communities. However, it was also criticized by some because of its explicit scenes and intimate relationships of same-sex couples. The series lasted for two seasons before getting canceled in 2018. The fans of the shows organized protests and campaigns in order to save the show. In the end, their efforts resulted in the series getting a 2-hour-special finale episode to properly wrap things up.

## **THE GET DOWN**

*The Get Down* is a musical series created and directed by Baz Luhrmann. It shows the rise of hip-hop and disco music through the eyes of Afro-American and Latinx youth in the 70s Bronx, New York. The series had a talented cast including Justice Smith, Shameik Moore, Herizen Guardiola, and Jaden Smith. It also featured well-known names in its soundtrack including Christina Aguilera, Sia, Zayn, Miguel, Alessia Cara, and many more. The series included storylines about racism, LGBTQ+, religion, education, fame, how politics at the time were

neglecting certain communities and using them for their own benefit. Overall, the series told an interesting story inspired by real-life while also still demonstrating the conditions of the era.

Unfortunately, the series only has one season that was released in two parts. Only a month after the release of part two in April 2017, the show was canceled. Netflix stated that the reason for the cancellation was the show was very expensive to shoot and the low viewership did not justify the budget. However, fans were quick to point out that the advertisement for the series was nowhere near as the other series that came out around the same time as *The Get Down*. The publicity for the show was indeed quite low despite the important storylines and well-known names included in the project. Needless to say, the cancellation of the show saddened and angered a lot of fans who believe that the story was not over, and the series deserved more.

In conclusion, even though Netflix cancels shows like these it is also apparent from its social media platforms and the new shows it puts up that they believe in supporting minorities and those in need. However, cancellations like these and the continuous renewals of other “non-dangerous” shows do not make a good case for them. In order to properly support communities, they need to let the shows finish their stories and include a diverse set of cast and characters in the majority of its shows.

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