

NOW STREAMING



BY ALEXIS WAGAR

One of Netflix's newest originals, based off of the 2007 young adult novel by Jay Asher, *13 Reasons Why*, deals with the aftermath of Hannah Baker's (**Katherine Langford's**) suicide and follows her fellow classmates as they try to uncover the reasons she took her own life. The 13-part series was released worldwide on Netflix on March 31, 2017.

Following the suicide, a box of cassettes is delivered to Clay Jenkins (**Dylan Minnette**), a former classmate, coworker, and friend to Hannah. The cassettes detail the 13 reasons why she killed herself and each tape represents a fellow classmate or adult that had caused Hannah trauma in her life. There are instructions that the tapes be passed from one to another, and Clay is near the end of the list.

I've seen a lot of controversy surrounding the show on social media — one side states that audiences should avoid that show claiming that it is glorifying suicide, and that it is a trigger warning to some people with mental

health issues. On the other hand, people say that the show is an important reminder about the effect actions and words can have on individuals and the impact of social media with the new generation.

There have been some comparisons on how viewers watch the show as well. Do you binge watch all 13 episodes all at once, like how the majority of the classmates listen to the tapes? Or do you have to pace yourself, tape by tape... or technically episode by episode like Clay does in the series?

As somebody who has dealt with depression through myself and others close to me, I think that the show has some positive aspects including prompting serious discussions about mental health. Nobody likes to talk about death or suicide, but the show definitely brings attention to the topic as well as other important issues to discuss including sexual assault, slut shaming and cyberbullying.

"Adults don't realize how much cyberbullying is hurtful because it didn't exist when people my age

were younger," said Rona Hu, a psychiatrist at Stanford University School of Medicine in the "13 Reasons Why: Beyond the Reasons" interview.

The show is graphic and is definitely not suited for those with weak stomachs. But the show does a really good job of opening the viewer's eye on the true effects of teenage technology and social media drama, and is potentially a really educational show to watch for parents to help them understand, connect with and discuss sensitive topics with their own children.

"They may Instagram and Snapchat and Facebook their lives, but that's curated even with all of that you still don't really know what's going on in their life," said Brian Yorkey, executive producer during a "Beyond the Reasons" interview.

I would highly recommend this 13-episode series. Each episode is one hour long and they work well to binge through, but it is also a good series to pace through slowly if that's more your style. The rating for *13 Reasons Why* is TV-MA and viewer discretion is advised.

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