

hollywood q&a

By Adam Thomlison
TV Media

Q: I've started watching the "Flash" TV show, and I remember watching another one back in the '80s. That got me wondering, which superhero has been on the most shows?

A: Marvel's heroes — Captain America, the Incredible Hulk and company — may be getting most of the attention on the big screen, but the small screen has always been dominated by competing comic publisher DC. In particular, it's been a Superman's world.

But you don't have to take my word for it. No less an authority than the Guinness World Records organization has kept track, and the Man of Steel holds the record for the most-portrayed superhero on live-action TV.

Superman has been played by several different actors, starting with the great George Reeves in "The Adventures of Superman" from 1952 to 1958. More recently, Dean Cain played him in "Lois & Clark: The New Adventures of Superman" from 1993 to 1997, and Tom Welling played him in CW's "Smallville" from 2001 to 2011.

And those were just the shows that were specifically about him. Superman has also showed up in guest spots in "Superboy" (1988 to 1992) and most recently in the whole pack of ongoing DC shows on the CW network — "Supergirl," "Arrow" and (spoiler alert if you haven't gotten this far yet) "The Flash."

By comparison, your buddy the Flash has had less success. Though the current series is doing pretty well on CW, recently wrapping its fifth season, the previous iteration you mention (which actually aired in 1990) only lasted a season on CBS.

Note that this is just the live-action stuff, too — Superman has shown up in loads of animated series as well.

Q: Anderson Cooper released a documentary called "Nothing Left Unsaid." Will it be available for rental on Netflix? I hope so.

A: The short answer is no, but of course there's a longer answer. There always is with Netflix.

"Nothing Left Unsaid," CNN personality Anderson Cooper's documentary about his famous mom, Gloria Vanderbilt, was produced by and aired on HBO in 2016. That's a big roadblock right there, because HBO is trying to get its own web-based TV service going, called HBO Go.

For that reason, HBO has been reluctant to make any of its content available on Netflix — they want to make it so that if you want to watch any of HBO's headline-grabbing content online, be it "Game of Thrones" or "Westworld" or "Nothing Left Unsaid," you have to do it via HBO Go.

But of course, things change (this is where the answer starts getting long) — Netflix is famously cutting new deals for content all the time. The Starz series "Outlander" was winning fans for four seasons before the network finally agreed just a few weeks ago to put it up on Netflix.

Your use of the word "rental" makes the answer even longer, because it means you could be referring to Netflix's surprisingly persistent DVD business. The company actually got started by renting DVDs by mail, and not only is that wing still running, but it has some HBO content in its catalog (presumably, because HBO isn't offering a DVD business, it's not as worried about the competition). But it doesn't have "Nothing Left Unsaid."

There are reasons for hope, though. America's fascination with the Vanderbilt family has lasted generations, and its fascination with Anderson Cooper has made him a multi-platform superstar, so interest in this documentary should remain high for a while. And in the meantime, the streaming-TV landscape is changing all the time, with new Netflix competitors launching and crashing along with their exclusivity deals.

Have a question? Email us at questions@tvtabloid.com. Please include your name and town.

STREAMING THIS WEEK



Murray Bartlett and Laura Linney in a scene from "Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City"

By Shona Dustan
TV Media

NEW ON NETFLIX:

"Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City"

Olympia Dukakis ("Steel Magnolias," 1989) and Laura Linney ("Ozark") first stepped into the roles of Anna Madrigal and Mary Ann Singleton more than 25 years ago. The 1993 miniseries "Tales of the City" told the story of how Mary Ann came to live on Barbary Lane in San Francisco, while 1998's "More Tales of the City" and 2001's "Further Tales of the City" expanded upon the stories of Anna, Mary Ann and their colorful friends and neighbors. Now both award-winning actresses are back for a fourth time in "Armistead Maupin's Tales of the City," premiering Friday, June 7, on Netflix. This time, Mary Ann returns to Barbary Lane many years after leaving her home and her family to pursue a career. Ellen Page ("The Umbrella Academy") plays Mary Ann's daughter, Shawna, while Paul Gross ("Due South") reprises the role of Brian Hawkins, Shawna's father and Mary Ann's ex-husband. Murray Bartlett ("Looking") also returns as Mouse. As you may have surmised, the enduring series is based on the "Tales of the City" novels by Armistead Maupin, and the author himself is an executive producer this time around.

"Designated Survivor" (Season 3)

Netflix has saved yet another series from extinction. This one was canceled by ABC after two seasons, but a dedicated fanbase, a talented cast and a compelling premise helped convince the streamer to give it another chance. The show follows President Tom Kirkman, a dedicated civil servant who suddenly found himself President of the United States after a devastating attack on the Capitol wiped out most of Congress and the Senate. Kirkman is intelligent and kind, and he has no agenda but a desire to do the right thing, which both endears him to staff and constituents and infuriates rivals. Kirkman has been through a lot since his sudden swearing in, including the death of his wife, deadly conspiracies and many political gaffes, but the Season 2 finale saw him declare to the nation his intent to run for another term. If you've never seen it, you can watch the first two seasons of Netflix now, and jump into Season 3 when it premieres Friday, June 7.

"I Am Mother"

This sci-fi thriller stars Clara Rugaard ("Still Star-Crossed") as a young woman who was raised by a nurturing robot. She is known only as Daughter, while the robot is known as Mother, and they live in a facility cut off from the outside world. According to Mother, a deadly contagion wiped out much of humanity and made the world unlivable, which is why Daughter is not able to leave their home. When a stranger known only as Woman (Hilary Swank, "Million Dollar Baby," 2004) breaks into the facility, Daughter is shocked to learn that there was no contagion, and that droids just like Mother are the cause of the apocalypse outside their door. It's a terrifying game of "who do you trust?" and Daughter must uncover the truth about both Mother

and Woman in order to make the right choice. The movie premiered at the Sundance Film Festival in January to positive reviews, and you can stream it starting Friday, June 7.

"3%" (Season 3)

This dystopian Brazilian series follows a group of survivors in a harsh world where, once a year, 20-year-olds have a chance to complete a series of tests called "The Process." If they pass these tests, they're allowed to leave their barren home and live "offshore," which, we're told, is a virtual paradise. Only three percent of applicants pass the tests, and many die trying or are killed when they fail. It's an edge-of-your-seat thriller full of intrigue, betrayal, romance and action, and you can stream Season 3 starting Friday, June 7.

NEW ON AMAZON PRIME:

"Jonas Brothers: Chasing Happiness"

As you may have heard, the Jonas Brothers are back together, and on Tuesday, June 4, you can stream this documentary that delves into the ups and downs of the brothers' lives and careers. Joe, Nick and Kevin Jonas talk candidly about why they split up in 2013, and how they overcame obstacles, rebuilt their relationships and ultimately found happiness. Other members of the Jonas family are featured as well, including Kevin's wife, Danielle, and the famous wives of Joe and Nick, Sophie Turner ("Game of Thrones") and Priyanka Chopra ("Quantico"), respectively.

NEW ON HULU:

"The Handmaid's Tale" (Season 3)

The much-anticipated third installment of this Emmy and Golden Globe-winning series lands Wednesday, June 5, and after June's (Elisabeth Moss, "Top of the Lake") sudden and unexpected decision in the Season 2 finale, fans have been eagerly awaiting the show's return. Just as she was about to escape Gilead with her daughter, June decided to stay behind, and her reasons are as selfless as they come: she's going to start a resistance movement. It's an exciting development that allows us to keep following the arcs of Serena (Yvonne Strahovski, "Chuck"), Fred (Joseph Fiennes, "American Horror Story"), Nick (Max Minghella, "The Mindy Project") and the other irresistible characters of this dystopian world, and Moss is spectacular, as always. If you haven't jumped on this bandwagon yet, I suggest streaming all three seasons as soon as possible.

"Into the Dark: They Come Knocking"

The latest installment of this chilling series premieres Friday, June 7, and it's just as terrifying as the films that came before it. Clayne Crawford ("Lethal Weapon") stars as Nathan, a widower and father who takes his two daughters on a road trip. Things get hairy when the family is set upon by a number of horrifying supernatural beings, and Nathan must go to great lengths to keep his family safe.



Kiefer Sutherland as seen in "Designated Survivor"