Master Thesis in Public Service Audiovisual Communication

Reality approach on Social Media through fictional series *Black Mirror*

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*To my students, who have encouraged
me to pursue this research and whose
participation made the study possible.*

INDEX

INDEX OF TABLES

INDEX OF FIGURES

1.- ABSTRACT AND KEYWORDS

The development of technology has led to a social media-based society where users feel the need to be permanently connected, and this, in turn, has generated new attitudes and behaviours that they have integrated in their daily life. The assumption of reality in an online world questions the lack of awareness people have about the reasons and purposes for using social media. When utterly negative consequences arising from such use are depicted in a fictional product, viewers might get closer to identify and acknowledge their own behaviour, and perhaps even change it. The pessimistic tone in *Black Mirror*'s episodes is the starting point of this research which does not mean to create any social media guidelines, but expects to help viewers identify threads of reality behind the audiovisual fictional product.

Keywords: *audiovisual fiction, Black Mirror, social media, behaviour patterns, reality identification*, *online attitude*.

RESUMEN Y PALABRAS CLAVE

El desarrollo tecnológico ha llevado a una sociedad basada en las redes sociales donde los usuarios tienen la necesidad de estar permanentemente conectados, y esto, a su vez, ha generado nuevas actitudes y comportamientos que han integrado en su rutina diaria. La suposición de realidad en un mundo virtual pone en entredicho el nivel de concienciación que tiene la gente acerca de las razones y propósitos para el uso de las redes sociales. Cuando las consecuencias negativas que se desprenden de dicho uso se representan en un producto de ficción, puede que los espectadores consigan identificar y reconocer su propio comportamiento, y quizás, cambiarlo. El tono pesimista de los capítulos de *Black Mirror* es el punto de partida de esta investigación, que no intenta establecer ninguna base para el uso de las redes sociales, sino que pretende ayudar a los espectadores a identificar trazas de realidad a través de este producto audiovisual de ficción.

Palabras clave: *ficción audiovisual, Black Mirror, redes sociales, patrones de comportamiento, identificación de la realidad, actitudes en el mundo virtual.*

2.- INTRODUCTION

Social Media* is a term which people has become very familiar with over the last two decades, with a rapid increase in popularity during the last ten years until its expansion nowadays. As social beings we conform a society that was clearly predisposed to the acceptance of this particular kind of media that enables us to interact, exchange information and, in short, socialize with other human beings. However, such rapid growth has led to a massive use of social media – especially by young generations – with no guidelines or restrictions and lack of rules that have resulted in the feeling of "losing control" over it.

As negative as it may sound, this is also how the fictional series *Black Mirror* depicts social media in their science-fiction utopic-based episodes. *Cheatsheet.com* describes the series as "the stories of how social media and technology consumes our lives". Interestingly, exploring the dark sides of technology seems to be something recurrent in fiction with far-fetched stories where mankind struggles to win the battle against a thing they created in the first place. Fiction is fiction, but there is knowledge behind those stories. There are warning signs for viewers to identify and become aware of the consequences of their actions. As a matter of fact, the misuse of social media might not place humanity in danger, but there is collateral damage which has proven to be able to get someone hurt. The approach that I wanted to follow in this research is about making something useful out of what this audiovisual genre is presenting in front of us.

In other words, considering the possibility of fiction offering an alternative on how to perceive reality and thus, creating an impact of social importance. In order to get a clear bond with the field of study of this Master's Degree, one could argue that this idea of exploring real-world issues regarding social media and taking advantage of the knowledge science fiction is giving us could be ultimately considered as public service.

The following study is not meant to create any guidelines or potential rules on how to use social media, but identifying threads of reality behind the fiction could help create an educational pattern which could promote attitude change in viewers and thus, make society more aware of the dangers and consequences of using technology without restrictions.

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*The word Social Media (SM) will appear several times along the dissertation. It can alternatively be written using first capital letters when referring to the concept or idea or lowercase initials when referring to the multiple social media sites, and generally followed by a singular verb as it is the most common usage.

The parallelism with Carl Hovland's theory on attitude change and persuasion was the main starting point on this dissertation which wants to follow the idea that an audiovisual product – in this case fictional – generates a communication process in which the receiver actively reacts to the message and becomes aware of the impact of such message in their lives.

However, the fact that this is not a psychological study must be taken into account as it is not meant to focus specifically on viewers' attitude change, and its purpose does not include any follow up regarding their behaviour afterwards. What it does focus on is their ability to identify behaviour patterns with reality and relate them to their daily life habits and routines.

Another great inspiration for choosing this topic was the author Neil Postman and his speech about the *Five Things We Need To Know About Technological Change*[1]. The talk is far from outdated as Social Media is nowadays on the spotlight of this change, where technology and society are being remodelled accordingly. The main issue is that society might not be aware of it yet, and its cultural surrender to technology is merely perceived in audiovisual fictional products. *Black Mirror* seems to get a glimpse of this, and when it comes to the episodes selected as case study, the comparison with real world will prove in some respects to be astonishingly accurate.

The dangers that the evolution of technology implies are not viewed negatively by everyone, and especially social media has managed to create a very special, personal and sometimes harmful relationship with their users who might not be aware of it.

Mine is a pessimistic approach, and this text has the will to highlight the negative impact of social media if such technology is not used properly.

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[1] Postman, N. (1998, March 28). *Five Things We Need To Know About Technological Change*. Retrieved from https://www.cs.ucdavis.edu/~rogaway/classes/188/materials/postman.pdf

3.- GOALS AND HYPOTHESIS

The aim of this dissertation is to analyse how Social Media is depicted in a fictional product and find its connection with real world usage. Firstly, there will be a summary of how fiction genre is placed in the world of communication in order to prove that in can be used for educational purposes. Also, an overview on the behaviour of viewers and the general attitude of society towards social media will establish the basis and knowledge to design the appropriate kind of research.

Secondly, the viewing and analysis phase will allow a clear identification of the parameters to be recognised by the sample population. *Black Mirror* has been chosen precisely for its pessimistic tone, which serves the purpose to compare the negative inputs about social media they are offering with the real perception of people. To meet the target of this dissertation, there is a research study which must be conducted to perceive the attitude of viewers. Once data is collected, the results will validate or disprove the following hypothesis:

Can audiovisual fiction genre help identify behaviour patterns towards Social Media in reality?

This is a limited research because with only three episodes it is intended to get a general scope about the situation of social media nowadays and extrapolate its conclusion to the general effect of the genre. In a more ambitious regard, the concept of this study has been designed in order to raise awareness about the negative path Social Media is leading society to, and how using fictional products might help prevent it.

4.- THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The research carried out in this thesis has its basis on contents belonging mainly to the fields of communication and education, with a link to psychology. Establishing a theoretical framework around audiovisual fiction genre, the perception of reality and the current use of Social Media sides with the consistency on proving the dissertation's hypothesis.

4.1.- Audiovisual fiction as a learning resource

To understand the way a fictional product works on society, it is necessary to get a further view of the communication channel it uses, which validates the choice of audiovisual fiction over other types of narrative. According to Pereira, nowadays "what someone sees prevails over what they read" (Pereira, 2005, p. 208) alluding the revolution of audiovisual culture as a communication vehicle that has overcome the popularity of narrative storytelling in the form of reading and writing. In this context, audiovisual fiction has become a broad and easily accessible tool for the understanding of messages. According to the five functions of fictional genre established by Gordillo (2009), audiovisual fiction products constitute an educational resource with a didactic and moralising role (p.101).

Regarding the message content, it can be presented in several forms which could determine its level of effectiveness. *Black Mirror* follows the form of an anthology series with independently written episodes which do not share characters, space or timeline, and their sole union lies in the topic and genre. This work does not mean to impose a preference on fictional formats typology, but compared to other famous anthology series cited by Gordillo (2009) such as *Alfred Hitchcock Presents* and *The Alfred Hitchock Hour*, it brings some advantages in terms of popularity. Both *Black Mirror* and the series produced by Hitchcock scored 8.9/10 in the review website *Tv.com*[2].

In determining the effectiveness of this channel, another aspect to bear in mind is not only the characteristics of the message and the intentions of the sender, but also the capacity and training for audiovisual understanding of the receiver-viewer (Pereira, 2005, p. 214).

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[2] http://www.tv.com/shows/black-mirror/ http://www.tv.com/shows/alfred-hitchcock-presents/

When choosing this medium one needs to consider it mainly as a resource to enhance moral education and constant learning through critical observation. The learning process begins when viewers observe several issues depicted in an audiovisual product and assume them as their own. Using the same context for cinematographic products, Pereira (2005) cited Mitry (1990) and Casanova (1998) to refer that its message is so powerful that it can "awaken thoughts, make judgements and lead to a change of attitude" (p. 208).

The main interest in considering audiovisual fiction an effective learning resource is its ability to raise awareness about certain behaviours or aspects of reality when they are exposed through an interactive storytelling. One could argue about the manipulation it may carry within as well as the communication tactics for persuading audiences that audiovisual products certainly possess. However, when it comes to fictional genre, over centuries it was commonly believed that its primary function was to entertain (Gordillo, 2009), so by distancing its message from a patronising and educational approach, it generated a different perception from viewers. Depictions of reality through documentary products might be perceived differently than those presented through fiction, even if they revolve around the same topic. According to Aparicio (2014), developed societies often reject messages that question some aspect of their way of life, but these are objectified when such problems are seen in a film product (p.78). Therefore, fictional genre serves as a useful resource with the convenience of the audience not being aware of its educational purposes.

For this reason, the manipulative side of audiovisual fiction lies in the ability to instil ideas, influence behaviour patterns or identify with certain moral values (Pereira, 2005, p. 207). Showing the narrative ideas presented in *Black Mirror*, pretends to make viewers perceive a utopian world as if it really existed, where instead of rejecting its ideas, they would accept and learn from them. Dahlstrom (2014) provided with several examples of using narrative and storytelling to communicate science with nonexpert audiences in his article. The potential outcome obtained when presented with narratives about health issues is that individuals were persuaded towards making healthy behaviour choices (p. 13615).

Similar results are expected when comparing Dahlstrom example with the fictional series. Viewers might undergo the learning process unknowingly by being presented with a storytelling in the form of audiovisual product.

4.2.- Influence of fiction on the perception of reality

There is no denying that audiovisual products carry an educational role that leads to the acceptance of values and reproduction of behaviour patterns. The connection between these moral lessons and real-life actions happens due to the influence that fictional products have on viewers' perception of reality. The same way Friend (2010) cited Currie (1990) people assume that "the fictional world is the way it is because that is the way the real world is" (p.93). However, the one condition Friend (2010) exposes in the success of such perception is for filmmakers to follow the norm of accuracy if they expect appropriate emotional engagement. This credibility feature is the subject of analysis in the case study, where a prior identification of elements that could be considered real and authentic pretends to match the conclusions drawn by viewers.

According to Dahlstrom (2014), when communicating any type of narrative, "the legitimacy of its message is judged on the verisimilitude of its situations" (p. 13615). The depictions of reality that viewers will see, must provide elements for comparison with the real world, especially when dealing with dystopian fiction, as is the case of this research. If such narratives provide values to real-world objects, audiences might be more willing to find identification in those which share some similarities. For instance, portraying a fictional mobile phone application with an invented but yet credible functionality might question the purposes of the actual one in reality. Thus, containing elements that are truthful, makes individuals readily use information from fictional stories to answer questions about the world (Dahlstrom, 2014).

Therefore, identification of elements that relate to reality is the main point of the communication process, followed by an attitude change from viewers. Although it is not taken into consideration for this research, in their study, Konijn et al. (2009) cited Green and Brock (2000), Murphy (1998), and Strange and Leung (1999), who, contrary to expectations, found that stories with the label of fiction "lead to attitude change equal to—and sometimes even greater than—those that result from nonfiction stories" (p.311). The non-patronising communication used in fiction implies the likelihood of audiences to be more influenced by its content. Thus, showing the death of a character in a car accident due to the use of a mobile phone might prove more effective than a government campaign with real figures on traffic fatalities for the same cause.

The study that Konijn et al. carried out, also proved the link between personal emotions and the perception of realism (2009). As an added variable on why people might take fiction for real, emotional viewers perceived more realism in audiovisual contents than the non-emotional ones (p. 329).

Black Mirror intentionally depicts plausible elements in a fictitious setting for audiences to compare with reality. The storytelling extracted from its episodes, portrays characters and behaviour patterns that raise awareness on the similarities they may have with the real world. Overall, relying on these theoretical contents is how, through a fictional product, viewers will be able to express their understanding of the reality of Social Media.

4.3.- A brief approach on Social Media

As social animals, human being have the need to communicate and interact with others beyond face-to-face limitations. Nowadays, the widespread popularity of Social Media enables people to be connected worldwide without any distance constraints. As a successor of mass media, Social Media changed the traditional concept of communication (sender-message-receiver) to a bidirectional approach where users are both content consumers and creators. The rapid growth of technology during the 20th century, lead to the first recognizable social media site in 1997 called Six Degrees, which enabled people to upload a profile and make friends with other users (Hendricks, 2013). Perhaps due to the multiple functionality allowed by several recent applications, there is often a confusion between the terms social media and social networks. In general, social media is the platform for creating and sharing content allowing the socialisation of human beings. Thus, all social networks are in fact social media with the particularity that such socialisation is considered between human beings. McMillan's definition establishes the difference in the fact that "social media is a communications channel, whereas in social networking the communication has a two-way nature" (2011).

The reason why this dissertation advocates for the term "social media" is due to the consideration of "network" implying a both-sided connection with other known – personally or online – users that accepted to be part of a community. That would exclude all the content provided by strangers that is accessible to everyone, and the possibility to be a non-participant observer of the communication processes between other users outside one's personal circle.

Foreman (2017) categorised the type of website platforms that would comprise social media based on their ten different functionalities. Interestingly, Foreman points out a distinction between the use of social networks that allow to connect with people, and those intended to communicate anonymously. Other categories include media sharing sites (YouTube), discussion forums (Reddit), blogs (Tumblr) and social shopping platforms (Etsy) among others. However, the features included in most of the applications already suppose a hybridisation of uses, which questions the purpose of classifying them into rigid subgroups of social media.

Much more convincing is the framework to define social media established by Kietzmann et al. (2011). Their research provides with seven functional "building blocks" that can be applied to any network, platform or website, and measure its importance to a greater or lesser extent. The characteristics presented, revolve around identity, conversations, sharing, presence, relationships, reputation and groups (2007). Independently of the purpose of individuals when using social media, its goal is defined by the function and impact of each of the blocks. In the context of this study, the fictional social media presented will be analysed in terms of usage mechanisms and what it enables users to do. The possibilities offered by these social applications have a close connection to the reason why people make use of them, as well as the level of happiness of their users based on achieving social media goals. An empirical study carried out by Hoffman and Novak (2012) established a framework for analysis based on the focus of the interaction and its direction, applied to the following online behaviour patterns: create content, connect with people, consume content and control applications.

As a matter of fact, the widespread of social media is reflected by the number of users some of the most popular sites have. Currently with more than 2.5 billion[3] Facebook active accounts and 1 billion active users on Instagram, an idea is given on the expected world-wide growing trend towards the use of these applications. The fact that the real world is clearly social media-oriented provides verisimilitude to the fictional universe depicted in *Black Mirror* and its intention to portray familiar social media with sometimes unexplored functionalities and their consequences.

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[3] Data obtained from *statista.com*: https://www.statista.com/statistics/272014/global-social-networks-ranked-by-number-of-users/

5.- METHODOLOGY

This dissertation intends to (1) identify behaviour patterns towards Social Media seen in *Black Mirror*'s episodes and (2) find a comparative approach to the same attitudes in real life. For this purpose, the research to be carried out required complex measurement and analysis methods to justify the reliability and validity of the study. In order to do so, the main points for establishing an appropriate research methodology in this thesis were implemented following the guidelines stated by Goundar (2013):

Research methodology seeks to inform: Why a research study has been undertaken, how the research problem has been defined, in what way and why the hypothesis has been formulated, what data have been collected and what particular method has been adopted [and] why a particular technique of analysing data has been used.

Firstly, a case study research has been the starting point for the in-depth examination of behaviour patterns towards Social Media in fictional products. The approach represented by the work of Robert E. Stake (1995) on a "social construction of reality" allowed the collection of data for the main formal research. This first-step qualitative research based on content analysis was extracted from three episodes of the series *Black Mirror* (*Nosedive*, *Smithereens* and *Hated in the Nation*[4]) and included the following scenes:

- When technology involving social media was used or alluded.

- When images of mobile phones, computers, tablets or other devices were relevant.

- When the consequences of using social media showed specific attitude.

Case studies can also provide with "multiple source of evidence" (Yin, 1994) to which all the viewed content was narrowed to a dichotomy measurement in order to establish if:

- It was clearly a fictional representation.

- It could be compared to real world social media.

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[4] In the Spanish version the episodes are named (in the same order) *Caída en picado*, *Añicos* and *Odio Nacional*.

After that primary research and the familiarisation with the main issues conforming the *raison d'être* of this study, subject response was needed to obtain validating results. Thus, it was necessary to collect data from a sample population who could prove the identification of behaviour patterns towards social media, using mostly quantitative but also qualitative assessment. The same way Goundar (2013) cited Neuman (1997): "mixing qualitative with quantitative methods provides opportunity to corroborate results from diverse methods of studying a given phenomenon in a more rigorous manner". There is further explanation about the use of this methodology in the paper as for why pursuing the validation of the research hypothesis requires both quantifiable data and in-depth reasoning of social response.

The collection of data has been possible through online questionnaires specially designed for this purpose and answered by a sample population of between 20-60 people. Based on a simple random sampling, the only[5] requirement for individuals was the viewing of the episode of the case study related to its corresponding survey. The time frame for obtaining data has been of approximately three months since the creation of the website platform and subsequent distribution of its link[6] until its closing for the results analysis phase.

When conducting the study in quantitative terms, an independent variable established was the script of the episodes projected through audiovisual images. The dependent variable consisted in the identification of the inputs perceived by viewers from the script and viewing of the episode. However, there was also a confounding variable related to the perception of reality of viewers that could be determined by their age or their memory in the case they did not watch the episode exclusively for this research. Such aspects were unable to be controlled in this study, thus adding the mix of quantitative and qualitive assessment when looking at data results served as a potential focus on the parameters desired. Aiming to cover as many variables of the research as possible and following Bryman's words (1988) "the obvious way forward is likely to be a fusion of the two approaches so that their respective strengths might be reaped".

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[5] According to IMDB, the series has different age rating depending on the country, the minimum being 15+ and not suitable for under 16s in Spain, which makes it an intrinsic requirement per se. Retrieved from: https://www.imdb.com/title/tt2085059/parentalguide?ref_=tt_ql_stry_5

[6] https://masteruned2020.wixsite.com/blackmirror

5.1.- Mixed research

The aforementioned goals of this study required a different approach in terms of (1) identification of patterns and (2) reproduction of reality. The data obtained with this research has been used in a descriptive manner, based on the answers submitted by viewers without interfering or influencing them. For this purpose, it was necessary to quantify how many viewers identified social media behaviour in a similar way, as repetition indicated a pattern and thus, validation of the results. At the same time, it was interesting to know how such identification was perceived, as well as the subjective idea of fictional characters reproducing existing behaviour towards social media. On this matter, the comparison with reality also required a larger sample to provide statistical results, but also a qualitative insight on what viewers consider a fictional product is showing them. The reason why a range of participants was established, was to allow the possibility of assessing the results differently according to a quantitative or qualitative approach.

To support a feasible method in mixing both research techniques, the design of questionnaires was established according to the goals in the collection of data. Likewise, surveys included a variety of statistical and open-ended questions "to look beyond the percentage [and] to gain an understanding of feelings, impressions and viewpoints" (Goundar, 2013).

Type of data	Quantitative assessment	Qualitative assessment
Identification of patterns	Social Media comparisons	Value judgement
	Fictional scenes inputs	Moral of the story
Attitudes in reality	Social Media usage	Examples of SM usage
	Social Media functionality	Personal opinion on SM
Examples	Statistical questions	Open-ended questions
Identification of patterns	Do you think the episode portrays a positive or negative view on the use of Social Media?	What do you think the moral of the story is?
Attitudes in reality	Do you think it's possible that comments made on social networks could emotionally affect individuals?	What do you think should happen with the social media account of a deceased person?

Table 1. Examples of data for which quantitative or qualitative assessment was used.

5.2.- Designing questionnaires

After the in-depth analysis of each of the case study episodes, a series of questionnaires were designed accordingly. The main focus was on the type of information wanted to be obtained, and the list of questions which served as tools for that purpose. Since every episode contained a different storyline, it was necessary to set four big areas of research that included (1) social media identified and behaviour of characters towards it, (2) how participants use social media, (3) recognition of own attitude and (4) message perceived from the audiovisual product. Essentially, the answer to these topics intended to collect information for a communication study and not a psychological one, so the premise of non-judgement of participants had to be reflected in the formulation of the questions. Overall, following the recommendations of *typeform.com* on writing questionnaires, these were the basic requirements:

- Language simple and specific: in order to facilitate the comprehension of participants, a Spanish version of the questionnaire was available besides the English original, both written in a clear way and using simple words.

- Avoid leading questions: the non-judgement premise intended to diminish the possibility of establishing prejudices towards the answers.

- One question = one idea: keeping it simple implied that it was preferable to split the question into two parts when the target was a big idea or concept. In some cases, there was an introductory question to prepare for the next.

- Not too long: more than 20 questions would deter participants from answering, but a short number could result in lack of information and the data collection would be poor when trying to validate the hypothesis of the research. The target was between 15-20 questions, considering that most of them were dichotomous and simple to answer.

- Show how long: the home page of the questionnaires shows a message explaining that the answering process does not take more than 5 minutes to encourage participation.

- Use open-ended sparingly: a lot of open-ended questions served a good purpose for qualitative analysis but understanding that participants could not be keen on elaborating their answers prevented its overuse. Considering the same, open-ended questions were not a required field to allow elusive participants to still be eligible for statistical results.

Despite the methodological approach used when collecting data, the questionnaires were presented in a variety of forms, allowing five types of question depending on the information that could be provided by their answer:

- Close-ended questions: usually following a dichotomous "yes/no" and often including a "not sure" option in cases dichotomy could be avoided.

- Open-ended questions: participants were asked to write a few words about their feelings and perceptions about a topic.

- Semi closed-ended questions: especially in a multiple-choice form where there was no correct answer and by selecting the items considered it served for statistical comparison.

- Likert Scale questions: to measure quantities and level of conformity towards a topic.

- Demographic questions: the initial question in the survey is related to the age of participants. As it constituted one of the confounding variables due to the relation with knowledge or perception about social media, establishing a different age range favoured the contrasting of data in the results analysis.

Type of question	Methodological approach	Examples
Close-ended	Quantitative	Have you ever had the feeling you were using the phone when you were not supposed to? ○ Yes ○ No ○ I'm not sure
Open-ended	Qualitative	What do you think the moral of the story is?
Semi open-ended	Both	In general, does the concept of social network depicted in the episode remind you of any existing social network? * ☐ Twitter ☐ Facebook ☐ Instagram ☐ TripAdvisor ☐ It doesn't remind me of any existing social network ☐ Other:

Likert Scale	Quantitative	And with yourself? ◯ Some of them ◯ Most of them ◯ None of them
Demographic	Quantitative	Select your age range * ◯ 15-20 ◯ 21-30 ◯ 31-40 ◯ 41-50 ◯ 51-60 ◯ +60

Table 2. Examples of each type of question and their methodological approach.

At the moment of analysing results, the details of each questionnaire (including both language versions) were:

- Episode 1 Season 3. *Nosedive* → 17 questions; 55 participants.

- Episode 2 Season 5. *Smithereens* → 16 questions; 20 participants.

- Episode 6 Season 3. *Hated in the Nation* → 17 questions; 21 participants.

The full view of each questionnaire in the Spanish and English version can be found in the Annexes, as well as the home page of the explanatory and mobile-friendly website designed for the collection of data.

6.- CASE STUDY: *BLACK MIRROR*

The following case study will allow the identification of the parameters to be analysed and will help structure the appropriate research for the purpose of this dissertation. Choosing the series *Black Mirror* has a reason to be, as its episodes not only depict certain aspects of technology – including Social Media – but also present themselves in a form of dystopia that makes it easier for viewers to clearly disassociate fiction from reality. However, in Netflix's plot description, the series "explores a twisted, high-tech near-future where humanity's greatest innovations and darkest instincts collide" (Netflix, 2011). The platform that took over the series before the release of the third season differs from that disassociation in its synopsis which makes it a perfectly suitable case study. Google offers a much more accurate description related with the hypothesis raised in this thesis, where the series "revolves around a group of people's personal lives and how technology manipulates their behaviour" (Google, 2011).

Thus, the three main inputs necessary for research are: audiovisual fiction, Social Media and behaviour patterns, all of which are the highlights of *Black Mirror*. The stand-alone episodes contributed to the choice of said dystopian fiction, as it seemed more convenient considering the viewers.

The decisive factor when selecting the episodes that served as case study has been mainly the appearance of Social Media in a way that it could be related to reality. Secondly, the line between fiction and reality had to be thin and controversial in order to allow viewers to draw their own conclusion from the audiovisual product. As a result, the episodes *Nosedive*, *Smithereens* and *Hated in the Nation* were selected. Their analysis is meant to confront what is seen in the fictional story with the perception of reality towards Social Media. To do so, the description of the points to be considered shall include:

- **How social media is depicted.** That covers from the graphic description of the design to the functionality including mechanisms and procedures to make it work.

- **Typical usage by characters.** Reflecting the behaviour of characters who make use of social media and what it enables them to do.

- **What is behind Social Media.** A personal approach on what it implies, how it affects the new way of thinking and understanding the world for the fictional society.

- **How it affects characters.** The consequences of using social media have an impact on the lives of the characters who have their personal regard towards it.

- **The moral of the story.** There is always a message or a conclusion that can be drawn at the end of the episode although it does not have an easy identification and it is not always perceived equally. Personal judgement and the own way to discern fiction from reality will determine the approach of both the author and the viewers.

6.1.- Episode 1 Season 3 – *Nosedive*

Nosedive would undoubtedly be considered the most social media-related episode in the whole anthology series. The plot is about a woman who is desperate to boost her social media score and gets an opportunity when she is invited to a wedding of high-class people (Netflix, 2016).

The kind of social media presented in this episode is ubiquitous and a complement to every human interaction as well as biological involvement. It is accessible from the characters' phone, but they also have some sort of retinal implant which allows them to see other people's name, profile picture and ranking only by looking at them.

Figure 1. Example of visual input with name and ranking seen thanks to eye implants in *Nosedive*; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

From the very beginning, this fact suggests that it is clearly a fictional product although as The Atlantic magazine highlights "it is both dystopian fiction and acute social satire" (Gilbert, 2016). In real life, social media might constitute a big participant in daily activities whereas in

Nosedive, Social Media becomes a system in which society organises itself around numbers and people are ranked out of five. In this ranking system everyone can vote and be voted by peers and it is done either by interaction – getting a coffee, doing small talk in the elevator, crossing paths with someone – or looking at their profile feed, which include the uploads of pictures and videos. Since every little interaction counts, the episode presents a seemingly perfect society where everyone is polite and tries to please others to get as many positive votes as possible.

The social media is depicted with a simple user-friendly interface in both a smartphone version and for bigger devices such as a computer or tablet. The main elements contained include user's name, profile picture, current ranking, photo or video and its description, number of people who voted the post and comments. The way these elements are portrayed in the series shares clear similarities with existing social media.
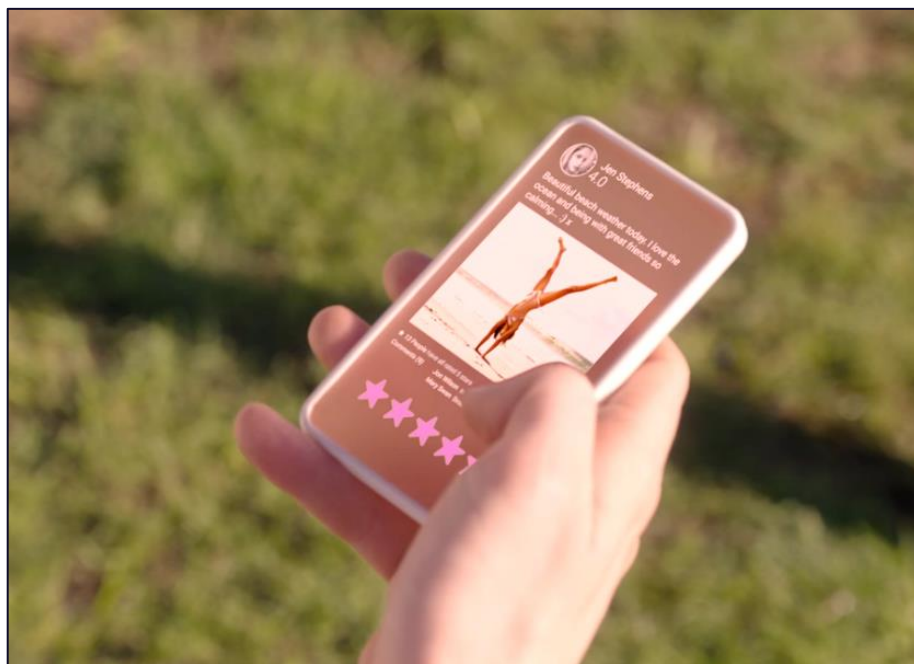
Figure 2. Depiction of social media in the phone-adapted version in *Nosedive*;
Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

In the phone-adapted version, a symbol with five stars is located at the bottom of the post, which makes it simple for users to swipe right and select the score number they want to rate. Similar mechanism and distribution happen in Tinder, where users swipe right to like a profile, or they click on the icons that are also located at the bottom area of the screen. The round frame in the profile picture and the score number next to it remind of Instagram and its "verified badge" which is practically the same design used in Facebook. After the release of the episode,

several online magazines mentioned the intentional characterization of the rating system in their reviews describing it as an Instagram-friendly perfection, as if Pinterest had taken over the world (Framke, 2016) or as a version of Tinder "to the max" (Mullane, 2016).

Apparently, the concept of social media has common features both in fiction and real life, but the distribution, design and functionality of the invented system show signs for a clear identification with Instagram. The following Figures show a comparison of graphic elements between the fictional social media and the interfaces of Instagram and Tinder:
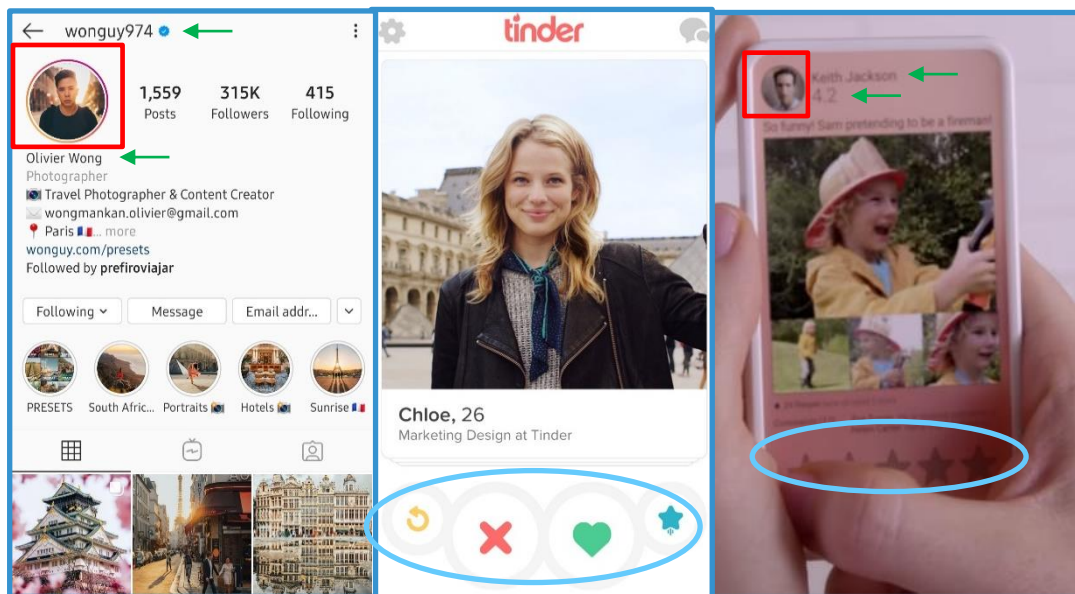
Figure 3. Comparison of Instagram (1), Tinder (2) and the fictional social media (3) in terms of profile picture, name user, ranking or verification badge and rating panel; (1) Retrieved from Instagram; Wong, O.; May 13, 2020; https://www.instagram.com/wonguy974/?hl=en; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from *Fiverr*; cammyb5; May 2019; https://www.fiverr.com/cammyb5/help-you-with-your-tinder-profile; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.
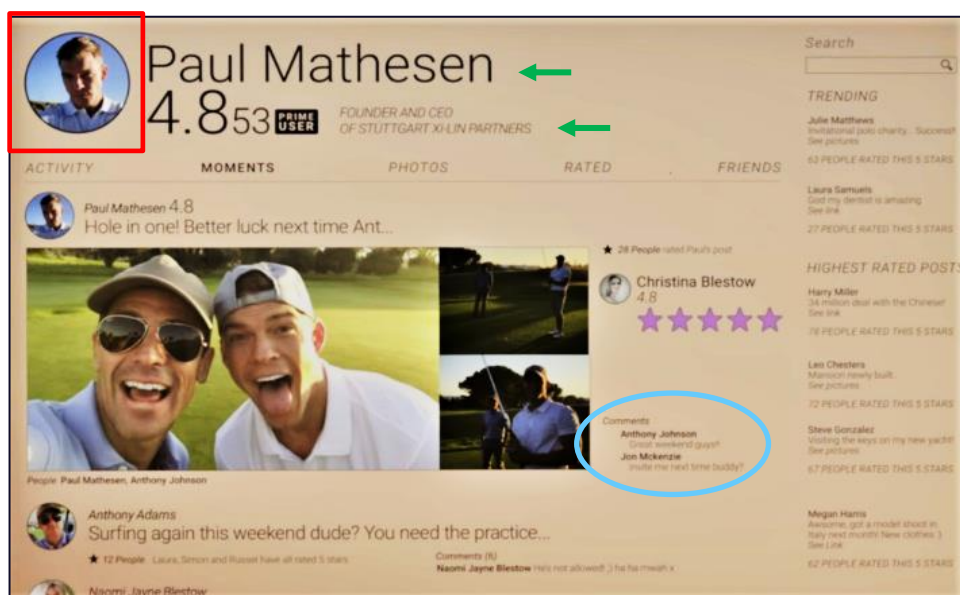
Figure 4. Interface view of the fictional social media version for larger devices and its common graphic elements with Instagram; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

27
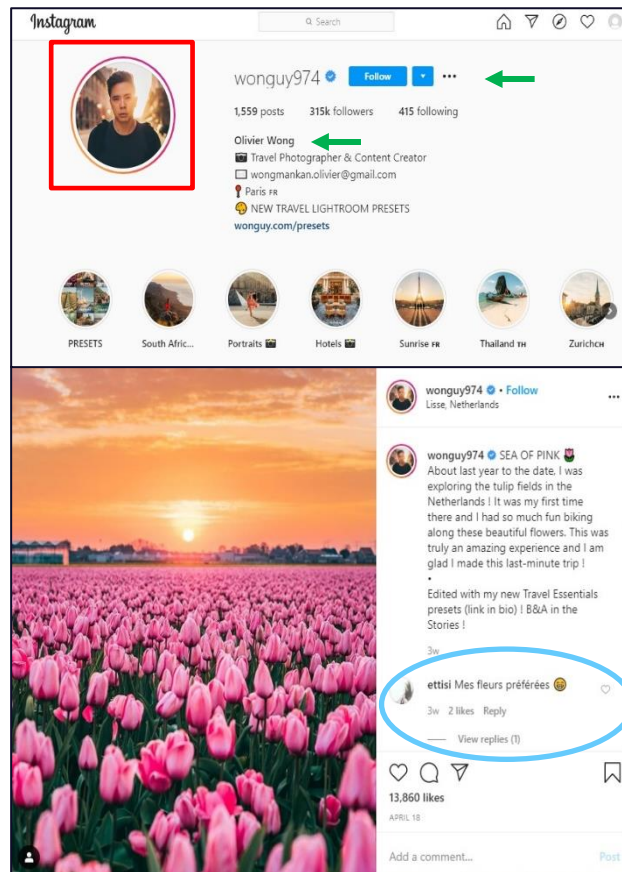
Figure 5. Interface for Instagram's computer version with common graphic elements and post example; Retrieved from Instagram; Wong, O.; April 18, 2020; https://www.instagram.com/wonguy974/?hl=en; screenshot.

Nosedive's social media also offers feedback on the status of the ratings that appear in the form of simple notifications or visual indications. For instance, the message when a post or interaction is rated in the fictional media could be compared to the coloured heart after liking a picture on Instagram. The same thing would apply to the notification received after someone likes our upload or interaction which appears on the phone in a very similar style, with a plain background and not interfering with the home menu.
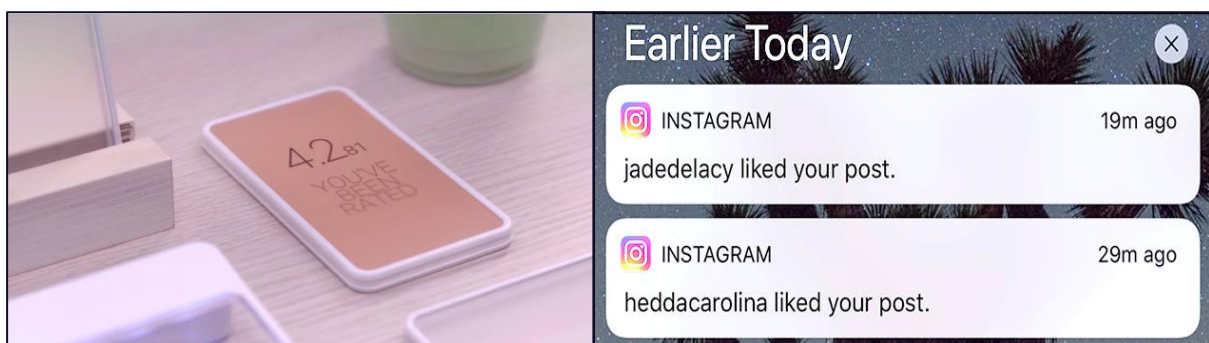
Figure 6. Notification message in *Nosedive* (1) and Instagram (2); Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from *How-to Geek*; Guinnes, H.; November 6, 2017; https://www.howtogeek.com/331346/how-to-make-iphone-notifications-disappear-as-soon-as-you%E2%80%99ve-read-them/
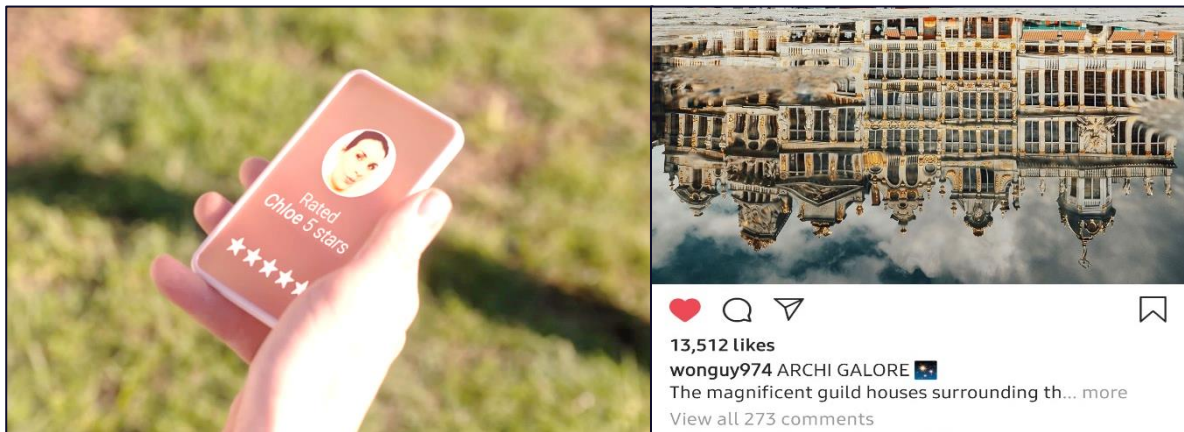
Figure 7. The word "Rated" that appears in *Nosedive*'s social media (1) and the coloured heart in Instagram (2) as an indicator of having rated/liked an upload; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from Instagram; Wong, O.; May 8, 2020; https://www.instagram.com/wonguy974/?hl=en; screenshot.

It is important to point out the need for feedback that revolves around the system. This social media is present in every daily interaction – online or face to face –, and therefore, it encourages users to rate those, regardless of how meaningful they were. At this point it is not Instagram that comes to mind but TripAdvisor, Wish and other similar applications and websites where immediately after purchasing a product or service, users are asked to evaluate them. It does not necessarily involve human interaction, but the question is practically the same as the one in Figure 8: "Would you like to rate this?".
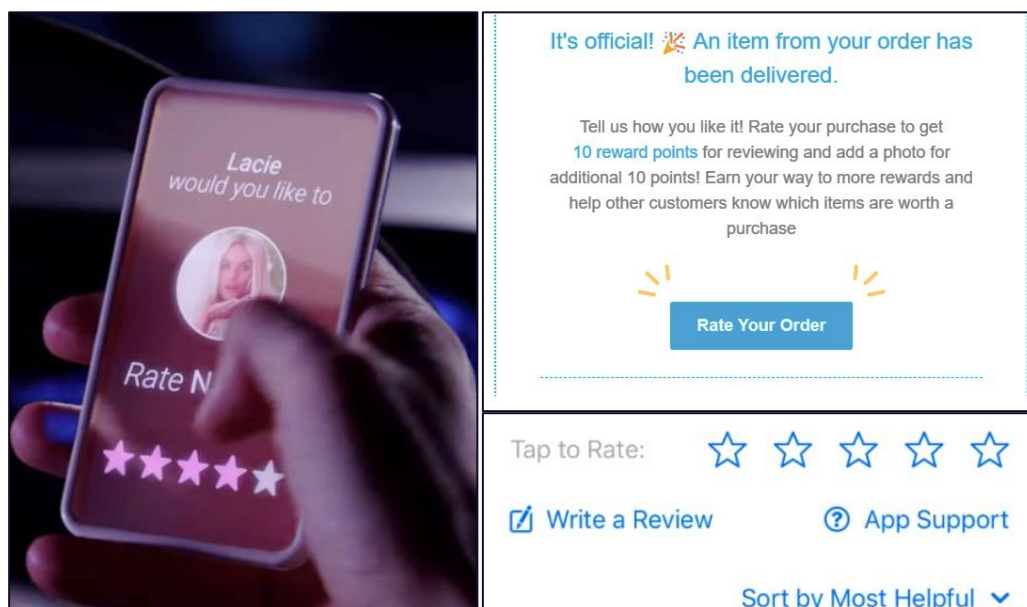
Figure 8. Depiction on feedback and the similarities about rating between fictional social media and real applications. *Lacie would you like to Rate Naomi?* (1) and two different steps in Wish, for computer *Rate Your Order* (2) and its phone version *Tap to Rate* (3); Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) and (3) Retrieved from *Wish*; May 2020; screenshots.

Another feature of this fictional social media includes calls or videocalls in a very similar style of WhatsApp in both their iOS and Android versions.

Figure 9. On-screen view of the call feature in *Nosedive*'s social media (1) and WhatsApp Voice Call for iOS (2) and Android (3); Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from *The Verge*; Chaudhry, A.; April 13, 2020; https://www.theverge.com/2020/4/9/21210345/whatsapp-group-call-how-to-video-audio-text-android-iphone; (3) Retrieved from *Meme*; January 1, 2020; https://me.me/i/96-14-49-whatsapp-voice-call-nani-incoming-swipe-up-to-aaacd4b23e94484cbf00109ae22823f5

And finally, when it comes to functionality, every technology or application must follow some rules established by their creator. The downside of this social media is the possibility of receiving a penalty of a full point down for 24 hours and a "double damage" state where negative votes count double during the same period of time. As the dystopian world of *Nosedive* revolves around social media, the consequences of not using it in an appropriate way have as much negative impact as social benefits when being on a top ranking. It would be the equivalent of having an account shut down or censored for not respecting the terms of use or violating a norm. Although in real life this fact can be inconvenient for users, it is still far from the temporary effect caused in the fictional social media, where not only people might be banned from places or using services but are also forced to ultimately fake their behaviour in order to avoid a negative rating.

Figure 10. Image of penalty (1) and double damage (2) punishments in *Nosedive*'s social media; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshots.

Regarding the typical usage of that social media, the aim is to identify the character's behaviour and how they relate to using the application on their daily basis. It might seem obvious that if it constitutes the main pillar of the system, phones become an attachment to people due to that. However, phone addiction is not only something exclusive of fiction and there are several examples that remind of similar attitudes in real life. The episode starts with the main character, Lacie Pound, jogging in the street with her phone on her hand and taking a selfie while doing exercise. As soon as she crosses paths with other runners, she points the phone at them and provides a rating.

Figure 11. Example of behaviour pattern regarding social media shown in *Nosedive*; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

The omnipresence of phones is also perceived in public places, where characters wait in line to make their orders, or even at a wedding, where guests seem to be more focused on rating the couple than enjoying the ceremony.

Figure 12. Example of social media usage in a wedding ceremony in *Nosedive*; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

The phone or tablet is also there while eating, working, waiting for other people or taking the elevator. The only difference lies in the possibility of giving a score to every single interaction and encounter with other people. Social Media, both in real life and fiction, allows communication between peers and results in particular behaviour when it comes to the online scenario. The eagerness of the protagonist to see who rated her photos and what score she was given could be compared to any social media and especially to Instagram. Likewise, her clear intention to get the attention of Naomi – her Prime User friend – by uploading a post about something they had in common, shows a similar attitude to the actual purpose of social connectivity in existing media.
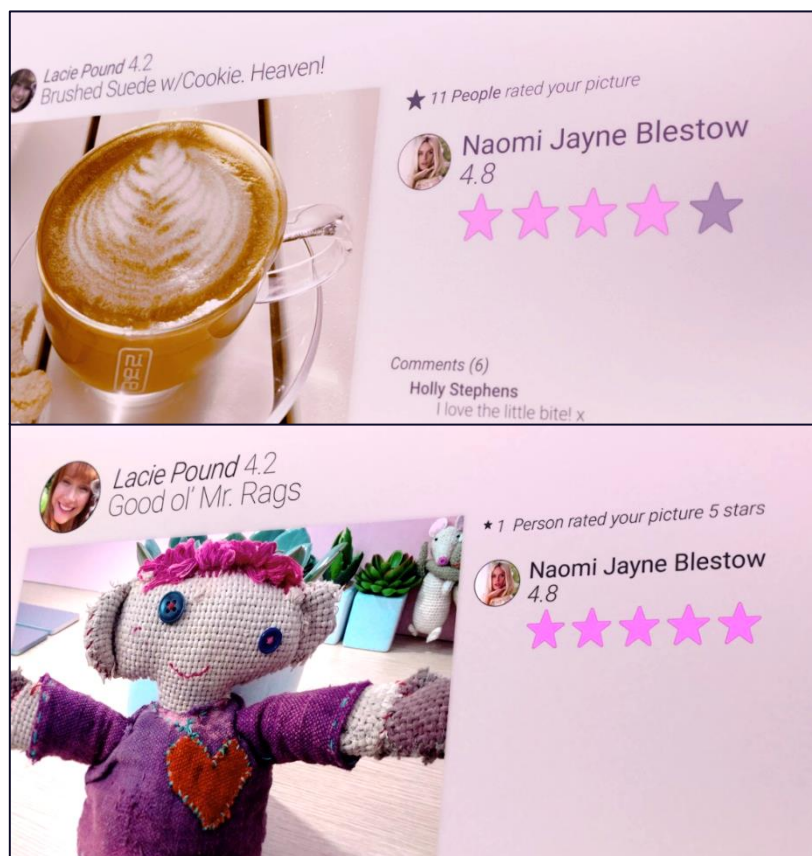
Figure 13. In the episode, Lacie checks for her upload's popularity (1) and takes a photograph to get Naomi's attention (2); Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshots.

Another typical usage seen in this fictional story is how looking at any user's social feed enables characters to establish a face-to-face conversation. Adler (2017) mentions in an article how the episode reflects on the way people is portrayed in media versus reality, but when real life topics are based exclusively on the online content, the fake persona on social media merges with the real life one.

As it has been previously mentioned, society in *Nosedive* revolves around a numbers system established by the social media and the personal ranking of its users. This simple analogy to wealth (Mullane, 2016) implies that the higher the ranking is, the better services, exclusive treatments, discounts and benefits will be available. They present a society where popularity is the key to the perfect lifestyle and constitutes the only way to reach high class and become a Very Important Person. Comparing it to a cast system, the ranking number defines the status of a person and determines all aspects of life, from the level of employability and access to facilities to the kind of transport they are eligible for.

Figure 14. Private facility with entry restrictions (1) and express lane in the car rental company (2) are examples of *Nosedive*'s society; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshots.

The extreme outcome of the ranking system is shown in the episode in a variety of scenes when a co-worker of the main character is not allowed in the building anymore as the doors will not open for him due to a decrease in his number. The same thing happens to the protagonist when she tries to board a plane exclusive for 4.2 people or when she is given the worst rental car of the fleet. The way popularity is portrayed in this fictional story, settles the fact of being a Prime User with the equivalent role of an influencer, a job position which has originated in existing social media that involves getting sponsorships and other financial advantages such as receiving exclusive products or benefiting from hotel stays free of charge.

As utopian as it might seem, there is an existing numbers system sponsored by the Chinese Government, known as Social Credit System, which categorizes people into A, B, C and D according to their score and allows them to take advantage of its perks or be punished for bad scores. Among the consequences is the inability to purchase business-class train tickets, lodge at certain hotels and forbid their children to attend a high school or college of their choosing, showing clear similarities with the happenings in *Nosedive* (Nittle, 2018).

In order to climb the social ladder, several behaviour patterns are developed where the character's attitude results in fake interactions and constant pretension. *Nosedive* takes advantage of that and takes it to an extreme by showing the utterly false comment after a well-planned unnatural picture of a coffee that the character actually despises. The way she bites the cookie and immediately removes it from her mouth, states that the importance of showing an idea of happiness and projecting it through social media opposes to reality.

Figure 15. Lacie takes a carefully planned picture of her coffee and writes a comment that reads: *Brushed Suede w/ cookie. Heaven!* after which she tastes it and dislikes it; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

The concept of social media pretension is often brought up in the episode by the main character's brother, Ryan, who criticises the way people look in some pictures by saying "no one is this happy!", as well as referring to the exclusive apartments Lacie wants to rent as "fake smile jail cells". According to an article by Mamo (2018) characters who disengage from the rating system, like Lacie's brother, develop more legitimate relationships. Thus, the alienation process that the social media produces on her has begun with a bitter feeling for her brother: "I miss the old you, when we could sit down and have conversations, remember?", at which she responds alluding to Ryan's mediocre ranking. What is behind Social Media in *Nosedive* is an attitude towards life based on the possible number of high rates and not on genuine behaviour. For this reason, the episode shows how characters carefully plan their gestures and words in a theatrical way, because the importance of what others perceive overtakes spontaneity.

On the one hand there is Lacie, pretending to drink wine and wear fancy clothes the moment she receives a call from her friend, and writing a wedding speech not with her heart but thinking about pleasing an audience full of potential votes. On the other, her brother Ryan seems to realise that the whole situation is surreal and wishes her good luck with her "performance". Therefore, in a society where honesty is relegated to a non-existent condition and being politically correct is the only thing that matters, one can question the meaning of friendship. For instance, when Lacie bullies a co-worker because other people do, she betrays his friendship not to be looked down by her peers.

The other character that rejects the numbers system is the truck driver, Susan, who learnt it was a hypocritical system after her husband died. She tells Lacie her story in a plain and straight-forward manner with her conclusion: "a lot of my friends didn't care for honesty".

The way Social Media affects the main character is in a form of complete alienation, where she loses focus of the real things and relationships in order to achieve the status that comes with a higher ranking. To do so, she attends a consultant on social media at a company named *Reputelligence* – a combination of reputation and intelligence – where she is told that she needs a social boost. Comparing to real life, it would mean hiring a marketing expert for a company based on a person.

Figure 16. Lacie consults a social media specialist who analyses her interactions in *Nosedive*; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

In *Nosedive*, as well as in existing social media, votes do not have the same value. According to the consultant, ratings from "mid-to-low-range folks" will not grant Lacie the social boost she desperately wants, whereas "quality people" could make the difference. Ironically, it is the man at *Reputelligence* who tells her: "just be you. Authentic gestures, that's the key". The way

social media has created an impact on the character, it becomes difficult to distinguish a genuine attitude from a fake one at that point.

The impact is harder when, due to an unfortunate series of events, she loses a few points that do not allow her to take her plane and the situation escalates. Her frustration leads to yelling, which leads to a considerable loss of points with a penalty and double damage state. As she tries to be nice in all her interactions, she realises that people vote her down because of her number and not her actions, especially when she is hitchhiking and no one wants to pick her up because she is a 2.8. The scene tries to reflect on people's prejudices determined by a rating number, the same way Lacie hesitates to go with the truck driver because she is a 1.4, to which the protagonist doubtfully says: "you seem normal".

Figure 17. People see Lacie hitchhiking and refuse to pick her up due to her ranking (1), same prejudice that she has when she meets Susan (2) in *Nosedive*; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshots.

During their conversation, Lacie acknowledges being aware of the hypocritical system but she believes that following it will be her chance for happiness. In real life society, such belief could be matched to the importance of going to a well rated restaurant or hotel and buying high-ranked products as a way to achieve happiness. In a more fictional approach, the main character does everything in her life for the sake of her ranking, and the social boost that was promised to come with a better lifestyle reward. The alienation process reaches its extreme when she loses all her points, having her eye implants removed and locked in a cell where she can no longer see the numbers.

For her friend Naomi, the impact social media causes on her has the same basis. She acts and behaves according to the system, benefitting from her status as Prime User and bragging about not having "dipped in under a 4.7 in six months". She uses Lacie to get a prestige bounce after discussing with her fiancée that the "vintage bond with a 4.2" looks great in all the simulations they ran. The way social media affects her personality is in caring only about her status and seeking people out of interest rather than pursuing a genuine relationship.

Figure 18. Naomi and her fiancé running simulations on their social media to obtain a prestige bounce at their wedding ceremony in *Nosedive*; Wright, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

There are several messages behind this fictional story, mainly related with the importance of being honest and avoiding falseness and pretension. The episode portrays a person whose only aim in life is being popular in social media and how this results in empty and shallow interactions. The ability to distinguish meaningful relationships to those who only look for their own personal benefit and the idea that social media perfection brings real life happiness are some of the topics the episode intends to reflect on. The reality is that social media does not bring happiness. Erin Brodwin's 2016 article states the following:

Study after study has found that when we engage with social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, we may feel a temporary boost from likes or favorites, but there's absolutely no link between social media use and long-term happiness.

Nosedive is the result of social media obsession and the consequences of putting it ahead of everything to the point of not knowing what matters in real life. An article in the magazine The Verge defines the moral of the story this way: "Technology is exciting, but people are awful, and they keep finding the worst ways to apply it" (Robinson, 2016).

37

6.2.- Episode 2 Season 5 – *Smithereens*

The story told in *Smithereens* contains less fictional elements and more similarities with reality when it comes to the appearance and use of social media. In the episode, a London rideshare driver kidnaps a worker from a social media company and ignites a crisis as his plan unravels (Netflix, 2019). In this context, the kind of society presented seems to share common inputs with the existing one, where people make use of applications and social media through their mobile phones, tablets or other devices in a way that is possible for viewers to associate with the current situation in real life. Thus, moving away from a dystopian world, the episode depicts three different software: Smithereen, Persona and Hitcher App, which seek the identification with Twitter, Facebook and Uber respectively. Within this fictional scope, presenting social media with different names but similar interfaces and functionality helps viewers relate to them through their common elements.

Primarily, the episode revolves around a social media called Smithereen which is portrayed with an exclamation mark logo in a lime green background as corporate colour instead of the light blue of Twitter. It uses the same form as the actual social media, with a personal profile and a thread of posts sharing the same hashtag.
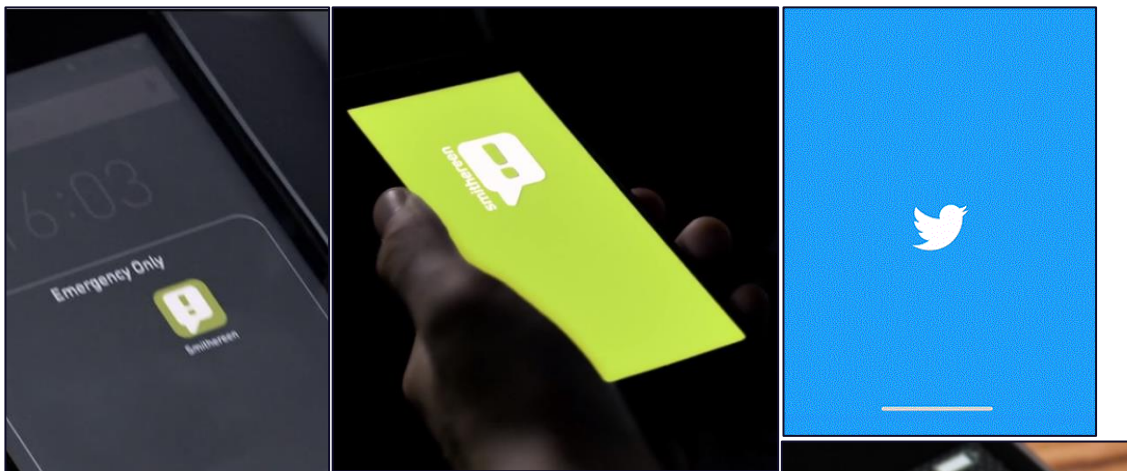
Figure 19. Comparison between Smithereen's icon (1) and loading screen (2) and Twitter (3)(4); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshots. (3) Retrieved from *TechCrunch*; July 19, 2019; https://techcrunch.com/2019/07/19/twitter-tests-a-new-way-to-label-replies/ (4) Retrieved from *ReactNative*; White, E.; January 18, 2018; https://reactnative.dev/blog/2018/01/18/implementing-twitters-app-loading-animation-in-react-native

Figure 20. Similarities between Smithereen (1) and Twitter (2) profiles; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot. (2) Retrieved from *Panacea Social Media*; May 19, 2014; http://www.panaceasocialmedia.com/blog/twitters-new-layout-means-business/
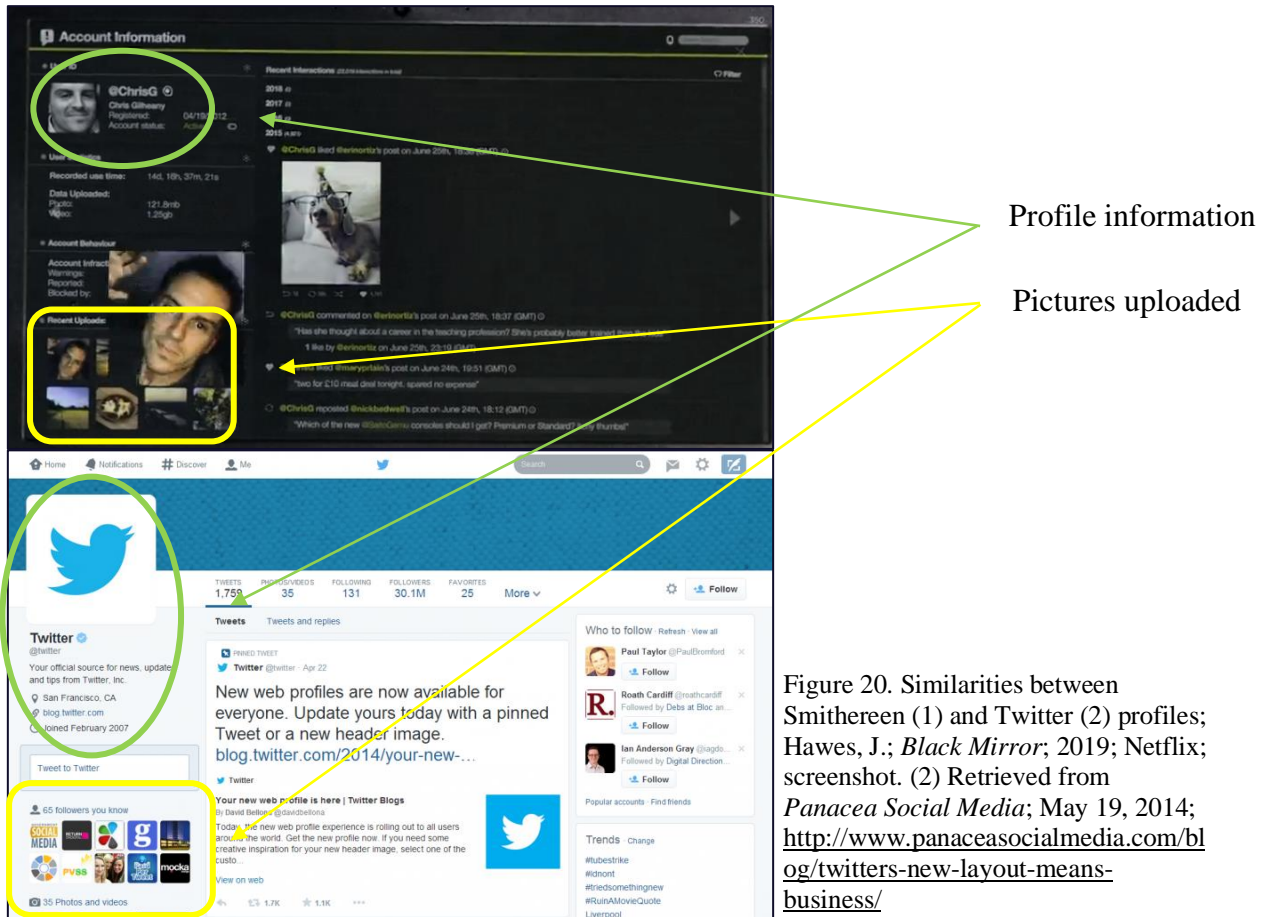
In *Smithereens* there are only a few peeks into the social media application interface, but it shows similarities in profile distribution and functionality with the dark mode screen version of Twitter.
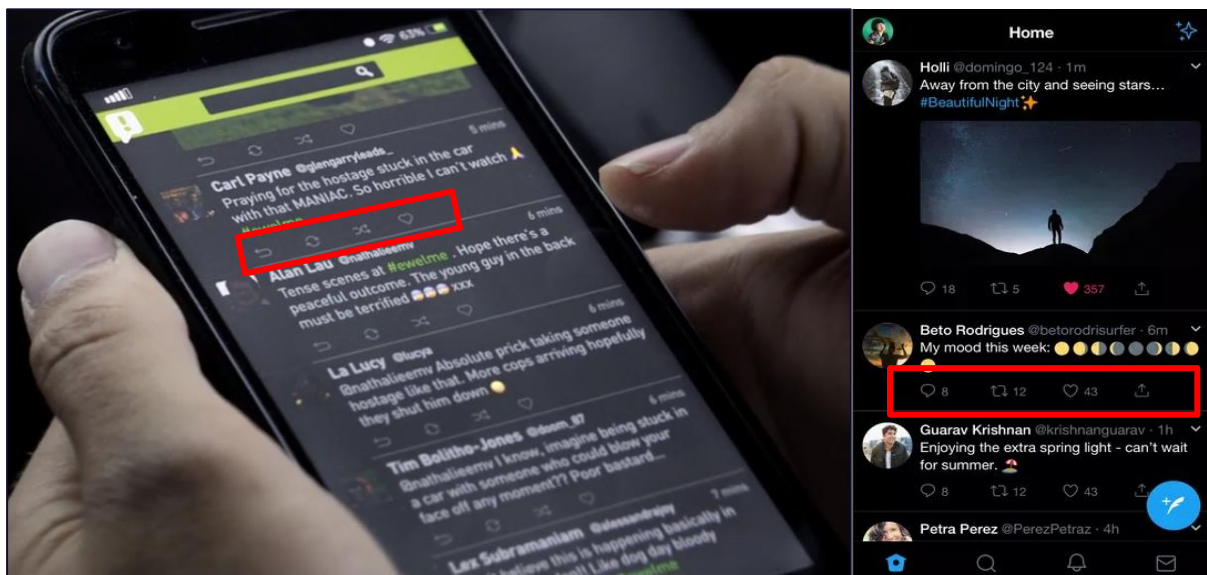

Figure 21. Comparison between Smithereen (1) and Twitter (2) posts thread; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot. (2) Retrieved from *The Verge*; March 28, 2019; https://www.theverge.com/2019/3/28/18285710/twitter-dark-mode-lights-out-even-darker-oled-phones-screens

Corporatism can easily be perceived from the beginning with the Smithereen logo in the buildings of the company, and their location in the financial neighbourhood of London and in San Francisco reminds of the social media companies established in Silicon Valley.

Figure 22. Depiction of corporatism in Smithereen company (1)(2) and Twitter (3); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshots. (3) Retrieved from *The Chronicle*; Mills, C.; September 9, 2014; https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Twitter-employees-threatened-by-ISIS-affiliated-5743023.php

Overall, Smithereen is depicted as a modern company with the features of a business in the technological sector. The way characters describe its facilities and the dress code of its young employees, are some of the allusions made to the modernity and the style some existing social media companies lead nowadays. On a secondary level, the episode portrays another social media called Persona. Whereas its use is not relevant to the plot, it intends to show a credible picture of society where different social media coexist. Its interface shows clear similarities with Facebook, changing the corporative blue of Zuckerberg's company for a shade of purple.

Figure 23. Home Page of Persona (1) and Facebook (2); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot. (2) Retrieved from *Coderglass*; Singh,V.; February 8, 2016; https://www.coderglass.com/social/facebook-style-homepage.php

Both social media include the log-in panel on the right, and their similar motto on the left ("Persona helps you connect with the people who are important in your life" – Persona; "Facebook helps you connect and share with the people in your life" – Facebook).

40

This social media appears in *Smithereens* to reflect on the pain and suffering of a mother when she cannot access the account of her deceased daughter. Persona staff tell her that they are not able to facilitate such information due to the privacy policy terms, but "they will memorialise it if she proves she is next of kin". For the mother, this is not an option because by doing that, the inbox would be deleted, and she expected to find any explanation for her daughter's suicide in there. This side story questions the morality of the system and the procedures of social media towards the impregnability of the accounts.

Figure 24. A grieving mother trying to access her daughter's Persona account on her three attempts per day; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

Finally, one of the applications that appear in *Smithereens* is Hitcher App. Not much is depicted in the episode but there are clear signs of similarities with Uber, Cabify or other ride-sharing companies. The fact that all the details about cost and destination of the ride appear on the app reduces the need for communication between driver and passenger. In addition to that, its use sets the beginning of the story when one of the characters is unaware of the driver's intentions because he is looking at his phone during all the journey, capturing the idea of how much people rely on social apps.
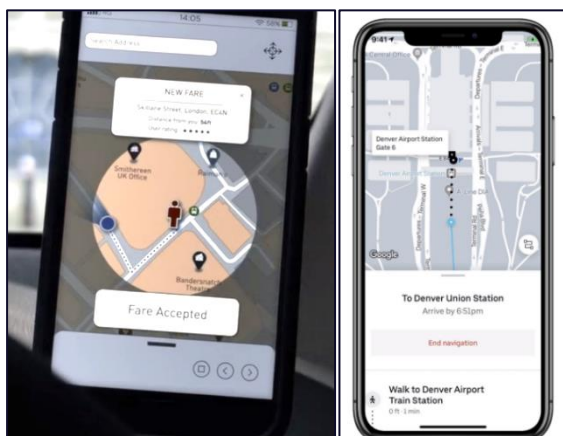

Figure 25. Depictions of Hitcher App (1) and Uber (2); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot. (2) Retrieved from *Medium*; Pangilinan, C.; September 26, 2019; https://medium.com/uber-under-the-hood/expanding-transit-options-on-uber-62d994b00b1e

Figure 26. Examples of the unnecessary communication between driver and passenger (1) and the hostage's sole focus on his phone that makes him unaware of the driver's intentions; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshots.

The usage and functionality of Smithereen is perceived through the main character's description and the actions of some secondary roles. The hashtag system adds to the similarity with Twitter as it presents a feed following a thread on the same topic with its comments, likes and even a retweet sign look-alike. Although there is no further explanation, the connection with the existing social media expects viewers to assume an identical use. On the one hand, the protagonist – Christopher Gillhaney – repeatedly refers to Smithereen as addictive, on the other, there are visual inputs on how people upload content on the social media. The image of some teenagers taking pictures during a police operation reminds of the new figure of a citizen-reporter that started with the birth of social media, where everyone who witnesses any newsworthy event has the authority to share it globally online through social networks.
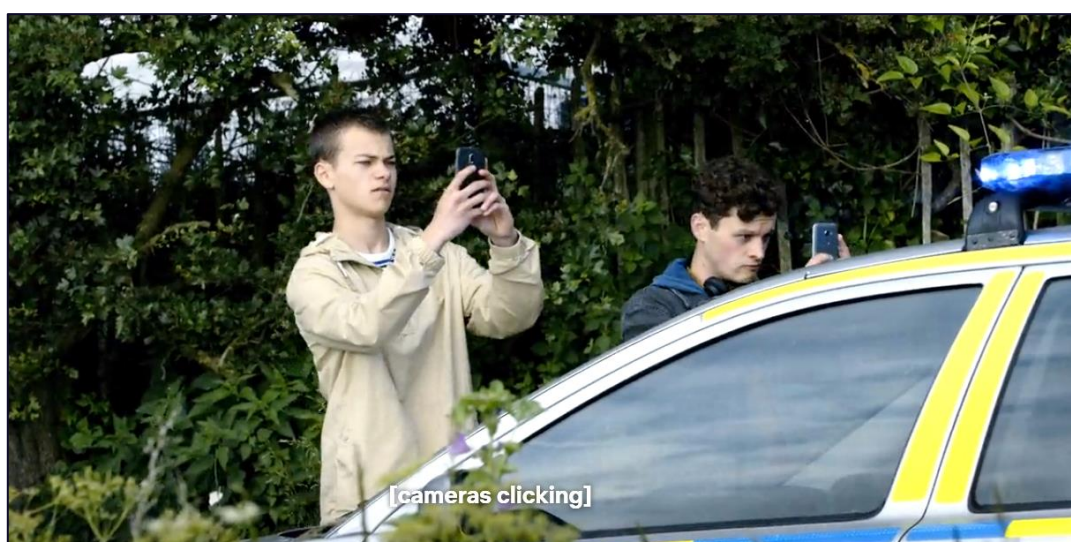

Figure 27. Teenagers take pictures of the ongoing police operation; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

42

At this point, the episode reflects on the idea that social media contributed to taking the role of journalism very lightly, which led to the increasingly familiar term of "fake news" and shows how its use can endanger a police operation. This is exemplified through the situation where one of the teenagers overhears an officer saying that the kidnapper does not actually have a real gun. The information comes from a private conversation inside the car, and when the boy writes a post about it on Smithereen, the kidnapper realises that his phone had been wiretapped and hangs up.
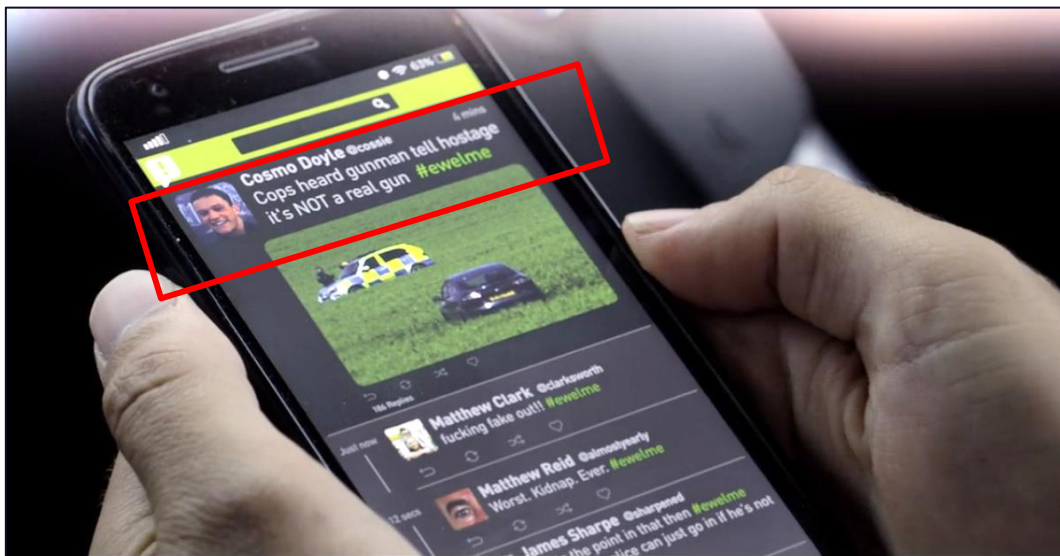

Figure 28. Chris Gillhaney reads about the gun replica in Smithereen; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

Behind the concept of Social Media in *Smithereens* there is a world not much different than what might happen in reality. It shows fictional applications that have so many common traits with existing ones, from which viewers can make the assumption that this is the way they operate in real life. The social media company depicted in the episode has all the information about its users in terms of names, contacts and activity, as well as the account analytics about the type of postings that have been made. This way, the company is always a few steps ahead of the police in the investigation of the suspect Chris Gillhaney.
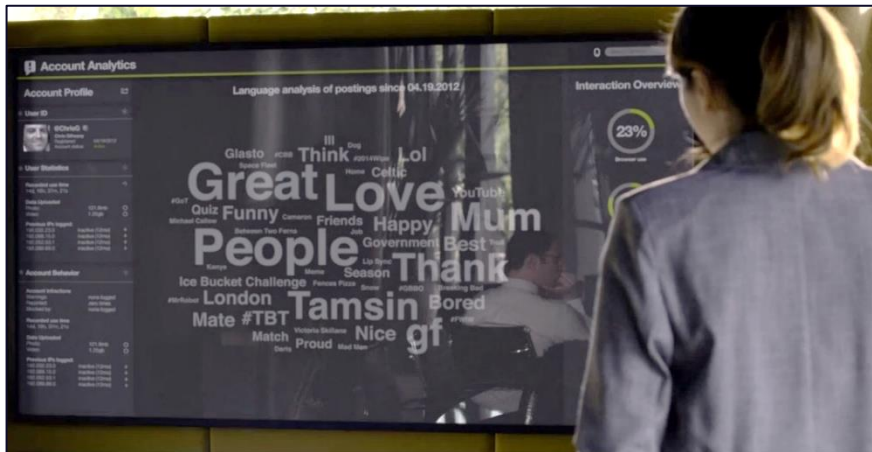
43

Figure 29. Depiction of Smithereen account analytics; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

Since he did not have any criminal record, once the police identify him, Smithereen already knows that he was involved in a car crash where his fiancée was killed. It is the condolences messages and other posts on the social media that reveal this information, which reflects on the perpetuity of all the content users upload to the net. What can be understood from the situation is that social media is a great weapon on population control with the excuse of public safety. The way local police look puzzled during the operation questions its efficiency and authority when they find out that Smithereen actually has more information than them as well as the ability to revert the call signal and listen to the conversation between kidnapper and hostage.

Figure 30. Local police department realises that Smithereen has more information on the suspect; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

Another similarity with real social media is that even the fictional owner of Smithereen, Billy Bauer, is portrayed very much resembling Twitter CEO Jack Dorsey (Chitwood, 2019), with his silent retreat in an isolated location and away from technology. In the episode, he talks about "invoking God mode" before accessing all the data to track down Chris Gillhaney and being able to call him.
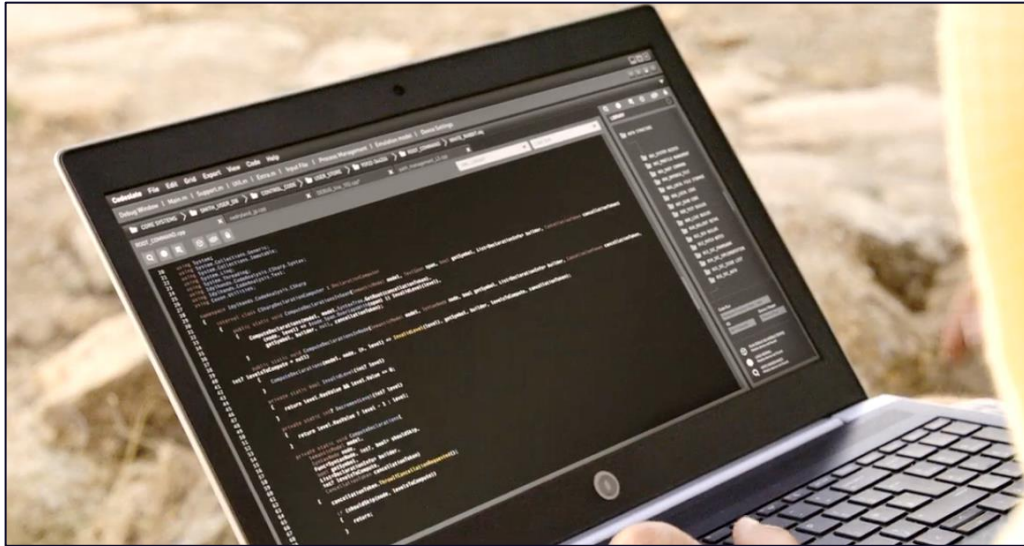

Figure 31. Billy Bauer uses his laptop when invoking "God-mode"; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

That leads to the reflection on the amount of information social media companies have about its users and the power to use it. According to Twitter's Privacy Policy, they can disclose private personal data when it is necessary to operate their services or when it is required by law (Twitter, 2018). Although this information is available for users, it is expected from them to agree with the terms if they want to make use of the application.

The way this social media affects characters is depicted from three different points of view: a former user of the app, Chris Gillhaney; an employee in Smithereen company, Jaden; and its owner Billy Bauer. The greatest impact is caused on Chris, who acknowledges that he was addicted to the social media, and his peek at the notification he had received led to the fatal car accident where he lost his girlfriend. In the episode, police talk about the incident where the driver of the other vehicle was blamed as he proved to be drunk at the time of the accident. So, by making that confession, Chris expresses his guilt and frustration towards Smithereen, which was the reason he carefully planned to kidnap one of its employees to use as hostage. He does not have a specific target, but he wants to let Billy Bauer know personally how harmful his social media can be.
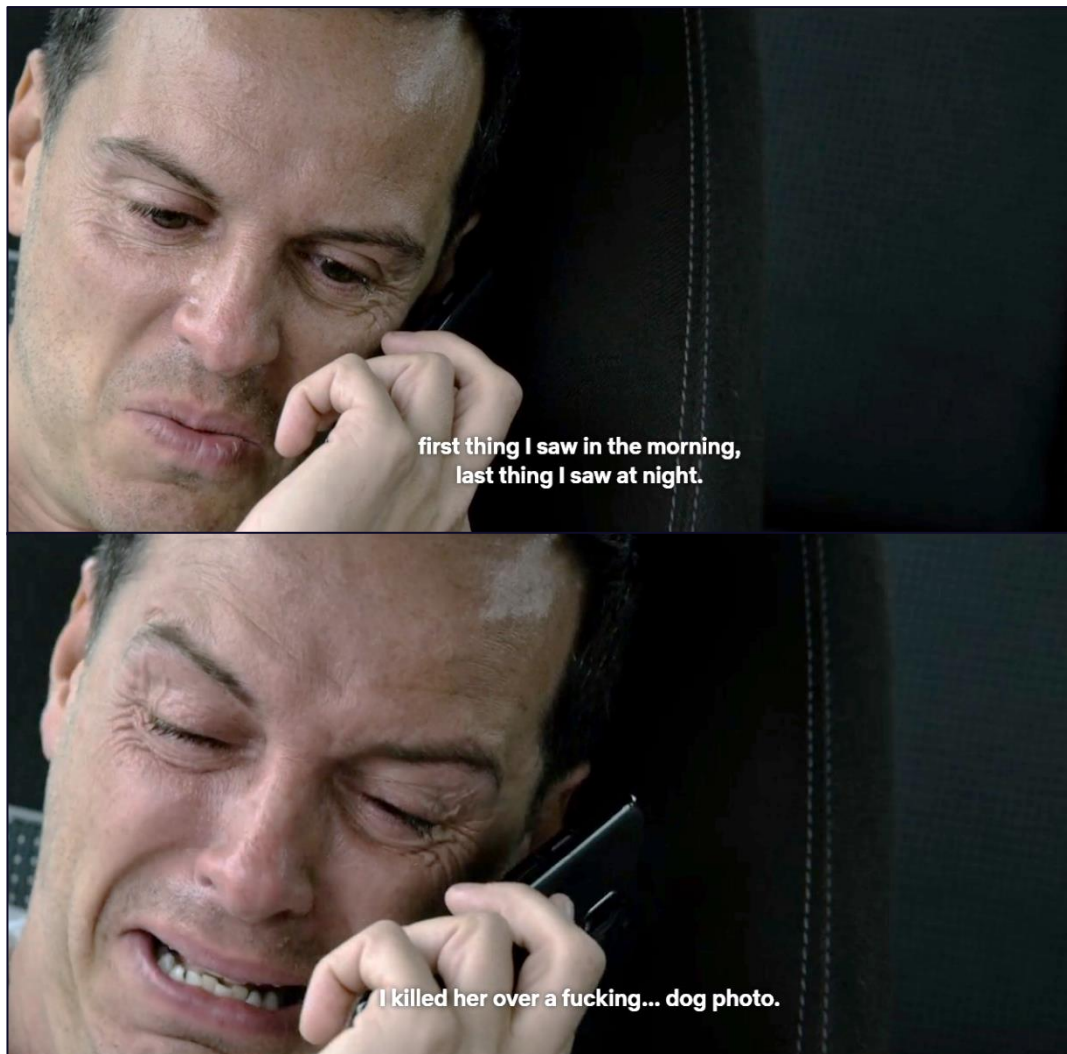
Figure 32. Chris Gillhaney assumes his addiction (1) and confesses the accident was his fault (2); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshots.

The hostage is collateral damage although he could have prevented the kidnapping had he not been looking at his phone. He fears that the company will not pay a ransom for him but sympathises with the kidnapper after hearing his story and understanding the fatal consequences of social media addiction.

For Billy Bauer, it affects him in a way that he admits having lost control of the social media he created and acknowledges that Smithereen is meant to be addictive although he cannot do anything about it. Despite the advice he gets from the members of the board and the FBI, he decides to engage in a conversation with Chris and tries to show sympathy by granting him the petition he makes involving the social media Persona.

Figure 33. Billy Bauer acknowledges the social media he created turned out into something he cannot control; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

When it comes to the moral of the story, it is perceived that *Smithereens* revolves around social media addiction, and by extension, mobile phone dependence. Throughout the episode, there are subtle reminders of how people use their phones for everything and everywhere, as well as the explicit dialogue of characters alluding such addiction.
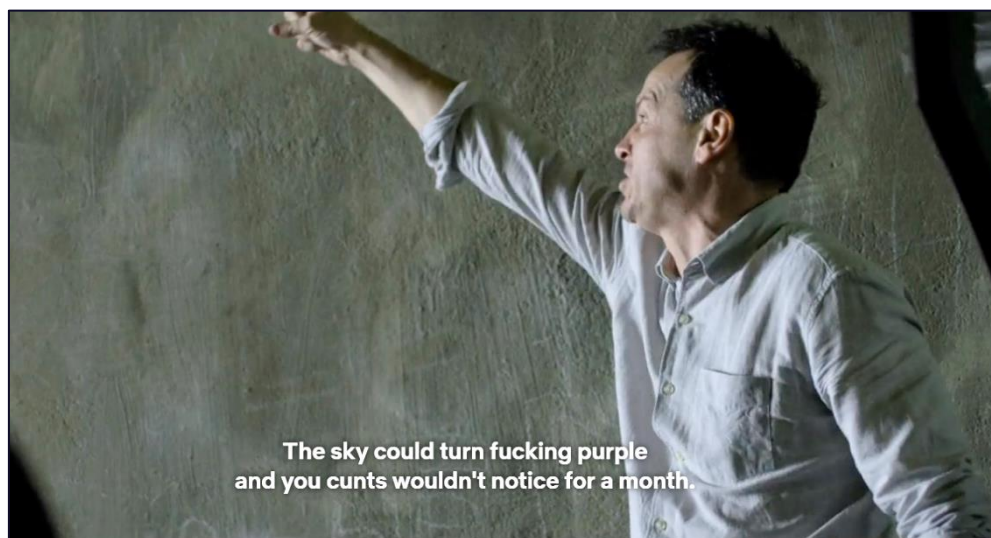

Figure 34. Chris referring to phone addiction; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshot.

Even the song Chris hears in the background while holding the line is "Can't take my eyes off you" by Frankie Valli, another allusion to the people's attitude towards social media both in fiction and in real life. In the episode, the fact that the teenagers pulled out their phones to take pictures of the police operation, reflects on the necessity some people have to upload content incessantly regardless of the impact it may have.

In fact, the open ending shows a series of images of people looking at their phones while walking in the street, or even being distracted at the wheel for peeking at their new notifications, without knowing for certain the final situation of the driver and hostage, as a sign that the outcome is not what matters. Due to this, an interesting approach is taken by *Collider.com*, which considers the inconclusive ending as a sign of what happens in reality when people resume their activities "business as usual" after witnessing tragic events. *Smithereens* portrays this nowadays society that has become desensitized to violence when they receive alerts on horrific events, but then go on about with their routines (Chitwood, 2019).

Figure 35. People looking at their phones at the end of *Smithereens*; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2019; Netflix; screenshots.

6.3.- Episode 6 Season 3 – *Hated in the Nation*

The inclusion of the words "social media" in the plot description of the three episodes selected for this dissertation is one shared characteristic that stands outs despite the variety of elements contained in each story. *Hated in the Nation* is a detectives' tale with a crucial role of social media. Although there are a few differences between synopsis, Netflix (2016) describes the episode as the investigation that two detectives carry out after the death of a journalist at the centre of a social media firestorm. More revealing is Google's description of the plot, which places the story in the near future, where two detectives investigate mysterious deaths linked to social media (Google, 2016). The fact that it is considered a near future, gives an idea of what viewers might expect when watching the last episode of *Black Mirror*'s third season.

The main input for assuming *Hated in the Nation* is set in a near future, is the presence of robot bees with artificial intelligence as the only dystopic element. The creation of those drone bees or ADIs (Autonomous Drone Insects) was the result of regular bees dying out and the effort of technological companies and governments to prevent dramatic environmental consequences. Apart from that, the way actions and people are presented in this fictional product – as well as the social media depicted – share common elements with reality. Such episode reality includes a variety of media from television and radio to online newspapers, and these, in turn, involve dealing with controversial topics, uncovering scandals and feeding chat shows. The social media where people express their disagreement or discontent is depicted in a very simple way, allowing space for short texts with the possibility of mentioning other users through the symbol "@" and to group the messages with the use of hashtags following "#". Although nowadays most of existing social media understand the code @ followed by a name to tag or mention users, and the hashtag after # as a summary of the topic or issue expressed, the characteristics in the design of the fictional social media undoubtedly reminded of Twitter.

There is a similar distribution of elements, with the profile picture and information on the left, and the display menu on the centre top. The user name is preceded by the symbol @ and includes information about the number of followers and posts. The thread on the right is the feed with the messages targeted at that user, and below the text there are also similar icons to share or like the comment.
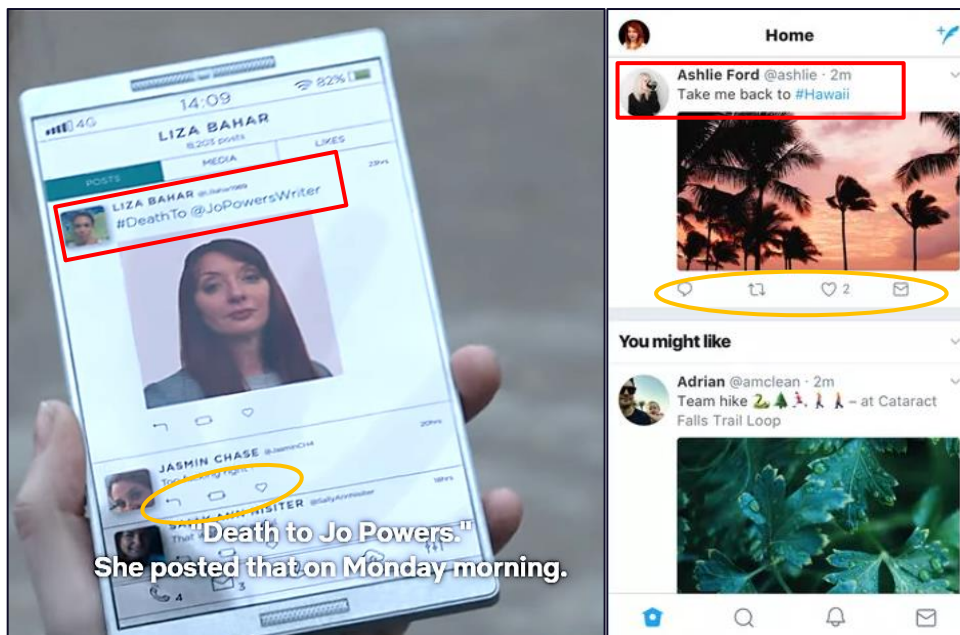
Figure 36. Comparison between social media in *Hated in the Nation* (1) and Twitter (2); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from *Breaking911*; February 10, 2015; https://breaking911.com/breaking-twitter-cfos-account-hacked/

In the mobile-friendly version, the interface is simpler but presenting the same similarities to Twitter in terms of text, media and icons.

Figure 37. Comparison between social media in *Hated in the Nation* (1) and Twitter (2); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from *The Verge*; Newton, C.; June 15, 2017; https://www.theverge.com/2017/6/15/15804508/twitter-redesign-ios-android-tweetdeck-twitter-lite

Apart from the Twitter-like network, there is a glimpse of another social media which could be associated with YouTube because of the video features that include a title below. Although it is not relevant to the story, the quick depiction of the social media and the role of Youtubers in that fictional society is worth mentioning in order to identify their similarities.
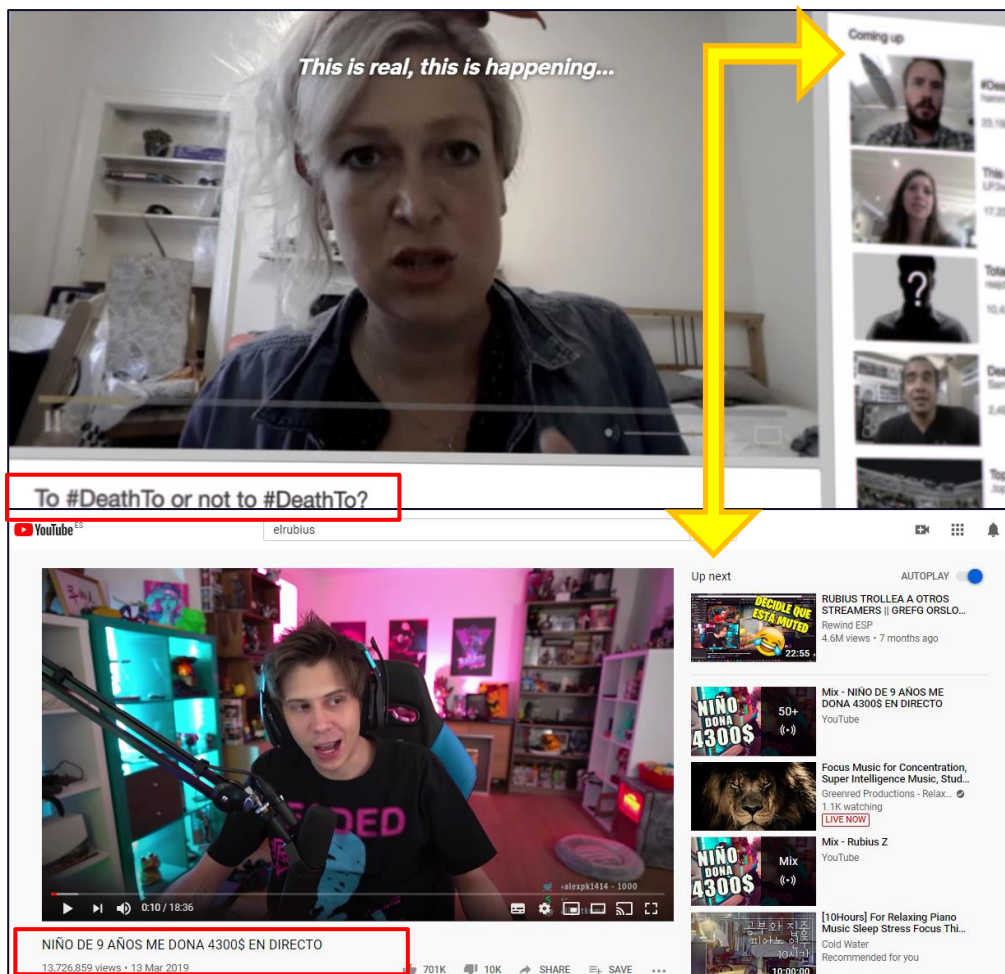
Figure 38. Comparison between a video platform in *Hated in the Nation* (1) and Youtube (2); Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from Youtube; Rubius Z; March 13, 2019; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GuaWagn7sOU; screenshot.

In terms of social media functionality, the only use shown in the episode is to discuss news, write hatred messages targeted at celebrities or public figures and use the hashtags that are in the current affairs agenda. *Hated in the Nation* has no necessity to show other purposes around this social media as viewers already assume its function, and the existence of these kind of comments makes it resemble reality. The following example shows a comparison between the fictional hatred messages targeted at the character Jo Powers and the actual comments made on Twitter by an American rapper who expressed his hate and racism towards Chinese people due to the recent covid-19 outbreak.

The fictional comments read: (i) "Straight up I'd just laugh if that @JoPowersWriter bitch got killed" (ii) "SIGN THE PETITION!!! GET @JoPowersWriter SACKED NOW!!!" and (iii) "@JoPowersWriter die in a fire" whereas the existing message on Twitter stated: "Chinese people nasty asl man got the whole [world] fuck up".

51

Figure 39. Fictional comments (1) shown in *Hated in the Nation* vs. actual comment (2) made by LilReese300; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot; (2) Retrieved from *Nestia*; NextShark; March 13, 2020; https://news.nestia.com/detail/-/3704437

Thus, the episode revolves around the actual situation in social media where people use their words carelessly, allowing hatred, violent and racist messages to spread out through the net. The idea that words cannot kill is totally reversed in the story when the detectives manage to link mysterious deaths with the use of the hashtag #DeathTo. And ironically, when tracking down a woman who used said hashtag, she appeals to her freedom of speech.
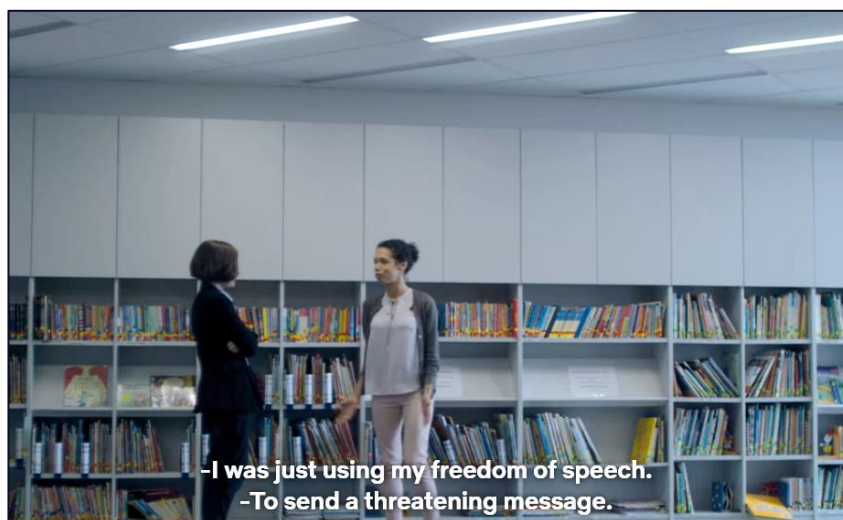

Figure 40. Woman who used the hashtag appealing to her freedom of speech; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

This is an indicator that in the fictional series – as well as in real life – users consider threats or aggressive comments as part of an online game that has no real consequences. When asked about the reason for using the #DeathTo hashtag, the woman replies: "it's not real, it's a joke thing", which might indicate similar online behaviour when it comes to real life social media. To exemplify the power of a hashtag and how people apparently use them lightly, the episode introduces the case of a woman who suffered cyberbullying and that led her to attempt committing suicide.

52

Figure 41. Explanation of the woman who suffered cyberbullying in *Hated in the Nation*; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

At this point, viewers understand that the person who came up with the plot was trying to appeal to the self-responsibility of using hate messages online and started his plan of hacking the robot bees to make them carry out the murders. The hacker spread the "game of consequences" on social media with easy instructions stating that the target with higher number of #DeathTo posts would be killed every day after 5pm.

Figure 42. Instructions for the "Game of Consequences" portrayed in *Hated in the Nation*; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

Behind the use of social media portrayed in *Hated in the Nation* there is an extremely opinionated society where each individual believes they are the rightful judges over others – at least, online – as they feel free to post comments without experiencing consequences of any kind. To give an example, the first targets to be murdered were a journalist who had written a controversial article criticising a martyr who was in a wheelchair, a singer who mocked a little boy, and a girl who took a nasty picture of herself next to a war memorial monument. The situation worsens once people discover that the hashtag carries out its purpose and they end up making a media circus out of it and turning it into a popularity contest where the final prize is death. The figure below shows a depiction of the top five candidates on the "hashtag death poll" broadcast in a television channel, and an example of a post which intends to tag someone "who deserves it, like a racist".
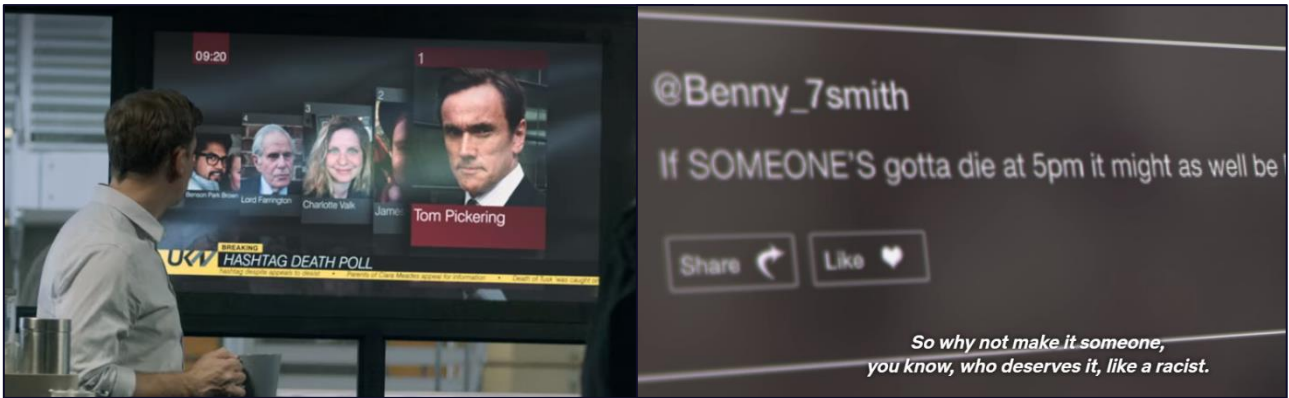
Figure 43. Examples of media and users' reactions when the lethal hashtag is made public; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

The episode also wants to reflect on the power of internet in the hands of citizens who use it to rage and accuse others, as well as the phenomenon of viral threads. *Hated in the Nation* reduces the nature of such posts to hatred and insults, which, for some reason, become a trend and eventually get everyone on board with spreading its content and making it viral. Thus, the reflection is about why some users decide to get carried away and participate in such online trends, especially when they involve negative messages. And this is precisely what the fictional character of the hacker who set the scheme in motion wanted to point out. As the detectives carry out their investigation, they discover a hidden encrypted manifesto in the hacker's hard drive with an article under the name "Freedom of (hate) speech?", where people are urged to acknowledge individual responsibility on their hate comments and posts online. One of the meaningful sentences of the manifesto – depicted below – reads: "You are not clickbait. Words are weapons. Actions have consequences". That represents a revealing conclusion of the attitude people show in the episode's social media.

Figure 44. Pages of the hacker's manifesto in *Hated in the Nation*; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

On the other hand, the link between the social media and the drone bees uncovers the government classified measures to spy on citizens and control them. The fact that the bees contained a sensor with a small camera granted government security services access to the visual feed, and once the bees were hacked, they were able to recognise the picture uploaded next to the hashtag #DeathTo, locate and attack the target. This fictional product relates the existence of social media with total nationwide surveillance – through robot bees and security cameras – and questions the disclosure of data such as pictures or location pinpoints for governmental purposes.

Figure 45. Depiction of a drone bee observing its target on top of a CCTV; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

Towards the end of the episode, viewers can see the way this fictional social media really affects the characters. So far, it affected the picked targets with death, after they had achieved the higher number of posts following #DeathTo. What happens in the final twist in the story is that the hacker overwrites the source code, and since the drone bees had been keeping a record of every single person who had used the deadly hashtag through their IMEI numbers, they are the ones who become the target. Firstly, users did not feel shame or guilt on posting raging comments or signing petitions to destroy a person's career. Once they learn the real consequences, there are different views about it but some of them still want to make use of the hashtag for whichever reason they consider justifiable. Finally, they pay the price with their lives in a similar manner, when "the gun firing the #DeathTo bullet turns out to have been pointing both ways" all along (VanDerWerff, 2016).

Figure 46. Scene in the episode where characters find out the real purpose of the deadly hashtag; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

Hated in the Nation intends to make viewers reflect on the consequences of their actions, especially when it comes to the online content they produce or spread out. The moral of the story is presented explicitly through the point of view of the hacker, adopting his moral lesson to teach what he considers the appropriate behaviour on social media.
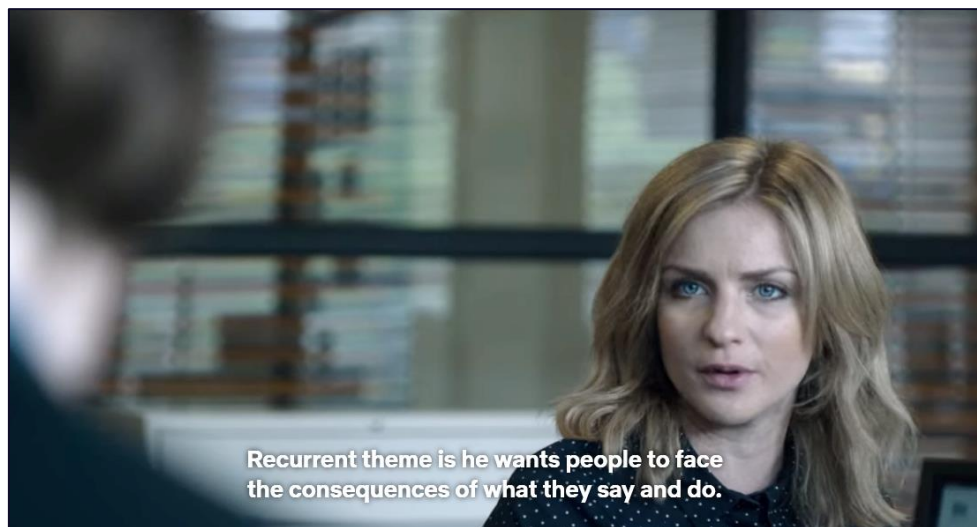
Figure 47. The explicit moral lesson stated in *Hated in the Nation*; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

Visibly influenced by the person who tried to commit suicide after suffering cyberbullying, the idea of both the hacker and the episode, is to raise awareness about the fact that some users carelessly posts what they might consider harmless comments, which actually have a whole repercussion they cannot elude. The fatal ending is a pessimistic approach about social media and its misuse to send threatening and slandering messages or even to release one's frustration.

Another worth considering aspect of society portrayed in the episode is the role of social media and its volatile presence on the internet. Both in the fictional and existing society, people learnt to coexist with the volatility of internet and its peak trends which involve a big amount of information and controversy that generates a media storm, after which all the data is quickly forgotten. It seems as if one of the functions of social media is to provide with an open free space to express frustration and get into debates for the sake of arguing without considering other people's feelings or wellbeing.
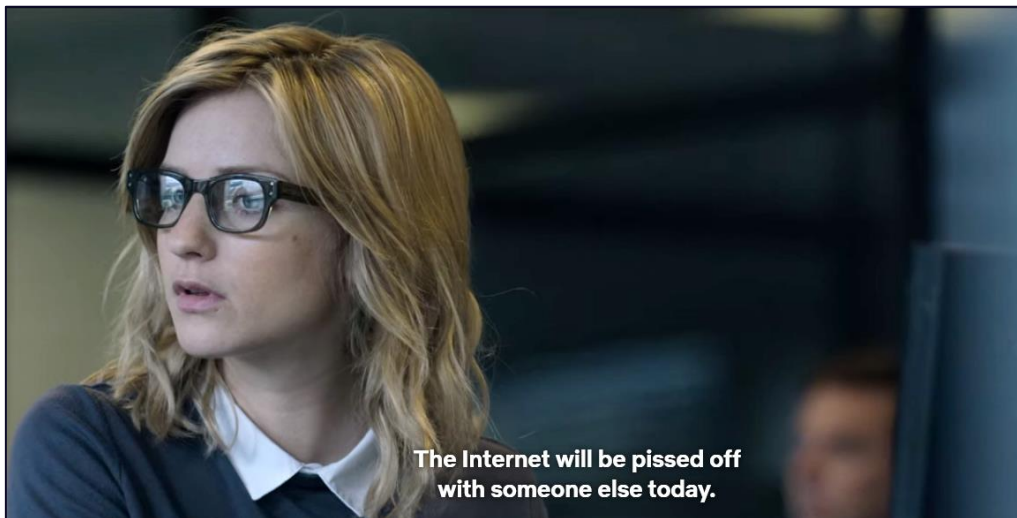
Figure 48. Caption of a dialogue between detectives: "the Internet will be pissed off with someone else today" which explains internet's volatility; Hawes, J.; *Black Mirror*; 2016; Netflix; screenshot.

Apart from reflecting on the users' attitude on social media and questioning their morality, *Hated in the Nation* might present itself with more than one moral lesson or criticism. According to the magazine *The Verge*, it is unclear if the episode revolves around online bullying, psychopaths with manifestos, our collective willingness to jump on a pithy hashtag, drones, government surveillance or our ignorance of the plight of the honeybee (Plaugic, 2016).

It is likely all of the above but focusing on the role social media plays in society, the episode warns of its great power of influence and the risks of misusing it, which in turn implies that people should measure the consequences of their online actions.

7.- RESULTS ANALYSIS

The following section will allow the verification of the research by establishing a link between the analysis of each case study and the answers from viewers. For this reason, the questionnaires have been analysed separately according to the objectives of the storyline portrayed in each of the episodes but using the same system for measuring the three of them. Since this research follows a mixed methodology, quantitative results have been presented in a descriptive manner in the shape of charts or graphs. For qualitative answers, they have been observed individually and then organised in categories according to topic. Foreseeing a margin of error of 5%-10% should be an option for those answers presenting any kind of anomaly or different perception from average. It must be taken into account that the sample population includes viewers who have very little to no social media experience, and hence their point of view about pattern recognition might differ from others. Nonetheless, this research does not attempt to establish correlations between age and use of social media but rather their perception and conclusions about its usage after viewing a fictional audiovisual product.

The results presented below are the analysis of each question whose answers have been grouped according to the two main areas of study in this dissertation. For every episode's questionnaire, the information has been organised in the following manner:

- Identification of patterns in the fictional series including (i) social media identified and (ii) message perceived.

- Attitudes in real life including (iii) personal use of social media and (iv) behaviour patterns.

7.1.- Episode 1 Season 3 – *Nosedive*

The following results and percentages are based on a total number of 55 participants.
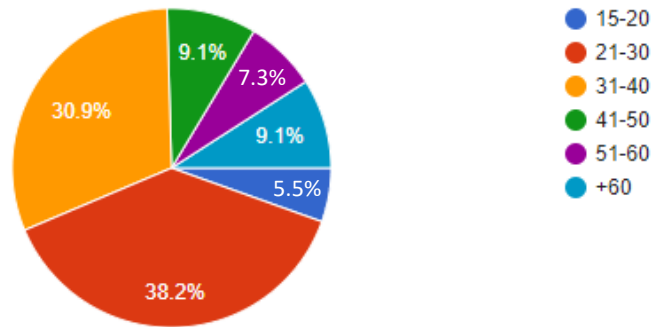
- Age: (question 1)

Figure 49. Age range of participants in the questionnaire for *Nosedive*.
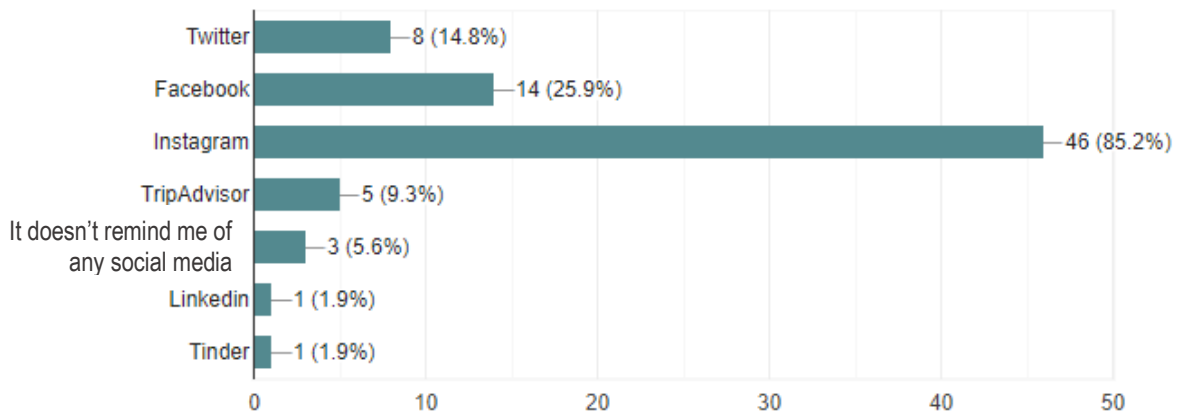
- Social media identified: (question 2)

Table 3. Existing social media identified in *Nosedive*.

Table 3 shows the multiple-choice answers with the total number of votes each social network received. In the breakdown of responses, 31 participants selected only Instagram as the existing social media that led to such identification, which represents a significant number over the more reduced percentage of viewers who considered a mix of other options.
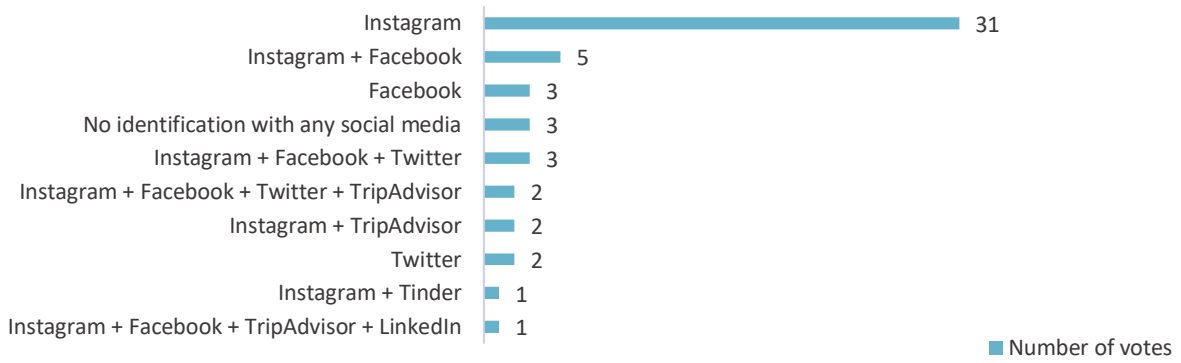
Table 4. Breakdown of votes belonging to social media and participants who selected more than one option.

- Message perceived: (questions 3, 17)

Most of viewers agreed on the fact that the episode portrays a <u>negative</u> view on the use of Social Media.
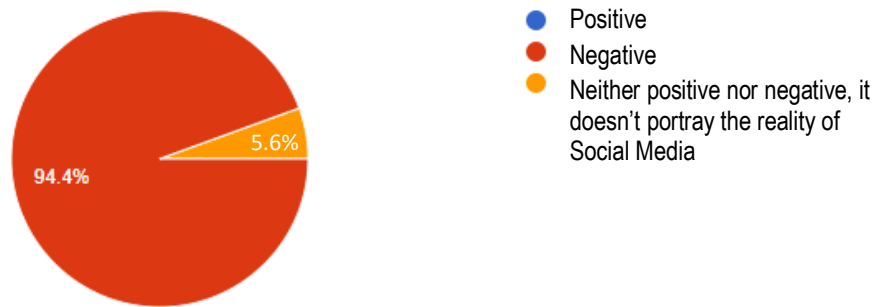

Figure 50. Results of the question: *do you think the episode portrays a positive or negative view on Social Media?*

Qualitative answers related to the moral of the story followed more than 16 different ideas and trends that have been categorised into six broad content areas.
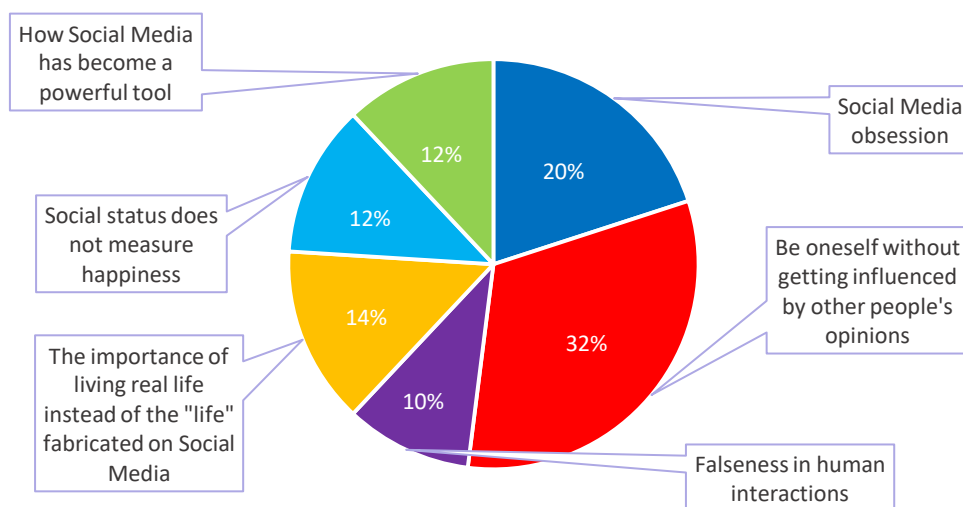
Figure 51. Qualitative results grouped into six main areas to define the moral of the story.

The conclusions about the message perceived in *Nosedive* are broken down in the following percentages with answer examples[7]:

-   32% → Be oneself without getting influences by other people's opinions.

    "We should live life without considering the others' opinions, just being oneself and behaving however we want"

-   20% → Social Media obsession.

    "We live in a world so obsessed with social media and appearance that we forget about what really matters"

-   14% → The importance of living real life instead of a fabricated one on Social Media.

    "Don't live by and for the image you want others to see of you"

-   12% → How Social Media has become a powerful tool.

    "It is simply another social tool that generates in us a form of control and numbness"

-   12% → Social status does not measure happiness.

    "Living to get high marks even knowing that you are living a lie"

-   10% → Falseness in human interactions.

    "The fragility of false or politically correct social interactions"

One uncategorised response referred to the prejudices people have when they do not know the reason behind some actions: *"we cannot be judged by some acts we do"*.

These results show the fact that *Nosedive* contained several messages, all of which have been identified by viewers. They show the trend on perceiving the general moral of the story, comparing to those who focused on one aspect of it.

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[7] Answers that were originally written in Spanish have been translated for the dissertation.

- Personal use of Social Media: (questions 10~13)

More than 80% of participants were Instagram users, which validates the identification of the social media portrayed in *Nosedive*.
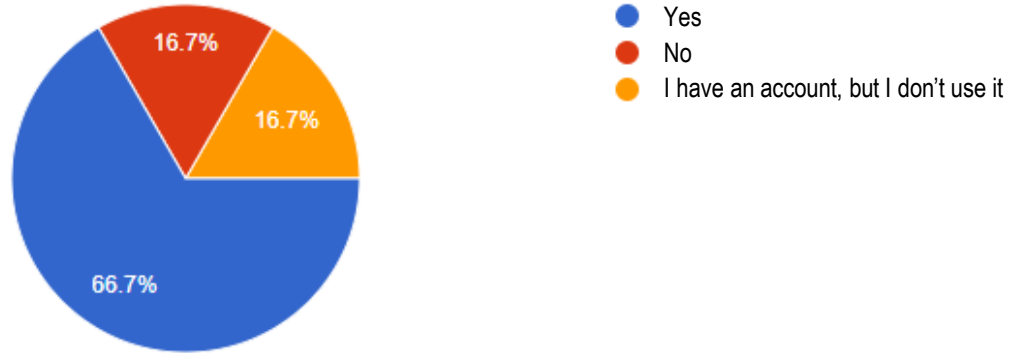

Figure 52. Results of the question: *are you an Instagram user?*

They mentioned up to 9 reasons why they use Instagram. Due to such diverse functionality, the following chart establishes the number of times each purpose has been stated. The multiple answers belong to those participants who currently use Instagram or used it in the past.
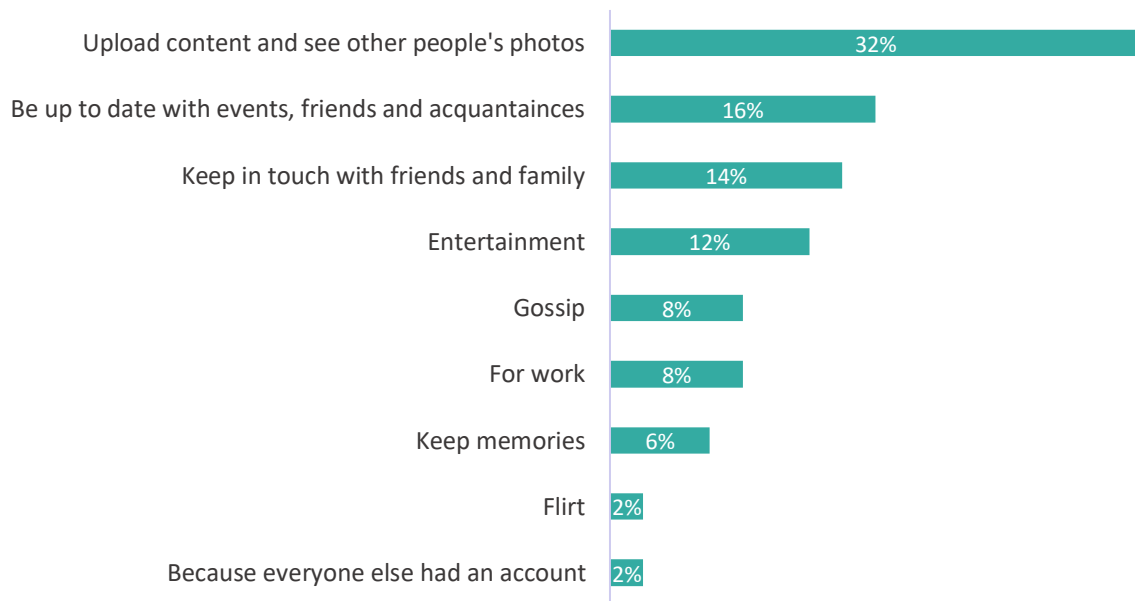
Table 5. Qualitative results grouped into reasons for using Instagram.

Almost three quarters of the participants had left (at least once) a negative review online.
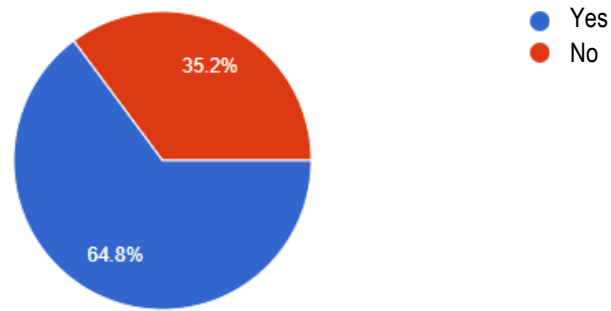

Figure 53. Results of the question: *have you ever given bad rating online?*

When asked about the reason for the bad review, 35 responses were submitted. In general terms, such action was taken to complain about receiving bad service, especially in hotels and restaurants.
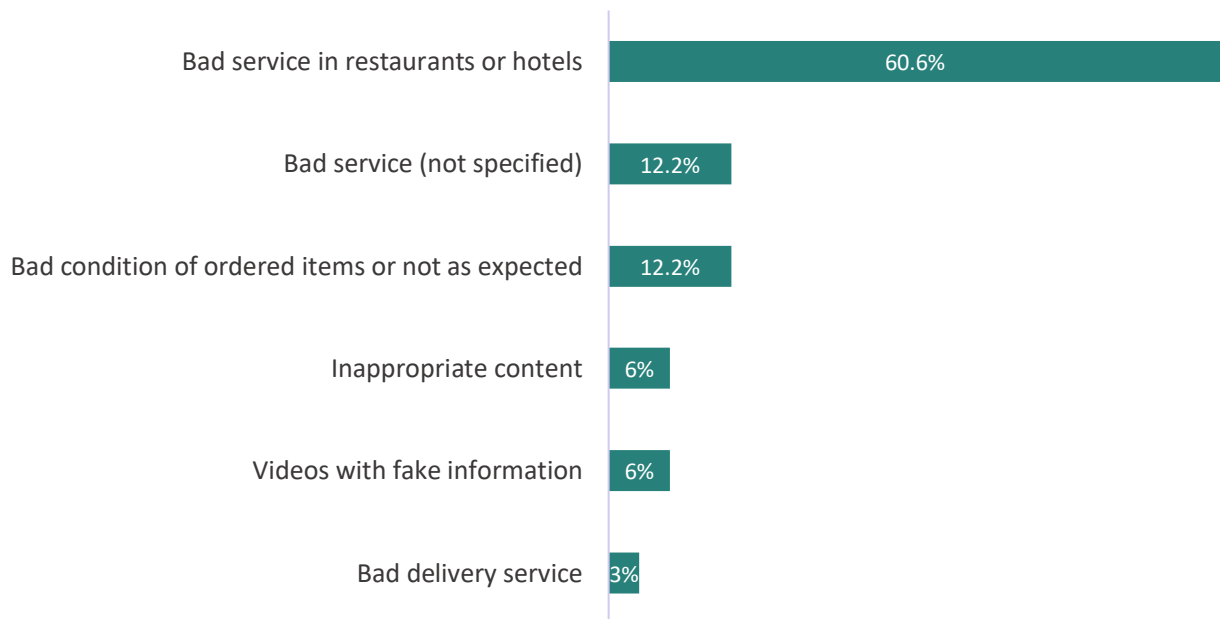

Table 6. Qualitative results grouped into reasons for giving bad rating.

- Behaviour patterns towards Social Media: (questions 4~9, 14~16)

The following figures show the percentage of people who believe online reviews can generate prejudices towards a person (Figure 54) or towards facilities (Figure 55) such as hotels or restaurants. A vast majority consider that the degree of online popularity might influence its real perception, even more so when it comes to services or establishments.
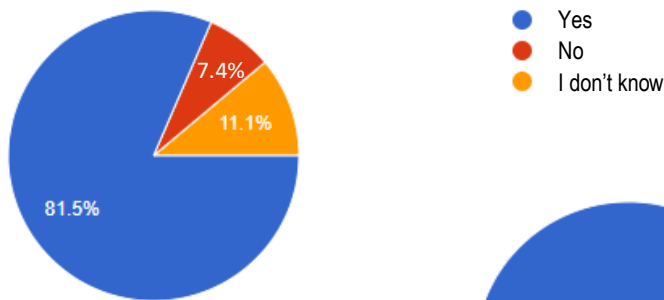

Figure 54. Results of the question: *do you think that the degree of influence/popularity someone has in social media can generate prejudices (positive or negative) towards that person?*
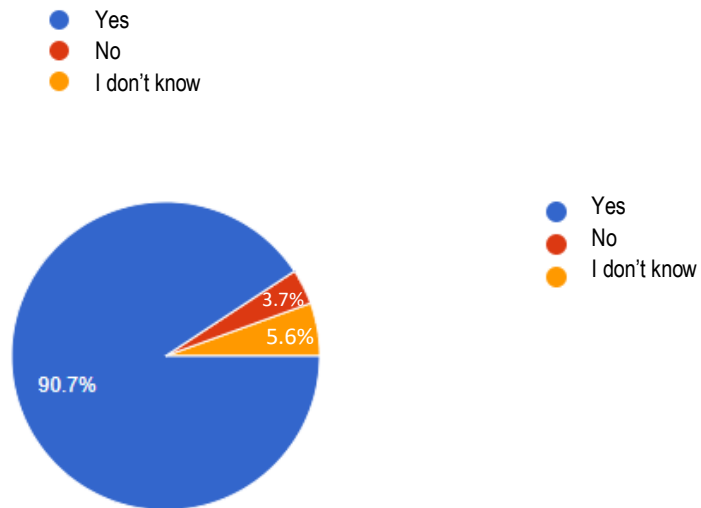

Figure 55. Results of the question: *do you think that the degree of influence/popularity someone has in social media can generate prejudices (positive or negative) towards facilities/organisations? (e.g. stores, hotels, venues...)*

When inquiring about the function of rating or giving "likes" on social media, the respondents were given four multiple-choice options based on definitions in online terms dictionaries and blogs, and their use in the fictional episode of *Nosedive*. They were also given an open-ended answer box to express any other functionality which might have not been considered.
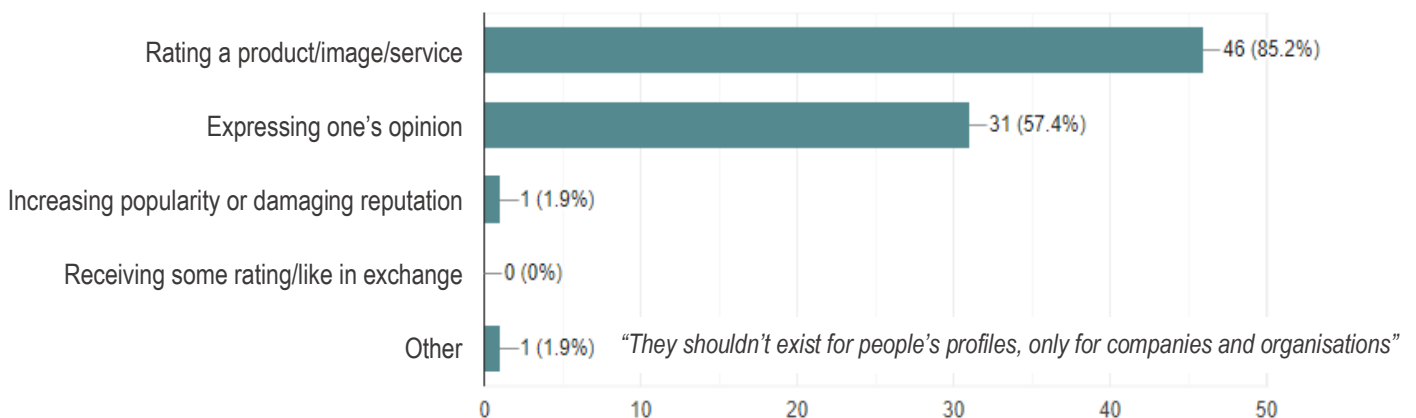

Table 7. Results of the question: *what do you think should be the function of rating or giving likes on social media?*

Most of the answers pointed at the function of rating, reviewing or evaluating a product, image or service – 22 single-answers and 24 responses combined – and more than half of participants considered expressing one's opinion as an added functionality, where only 7 of them considered it the sole function of rating. A significantly low or zero percentage considered the use of social media depicted in *Nosedive* as one of the purposes for using the "like" sign.

In order to proceed with attitude awareness, participants were asked to identify a total number of 9 behaviour patterns towards social media that were shown in the episode.
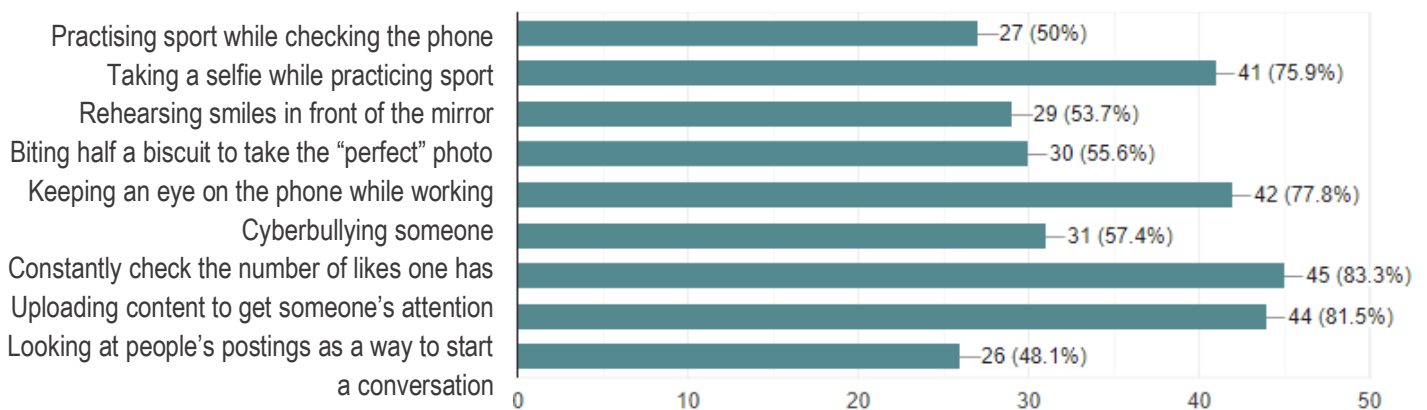

Table 8. Results of the question: *which of the following behaviours seen in the episode could you relate to what happens in reality?*

As a summary, all the actions portrayed in *Nosedive* – except for one which gets very close – obtained more than half of votes. The four attitudes that were clearly identified were:

- Constantly check the number of likes one has (83.3%)

- Upload a picture to get someone's attention (81.5%)

- Keep an eye on the phone while working (77.8%)

- Take a selfie while practising sport (75.9%)

Considering the multiple-choice option, more than 50% of respondents identified a minimum of 6 attitudes from the fictional product that they could relate to real life behaviour and almost 24% selected the 9 options, whereas close to 15% of them only recognised one or two actions.
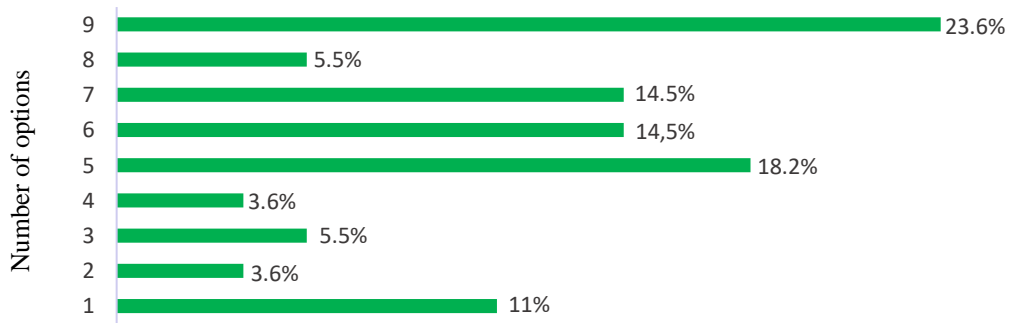
Table 9. Percentage of participants who selected each number of options about identification of behaviours seen in the episode and what happens in reality.

Once the type of behaviour towards social media was recognised, participants were asked to identify such patterns with themselves or other people they knew. More than 90% of respondents related similar attitude in people – almost 76% to more than one person – and 74% of them acknowledged reproducing some of the actions depicted in *Nosedive*.
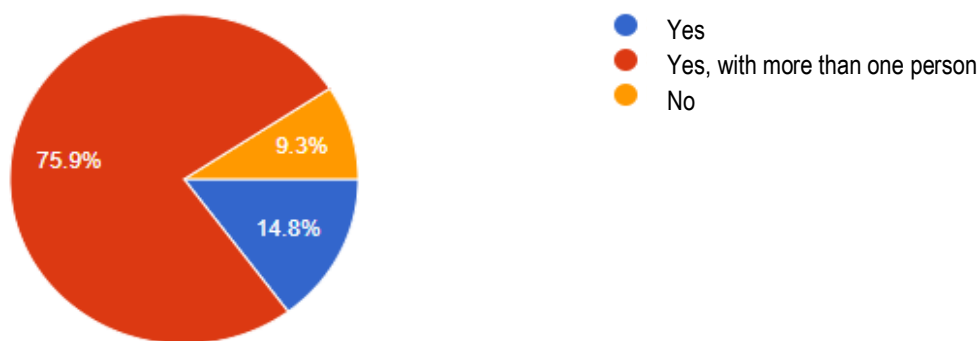

Figure 56. Results of the question: *do you identify any of the behaviours above with anyone you know?*
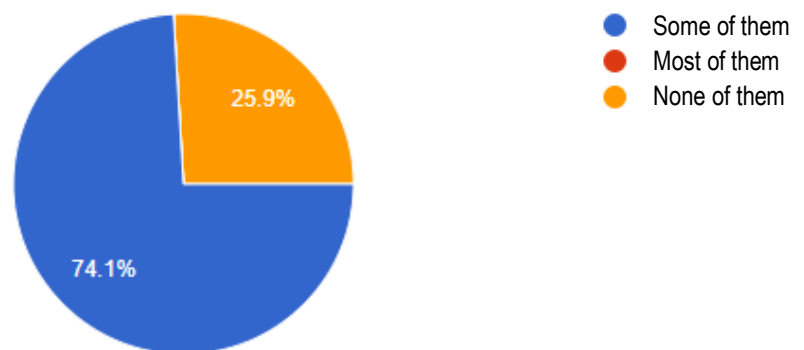

Figure 57. Results of the question: *and with yourself?*

Based on some behaviour patterns depicted in the episode, participants were asked about whether the following 6 actions were encouraged by social media. A wide variety of answers were submitted of which the number of votes was distributed as follows:

- Pretend something that is not true (79.6%)

- Desire to be popular (77.8%)

- Keep in touch or regain old friendships (66.7%)

- Fake interactions (61.1%)

- Envy others (55.6%)

- Make new friends (46.3%)

The remaining percentages belong to the open-ended answer box, which offered qualitative results about what social media encourage besides the given options such as the following example of *"getting validation from others to feel important or that you matter"*.

Overall, almost three quarters of respondents selected at least half of the actions suggested, the most popular choice being a total of 6 or 4 options with 13 and 12 votes respectively:
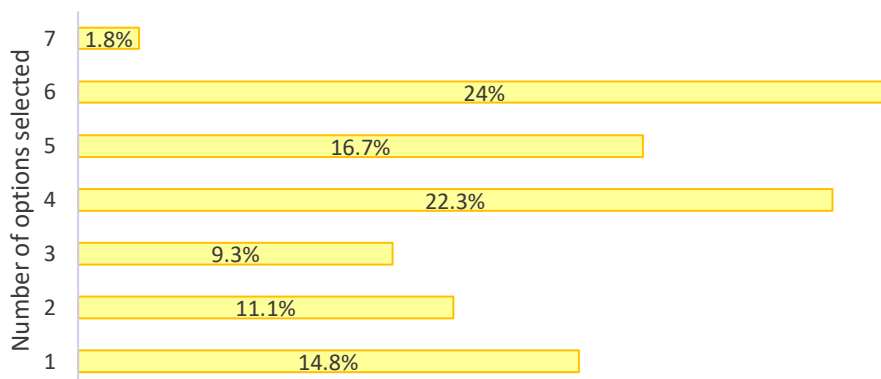

Table 10. Percentage of participants who selected each number of options about behaviours encouraged by social media.

Moving on to the next question, it was assumed that people look for a maximum number of likes in order to attain popularity online – 77.8% of survey respondents confirmed a similar mindset –, so they were asked about the reason why. As there could be more than one reason, 5 options given were based on both the fictional purposes in *Nosedive* and the reality of some distinguished social media users. However, the results collected show relevant differences with around 20% of participants choosing all the options versus 18.5% of them choosing only one.

According to the respondents, the results on the main reasons for seeking popularity on social media are shown in Table 11.
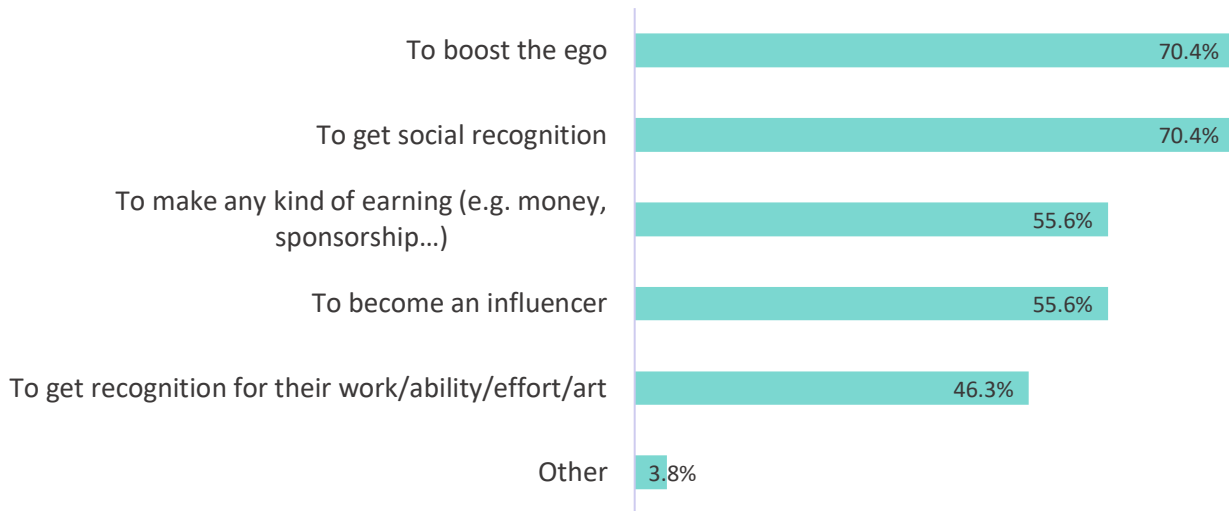

Table 11. Results of the question: *why do you think some people aim for the maximum number of likes and popularity in social media?*
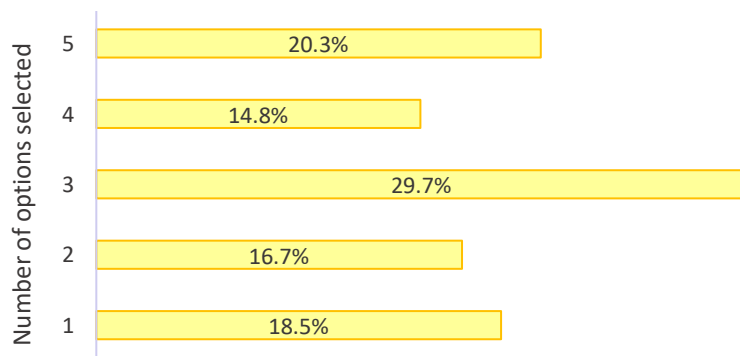

Table 12. Percentage of participants who selected each number of options about the reasons for seeking online popularity.

Finally, the most significant result has been obtained when asking participants about social media obsession as portrayed in *Nosedive* through the main character of Lacie Pound. All of them believed it is a behaviour pattern that could happen in real life.
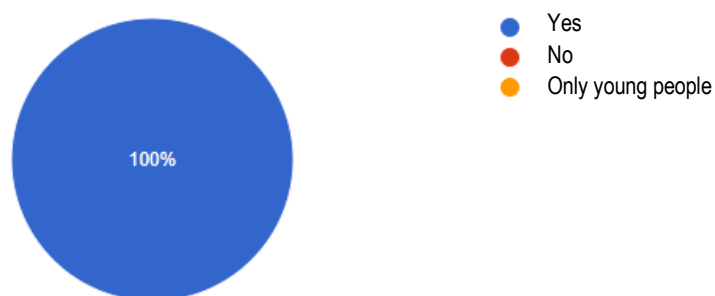

Figure 58. Results of the question: *do you think a person can become obsessed with social media?*

7.2.- Episode 2 Season 5 – *Smithereens*

The following results and percentages are based on a total number of 20 participants.
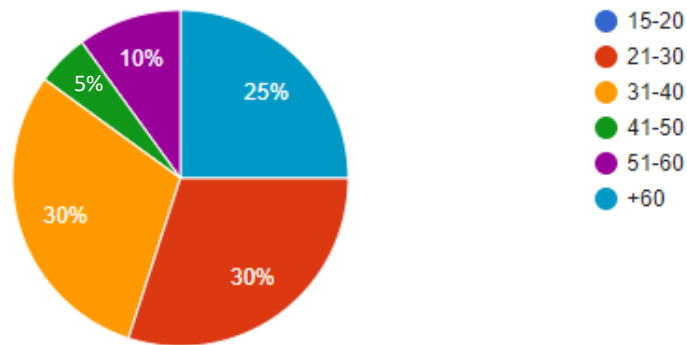
- Age: (question 1)

Figure 59. Age range of participants in the questionnaire for *Smithereens*.
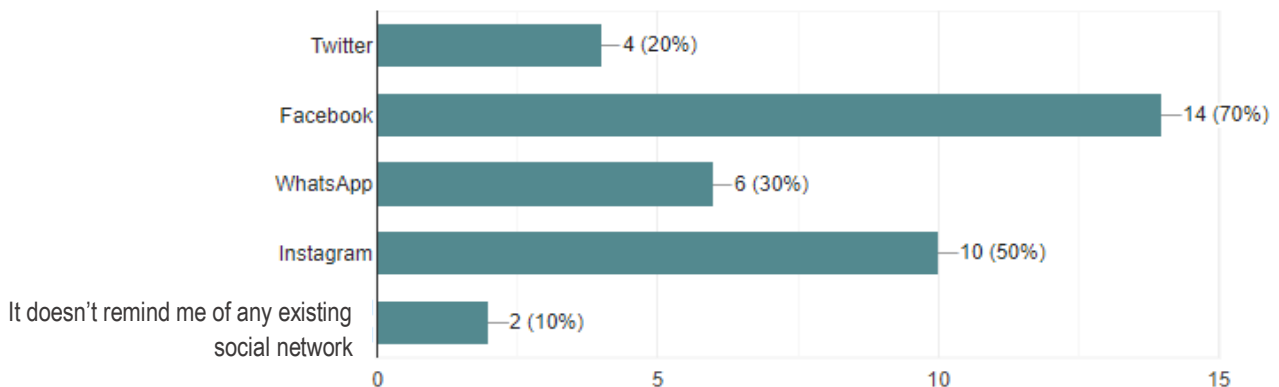
- Social media identified: (question 2)

Table 13. Results of the question: *in general, does the concept of social network depicted in the episode remind you of any existing social network?*

In the multiple-choice answers, 70% of survey respondents identified the fictional social network Smithereen with the existing Facebook and 50% related it to Instagram. In terms of their similarity perception, half of the participants selected solely one option whereas the other half found the depicted media as a combination of more than one. Thus, the number of votes has remained very divided with a significant trend towards selecting Facebook (20%) also in combination with Instagram (30%).
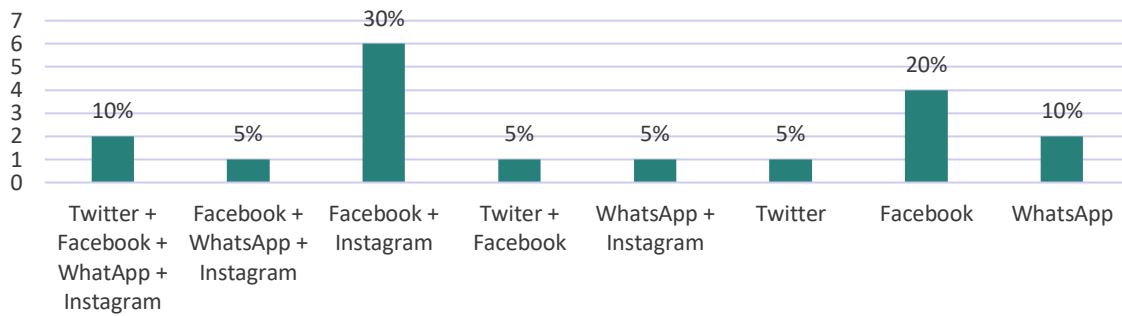
Table 14. Breakdown of votes regarding the identification of the social network depicted in *Smithereens*.

- Message perceived: (questions 3, 14, 16)

Interestingly, the perception of viewers was also divided in terms of drawing their conclusions on the image about social media that the episode intends to portray. While clearly none of them considered it to carry a positive message, the similarities with real life presented in *Smithereens* established a dichotomous thinking between depicting a <u>negative</u> and <u>neutral</u> view.
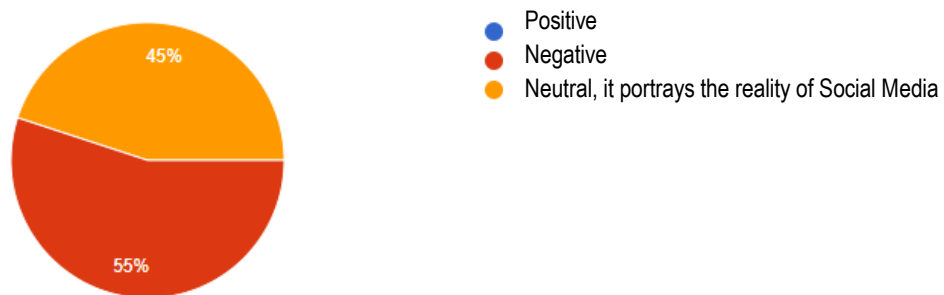
Figure 60. Results of the question: *do you think the episode portrays a positive or negative view on the use of Social Media?*

A similar was shown when asking about the depiction of the fictional CEO of Smithereen after considering that the reach of social media had escaped his own control.

Figure 61. Results of the question: *in the episode, the founder of Smithereen Billy Bauer acknowledges that the impact of his social network exceeded the limit he had conceived. Do you think something similar happens with existing social networks?*

However, when faced with the moral of the episode, the vast majority of participants believed that social media is designed to be addictive.

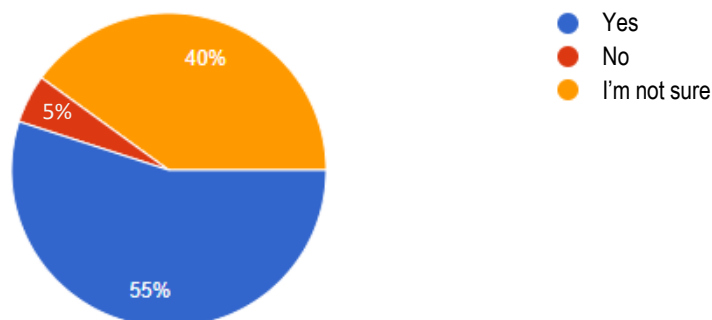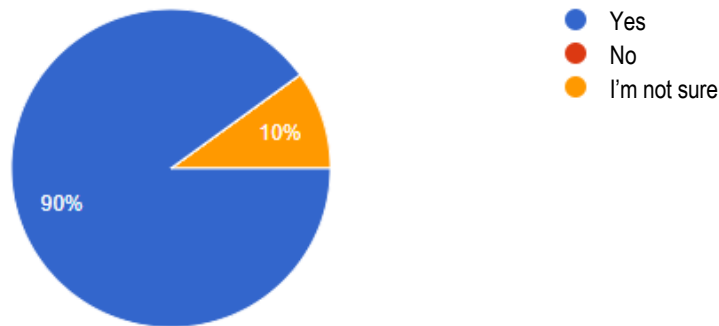Figure 62. Results of the question: *do you think today's social networks are designed to be addictive?*

- Personal use of Social Media: (questions 7,8)

In order to verify the proper identification of the network depicted in the episode, participants were asked about their regular use of existing social media. It is worth noting that only a quarter and a third of them are Twitter and Facebook users respectively, which could indicate a poor identification with the one portrayed in the episode. In addition, 40% of participants only make use of 1 or 2 social media applications whereas 60% are regular users of 3 or 4 of the most common social networks stated in Table 15.

Table 15. Results of the question: *what social networks do you frequently use?*

Figure 63. Ratio of participants who use between 1-2 or 3-4 social networks.

71

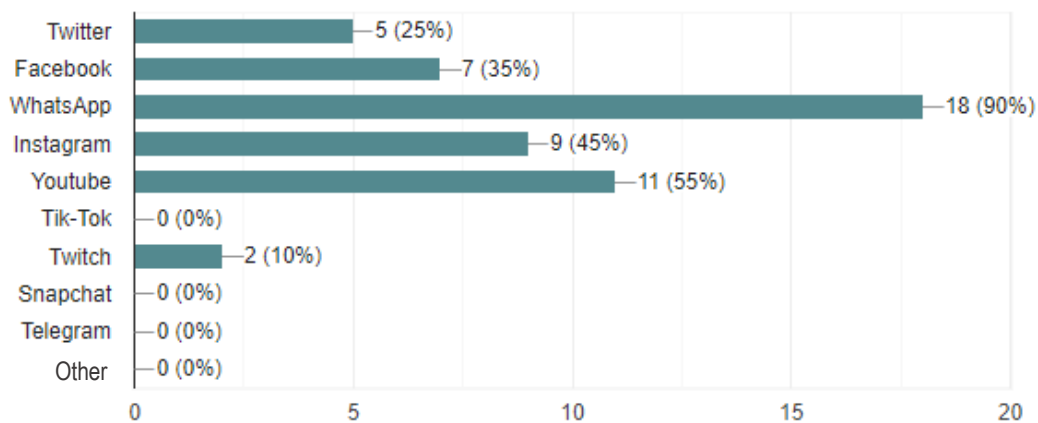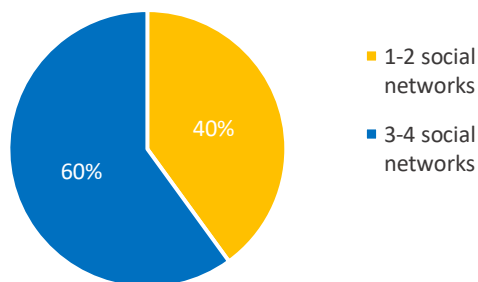When inquiring about the use participants give to these social networks, results showed that the biggest motive is as a way of entertainment, followed by the exchange of personal content such as messages, photos or videos and being up to date with news and events of their personal interest. Analysing the votes individually, 50% of respondents give one or two purposes to the use of social media, and the other half give them between 3 and 4 functions of the ones listed in Table 16.

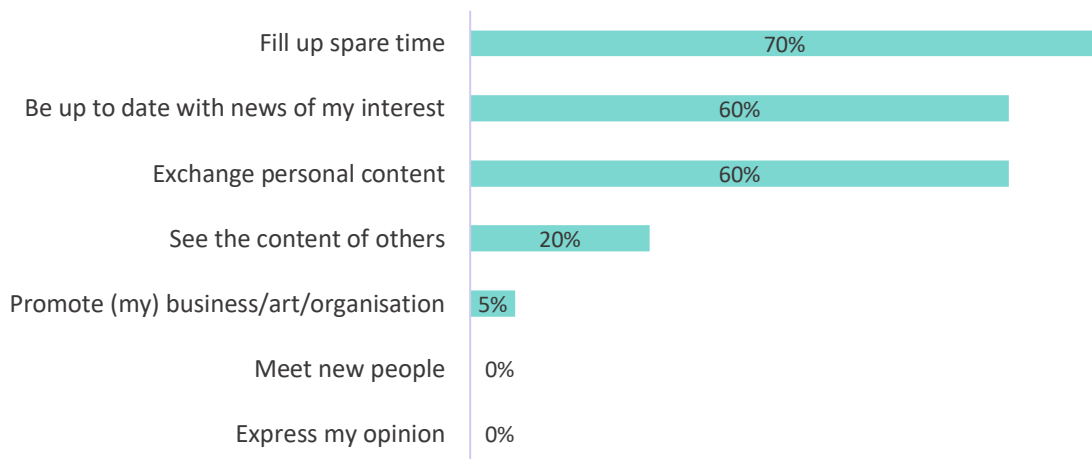|	
Fill up spare time	70%
Be up to date with news of my interest	60%
Exchange personal content	60%
See the content of others	20%
Promote (my) business/art/organisation	5%
Meet new people	0%
Express my opinion	0%

Table 16. Results of the question: *what do you use them [social networks] for?*

- Behaviour patterns towards Social Media: (questions 4~6, 9~13, 15)

In the episode *Smithereens*, there are several scenes that viewers were asked to identify whether they shared similarities with reality. More than 70% of votes recognised the following behaviour patterns:

- Having seen shocking news on social media and going about your business as usual (80%)

- Citizens recording a police operation and uploading details on social networks (75%)

- Driver looking at his phone without noticing the light turned green (70%)

- People in public places or walking and looking at their phones (70%)

The remaining attitudes only obtained between 20%-35% of votes:

- Blaming the addiction to social networks to excuse one's negligence (35%)

- The 10-day technology detox (30%)

- Not needing to interact with a person for a service because the application already has all the details (20%)

Among the seven suggested scenes, 40% of respondents recognised between 3 and 4 behaviour patterns, 35% observed more than 5, and 25% only identified similar attitudes in 1 or 2.
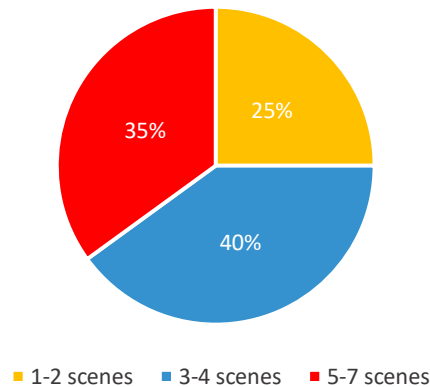

Figure 64. Percentage of votes identifying different number of scenes with reality.

In order to know the moral awareness of viewers regarding the incident of a mother who wants to access her deceased daughter's account, participants perceived in equal amount normality and unfairness. Despite being a multiple-choice question, 75% of respondents selected one single option.
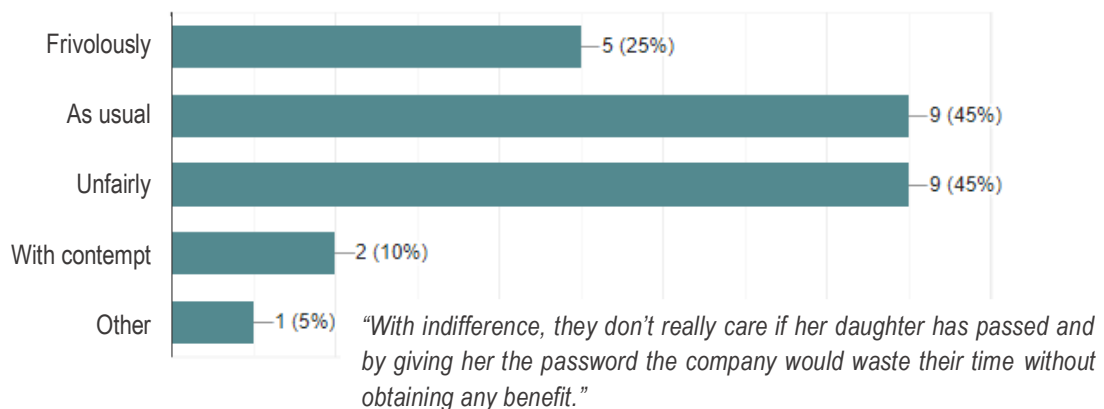
Table 17. Results of the question: *in the episode, the mother whose daughter committed suicide tries to guess the password of her daughter's account. How do you think she is treated by the company which runs the social network?*

When it comes to qualitative answers about what viewers think a social media company should do in similar cases, there seems to be indecision between those in favour of eliminating the account and the ones who would allow a close relative to access it. The four trends identified in the 18 messages left by participants, relate as follows:

- 35.3% → Eliminate the account.

    "Eliminate automatically the account so no one could ever access it"

73

- 35.3% → Allow access to close relatives or spouses.

  "Give the password to close relatives in case of death, which should be stated in their privacy policy"

- 17.6% → Reveal the information only if a judge considers it.

  "Information on her daughter's account should never be revealed unless a judge authorised it"

- 11.8% → Do nothing and forget about the social media account.

  "Nothing. Try not to make a big deal out of it"

In the episode, it is made clear that social media companies have a big amount of personal information about their users. Comparing this fact with reality, more than three quarters of participants acknowledged thinking about it although they presented different reactions.
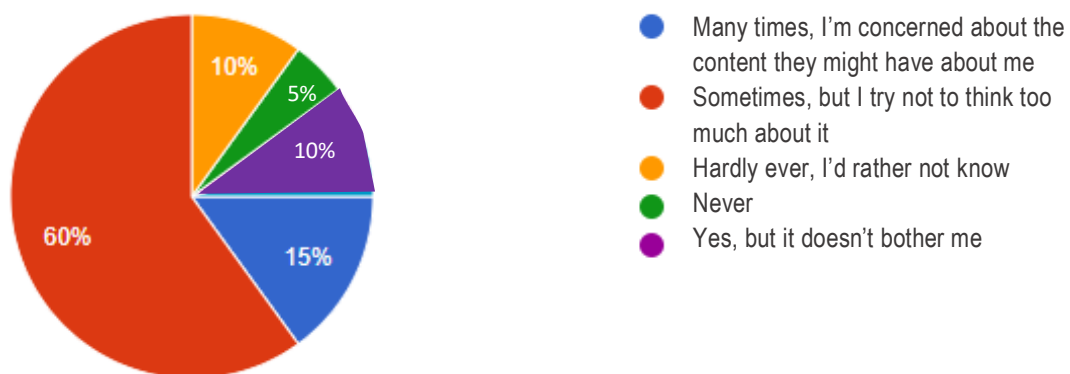
Figure 65. Results of the question: *do you ever think about all the information these social networks have about you?*

Perhaps such different attitude responses could lead to the results obtained when comparing the situation seen in *Smithereens* and the amount of knowledge the social media company has, compared with that of the police.
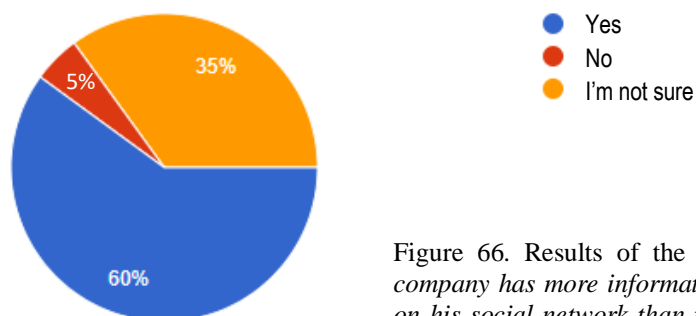
Figure 66. Results of the question: *in the episode, Smithereen company has more information on the kidnapper through the feed on his social network than the police in charge. Do you think the same thing could happen with today's social networks?*

Regarding the moral of the story, *Smithereens* depicts a realistic society that revolves around the use of phones and social media. Such reflection is made through the main character and accepted by 90% of viewers who considered that most people make an excessive use of them.
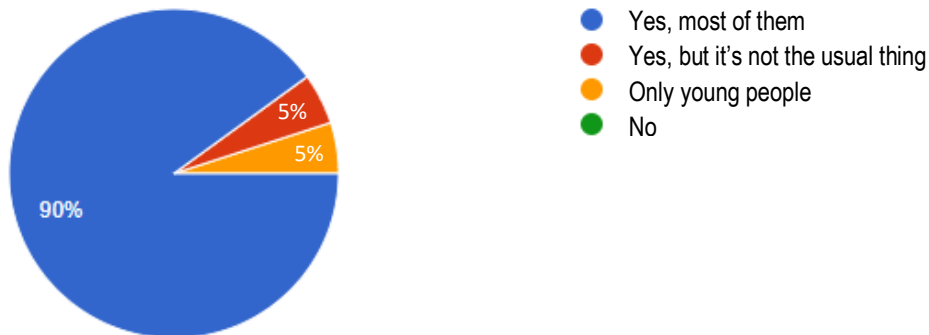
Figure 67. Results of the question: *do you think there is people who use social networks excessively?*

Part of this phone addiction is reflected in the 70% of respondents who acknowledged having used it when it felt inappropriate. The reasons for doing so have been grouped into five categories, where almost half of the answers involved real human interaction.
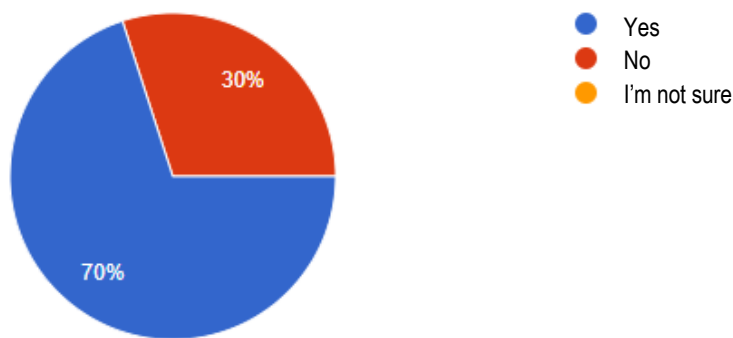
Figure 68. Results of the question: *have you ever had the feeling you were using the phone when you were not supposed to?*
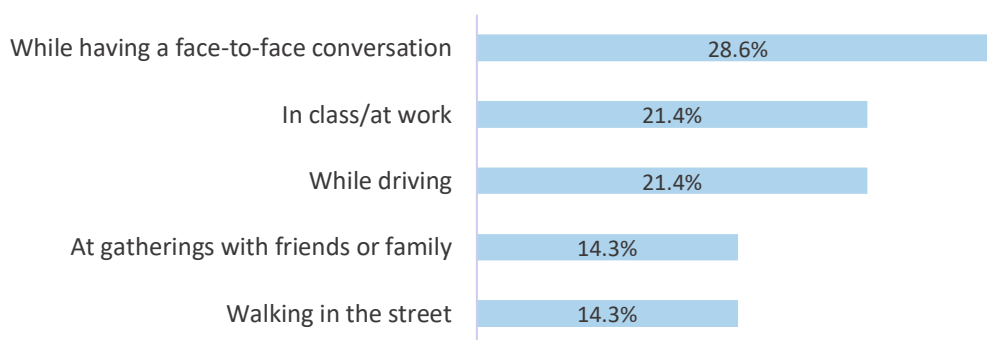
Table 18. Qualitative results grouped into categories for the reasons of using the phone when it felt inappropriate.

Finally, to check the level of awareness towards the use of social media as depicted in the episode, viewers were asked to compare the main character's accident to something that could happen in real life, where most of them recognised that type of behaviour.
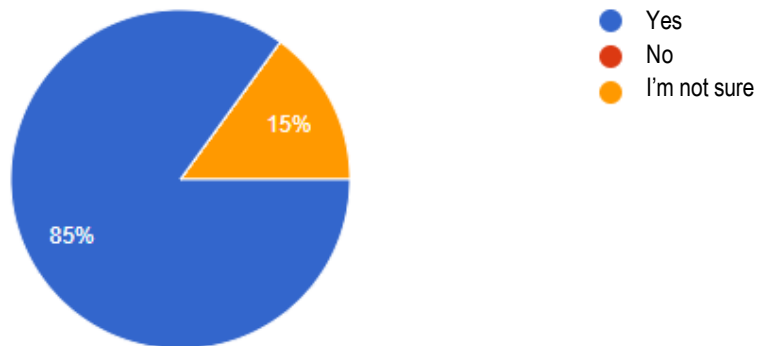
Figure 69. Results of the question: *do you think what happens to Christopher in the accident could happen to any of your relatives or acquaintances?*

7.3.- Episode 6 Season 3 – *Hated in the Nation*

The following results and percentages are based on a total number of 21 participants.

- Age: (question 1)
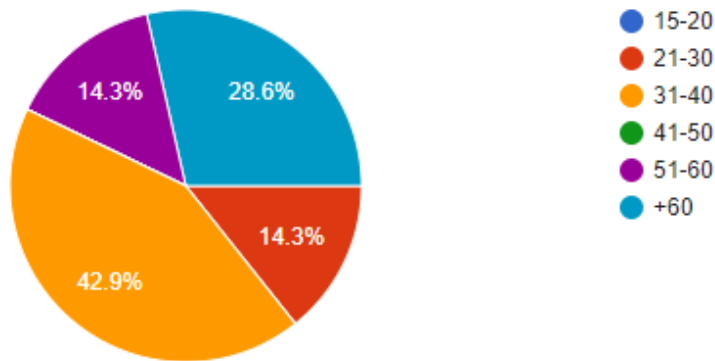
Figure 70. Age range of participants in the questionnaire for *Hated in the Nation*.

- Social Media identified: (question 2)

The vast majority of survey respondents found similarities between the social media depicted in the episode and Twitter, of which two thirds selected it as the sole identified option. The remaining third recognised the network in combination with other social media (mainly Facebook and Instagram).
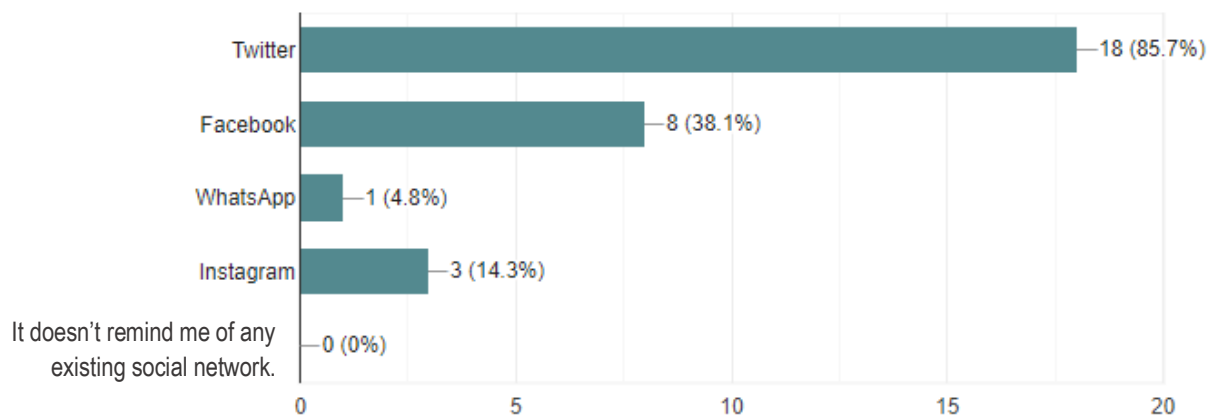
Table 19. Results of the question: *in general, does the concept of social network depicted in the episode remind you of any existing social network?*

- Message perceived: (questions 5, 17)

Hated in the Nation portrays a realistic image of social media in a fictional world, which explains the results shown about the view on social media that participants got after watching the episode. Being close to a 60%-40% ratio, 13 viewers considered it depicts a <u>negative</u> view whereas 8 perceived a <u>neutral</u> vision that could easily be compared with reality.
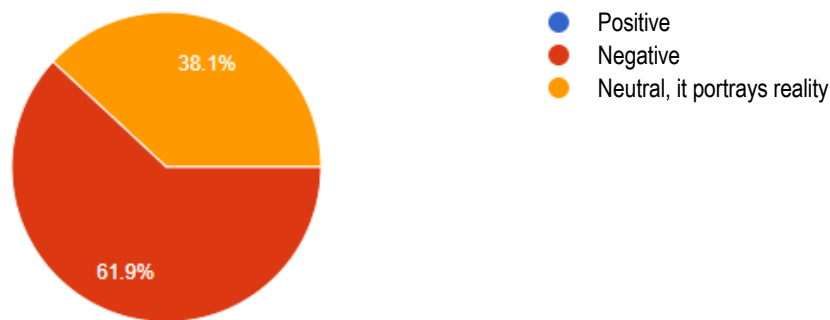
Figure 71. Results of the question: *do you think the episode portrays a positive or negative view on the use of Social Media?*

When it comes to the moral of the story, qualitative answers from viewers have been grouped into five trend lines, where close to half of them advocate for raising awareness about other people's feelings and the consequences of online actions:

- 38% → People should be aware of how harmful slandering can be for others (8 answers)

  "Sometimes unpleasant comments are made that can unknowingly affect some people very negatively"

- 28.6% → Our actions have consequences (6 answers)

  "Every tiny action may have consequences"

- 19% → Do not do what you do not wish for yourself (4 answers)

  "Do not do to others what you wouldn't like them to do to yourself"

- 9.6% → The powerful tool Social Media has become (2 answers)

  "The power of influence of social media on human beings"

- 4.8% → You get what you deserve (1 answer)

  "The slanderers reaped what they sowed"

78

Overall, it seems that viewers agree with the message conveyed in *Hated in the Nation*.

- Personal use of Social Media: (questions 3~4, 6~7)

The results are not very favourable at this point due to the low number of Twitter users (19% with an active account), which makes it difficult to validate their identification with the social media depicted in the episode. Among those who have or had an account, the main reason for using it is to be up to date with news and information.
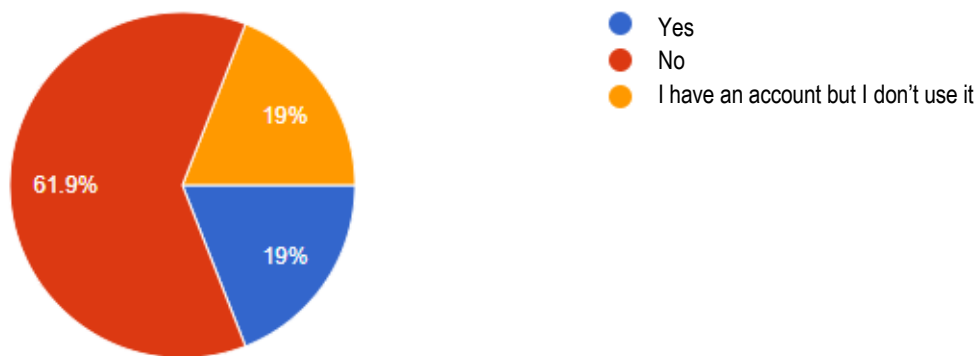
Figure 72. Results of the question: *are you a Twitter user?*
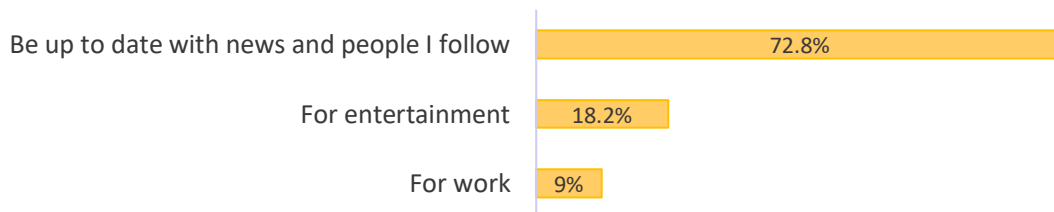
Table 20. Qualitative results about reasons for using Twitter.

Including other social media applications, the vast majority of respondents would not make use of them to insult, criticise or slander a person or institution. The scarce 9.5% who would, related such action to political reasons.
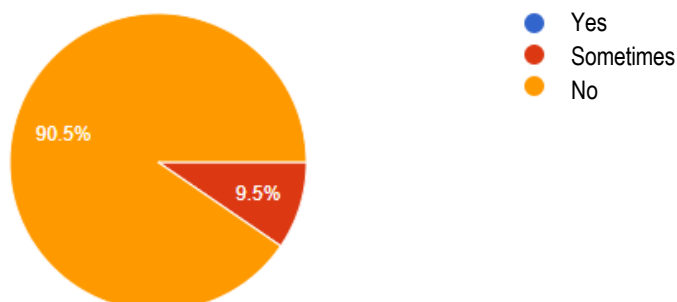
Figure 73. Results of the question: *have you ever wanted to use Social Media to insult, criticize or slander a person/institution?*

- Behaviour patterns towards Social Media: (questions 8~16)

In the episode, the characters' behaviour in social media revolves around the use of harmful comments and hatred messages online which lead to the spread of the deadly hashtag. Overall, viewers do not consider hatred towards a person should go viral, and they would not use the hashtag #DeathTo lightly.
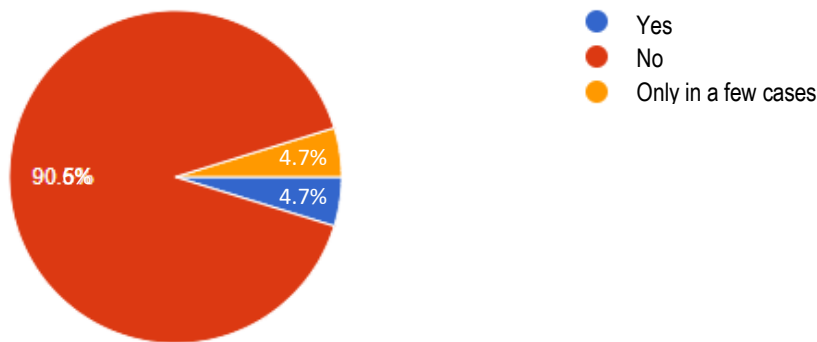
Figure 74. Results of the question: *do you think hatred should go viral?*
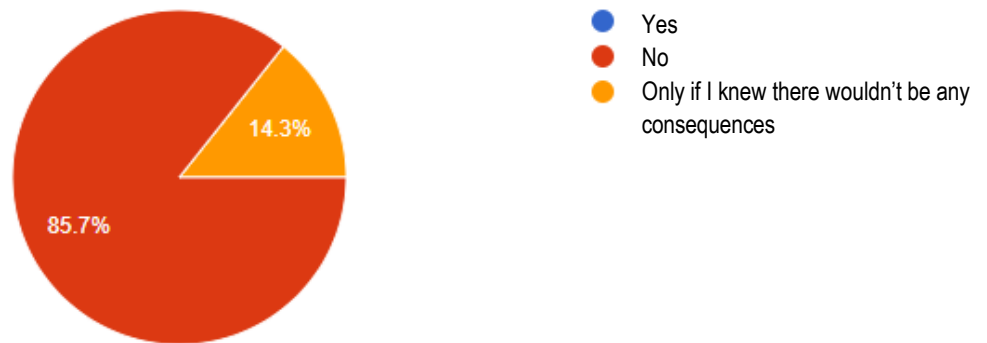
Figure 75. Results of the question: *would you use the hashtag #DeathTo?*

When analysing and reproducing the attitude of characters, participants were asked about the fictional purpose of using the hashtag in real life. In the episode, there were those who used it unaware of its consequences and others who knowingly intended to use it for a good cause and picking an appropriate target. Despite the 85.7% of viewers who said they would not use the hashtag, the number gets reduced to an 81% when rephrasing the question but assuming a real outcome.

Figure 76. Results of the question: *would you use the hashtag #DeathTo if you knew that your comment would indeed have real consequences?*

80

Such result shows that if one person could change their mind, it could be foreseen for others to do the same, even if they were targeting a positive greater goal.

Therefore, removing the fictional element of hacked drone bees, the episode portrays a behaviour pattern where insulting, slandering or criticising individuals on is common usage of social media. More than 95% of viewers considered it to be a realistic depiction and acknowledged that similar actions happen in real life.
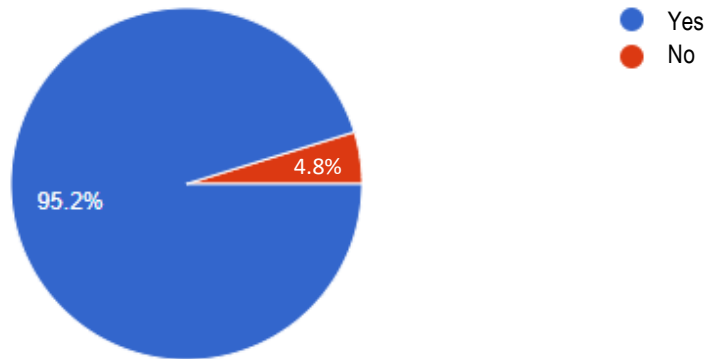
Figure 77. Results of the question: *do you think that insulting, slandering and criticizing individuals on Social Media bears some resemblance with reality?*

When asked about real life cases of online slandering, almost half of respondents admitted being aware of their existence but only a quarter provided with some examples:
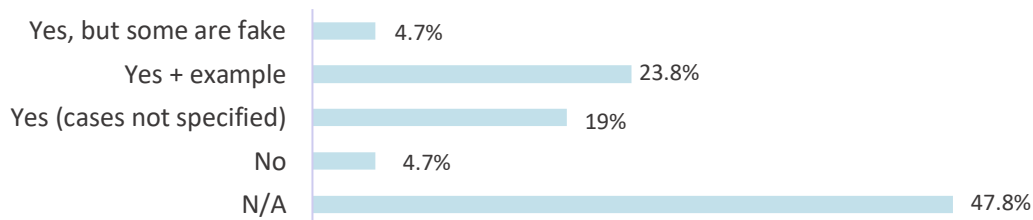
Table 21. Qualitative results about real life cases of online slandering.

- *"Tailor Swift had to stay away from social media for being the target of some hashtags"*

- *"Mallory Rose Grossman"* [teenager who committed suicide due to cyberbullying]

- *"A harmful hashtag followed by the words: beating women is happiness"*

- *"A famous model insulted after criticising a delivery service in coronavirus' time"*

- *"A woman who lost her job due to her racist comments online on her way to Africa"*

Finally, results showed total agreement on the fact that harmful comments – or hashtags – posted on social media could affect people's feelings, with a high percentage of viewers considering they could even lead to suicide.
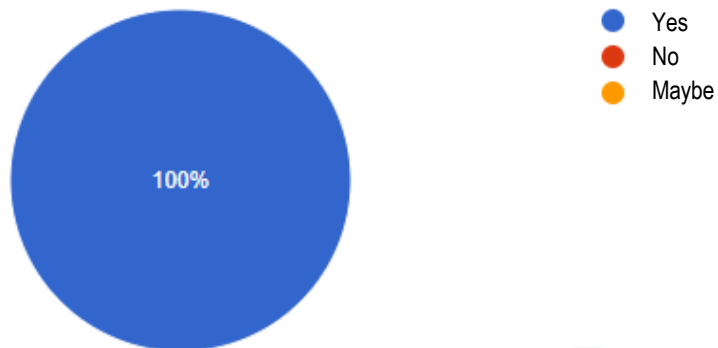
Figure 78. Results of the question: *do you think it's possible that comments made on social networks could emotionally affect individuals?*
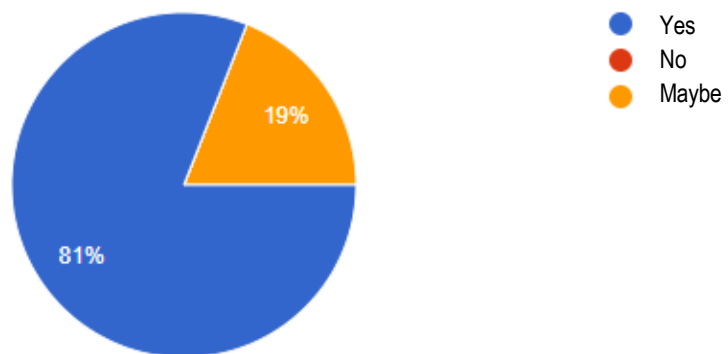
Figure 79. Results of the question: *to the point of committing suicide?*

8.- CONCLUSIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

Despite the difference between reality and fiction, and after the observation and analysis of a case study contrasted with the perception of its viewers, one comes to the realisation that society without social media could not exist, the same way as social media could not exist without society. Considering that irrevocable premise, the creation of dystopian fictions around the behaviour of human beings towards a virtual entity embodied by social media, could be understood as a warning sign to make society aware of an unwanted future. When viewing the fatal consequences depicted in *Black Mirror*, the primary entertainment function leads to reflection and identification of reality traits in the fictional product.

The results obtained in this research prove to be valid in the case of *Nosedive*, which surveyed a bigger sample population of participants, and rather inconclusive for *Smithereens* and *Hated in the Nation*. Although the conclusions from the three episodes follow a similar trend, the lack of social media experience in the latter two, did not reflect a clear identification due to the poor knowledge of reality. Nonetheless, all viewers-participants showed a common perception of the moral of the story and the warning message they carried.

Considering the identification of reality and the real life attitude towards social media to validate the hypothesis, only *Nosedive*'s results will be taken into consideration. In terms of identifying the social media depicted, the correlation between those viewers who were Instagram users and its comparison with the fictional series had an effective response. Similar reaction was obtained when comparing scenes that depicted behaviour patterns towards social media, and the actual counterpart. The recognition of more than half of the patterns – especially the ones with negative value or related with social media addiction – lead to acknowledging their reproduction in real life. As it was stated in the introduction of this thesis, it is not intended to take a psychological approach or judge viewers, but the fact that participants were able to recognise similar attitudes in their peers more than in themselves[8] could leave an open door for further research.

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[8] Results shown in Figures 56 and 57.

At this point, a connection could be established between fictional products and the online world, as they both configure an image of reality in people's perceptions. Taking popularity or negative prejudices as an example[9], they no longer depend on a factual realism but rather suppose reality itself because it is the way the online social media portrays it. However, when capturing the message of the story in *Nosedive*, many participants[10] understood the dichotomy between real world and social media world which, as a matter of fact, they considered unequal.

A surprising fact is that the more negative the attitude depicted was, the more agreement it generated among viewers, leading to high percentage rates in key questions about the harmful use of social media in real life[11]. As a consequence, the validation of the hypothesis results in the role of audiovisual fiction genre helping viewers identify behaviour patterns towards social media in reality.

A greater extent that was left out of reach in this modest research, is how, once the identification of reality is achieved, whether it generates any influence on the attitude change of viewers. Offering a personal view, the findings of any correlation would not be expected since bad habits are so engrained in people's use of social media that raising awareness on the topic could, at best, make them doubtful for just a short period of time. Even so, showing similar fictional products targeted at a particular age-group sample – especially teenagers – could be used for educational purposes or to make people have a critical view on a powerful tool that comes with no guidelines or instructions of use.

Due to its constant change and implementation of updates, there is no denying that Social Media has become a vast field that encompasses disciplines such as psychology, education or communication, whose unexplored edges contain the potential for carrying out ambitious research.

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[9] Results shown in Figures 54 and 55.
[10] Results shown in Figure 51.
[11] Results shown in Figures 58, 62 and 78.

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10.- ANNEXES

I. WEBSITE PLATFORM

II. WEBSITE PLATFORM (Spanish version)

III. QUESTIONNAIRES

Nosedive

Season 3
Episode 1

*Required

Select your age range *

◯ 15-20

◯ 21-30

◯ 31-40

◯ 41-50

◯ 51-60

◯ +60

In general, does the concept of social network depicted in the episode remind you of any existing social network? *

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ Instagram

☐ TripAdvisor

☐ It doesn't remind me of any existing social network

☐ Other:

Do you think the episode portrays a positive or negative view on the use of Social Media? *

◯ Positive

◯ Negative

◯ Neither positive nor negative, it doesn't portray the reality of Social Media

Which of the following behaviours seen in the episode could you relate to what happens in reality? *

☐ Practising sport while checking the phone

☐ Taking a selfie while practising sport

☐ Rehearsing smiles in front of the mirror

☐ Biting half a biscuit to take the "perfect" photo of a coffee

☐ Keeping an eye on the phone while working

☐ Cyberbullying someone

☐ Constantly checking the number of likes you have

☐ Uploading a picture to get someone's attention

☐ Looking at people's postings as a way to start a conversation

Do you identify any of the behaviours above with anyone you know? *

○ Yes

○ Yes, with more than one person

○ No

And with yourself? *

○ Some of them

○ Most of them

○ None of them

Do you think that the degree of influence/popularity someone has in social media can generate prejudices (positive or negative) towards that person? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ I don't know

And towards facilities/organisations? (e.g. stores, hotels, venues...) *

○ Yes

○ No

○ I don't know

What do you think should be the function of rating or giving likes on social media? *

☐ Rating a product/image/service

☐ Expressing one's opinion

☐ Increasing popularity or damaging reputation

☐ Receiving some rating/like in exchange

☐ Other:

Have you ever given bad rating online? *

○ Yes

○ No

Briefly explain the reason why:

Your answer

Are you an Instagram user? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ I have an account but I don't use it

What do/did you use it for?

Your answer

Do you think that in the real world social media encourage any of the following behaviours? *

☐ Making new friends

☐ Keeping in touch with old friends

☐ Fake interactions

☐ Pretending something that isn't true

☐ Desire to be popular

☐ Envying others

☐ Other:

Why do you think some people aim for the maximum number of likes and popularity in social media? *

- [ ] To get social recognition
- [ ] To become an influencer
- [ ] To boost the ego
- [ ] To get recognition for their work/ability/effort/art
- [ ] To make any kind of earning (e.g. money, sponsorship...)
- [ ] Other: _____

Do you think a person can become obsessed with social media? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ Only young people
- ◯ Other: _____

What do you think the moral of the story is?

Your answer

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Google Forms

95

Smithereens

Season 5
Episode 2

*Required

Select your age range *

○ 15-20

○ 21-30

○ 31-40

○ 41-50

○ 51-60

○ +60

In general, does the concept of social network depicted in the episode remind you of any existing social network? *

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ WhatsApp

☐ Instagram

☐ It doesn't remind me of any existing social network

☐ Other:

Do you think the episode portrays a positive or negative view on the use of Social Media? *

○ Positive

○ Negative

○ Neutral, it portrays the reality of Social Media

Which of the following episode scenes could you relate to what happens in reality? *

☐ People in public places or walking and looking at their phones

☐ Not needing to interact with a person for a service because the application already has all the details

☐ Citizens recording a police operation and uploading details on social networks

☐ Driver looking at his phone without noticing the light turned green

☐ The 10-day technology detox

☐ Blaming the addiction to social networks to excuse one's negligence

☐ Having just seen shocking news on social media and going about your business as usual

☐ Other: _____

In the episode, the mother whose daughter committed suicide tries to guess the password of her daughter's account. How do you think she is treated by the company which runs the social network? *

☐ Frivolously, making a memorial account with a sepia-toned photo collage is the only thing they can do

☐ As usual, the privacy policy agreement shouldn't allow disclosure of such information to anybody

☐ Unfairly, being a close relative should grant access to the account

☐ With contempt, it is not the liability of the social network to be aware of the content of the account

☐ Other: _____

What do you think should happen in these cases?

Your answer

What social networks do you frequently use? *

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ WhatsApp

☐ Instagram

☐ Youtube

☐ Tik-Tok

☐ Twitch

☐ Snapchat

☐ Telegram

☐ I don't use any social network

☐ Other: _____

97

What do you use them for?

- [ ] To exchange personal content (messages, photos, videos...)
- [ ] To search news and be updated on the current topics of my interest
- [ ] To fill up spare time
- [ ] To express my opinion
- [ ] See the content of others
- [ ] To promote (a) business/organization/art
- [ ] To meet new people
- [ ] Other:

Do you ever think about all the information these social networks have about you? *

- ( ) Many times, I'm concerned about the content they might have about me
- ( ) Some times, but I try not to think too much about it
- ( ) Hardly ever, I'd rather not know
- ( ) Never
- ( ) Other:

In the episode, Smithereen company has more information on the kidnapper through the feed on his social network than the police in charge. Do you think the same thing could happen with today's social networks? *

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) I'm not sure

Do you think there is people who use social networks excessively? *

- ( ) Yes, most people
- ( ) Yes, but it's not the usual thing
- ( ) Only young people
- ( ) No

Have you ever had the feeling you were using the phone when you were not supposed to? *

- ( ) Yes
- ( ) No
- ( ) I'm not sure

Could you give an example?

Your answer

In the episode, the founder of Smithereen Billy Bauer acknowledges that the impact of his social network exceeded the limit he had conceived. Do you think something similar happens with existing social networks? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ I'm not sure

Do you think what happens to Christopher in the accident could happen to any of your relatives or acquaintances? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ I'm not sure

Do you think today's social networks are designed to be addictive? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ I'm not sure

Submit

Hated in the Nation

Season 3
Episode 6

*Required

Select your age range *

- ◯ 15-20
- ◯ 21-30
- ◯ 31-40
- ◯ 41-50
- ◯ 51-60
- ◯ +60

In general, does the concept of social network depicted in the episode remind you of any existing social network? *

- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ WhatsApp
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ It doesn't remind me of any existing social network

Are you a Twitter user? *

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No
- ◯ I have an account but I don't use it

What do/did you use it for?

Your answer

Do you think the episode portrays a positive or negative view on the use of Social Media? *

○ Positive

○ Negative

○ Neutral, it portrays the reality

What do you think should be the function of a hashtag? *

☐ Promote a product/event/idea

☐ Increase visibility

☐ Create trending topics

☐ Find information

☐ Show support for a cause/movement

☐ Other:

Have you ever wanted to use Social Media to insult, criticize or slander a person/institution? *

○ Yes

○ Sometimes

○ No

101

For what reason?

Your answer

Would you use the hashtag #DeathTo? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ Only if I knew there wouldn't be any consequences

Do you think hatred should go viral? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ Only in a few cases

Do you think it's possible that comments made on social networks could emotionally affect individuals? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ Maybe

To the point of committing suicide?

○ Yes

○ No

○ Maybe

As seen in the episode, do you think that the characters who use the hashtag to wish someone's death do so because they DON'T think there will be any real consequences? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ Yes, but if there were it wouldn't matter

Do you think that insulting, slandering and criticizing individuals on Social Media - as seen in the episode - bears some resemblance to reality? *

○ Yes

○ No

Do you know any real example? (e.g. seen in the news)

Your answer

Would you use the hashtag #DeathTo if you knew that your comment would indeed have real consequences (as seen in the episode)? *

○ Yes

○ No

○ Depends on who the affected person was

What do you think the moral of the episode is regarding what happens to the slanderers at the end?

Your answer

Submit

103

IV. QUESTIONNAIRES (Spanish Version)

BLACK MIRROR

Caída en picado

Temporada 3
Episodio 1

*Required

Selecciona tu rango de edad *

○ 15-20

○ 21-30

○ 31-40

○ 41-50

○ 51-60

○ +60

A rasgos generales, el concepto de red social planteada en el episodio ¿te recuerda a alguna red social existente? *

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ Instagram

☐ TripAdvisor

☐ No me recuerda a ninguna red social

☐ Other:

¿Crees que el episodio refleja una visión positiva o negativa sobre el uso de las redes sociales? *

○ Positiva

○ Negativa

○ Ni positiva ni negativa, no refleja la realidad de las redes sociales

¿Cuál de estos comportamientos que aparecen en el episodio podrías relacionar con lo que ocurre en la realidad? *

☐ Hacer deporte con el móvil en la mano

☐ Hacerse un "selfie" mientras se realiza una actividad física

☐ Ensayar una sonrisa delante del espejo

☐ Morder media galleta para hacer una foto "perfecta" del café

☐ Estar pendiente del móvil en el trabajo

☐ Hacer cyberbullying a alguien

☐ Comprobar constantemente el número de "likes" que tienes

☐ Subir una foto para llamar la atención de alguien

☐ Mirar las publicaciones de alguien como manera de iniciar una conversación

---

¿Identificas alguno de los comportamientos mencionados arriba con alguna persona que conozcas? *

○ Sí

○ Sí, con más de una

○ No

Y contigo mismo/a? *

○ Alguno

○ La mayoría

○ No, ninguno

¿Crees que el grado de influencia/popularidad que se tiene en las redes sociales puede generar prejuicios (positivos o negativos) hacia esa persona? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ No lo sé

¿Y con los establecimientos/organizaciones? (ej. hoteles, restaurantes...) *

○ Sí

○ No

○ No lo sé

105

¿Cuál crees que debería ser la función de dar puntuación o "likes" en redes sociales? *

- [ ] Valorar un producto/imagen/servicio
- [ ] Expresar la opinión propia
- [ ] Incrementar la popularidad o dañar la imagen
- [ ] Recibir puntuación/"like" a cambio
- [ ] Other:

¿Alguna vez has dado mala puntuación a alguien/algo? *

- ( ) Sí
- ( ) No

Explica brevemente el motivo:

Your answer

¿Eres usuario/a de Instagram? *

- ( ) Sí
- ( ) No
- ( ) Tengo una cuenta pero no la uso

¿Para qué lo usas/usabas?

Your answer

¿Crees que en la realidad las redes sociales fomentan alguno de estos comportamientos? *

- [ ] Crear nuevas amistades
- [ ] Mantener/Recuperar viejas amistades
- [ ] Falsedad en las interacciones
- [ ] Aparentar algo que no es la realidad
- [ ] Deseo de popularidad
- [ ] Envidiar a otros
- [ ] Other:

¿Por qué crees que hay gente que busca tener el máximo número de "likes" y popularidad en las redes sociales? *

☐ Para tener reconocimiento social

☐ Para convertirse en "influencer"

☐ Para aumentar el ego

☐ Para ver su trabajo/habilidad/esfuerzo/arte reconocido

☐ Para conseguir algún tipo de remuneración (económica/patrocinios…)

☐ Other:

¿Crees que una persona puede llegar a obsesionarse con las redes sociales? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ Sólo los jóvenes

○ Other:

¿Cuál crees que es la moraleja de la historia?

Your answer

Submit

Añicos

Temporada 5
Episodio 2

Selecciona tu rango de edad *

○ 15-20

○ 21-30

○ 31-40

○ 41-50

○ 51-60

○ +60

A rasgos generales, el concepto de red social planteada en el episodio ¿te recuerda a alguna red social existente? *

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ WhatsApp

☐ Instagram

☐ No me recuerda a ninguna red social

☐ Other:

¿Crees que el episodio refleja una visión positiva o negativa sobre el uso de las redes sociales? *

○ Positiva

○ Negativa

○ Neutra, refleja la realidad

¿Qué escenas del episodio crees que tienen cierto parecido con la realidad? *

☐ Gente en sitios públicos o caminando y mirando el móvil

☐ No tener que interactuar por un servicio cuando la aplicación tiene todos los detalles

☐ Ciudadanos grabando un acontecimiento policial y subiéndolo a las redes sociales

☐ Conductor mirando el móvil que no se da cuenta que el semáforo está verde

☐ Los 10 días de desintoxicación de tecnología

☐ Culpar la adicción a las redes de una negligencia propia

☐ Ver una noticia impactante en las redes y seguir tu actividad con normalidad

☐ Other:

En el episodio, la madre de la joven que se suicidó intenta conseguir la contraseña de la cuenta de su hija. ¿Cómo crees que es tratada por la empresa de la red social? *

☐ Con frivolidad, hacer un memorial de la cuenta con un collage de fotos tono sepia es lo único que pueden hacer

☐ Con normalidad, la política de privacidad no debería poder revelar esta información a nadie

☐ Injustamente, al ser familiar directa debería tener acceso a la cuenta

☐ Con desprecio, no es responsabilidad de la red social saber qué contenido hay en su cuenta

☐ Other:

¿Qué crees que debería ocurrir en estos casos?

Your answer

¿Qué redes sociales utilizas con más frecuencia? *

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ WhatsApp

☐ Instagram

☐ Youtube

☐ Tik-Tok

☐ Twitch

☐ Snapchat

☐ Telegram

☐ No utilizo ninguna red social

☐ Other:

109

¿Para qué las usas?

☐ Para intercambiar contenido de carácter personal (mensajes, fotos, vídeos...)

☐ Para ver noticias y conocer la actualidad de los temas que me interesan

☐ Para pasar el rato

☐ Para expresar mi opinión

☐ Para ver contenido no propio

☐ Para promocionar un negocio/organización/arte

☐ Para conocer gente nueva

☐ Other:

¿Alguna vez piensas en toda la información que estas redes sociales tienen sobre ti? *

○ Muchas veces, me preocupa el contenido que puedan tener sobre mí

○ Alguna vez, pero intento no pensarlo mucho

○ Casi nunca, prefiero no pensarlo

○ Nunca

○ Other:

En el episodio, la empresa Smithereen tiene más información del secuestrador a través del contenido en su red social que la policía encargada del caso. ¿Crees que podría ocurrir lo mismo en la realidad con las redes sociales actuales? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ No estoy seguro/a

¿Crees que hay gente que hace un uso excesivo de las redes sociales? *

○ Sí, la mayoría

○ Sí, pero no es lo habitual

○ Sólo los jóvenes

○ No

¿Alguna vez has tenido la sensación de estar haciendo uso del móvil en un momento poco apropiado? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ No estoy seguro/a

¿Podrías poner un ejemplo?

Your answer

En el episodio, el fundador de Smithereen Billy Bauer reconoce que el alcance de la red social ha superado el límite que él mismo había concebido. ¿Crees que ocurre algo similar con las redes sociales existentes? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ No estoy seguro/a

¿Crees que lo que le ocurre a Christopher en el accidente podría ocurrirle a algún familiar o conocido tuyo? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ No estoy seguro/a

¿Crees que las redes sociales actuales están diseñadas para generar adicción? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ No estoy seguro/a

Submit

Odio Nacional

Temporada 3
Episodio 6

*Required

Selecciona tu rango de edad *

○ 15-20

○ 21-30

○ 31-40

○ 41-50

○ 51-60

○ +60

A rasgos generales, el concepto de red social planteada en el episodio ¿te recuerda a alguna red social existente? *

☐ Twitter

☐ Facebook

☐ WhatsApp

☐ Instagram

☐ No me recuerda a ninguna red social

¿Eres usuario/a de Twitter? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ Tengo una cuenta pero no la uso

¿Para qué lo usas/usabas?

Your answer

¿Crees que el episodio refleja una visión positiva o negativa sobre el uso de las redes sociales? *

○ Positiva

○ Negativa

○ Neutra, refleja la realidad

¿Cuál crees que debería ser la función de un hashtag? *

- [ ] Promocionar un producto/evento/idea
- [ ] Aumentar la visibilidad
- [ ] Crear "trending topics"
- [ ] Encontrar información
- [ ] Mostrar apoyo a una causa/movimiento
- [ ] Other:

¿Has querido hacer uso de las redes sociales con intención de insultar, criticar o difamar una persona/organismo? *

- ( ) Sí
- ( ) A veces
- ( ) No

¿Con qué motivo?

Your answer

¿Utilizarías el hashtag #DeathTo (#MuerteA)? *

- ( ) Sí
- ( ) No
- ( ) Sólo si supiera que NO habría consecuencias

¿Crees que el odio debería hacerse viral? *

- ( ) Sí
- ( ) No
- ( ) Sólo en algunos casos

¿Crees que es posible que los comentarios en redes sociales afecten emocionalmente a los individuos? *

- ( ) Sí
- ( ) No
- ( ) Tal vez

¿Hasta llegar al (intento de) suicidio?

- ( ) Sí
- ( ) No
- ( ) Tal vez

Según aparece en el episodio, ¿crees que los personajes que utilizan el hashtag para desear la muerte de alguien lo hacen porque NO creen que pueda tener consecuencias reales? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ Sí, pero si las tiene no pasaría nada

¿Crees que el hecho de insultar, difamar y criticar a individuos en las redes sociales - tal como aparece en el episodio - tiene cierto parecido con la realidad? *

○ Sí

○ No

¿Conoces algún ejemplo real? (por ej. que haya aparecido en las noticias)

Your answer

¿Utilizarías el hashtag #DeathTo (#MuerteA) si supieras que tu comentario SÍ tuviera consecuencias reales tal como aparece en el episodio? *

○ Sí

○ No

○ Depende de quien fuera la persona afectada

¿Cuál crees que es la moraleja del episodio respecto a lo que les ocurre a los difamadores en el desenlace?

Your answer

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11.- ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EDUCATION

- ❖ **Master's Degree** in Public Service Audiovisual Communication – *UNED Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia* (2017 - 2020)

- ❖ **Bachelor's Degree** in Journalism – *UAB Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona* (2006 – 2012)

- ❖ **Bachillerato** in Humanities – *IES Sant Just Desvern* (2004 -2006)

LANGUAGES

- ❖ **Español** y **Català** (Nativo)

- ❖ **English** – Proficency Level C2

  *C2 European Certificate. CUID (2018)

  *CAE (Certificate in Advanced English) Mark: A. Cambridge University (2013)

  *IELTS (International English Language Testing System) Mark: 8/9. 6-month stay at Middlesex University in London (2011)

  *FCE (First Certificate Exam) Mark: B. Cambridge University. 2-month stay in Dublin (2005)

- ❖ **Français** – Level B1

  *DELF (Diplôme d'Études de la Langue Française) Levels A2 and B1. Liceo Francés de Barcelona (2004-2006)

- ❖ **Korean** – Basic level

  *Without certificate. Sin titulación. 8-month stay at PKNU (Pukyong National University) in Busan, South Korea (2012)

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- ❖ **English teacher** (2012-2020) at Barcelona Technical Center, Martorell; Progress School, Molins de Rei; Shalom Academy, South Korea.

- ❖ **Radio correspondent** (2013) at Busan e-FM.

- ❖ **Radio broadcaster** (2012) at Busan e-FM.

- ❖ **Internships** (2019;2010) at RNE Radio 4, Barcelona; Gavà TV, Gavà.