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The Best Offense; The Office

Regardless of where people live or where they are from, I can assure that it’s safe to assume that they have, in one way or another, heard of the comedic show called The Office. The Office is a comedy sitcom that revolves around the lives of office workers in a paper company called Dunder Mifflin Paper Company. This American sitcom was adapted from the original BBC series The Office (yet was much more successful), and it first aired in March of 2005 until its final season, for a total of nine seasons, in May of 2013. With the numerous awards to its name like the Peabody Award, Primetime Emmy Awards, a Golden Globe Award, etc. The Office has proven to have left a mark on the comedic industry as a whole by remaining on top (that’s what she said) all these years after its initial release. In general, this show has left such an impact on the comedic industry because of its unique way of introducing controversial topics to the show as a joke. Thanks to this unique approach, this show has become an all time favorite for millions of people around the world, including myself. This show is not your typical sitcom though, the reason it has stuck around is because it is a timeless classic that brings comedic relief to people with its quirky sense of humor that admittingly can be hard to swallow for some (that’s what she said). Since the release of The Office, other shows have tried to create something that is remotely similar to it, but have fallen short and are only able to create a mere shadow of what the show truly is. For this very reason, The Office has and will remain to be the most impactful show of its time.
*The Office* changed the comedic industry by taking on a satirical tone towards controversial topics and issues that are still discussed to this day. Nowadays, it is so much harder to joke about many controversial topics (like sexuality, weight, politics, religion, race, etc.) without offending a group of people or in general anybody who chooses to advocate either positively or negatively toward those things. When *The Office* first came out, it was during a time that, of course these topics were kind of a taboo, but they weren't as bad to bring up in a slightly negative way as they are now. Because of this fact, *The Office* was able to remain for the nine seasons that it aired. Had the show been aired in this era, it would not have lasted nine seasons, let alone one. Even Steve Carell voices a similar opinion. Upon interviewing Steve Carell, Jacob Stolworthy, from *Independent* Magazine, shares with us that Steve believes that the show, *The Office*, would not be welcomed in today's era. Had the show been introduced during this era, it would not be accepted nearly as much as it is now because it came out in 2005 when these topics were not as sensitive. The show might offend a lot of people if they were to watch it, but the truth is that it is not for everyone because not everybody can appreciate the dark sense of humor that this show displays. Yet, it's dark humor is another factor that goes in to the fact that *The Office* will remain a timeless classic, it can't be reciprocated.

*The Office*, as mentioned, is a widely known series that has made its way to people’s emotions. There are many factors that contribute toward the way *The Office* has reached its viewers' hearts. Not only does the humor come into play, but also the individual characters are what truly give light to the show. The characters aren’t just funny, they are also relatable. That helps build a bridge between the viewers and the characters of the show, which in turn creates a connection and admiration for the show. Additionally, what made the show even better was the fact that as the show progressed, the show was no longer revolving about office life, it became
about the characters and the ways in which they developed. For instance, Craft states that “Episodes began to revolve around the colleagues' individual home lives (like Dwight's adventures on his beet farm) and their relationships outside of The Office (like Angela dating a state senator).” As these stories followed the characters lives, you were able to get to know them while getting a few laughs out of it. Millions of people around the world enjoying the show because of its comedic effect and ability to uplift their mood. When people watch The Office, they connect with the characters because it is easy to get attached to them. Furthermore, while people rewatch the show after some time, it brings this feeling of nostalgia and it reminds them of how the show made them feel. As the character Andy Bernard says, “I wish there was a way to know you are in the good old days before you’ve actually left them.” Good thing that The Office is sticking around though!

Personally, the show means the world to me because it has oddly enough helped me through a lot of tough times in my life since I first started watching that show. As I mentioned before, The Office helps me feel better because it brings me laughter and happiness all while helping me temporarily forget the stressful things that are going on around me. Not only the show as a whole is what made me feel better, but also what I believe to be incredibly written characters from the show that help tie the entire thing together. They are a unique set of characters that help move the show forward with their quirky characteristics and great backstories. Not to mention, I think that on a larger scale, the fact that the show is wildly inappropriate is exactly what makes the show so extraordinary. In an interview with Stolworthy, Steve Carell explicitly states that Michael Scott (one of the main characters of the series) was basically created based off of inappropriate behavior. To many out there, it might seem odd that a show like this brings me happiness, but it truly does. For instance, when I was in high school I
was constantly stressed and overwhelmed by my responsibilities, so after a long day of school and doing homework, I would start to watch *The Office* and I felt better. Even if I still was stressed, the show definitely helped in relaxing my nerves, and it continues to do so to this day.

Lastly, other shows have tried to come close to creating something similar to *The Office* or nearly as funny, but nothing comes close to the original effect that *The Office* displays. Despite the American version of *The Office* being based off of the British version, it was much more successful with viewings as well as ratings. For example, “It may be an unfashionable opinion, but I maintain that American version of *The Office* has always been better than the British original” (Thier). Although this is only an opinion, it is an opinion voiced by many fans of *The Office*. Reasons to why most would find the American version to be the superior series, Thier continues, is that “Brent [UK version] was a petty, mean-spirited son of a bitch nearly devoid of redeeming qualities. Scott [US version], on the other hand, was a child, at times as uncomfortable, but loveable in a way Brent could never manage.” In all, the American version was a much more lovable form of the show that had just enough humor and insults in one. Evidence even shows that *The Office* (US version) is truly the best, for instance “Nielsen — which measures ratings for broadcast and cable TV — is one of the companies that has stepped in to offer some (unofficial) clues.” Neilson reports that The Office is No. 1 on Netflix.” (Metz).

If someone tried to create a show like *The Office* or if the show had come out in around 2018 through 2019, there would have been an uproar and the show would have been canceled after about one or two episodes (hint, watch episode two). The truth is that the show is not for everyone. Even though the show came out around 2005 if some people decide to watch hit just now or even watch the before then some might find it offensive and completely hate the show.
In all, there will never be a show that comes close to *The Office*, regardless of how many people tried to create the same comedic effect and story. *The Office* is an amazing show that is loved by millions of people all around the world for its unique sense of humor. Not only has a show captured my own heart but it has impacted the lives of others as well. *The Office* is significant to me because it helped me and has continued to help me through difficult times. As silly as it seems, it is a show that brings me genuine happiness and takes my mind off of the negative things that are going on around me.
Works Cited


Metz, Nina. “‘The Office’ is Netflix’s most popular show, even though it was made for and originally aired on an old-school broadcast network. Oh, the irony.” *Chicago Tribune*, 3 July 2019.
