



INTERACTIVE SHOWS

What could have been

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Black Mirror: Bandersnatch introduced the world to a completely different form of media consumption, as compared to more traditional media. And while the debate between fans and critics of the movie may carry on, there is no denying that the format itself is revolutionary. Consumers had already encountered interactive games from developers such as Telltale Games, Bethesda and so forth; the idea of interactive movies and TV shows open up new doors to how media, in the future, will evolve.

While *Bandersnatch* gives us hope to see more similar endeavours in the future, we cannot forget the shows of the past that left a lasting impact on our lives, some with elements in them that bother us to date.

There is an extensive number of past shows where the interactive element would help add to its excitement, perhaps changing it for the better or opening up a completely different can of worms.

Similar to *Bandersnatch*, the choices would allow multiple timelines to exist. In the case of some of these shows, the current pre-existing storyline would be one of the choices, with the alternate choices being the ones that would help in creating the many different timelines. However, for those who are left longing for more, here's a list of shows where adding an interactive

element would only help to make it better.

HOW I MET YOUR MOTHER

Not much explanation is needed for why *HIMYM* is on this list. *HIMYM* started off on great terms with fans, but eventually became one of the most disliked shows, with one of the most debated endings. For the fans who were left appalled by Ted ending the story with his wife dead, and reigniting the on/off relationship with Robin all over again, I have just the right solution for you. While *HIMYM* takes many twists and turns, there are multiple instances in which Ted could have met his wife; starting from a wrong classroom at the university he teaches to his ex-girlfriend's apartment, and even at a drug store at one point. Adding layers of choices, which would allow Ted to complete the task of finding his future wife, Tracy, earlier in the series timeline would probably result in him not falling in love with Robin as much as he did, thus resulting in an ending where the name of the show still has some meaning. Additionally, choices would also help Ted in changing the lives of his friends in ways that the viewers would prefer.

POKÉMON (THE ANIMATED SERIES)

Anyone growing up in the 2000s with Cartoon Network will remember just how profound an effect Pokémon had on our lives. While the many games developed by Game Freak gives fans an opportunity to embark on their very own Pokémon

adventure, being able to turn the original TV series into our very own Pokémon journey would be an incomparable experience unlike anything else. Imagine being able to control the choices of Ash Ketchum, the protagonist, as he journeys on his quest to become a Pokémon Master. Only, instead of blundering through his journey failing to catch even a hundred Pokémon, this time it's you who are in control of the choices he make, giving a chance to the dream of becoming a Pokémon Master. Every time Ash enters a new area, the viewer would get an option to either explore the area, or to move towards the next checkpoint. Also, whenever he reaches a new gym, there would be a choice between challenging the gym directly and training your Pokémon to ensure a swifter victory. Choices that would help in encountering and catching rare and wild Pokémon would be available as well.

HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE

Now, this particular show could be replaced by many others from the horror genre. However, it is the overall environment of the *Hill House* series that really attributes it to being a strong candidate for an interactive horror TV show. Unlike most other shows and movies, *Hill House* doesn't really provide an option to opt out of the haunting. Therefore avoidance of the shows many ghosts and nightmarish visions is inevitable. The presence of multiple characters along with the vast size of

the *Hill House* mansion and grounds, open up a myriad possibilities for the viewers. In fact, it would become somewhat similar to the environment of the mystery adventure game, *Scratches*, with real people and more ghosts. Unlike the previous shows, there would be multiple endings, and even secret endings available to the audience. Also, the choices of each individual Crain family member would be combined with the choices made by the other family members to finally sum up the final season ending of the show. Options for exploring different environments and confronting the many ghosts would help in making this show one of the most brilliant ones to come out of the genre.

HONOURABLE MENTION: CID

There would only be one choice here, and it would be a faux choice. The viewer gets to play as the producer, who makes the choice of refusing to cancel the show.

The purpose of making these shows interactive wouldn't only help improve the storyline, but it would also ensure that more probable paths are open for the viewers to explore to better understand the characters and the world of said TV shows. In case of some, viewers would be able to control the narrative according to their needs; for others, it would just create a more fun version of the already existing TV shows to give birth to a whole different category of entertainment.