KICKING ASS IS COMFORT FOOD: TELEVISION AND THE FEMINIST HEROICK

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ABSTRACT

Lena Jeanette Brown: Kicking Ass is Comfort Food: Television and the Feminist Heroick
[Under the direction of Todd Taylor]

Kicking Ass is Comfort Food investigates the fraught intersection between television and feminism. The dissertation takes an interdisciplinary, trans-temporal, genre-bending approach to its subject. *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* fully embraces television culture by incorporating contemporary popular-culture critics, such as Maureen Ryan and Jace Lacob, as well as actresses (and actors), writers, and creators, such as Joss Whedon. To implement its aims, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* employs a revived keyword: *heroick*. Rather than insisting on a univocal, uncomplicated definition of what makes a woman (or man) *heroick*, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* embraces a multivalent group of characters who all exemplify heroick womanhood (and masculinity).

This dissertation includes a wide-range of television series and their heroines (and heroes): Alicia Florrick in *The Good Wife*; Jon Snow and Daenerys Targaryen (*Game of Thrones*); Emma Swan and her parents, Prince Charming and Snow White, (*Once Upon a Time*); Laura Roslin (*Battlestar Galactica*); Echo and Sierra (*Dollhouse*); and Frederick Lyon (*The Hour)* are all characters who play a substantial role within the dissertation. The title, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* is a direct quotation from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, with *Buffy*, both text

and heroine, serving as the critical foundation. Along with *Buffy*, Maureen Ryan, a television critic; Jane Espenson, television writer and creator; Jane Austen (*Northanger Abbey*); Caroline Sheridan Norton (*English Laws for Women*); and Virginia Woolf (*Three Guineas*, *A Room of One's Own*, and "Professions for Women") star as integral critical voices and help define heroineism (and heroism). While by no means comprehensive, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* empowers its audience to re-see what makes a woman (or man) heroick.

This little book is dedicated to my beloved parents or as I like to call them Spy Daddy and Goddess, who are not only the authors of my being, but also my partners in crime and dissertation creation. This book is equally dedicated to Jane Espenson, whose productions from pen, writing sprints, and benevolence inspired this dissertation and sweetened its creation. She was the light by which my candle was lit.

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Although most dissertations are filled with libraries and colleagues and writing groups, the thanks I give reflect the alternative critical voice as much as the dissertation itself. This dissertation was spoken of on my home and on ways from cruise ships with my parents, generous enquires over cards with my mom's bridge group, twitter conversations with friends I have never met, and Pleiades who light my sky. I was surrounded by heroick women and men. Thank you Dianne Rhodes, Sharon Warlick, Gail (& Bill) Jamski, and Fammie Peters for letting me play in your bridge club and for always brightening my life. Thank

you Rachel Richards and Dr. Meriem Pages for reading over my dissertation and for yr heroick friendship. Love and gratitude to my beloved Temple Shalom crew: Margot & David Kling, Joyce & Joe Wolf, Janet (may her name be blessed) & Milton Greenbaum. I am equally grateful for the disspiration,friendship, & support from Jess McHale, Catalina Lee, Kelly Schenckel, Kaye Smith, Marissa Hondros, Leslie Smith, Chloe Monroe, Marto, Christine Rogers, Jackie, Bel Keats, Shannon Leigh, Alyssa, Meisha, Mariama Congo, Jim & Sarah Wade, Miriam Bazalon (may her name be blessed), Kathleen Homan, Teri LaFlesh, and The Abrams.

I am endebted to my parents for all their heroick support throughout the dissertation; we may not have hunted suitcase nukes, but we had some thrilling hobbit adventures over the summers. Thank you to my dad for reading over my dissertation before I submitted it. Mom typed your dissertation (and your thesis), and you helped me with mine.

Special Thanks to Jane Espenson, Maureen Ryan, and Jace Lacob. You embody everything that is great and good about television writing, whether as a professional critic or a television writer. I am grateful for all your kindness.

I have been blessed by a superb cast of characters, and I have striven to do them honour by my pen. Like any speech, I am sure there are important people whose names I forgot to adduce to the list, but your names are inscribed on my heart, if not this page.

PREFACE: AND NOW MY WATCH BEGINS: RELECTIONS ON TELEVISION AND FEMNINISM

At the end of "Professions for Women," Virginia Woolf declaims:

> But besides this, it is necessary also to discuss the ends and the aims for which we are fighting, for which we are doing battle with these formidable obstacles. Those aims cannot be taken for granted; they must be perpetually questioned and examined. You have won rooms of your own in the house hitherto exclusively owned by men. You are able, though not without great labour and effort, to pay the rent. You are earning your five hundred pounds a year. But this freedom is only the beginning; the room is your own, but it is still bare. It has to be furnished; it has to be decorated; it has to be shared. How are you going to furnish it, how are you going to decorate it? With whom are you going to share it, and upon what terms? These, I think are the questions of the utmost importance. For the first time in history you are able to ask them; for the first time in history you are able to decide for yourself what the answers should be.[1]

From Woolf's rousing call to arms or at least feminist empowerment through room-décor, we turn to darker and colder climes: the Ice Wall in Westeros. George R. R. Martin's *Song of Ice and Fire* series tends to be known more for the relentless dystopia than the bright, warm fuzzy joys of girl power.

The Night's Watch, full of bastards and broken things, defends the realm of Westeros from the dangers that lurk over the wall. The Night's Watch, moreover, is not a Profession for Women. The Night's Watch's oath follows:

> Night gathers, and now my watch begins. It shall not end until my death. I shall take no wife, hold no lands, father no children. I shall

[1]Originally delivered before the Women's Service League, "Professions for Women" was posthumously published in *Death of the Moth* (1942), edited by Leonard Woolf. All pages and quotations are taken from the first American edition [*The Death of the Moth and Other Essays*. Ed. Leonard Woolf. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1942. 235-242. Print.)].

> wear no crowns and win no glory. I shall live and die at my post. I am the sword in the darkness. I am the watcher on the walls. I am the shield that guards the realms of men. I pledge my life and honor to the Night's Watch, for this night and all the nights to come.[2]

"I shall wear no crowns and win no glory. I am the sword in the darkness. I am the watcher at the wall:" *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* would like to test that theory and add it to the wall of our Woolfian-room, right above our television set. After all, the dissertator often feels as if she shall live and die at her post and knows glory will not be hers, at least not in the traditional sense. *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* claims its place as heiress to both Virginia Woolf's glorious sentiments and the Night's Watch oath. It is true that academe often seems closer to embodying the linguistic charge of the Night's Watch without the heroism. For far too long, academe has set itself to battling the evils of popular culture at the time it welcomes the long-dead dangers of reading French fiction and loving Jane Austen.

Now, adoring Jane Austen is indeed a dangerous and treacherous endeavor. Witness the slings and arrows hurled at Caroline Criado-Perez, who had the temerity to aver that Austen might make a suitable candidate for the British 10 pound note.[3] Who knew that successfully putting Jane Austen on the

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[2]"You Win or You Die." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Daniel Minahan. (29 May. 2011) Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

[3]The twitter-terror-campaign directed at Caroline Crido-Perez understandably received a great deal of coverage. See, for instance, "Feminist Campaigner Receives Death Threats after Jane Austen Put on 10-Pound Note." (*News.Com.Au*. (29 Jul. 2013). Web. <http://www.news.com.au/technology/feminist-campaigner-receives-death-threats-after-jane-austen-put-on-10-pound-note/story-e6frfro0-1226687234123> 16 Jan. 2015.) and Annalisa Quinn. "Book News: Campaigner For Jane Austen Banknote Deluged With Threats." (*NPR*. (30 Jul 2013). Web. < http://www.npr.org/blogs/thetwo-way/2013/07/30/206902781/book-news-

10 pound note equals death threats and the sort of language that would make Jane Austen blush and Helen Mirren put your head through a wall?

Verily, you can purchase the décor and pay the rent for Virginia Woolf's room of one's own with fistfuls of Austens no less. More disturbingly, as borne out by the death-threats receive by Criado-Perez, Virginia Woolf's pronouncement with "Professions for Women" still rings disturbingly accurate: "Inwardly, I think the case is very different; she has many ghosts to fight, many prejudices to overcome. Indeed, it will be a long time still, I think, before a woman can sit down to write a book without finding a phantom to be slain, a rock to be dashed against."[4] *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* views Woolf's demons and phantoms as challenges to be met and defeated with the pen.

Our scene opens on the start of an Early Modern Drama class at my previous academic institution wherein the hoary first-day-of-class technique of name, field, and give an interesting fact about yourself was taking place. My turn arrived. I was at a loss for what to say, so I divulged my love of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Once the class was over, a close friend pulled me aside and told me that she never thought of me as a bimbo and hence she was surprised to learn that I loved *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. I did not tell her that I too once doubted the value of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* when my science-fiction-

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campaigner-for-jane-austen-banknote-deluged-with-threats > 16 Jan. 2015.) Two of her tormentors were arrested and pled guilty to their crimes [Rebecca Camber. "Pictured: Twitter Trolls who made Rape and Death Threats to Jane Austen Banknote Campaigner Plead GUILTY to Sending 'Menacing' Messages."(*Daily Mail*. (7 Jan. 2014). Web. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2535270/Twitter-trolls-rape-death-threats-Caroline-Criado-Perez-plead-GUILTY.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[4]Virginia Woolf "Professions For Women" 236

television-loving friend raved about how amazing it was. I did not point out the irony of undermining my intellect when we were both sitting in an Early Modern English class rather than exchanging pleasantries before we went to earn our way through graduate school on a pole. Instead, drawing on my fine command of language I said nothing and squirreled away the fact in my mind that you are what you watch. I would be mendacious if I were to suggest that this instance was the last and only time I would hear the sentiments that loving Buffy makes me intellectual substandard, though no one has perhaps been so bold and brazen as to impugn my honor.

Having attended the prestigious Mount Holyoke College (MHC), I was at a loss. We had cake and ice cream for Emily Dickinson's birthday every year. We, equally, would spend our lunch hours in scintillating conversation about whatever passion, scientific or something else, our classes provoked or sitting in front of the dorm television watching *Jerry Springer* or *Golden Girls*.

Like our foremothers reading novels together aloud, friendships blossomed over gathering together over M&Cs (Milk and Cookies traditionally served at 9:30) watching *ER*, *Masterpiece Mystery* or what you will. Both sociable and sacred—no one dared accept or make a phone call, except at the all-important commercial break—these television hours provided both a sense of community and, looking back on it, an ability to appreciate what Mount Holyoke women living in the nineteenth century must have felt waiting for the latest installment of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* or *North and South* to arrive hot off the presses. As a result of both my upbringing and Mount Holyoke, television

always provided me with a sense of community and was completely commensurate with smart-girl/womanhood status. As previously alluded to, I must confess that whilst at MHC, I had friends who were passionately devoted to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, but I was skeptical to say the least and did not become enamored of the show until the summer after my graduation.[5] When you, almost quite literally, inhabit the joys and perils of feminist empowerment, you don't always need to look for it on television. When you live on the sort of campus that looks both beautiful and perfect for a slasher film (so many women) or your graduation involves a laurel parade complete with dressing up like suffragettes and singing "Bread and Roses," you exist in a certain space both hallowed and haunted. Back then, I was a devoted British Literature major.[6] Learning to love *Buffy*, therefore, was not the only heroick lesson I needed to learn in order to gain the experience and education necessary to write this dissertation.

Flash-forward to a nearer present. When I was writing prospectus after prospectus after prospectus, I aimed to subsume my love for television into my equally impassioned ardor for social justice narratives in transatlantic nineteenth-century literature. I made this choice precisely as a result of the

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[5]I still remember flipping onto the channel playing *Buffy* ("Forever") in a Washington D.C. hotel room (I was going to be a bridesmaid for a dear friend) and becoming immediately entranced. Since one of the other bridesmaids (thank you Julia Lieberman! Sorry it took me so long to join the Whedonverse-love-club) was the friend who had tried to suade me into *Buffy*, I was happily able to mend my previous errors and tell her that I thought I was in love with *Buffy*.

[6]Prior to my master's program, I had the unfortunate educational experience that tricked me into thinking that women who were not named Edith Wharton were sadly lacking from American Literature. British Literature, in general, and the novel, in particular, seemed like where the girls were and with them went my nation.

bruising and disempowering experiences of my written and oral exams, wherein I was made to feel like including *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* as the final chapter in my dissertation was tantamount to burning the contents of Gaskin Library[7] or the Library of Congress. Finally, the day for defending my prospectus arrived. It was version fifteen, and I was ready. I had no director, but I had a prospectus and a committee. By the end of the defense, I had a director and a new *raison d'etre* or at least a *raison d'ecrire*: television.

Justice demands the inclusion that my staunchest defenders were people who stalwartly and proudly refused to own a television.[8] Equally, from my Master's program, I was familiar with John Field and the other groundbreaking work done on television within the fields of English and Culture Studies. Yet, when it came to writing the successful prospectus, I hit upon using Elizabeth Ammons's *Brave New Words: How Literature Will Change the World* as a jumping off point or rather an architectural plan to help construct my room, rather than the tried and true practitioners of academic television criticism.[9]

In *Brave New Words*, Elizabeth Ammons avers:

> I argue throughout that the challenge now facing humanists is clear. Inside and outside academic settings we need to revive the liberal arts as a progressive cultural force that not only provides critique but also offers workable ideas and inspiration in the real-

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[7]Gaskin Library was the setting for both my oral exam and my prospectus defence. It is the library for the English department, filled with bound copies of old theses and dissertations as well as respectable literature.

[8]Dr. Susan Ryan, my thesis director, and Dr. Philip Gura continue to inspire me to be as wise and wonderful as they are, even if they still do not own televisions.

[9]Elizabeth Ammons, *Brave New Words: How Literature Will Save the Planet*. (Iowa City, Iowa: University of Iowa Press, 2010. Print.)

> world struggle to achieve social justice and restoration of the earth.[10]

The challenge made by Ammons's in *Brave New Words: How Literature Will Save the World* influenced the theoretical underpinnings of this dissertation. *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* asserts television's analogous ability to wield the word and save the world.

Within *Brave New Words*, Ammons concentrates on limning what makes literature particularly capable of world-saving, and in so doing, outlines a specific sort of literature that is valuable (i.e., solely literature working in a progressivist tradition). Consequently, the television shows discussed within this dissertation were chosen to demonstrate television's power to fulfill Ammons's desire to craft thought-provoking analyses of American, and English, cultures. Television, likewise, fosters Ammons's ideal intellectual community by empowering both those working on the show and viewers of that show to interrogate vexed social concerns.

Although many ages of television are known as golden, students of television are fortunate to live in an age where television is finally starting to gain the respect accorded to cinema. For instance, it is notable that Joss Whedon, Alan Taylor, and the Russo Brothers were chosen to helm tent-pole Marvel action flicks even though their directorial work existed primarily within television series (respectively *Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Game of Thrones*, and *Community*). Moreover, television, be it cable or broadcast, is no longer seen as

[10]Ammons xiv

the place where actors go to slum it for a paycheck.[11] Likewise, television is commonly viewed as the *de rigueur* destination for complicated roles for women, especially for "women of a certain age."

Television, like the real world, is by no means a utopian paradise where women and minorities are granted equality of numbers and representation. Nevertheless, to a discerning viewer, it is striking how many women as producers, writers, directors, and creators exists on the small screen as opposed to cinema; the propensity for women, though not achieving parity by any means, to win an Emmy or another prestigious award for directing, writing, or producing a television show stands in startling contrast to their continued absences from the Oscars and other major cinematic awards. Similarly, television demonstrates the potential for men to participate as co-actors within the feminist movement.

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[11]For instance, Gary Susman avers, "It's a paradox. Independent films—the kind that are often dramas or comedies about everyday people, rather than superheroes—have all but vanished from theaters, which now show mostly popcorn action blockbusters. And yet, many of the filmmakers who used to make those indie movies have found a home on TV, where that same character-driven sensibility makes their work a critical and commercial success"[Gary Susman, "How Indie Filmmakers have Transformed TV." (*Moviefone*. (30 Jan. 2015). Web. <http://news.moviefone.com/2015/01/30/how-indie-filmmakers-have-transformed-tv/ > 23 Mar. 2015.)]. See also James Poniewozik, "Why TV is the Perfect Place for Indie Filmmakers."*Time*. (26 Jan. 2015). Web. < http://time.com/3682354/tv-independent-film-sundance/ > 23 Mar. 2015.).

Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* provides an apt example and demonstrates the foundation for this dissertation. In her interview with Whedon entitled "Must See Metaphysics," critic Emily Nussbaum notes:[12]

> Like Buffy herself, genre fiction is easily undervalued, seen as powerless fluff. But Whedon finds it uniquely forceful: using its vivid strokes, you can be speculative, philosophical—and create stories that are not merely true to life but are metaphors for a deeper level of human experience. 'It's better to be a spy in the house of love, you know?' he jokes. 'If I made 'Buffy the Lesbian Separatist,' a series of lectures on PBS on why there should be feminism, no one would be coming to the party, and it would be boring. The idea of changing culture is important to me, and it can only be done in a popular medium.'[13]

If it was the eighteenth and nineteenth century and I (or Joss Whedon) wanted to change the world, we would write novels, like Elizabeth Gaskell and Catharine Maria Sedgwick, but it is the twenty-first century, so reaching hearts and minds within popular culture requires television.

Even if it was more along the lines of "'Buffy the Lesbian Separatist," a series of lectures on PBS on why there should be feminism," writing a television show would be as unworkable for me as it would be for Whedon, though for different reasons. Instead, I have chosen to emulate Woolf and Whedon and combine my genres in a form follows function approach. More of the rationale will be revealed in the introduction or "Pilot." The pages that follow do not resemble an actual television script, since those tend to look like plays.

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[12]Emily Nussbaum,"Must-See Metaphysics." *Joss Whedon: Conversations*. (Eds. David Lavery and Cynthia Burkhead. Jackson, Miss: University Press of Mississippi, 2011. 64-70. Print.)

[13]Nussbaum "Must-See Metaphysics" 65

Consequently, the structure of the chapters, embraces an alternate critical approach by employing a unique structure in every facet of its construction: cheeky nods are made by calling the chapters "Episodes" or "Season Finale" for the closing chapter; using "Teaser," instead of "Introduction," and "Act I" to "Act V" for section header titles; and placing an epigram at the start of each chapter. The titles for the sections are meant to evoke a certain playfulness, like the linguistic equivalent of a shooting lens or the soundtrack playing over the scene.

In thinking about how to construct an argument so it might be intelligible to as many people as possible, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* takes rhetorical cues from diverse sources, as can be seen from the preface. Like any good television show (e.g., *Gilmore Girls*) or novel, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* relies on the intellect of the audience and not every single namecheck/reference will be explicated. Television shows, for instance, frequently rely on stock footage to set the scene or elide moments.

If a television show or movie takes the time to show you every single detail (ten pages worth of script) of something normal, like teeth brushing or going about one's morning routine, the audience has certain expectations or reactions: a) dull: why is the action slowed down? b) this is important: plot anvils are falling, so we ought to pay attention, and c) artistry: there are aesthetic reasons (perhaps a desire to be novelistic) that this level of details is being included. The Woolf that we emulate is more *A Room of One's Own* and less *Mrs Dalloway*; therefore, our dissertation uses the technique more

sparingly than the typical dissertation wherein every single solitary reference would be broken down to the molecular level. The traditional dissertation will spend forty pages in its introduction discussing the history of television. *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* acknowledges the value in that approach but asserts the necessity to choose an alternate path in order to more directly engage with the television on its own terms.

Austen's defense of the novel from *Northanger Abbey* exemplifies the approach this dissertation takes:[14]

> And while the abilities of the nine-hundredth abridger of the *History of England*, or of the man who collects and publishes in a volume some dozen lines of Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the *Spectator*, and a chapter from Sterne, are eulogized by a thousand pens—there seems almost a general wish of decrying the capacity and undervaluing the labour of the novelist, and of slighting the performances which have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them. 'I am no novel-reader—I seldom look into novels—Do not imagine that I often read novels—It is really very well for a novel.' Such is the common cant. 'And what are you reading, Miss—?' 'Oh! It is only a novel!' replies the young lady, while she lays down her book with affected indifference, or momentary shame. 'It is only *Cecilia*, or *Camilla*, or *Belinda*'; or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language.

Look at Austen's rhetorical choices.

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[14]*Northanger Abbey* was posthumously published in a combined edition with Jane Austen's last completed novel, *Persuasion*, with an biographical note by Austen's brother Henry [Jane Austen, *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*. (London: John Murray,1818. Print.)]. Like the other novel's printed in Austen's lifetime, her name was not listed on the title page. Instead, she was listed as "by the author of "Pride and Prejudice," "Mansfield-Park," &c."[directly quoted from title page, including the &c.]. That said, her authorship was well known with her society. To retain consistency, all quotations from Jane Austen provide chapters rather than page numbers to enable the reader to locate the quotation. The *Republic of Pemberley* provides an excellent e-text of the novel, which can be found here (http://pemberley.com/etext/NA/index.html). Austen's defence of the novel may be found in Chapter 5, and we will see it again in our second chapter.

The speed with which Austen hurls out references seems more fitting for an episode of Amy Sherman-Palladino's *Gilmore Girls* or a George Cukor 1940s film. She trusts her audience to understand whom she is talking about and to decipher her gendered binary code. She chose Frances Burney (*Camila* and *Cecilia*) and Maria Edgeworth (*Belinda*) to illustrate the novelists' art rather than boys like Samuel Richardson or Henry Fielding. Instead, male authors only show up on the other side of the equation as few lines from Alexander Pope or Matthew Prior and a chapter from Lawrence Sterne. Notice, it is not a dozen lines from Charlotte Smith or Lady Mary Wortley Montague and a chapter from Eliza Heywood or Charlotte Lennox. Thus, Austen is able to construct a potent attack on masculinist privilege and a scintillating defense of the novel.

Austen, were she writing a dissertation defending the novel, would not have carefully, like another Mr. Casaubon, provided a detailed analysis for what Prior contends, what Maria Edgeworth argues and why she selected *Belinda* rather than another of Edgeworth's novels. Instead, Austen places her faith in the reader's ability to rightly reckon her larger argument. Scraps of masculine intellect placed together by another man are far superior to any novel crafted by a female pen. Moreover, if we give Austen's moral-literary calculus a contemporary equation, novel reading's toxicity is such that a young woman rather would proclaim she enjoys watching *Toddlers and Tiaras* or *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* over divulging that she was engrossed in the Colin Firth/Jennifer Ehle *Pride and Prejudice* adaptation.

Austen's linguistic choices to set up her debate are especially telling. She aligns the novel with "genius, wit, and taste." Likewise, her trenchant definition is "in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, in which the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language." If she were working within a traditional dissertation form, Austen would have explicated "genius," "taste," and "wit," situated her utilization in a historical context, then responded to her contemporaries (e.g., does she uphold Sarah Fielding or go against Sir Joshua Reynolds?) and included copious footnotes on the surrounding counterarguments on both sides. Austen would have taken pains to clearly and minutely note how Edgeworth and Burney of all women convey a thorough knowledge of the human spirit. It is true Frances Burney makes an appearance in *Northanger Abbey*, but Austen does not elucidate with compelling and pertinent examples her points about these specific novels and these particular women (or men). While the dissertation qua dissertation was not, of course, something crafted in Austen's day and age, the rhetorical modes that it employs are certainly ancient enough to have been something Austen would have familiar with, if not conversant in seeing as her father was a Reverend. The potency of Austen's defense is not rendered powerless by its piquancy and vivacity. It is indeed probable that were she more prolix, she would have a) derailed the larger plot of her novel and b) more importantly, not made as effective and affective connection with her audience.

The dissertator herself places the firmest and truest trust in her reader's ability to read the snippet from Austen and prove as quick as Emma Woodhouse to decode Mr. Elton's letter to Harriet Smith. At the same time, the dissertator understands that audiences have expectations and when picking up a dissertation might perhaps be dissatisfied beyond measure if they find something inherently distinct from Dorothea Brooke's *A Key to All Mythologies*—hence her digression at the end of this preface to explain her methods to the patient and gentle reader. Perhaps fitting after Austen's linguistic charge, we leave the last words to Shakespeare:[15]

> If we shadows have offended,
> Think but this, and all is mended,
> That you have but slumbered here
> While these visions did appear.
> And this weak and idle theme,
> No more yielding but a dream,
> Gentles, do not reprehend:
> If you pardon, we will mend.[16]

[15]William Shakespeare *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1590-1596).

[16]Shakespeare *A Midsummer Night's Dream* V.i. 2275-2282

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PILOT: ENACTING THE HEROICK; OR SUNNYDALE AS CITY ON A HILL

Giles: Angel's not taking you, is he?
Buffy: Angel's leaving me. He's leaving town.
Giles: Oh, Buffy, I'm sorry. I don't really know what to say. Um, I understand that this sort of thing requires ice cream of some kind?
Buffy: Ice cream will come. First, I want to take out psycho boy.
Giles: You sure?
Buffy: The great thing about being a Slayer, kicking ass is comfort food.[17]

Teaser:[18] Muse and Minerva, or Enacting the Heroick

Adapted from "The Great Lawsuit: Man versus Men. Woman versus Women" (July 1843) for *The Dial,* Margaret Fuller's *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* (1845) asserts:[19] "We would have every arbitrary barrier thrown down. We would have every path laid open to women as freely as to men. If you ask me what offices they may fill, I reply—any, I do not care what case you put; let them be sea captains, if you will."[20] Fuller fulminates against the gendered double standards that construct all women as less than men.

Fuller, likewise, lauds the Muse (Creative and more traditionally feminine) and Minerva (Intellectual and more traditionally Masculine): "Man partakes of the feminine in the Apollo, woman of the masculine as Minerva."[21] Fuller claims

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[17]"The Prom." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Three*. (Writ. Marti Noxon. Dir. David Solomon. (11 May. 1999). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.)

[18]In television terminology, the teaser is the portion of the show before the credits. In traditional dissertation terms, it would be more closely translated as the introduction.

[19]Margaret Fuller, *Woman in the Nineteenth Century*. (New York: Greeley & McElrath, 1845. Print.)

[20]Fuller *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* 159

[21]Fuller *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* 104

that every woman has the potential to incorporate both sides: "Male and female represent the two sides of the great radical dualism. But, in fact, they are perpetually passing into one another. Fluid hardens to solid, solid rushes to fluid. There is no wholly masculine man, no purely feminine woman."[22] Moreover, men, she avers, incorporate the feminine through Apollo (the poetic, creative masculine element).

Along with the other virtues whose film stills you will see in the coming pages, Buffy's scintillating, ground-breaking combination between arse-kicking and ice-cream eating as a cure for boy problems renders her worthy of emulatory as well as titular status. Although the other television heroines starring in our dissertation might not all have the skill-set to hurl punches and thrust stakes through chests, all our heroines, in their own manner, embody as enthralling and thrilling a concept as Buffy's and find comfort (food) in slaying the "psycho boys" and demons or whatsoever evil beset them. *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* insists on the equality of all heroines. Austen's Elizabeth Bennett (*Pride and Prejudice*) need not be re-formed as a slayer of zombies (*Pride and Prejudice and Zombies*) to rate action-status. Accomplishing our ends requires a revived key term: *Heroick*.

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, heroick appeared as an alternative spelling throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, lasting into the eighteenth century. Our use draws upon the fourth meaning listed in the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "Having recourse to bold, daring, or extreme

[22]Fuller *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* 103

measures; boldly experimental; attempting great things."[23] Katherine (Fowler) Philips offers us an early literary use of the term in "To my dearest Lucasia" (aka *Friendship in Embleme, or the Seal*) (1674): "friendship from good angels springs/to teach the world heroick things."[24] Our use of heroick emulates both the OED and Philips through reviving the gender parity of heroick and the manner in which heroism can derive from.

The heroick woman can trace her origin story through diverse paths: from Judith slaying Holofernes to Joan of Arc and Countess Emilia Plater[25] as

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[23]"heroic, adj. and n." *OED Online*. ((Sept. 2012.) Oxford University Press. Web. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/86302?isAdvanced=false&result=2&rskey=aeAQa2&> 12 Sept. 2012.)

[24]Originally circulated in manuscript form amongst her social circle (the "Society of Friends"), Philips's poetry was posthumously published first in 1664 *Poems. By the Incomparable Mrs. K. P* and then reprinted in expanded edition *Poems. By the Most Deservedly Admired Mrs. Katherine Philips, the Matchless Orinda. To which is Added, Monsieur Corneille's Pompey and Horace, Tragedies. with Several Other Translations out of French* (London, Printed by T.N. for Henry Herringman,1678.)

[25]Margaret Fuller's *Woman in Nineteenth Century* provides a fascinating delineation of Countess Plater: "This fluctuation was obvious in a narrative I have lately seen, the story of the life of Countess Emily Plater, the heroine of the last revolution in Poland.The dignity, the purity, the concentrated resolve, the calm, deep enthusiasm, which yet could, when occasion called, sparkle up a holy, an indignant fire, make of this young maiden the figure I want for my frontispiece. Her portrait is to be seen in the book, a gentle shadow of her soul. Short was the career—like the maid of Orleans, she only did enough to verify her credentials, and then passed from a scene on which she was, probably, a premature apparition. When the young girl joined the army the report of her exploits had preceded her, she was received in a manner that marks the usual state of feeling. Some of the officers were disappointed at her quiet manners; that she had not the air and tone of a stage-heroine. They thought she could not have acted heroically unless in buskins; had no idea that such deeds only showed the habit of her mind. Others talked of the elicacy of her sex, advised her to withdraw from perils and dangers, and had no comprehension of the feelings within her breast that made this impossible.The gentle irony of her reply to these self-constituted tutors, (not one of whom showed himself her equal in conduct or reason,) is as good as her indignant reproof at a later period to the general, whose perfidy ruined all. But though, to the mass of these men, she was an embarrassment and a puzzle, the nobler sort viewed her with a tender enthusiasm worthy of her. 'Her name,' said her biographer, is known throughout Europe. I paint her character that she may be as widely loved.' With pride, he shows her freedom from all personal affections; that, though tender and gentle in an uncommon degree, there was no room for a private love in her consecrated life. She inspired those who knew her with a simple energy of feeling like her own. We have seen, they felt, a woman worthy the name, capable of all sweet affections, capable of stern virtue. It is a

well as Ripley (Sigourney Weaver), Sarah Carter (Linda Hamilton's original cinematic outing as well as Lena Headey's television version), and Laura Croft (video game vixen as well as Angelina Jolie's cinematic action heroine). The heroick woman, ergo, may, like Austen's Elizabeth Bennet, have her skirts six-inches deep in mud, a certain sweetness and archness of her manner, and employ her mind and mouth in unapologetic mockery to resist misogyny.

Our heroine may fight fire with words, wear stiletto heels, and solve things with violence; or be Whedonesque, wearing boots made for kicking, and wielding the power of the pun. She may read novels or write them. She might, like Alicia Florrick, the heroine of our third chapter, leave the workforce to raise her children, only to return many years later in order to work to support those children. The domestic, for our purposes, is neither by its very nature inharmonious with heroick womanhood nor by necessity hostile towards the heroick woman.

Kicking Ass is Comfort Food honors its textual sires (especially Joss Whedon) and kicks back against the illogical strictures imposed upon the discourse submitting women (and girls) to enhanced interrogation seemingly for sport. Although the dissertation forefronts the heroines of the television in question, it does so under the knowledge that all of the women are situated within a world wherein men can inhabit equally conflicted gender and societal roles as do our heroines and even play the same roles as women (sidekick, love interest, parent, spouse, or antagonist).

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fact worthy of remark that all these revolutions in favor of liberty have produced female champions that share the same traits . . . ." (Fuller *Woman in the Nineteenth Century* 34-35)

Within the critical conversation, men are all too often reduced to stock villains who are incapable of anything other than predation against women or abject terror over the power women (and girls) can hold. Women, likewise, who hold companionate or familial relationships with men are seen as lesser heroines. The scholarly discourse, therefore, denies men as well as women freedom of expression and coequal critical gazes. To aver that women who love men are weak would appear to uphold the damaging misogynist assertion that men who love women are emasculated and rendered unmanly by any relationships that are not purely homosocial.

On the surface, it would seem difficult, if not impossible, to construct a feminist reading of the texts under discussion because almost all of our shows were created by men, except for *The Good Wife* (the husband and wife team of Michelle King and Robert King) and *The Hour* (Abi Morgan). Stranger still, it would seem that the works under discussion prove that men are quite capable of admiring and crafting flawed, strong women, rather than pretty pieces of flawless perfection. Joss Whedon (*Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Dollhouse*); Robert King (*The Good Wife)*; David Eick and Ronald D. Moore (*Battlestar Galactica*); D.B. Weiss and David Beinoff (*Game of Thrones*); and Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz (*Once Upon A Time*) embody the sort of creative voice and vision that much of academic feminist thought contends belongs only to women.

The idea that men can be feminists does not seem particularly groundbreaking or even the focus of this dissertation. Nevertheless, it must be

stated and extended to all aspects of the work, particularly to the actors and writers, as a means of kicking back against the larger society, which all too often trafficks in a paradigm equating masculinity with misogyny. As Jane Espenson avers, ". . . [T]he fight for the rights of one group is part of the fight for the rights of another group."[26] Espenson continues, "If we take the struggle for the rights of women seriously, we need to recognize that victory will have implications—good ones—beyond us, and recognize that the war next door is our war, too, and worth getting involved in."[27]

Like Espenson, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* claims for men the same privileges that it accords to women. If any woman may be heroick, then surely any man may possess the abilities to admire her just the way she is and to limn her qualities and her virtues as compelling as she herself might, if she so desired. Equally, if femininity is toxic to anyone whom it touches, then all women are definitely doomed.

Our term heroick and the print world in which it was created take seriously Buffy's mandate (as outlined within its seventh season) that "everyone woman who can have the power will have the power." Rather than the traditional disparagement or ignorance of popular cultural critical responses in all their forms, the dissertation continues its power-sharing by examining, responding to, and incorporating the voices of the makers of the television

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[26]Jane Espenson, "Women! This is Your Fight, Too." (*HuffPost Gay Voices*. 13 Dec. 2012. Web. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jane-espenson/women-this-is-your-fight-too_b_2296845.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[27]Espenson "Women! This is Your Fight, Too"

studied, the fans who adore said television, and the contemporary criticism with which said television actually engages.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer in her multivalent role as heroick embodiment, mother text, and foundational critical paradigm opens our chapter. Next, it provides three real world critical voices: a television writer (Jane Espenson), a television critic (Maureen Ryan), and two actresses (Anna Chancellor and Romola Garai). Finally, we end with a glimpse of the shape of things to come.

Act I: Synecdoche and the Slayer

"In every generation there is a Chosen One. She alone will stand against the vampires, the demons and the forces of darkness. She is the Slayer;" or so intones the voiceover preceding the opening seasons of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.[28] On the face of it, the powers-that-be created an utterly unworkable paradigm. Imbuing only one girl in all the world with the powers to face the demon hordes would seem that she, along with the earth, would be doomed to annihilation.

But Buffy Summers (Sarah Michelle Gellar) is never actually alone. Within the world she inhabits, many correspondingly empowered women, called

[28]"In every generation" is a key idea to the Slayer mythos. In addition to serving as the voiceover that proceeds the series for the first two seasons, it makes its initial appearance within the story in the show's pilot in the following dialog: **Buffy:** Oh, why can't you people just leave me alone? **Giles:** Because you are the Slayer. Into each generation a Slayer is born, one girl in all the world, a Chosen One, one born with the strength and skill to hunt the vampires...
Buffy: ...with the strength and skill to hunt the vampires, to stop the spread of their evil blah, blah, blah... I've heard it, okay? ["Welcome to the Hellmouth." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Charles Martin Smith and Joss Whedon (uncredited). (10 Mar. 1997) Fox Searchlight, 1997. DVD.)] The specifics of the prophecy haunt Buffy and *Buffy*. Though season seven deconstructs the "in every generation" construct, Whedon, as evinced in the concepts debut, interrogates the deeper meaning.

Potentials, fight the same dark forces, stake vampires, hang out in cemeteries, and attempt to protect the innocent. Buffy might be the star of her own series and bear the official title, but countless numbers of nameless girls throughout Buffy's world kick, and have kicked, demon ass and lay scattered in desolate tombs, untimely felled in battle and unheralded.

We begin to get glimpses of the Potentials once we see them being brutally slaughtered off by the First Evil in season seven, the show's final season.[29] Ironically, Whedon billed season seven as the return to the "joys of feminist empowerment." Though it has a rousing ending, which will be discussed in more depth in "Episode Three: Whedon and Woolf Wield Words and Wreak Retributive Wrath," watching women getting murdered brutally would seem to emulate the horror movie clichés that *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* aims to upend. At the same time, Buffy herself battles against the power that makes her the lone defender of the world and representative woman.

Prior to season seven, however, we did see other Slayers and heard bits and pieces of their pre-Slayer lives after Buffy's demise.[30] Within Buffy's world,

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[29]That said, once all the remaining Potentials start assembling at Buffy's house in Sunnydale, we get to spend more time with them. At the same time, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* treats them as both archetypal slasher victims waiting to be killed off by the First Evil and as proto-slayers whom Buffy needs to transform into an army of women. Their role might not be unfeminist (after all, they do end up joining with Buffy, Faith, and the rest of Buffy's friends to defeat the First Evil), but it surely does not allow us to see what their lives were like as Potentials.

[30]The Slayers we see on camera and hear about are Nikki, an African-American woman in 1970s New York (she was killed by Spike); a nameless Chinese woman during the Boxer Rebellion (she was also killed by Spike), a Korean woman in 1930s New York, Kendra, who arrives in Season two, from Jamaica; and Faith, a working-class white girl from Boston. Other slayers' stories are collected in the graphic novel series *Tales of the Slayer* (Milwaukie, OR: Dark Horse Books, 2004. Print.)

once the Slayer dies, another one is called to replace her.[31] Consequently, both the audience and Buffy the Vampire Slayer herself operate under the knowledge that she is not exactly alone in her universe; rather, the Potentials provide as potent a gender linkage to her Slayer heritage as do the previous official holders of the title.

Once Buffy meets Kendra (Bianca Lawson) and then Faith (Eliza Dushku), the inheritors of her throne as it were, the audience learns what makes Buffy special. She is the synthesis of Kendra's strict adherence to the rules—there is actually a *Slayer Handbook*—and Faith's lust for violence and pleasure in killing. The forces are further reconciled within the final season when both Buffy and Faith work together to defeat the First Evil, who equals the Buffyverse version of Satan or misogyny made flesh.

Slayers tend to lead lives that are nasty, brutish, and short. Like more traditional superheroes (and heroines), Slayers' cultural work confines them to the shadows and the other Gothic spaces that are inhabited by the evil that needs to be fought. Within Whedon's world, the girl in the alley need not necessarily be a victim; she might be the one that slays the monster. In one particularly moving and emblematic scene, Buffy intones, "I am the thing that monsters have nightmares about. And right now, you and me are gonna show

[31]Buffy's deaths were in the season finales of season one ["Prophecy Girl." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (2 Jun. 1997). Fox Searchlight,1997. DVD.)] and season five ["The Gift." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Five*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (22 May. 2001) Fox Searchlight, 2001. DVD.)].

'em why."[32] Time and time again, *Buffy* shows the discontents and dangers that come with wielding the sort of power that gives monsters nightmares.

After all, choicelessness is as inherent in her DNA as is her chosenness. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, consequently, interrogates the master narrative that enshrines "Chosen Ones" and empowers Buffy not through the power that imbues her with "Chosen" status, but by her (re)negotiation of what that power actually means and to what ends that power should be employed.

Buffy wryly declares in the show's pilot episode, "Having a secret identity in this town is a job of work."[33] For Buffy, Slaying is a job whose contract and boundaries she renegotiates. Although she hides her identity from other denizens of Sunnydale, Buffy breaks with Slayer tradition during the pilot by having friends who fight alongside her. More radically, her friends Willow Rosenberg (Alyson Hannigan) and Xander Harris (Nicholas Brendon) are neither super-powered nor burdened with glorious purposes, though Willow grows into a powerful witch starting in the show's second season. Buffy's Watcher, Rupert Giles (Anthony Stewart Head), likewise, rebels against the establishment.[34]

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[32]"Bring on the Night." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Seven*. (Wri. Marti Noxon and Douglas Petrie. Dir. David Grossman. (17 Dec. 2002). Fox Searchlight, 2002. DVD.)

[33]"Welcome to the Hellmouth." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Charles Martin Smith and Joss Whedon (uncredited). (10 Mar. 1997). Fox Searchlight, 1997. DVD.)

[34]Within the Buffyverse, there is a Watcher's Council, located in England (of course). Each Potential slayer has a Watcher to train her. Giles is often more like a father to Buffy. His closeness to Buffy and failure to view her as a weapon causes him to be fired in the second season ("Helpless"). Thanks to Buffy, Giles is reinstated, within the fifth season ("Checkpoint"), once the Watcher's Council comes seeking Buffy's aid.

Rather than merely watching, he aids Buffy in her quest for self-determination and often fights alongside her.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer plays with the charged binary of authoritarian (Buffy is **the** Slayer) and communitarian power: It traffics in Buffy's uniqueness while it asserts her representative nature. What sets her apart from her kindred and her vampire-fighting foremothers is her ability to both work outside of the authoritarian patriarchal structures and within a complex system of friendships and romantic entanglements.

After it went off the air, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* has continued in comic book form. Of all the intriguing plot twists and turns, there is one that particularly falls within our purview, despite the venue change. There was a male Slayer: "a gay teen with no special strength, who took on the role of [S]layer on his own, not to take it away from the women but because he admired them and shared their desire to make the world a better place."[35] In "Women, This is Your Fight, Too!," Jane Espenson explains what makes this choice equally problematic and empowering:

> Slayerness, like femininity, turned out to be something that a male could embrace, although we'd never before seen a man want to take that title. A young girl with power was a subversion of expectation. A young man doing the same thing could easily have been just a return to status quo, except that this young man was explicitly joining and honoring the female group, not stealing from it.

Billy, the man who chose to be a Slayer, extended the slayer-feminist-construct to its logical conclusion. Likewise, he could arguably be said to represent

[35]Espenson "Women! This is Your Fight, Too"

Buffy's creator. Though not a gay teen, Joss Whedon's passionate and vocal dedication to the feminist causes could be seen as a "return to the status quo," but instead, represents a man who honors women's rights and responsibilities without co-opting the movement.

Act II: I Blame Jane and I'm Sure She Blames Herself

Jane Espenson may be said to be foundational to this dissertation, perhaps more so even than Joss Whedon. Espenson's centrality arises as much from her work as a television writer (e.g., *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Once Upon a Time* and co-creator of *Husbands the Series*) as from her critical writing (e.g., "Women, This is Your Fight, Too!" and "On Sex and Writing (Not That Kind of Sex)"). Espenson simultaneously, and perhaps paradoxically, celebrates gender-blind writing while she devotes an essay to championing women as writers and the need to hire more women writers.[36] Her asservations are based not on an essentialist idea that women are necessary to write women (i.e., for Espenson, women can write men, and men can write women), but rather that the numbers do not make sense.[37] If women possess equal

[36]Jane Espenson, "On Sex and Writing (Not That Kind of Sex)." (*HuffPost TV*. (6 Mar. 2012.) Web. < http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jane-espenson/women-tv-writers_b_1322537.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[37]Espenson contends, "But even I, on occasion, find myself arguing for more women writers using very different reasoning. This reasoning: you need female writers to write realistic/compelling/strong female characters, or to supply a 'female point of view.' And that argument, Gentle Readers, has the potential to do more harm than good"(Espenson "On Sex and Writing"). Espenson's delineation of what makes this reasoning problematic is brilliant and should be included in all feminist literary critical cannons and classes. wittily avers, "Here is my argument for why hiring women writers is a sensible thing to do. Likewise, Espenson wittily avers, "There are a lot of reasons why a particular writer might not get hired to work on a staff: lack of talent, inability to write to specifications, combativeness, slowness, and offensive

capabilities and breasts make no intellectual, emotional, or even physical difference, then by all the laws of Muses and (wo)man, there should be parity in the writing rooms.

Espenson illuminates her rhetoric through her writing and through her newest creation, *Husbands* (about two men who get drunkenly married in Vegas without really knowing each other). In a response asking what she felt was left out of the popular-cultural-critical celebration of *Husbands*'s success, Espenson said:

> I think that sometimes the message gets underplayed in all the talk about the new model for television and discussions of monetization. The message is actually pretty complex–it's beyond just a pro-marriage-equality stance. It's more like a series of essays on gender, pop culture, and feminism (as a battle shared by feminine men). Brad Bell has lived the life of these characters to a certain extent, and has had time to really come up with nuanced opinions on these topics. Sometimes they drive the narrative and sometimes they are prompted by it, but I think it's significant that the moments in which Cheeks articulates a political/social position tend to be our most-watched moments. People are hungry for more than romance and comedy—they are eating up the social points.[38]

Indeed, one of the more intriguing compliments I have heard directed at a writer arose in a *Torchwood* panel at Dragoncon (2012). The actor John Barrowman, himself a gay man, revealed his belief that Espenson excels at

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hygiene. In no rational world does the sex of the writer deserve to be on that list. (Note that even the most outrageously large breasts are unlikely to interfere with typing.)."

[38]Jane Espenson, (Personal Interview. 23 Feb. 2013.) Brad Bell is the co-creator, showrunner, and star of *Husbands*. His character is Cheeks. Bell wrote his own incisive and engaging analysis of *Husbands*'s employment of stereotypes. He argues, for instance, "We [Bell and Espenson] wanted to take an ultramodern topic (marriage equality) and frame it in a universe of sitcom tropes. After all, if an idea is overused to the point of losing all meaning, it must've had merit at some point. Why else was it so overused in the first place?"[Brad Bell, "You're Just Like a Million Others, Snowflake." (*HuffPost Gay Voices*. (13 Dec. 2012). Web. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/brad-bell/youre-just-like-a-million-others-snowflake_b_2296791.html>16 Jan. 2015.)

writing gay relationships: "Can I say for a lady, she writes great gay sex scenes. . . . I love you for it." [39]

Kicking Ass is Comfort Food echoes Espenson's cry for women to write at the same time it plays with her argument concerning the capabilities of men.[40] We, like Espenson, wholeheartedly support men in their quest to live up to women's pen and to write as flawless a sentence as ever could flow from the pen of an Espenson, Austen, Woolf, and West.

Espenson broadens her critical gender argument, in "Women! This Is Your Fight, Too!", to explicate the manner in which femininity constricts men, particularly those men like Brad Bell, co-creator of *Husbands*, who fail to uphold normative notions of manliness, both from homosexuality and from "girlyness,"that mark him as other. Likewise, Espenson avows, "But if we take the 'no boys allowed' sign off the door, look what we get. We can let in not only men like Joss Whedon and Ron D. Moore, among others, who employ, empower and write good women, but also men like Brad Bell, whose perceived femininity puts them right there in the discrimination splash zone with us."[41] Although our heroick textual examination focuses on women, it, like Slayerness itself,

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[39]John Barrowman, Torchwood Panel. 2 Sep. 2012. Dragoncon. Atlanta, GA. Comiccon Convention Panel.

[40]Espenson proclaims, "Write, women! Write, girls! It's a great job and you will love it. Get in there and flood the studio writing programs with your applications. Enter the contests. Participate in one of my writing sprints on Twitter. Film a web series as I have done, or go to film school, or get a job as a Hollywood assistant, or do all of those things. Just get into the pool. Writing yet? Good" (Espenson "On Sex and Writing").

[41]Espenson "Women! "This is Your Fight, Too"

belongs equally to men and the manner in which masculinity constricts their choices.

Espenson's point resonates equally within the world of academia where women and girls who embody normative notions of gender are seen as less worthy of emulation and either victims or Aunt Jemimas who sold out to the Man. Sherrie Inness, a preeminent theoretician of action heroines, [42] argues, "The tough girl plays numerous roles. Her tougher and more masculine image suggests that a greater variety of gender roles are open to women; at the same time, however, her toughness is often mitigated by her femininity, which American culture commonly associates with weakness." [43] Similarly, "Tough women can offer women new role-models, but their tightness may also bind women more tightly to traditional gender roles."[44] Unlike Espenson, empowering girls is often seen as disempowering women; or as we can see from Inness's typical formulation, toughness always carries an *xy* for its genetic code even when expressed in women and girls.

More damagingly, Inness's formulation of toughness excludes men like Whedon or Bell who fail to embody the ideals of gender. Within Inness's worldview, Whedon or Bell can neither make it as a girl nor can they convincingly illustrate a conventionalized masculinity that operates within the critical discourses. According to Inness, heroic masculinity within popular

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[42]Sherrie Innes. *Tough Girls: Women Warriors and Wonder Women in Popular Culture*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999. Print.)

[43]Innes *Tough Girls* 5

[44]Innes *Tough Girls* 5

culture is always confined to John Wayne or James Bond, rather than Gregory Peck's Atticus Finch or Jimmy Stewart's Mr. Smith.[45] It is, of course, understandable and even admirable that Inness focuses on women whom she believes to be overlooked and excluded from discussions on "toughness." Yet, the danger, as with the abovementioned Buffy, arises from reinscribing the strictures on women and men that Inness so desperately wants to overturn.

More crucially and dangerously, American culture, thus, becomes viewed as a monolith that beholds femininity qua femininity as a curse. This fraught exchange between segments of scholarly-critical and popular culture aims to see girlyness as substandard. For instance, some critics who operate within popular media aver that *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* trafficks in the same toxic dichotomy that troubles Inness. Writing "The Buffy Effect; or a Tale of Cleavage and Marketing" for the feminist-leaning *Bitch Magazine*, Rachel Fudge contends:

> "Girl power" as articulated in the mass media (and mass marketing) is often misrepresented as de facto feminism, when in fact it's a diluted imitation of female empowerment. Indeed, for some people, it's a way to bypass the complexities of feminism—it's a lot easier to wear a "girls kick ass" t-shirt than to learn how to defend yourself physically. The problem with girl power is that all too often it relies on style over substance, baby tees over action.[46]

Logical fallacies frequently beset the arguments made about woman's choices as can be seen from the above example. After all, women who take self-defense

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[45]Innes *Tough Girls* 5

[46]Rachel Fudge, "The Buffy Effect; or a Tale of Cleavage and Marketing." (*Bitch Magazine*. 10. (1999). Web. < http://bitchmagazine.org/article/buffy-effect > 16 Jan. 2015.) Other examples include Josh Stenger "The Clothes Make the Fan: Fashion and Online Fandom When *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* Goes to eBay." (*Cinema Journal*, 45.4 (Summer, 2006):26-44. Print.) and Gwyneth Bodger, "Buffy the Feminist Slayer? Constructions of Femininity in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*." (*Refractory: A Journal of Entertainment Media* 2 (2003) Web. <http://www.refractory.unimelb.edu.au/journalissues/vol2/gwynbodger.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

classes can be victims of sexual assault, the terror that I assume Fudge wishes to rescue her readers from experiencing through their taking self-defense classes. Wearing an "Also, I can kill you with my mind" shirt, moreover, is only posited as an alternative to combat training in the slippery slopes of the academic argument that is as pernicious in its construction of gender and power as those very evils it strives against.[47] It would be as sensible, given the parameters, to believe that I am indeed capable of perpetrating the act advertised on my t-shirt and react accordingly (whether by backing away slowly, running away screaming, or whatever alternative the reader so chooses).

More perniciously, the feminism advocated trades in the brand of self-loathing, girl-baiting ideology that one would, charitably, assume would horrify its progenitors. Let us be clear, time and time again, the literature reviewed for this dissertation was often more guilty of stripping women and girls of their authority and potential to be anything. I detest the millennia-crossing narrative script claiming that girls are made of sweetness and light and everything nice and hence are shallow, vapid, and biologically inferior: "Frailty thy name is woman."[48] At the same time, the countermeasures often subject women to a separate but equal status. Even if, like Inness, its intentions are honorable, feminist criteria, such as "The Bechdel Test" may be as infuriating as the

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[47]I chose "Also, I can kill you with my brain" because I actually own the shirt and the quotation is from Joss Whedon's *Firefly*, making it a more fitting example than the one chosen by Fudge. Likewise, one wonders about the poor benighted young maiden who, in Fudge's scenario, would upend the entire situation by wearing her "Girl power" shirt to her kickboxing or MMA training course.

[48]William Shakespeare *Hamlet* I.ii.146

villains that they aim to defeat.[49] If a movie or textual work is devalued by women talking about men, then why would that vice not be versaed? Are men only ever allowed to talk about nuclear physics and game theory and never about their wives and children?[50]

The question, therefore, we are forced to ask Espenson is how can Women help you win your fight when all we say, do, or wear dooms us to perpetual victimhood? How can we save anyone else when society says we are incapable of self-saving, let along self-making? How can we help men if we are unable to free ourselves?

Act III: Pictures of Perfection Make Me Sick and Wicked[51]

Maureen Ryan, like Espenson, has championed the diversity of writers, including gender parity, and campaigned against an essentialist notion of gender. Maureen Ryan, like Jane Espenson, can be said to be one of the guiding spirits of this dissertation. Along with her benevolence in assisting me in my

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[49]For the Bechdel rule, see this helpful website: "The Bechdel Test for Women in Movies." (*Feminist Frequency: Conversations with Pop Culture*. (7 Dec. 2009). Web. <http://www.feministfrequency.com/2009/12/the-bechdel-test-for-women-in-movies/ >16 Jan. 2015.). The Bechdel Rule is simple: A movie must have at least two women with names who talk to each about something other than a man. Of course, it is infuriating to inhabit a world where all women talked only about men to each other all the time, so I can easily see why we want a weapon to slay that demon, but it seems as disempowering to judge women as inferior for upholding societal standards as it would be to expect all women due their *xx* code to all want the same thing.

[50] Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* does a particularly strong job of taking on the questions in Chapter Five (specifically pages 142-145), and I find her criticism to be pertinent and compelling.

[51]Jane Austen, "Letter to Fanny Knight." (23 Mar. 1817). (*Austenrprose-A Jane Austen Blog*. Web. < http://austenprose.com/2008/01/08/sick-and-wicked/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

personal enquiries, Ryan's passionate commitment to television and to feminism renders her presence invaluable to the dissertation. Maureen Ryan, or Mo Ryan as she is more commonly known, is a popular-cultural television critic. Maureen Ryan first wrote for *The Chicago Tribune* ("The Watcher: All TV, All the Time"), but now writes for *The Huffington Post*. Ryan's defense of Lena Dunham's controversial *Girls* (2012-?) and her attack on Aaron Sorkin's *Newsroom* (2012-2015) illustrate the rhetorical possibilities for pen-wielding in order to enact change.[52]

Lena Dunham "wrote, created, executive produces and stars in" *Girls*.[53] The series "revolves around a group of twentysomething women in New York and is loosely based on her own experience: post-college struggles with work and relationships."[54] Aaron Sorkin's *The Newsroom* concerns the behind-the-scenes events at the fictive Atlantis Cable News (ACN) channel. Lena Dunham and Aaron Sorkin crafted television shows that came under critical fire for their gender politics. Additionally, Lena Dunham outraged viewers and critics through the prevailing whiteness of her characters.[55]

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[52]Maureen Ryan, "Why *Girls* Season 1 Was Terrific and Why It's a Hit With Guys Too." (*The Huffington Post*. (17 Jun. 2012). Web. < http://www.huffingtonpost.com/maureen-ryan/girls-season-1-finale_b_1602385.html> 16 Jan. 2015.); Maureen Ryan and Jace Lacob, "*The Newsroom*: Women Problems Abound in Aaron Sokin's HBO Series."(*The Huffington Post*. (2 Jul 2012). Web. < www.huffingtonpost.com/maureen-ryan/the-newsroom-women-aaron-sorkin-hbo_b_1641982.html> 16. Jan 2015.)

[53]Lesley Goldberg, "TCA: Lena Dunham Says HBO's 'Girls' isn't *Sex and the City*." (*The Hollywood Reporter*. (13 Jan. 2012). Web. < http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/tca-hbo-girls-lena-dunham-judd-apatow-281483 > 16 Jan. 2015.)
[54]Goldberg "TCA: Lena Dunham Says HBO's 'Girls' isn't *Sex and the City*"

[55] For Ryan's impassioned response to the race issue in *Girls*, see Maureen Ryan, "HBO's *Girls* isn't Racist, TV is Racist (and Sexist)." (*The Huffington Post*. (25 Apr. 2012). Web.

Dunham, to her credit, acknowledged and apologized for the lack of racial diversity. She contended that she was more worried that she would be unable to write compelling or well-rounded characters that were not based on herself or her circle of friends; she argued, moreover, that she might be in more danger of racist actions if she misconstrued or shoehorned a woman of color as a token.[56] Sorkin, on the other hand, defended and continues to defend his show as utterly unproblematic and an accurate, if not admirable, depiction of women, even in front of the very audience (the all-important-Television Critics Association) of critics who had aimed to cure him of his errors.[57] Alan Sepinwall noted that the show's unequal treatment of its male and female characters were the primary objections brought up by critics: "By far the most frequent complaint about the show involves the way Sorkin writes for the female characters, who seem (to some of us) more emotional, more unstable and less competent than the men."[58]

<http://www.huffingtonpost.com/maureen-ryan/girls-hbo-racist_b_1451931.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[56] For Lena Dunham's interview with NPR's *Fresh Air*, see "Lena Dunham Addresses Criticism Aimed at Girls." (*NPR*. (7 May 2012). Web. < http://www.npr.org/2012/05/07/152183865/lena-dunham-addresses-criticism-aimed-at-girls?ft=1&f=1008# >16 Jan. 2015.) Dunham's apology did little to soothe her detractors.

[57]Alan Sepinwall, "Aaron Sorkin faces *The Network* critics at Press Tour" (*What's Alan Watching?. Hitfix*. (1 Aug 2012). Web. < http://www.hitfix.com/whats-alan-watching/aaron-sorkin-faces-the-newsroom-critics-at-press-tour> 16 Jan. 2015.) Sepinwall, like Ryan, demonstrates a thought-provoking critical voice and the power of the television critic to ask the sort of questions thought to be only the provenance of academia while still excelling at the rhetorical moves that make up his chosen genre.

[58]Likewise, "Another critic brought up the lack of symmetry in the show's portrayal of the male and female characters, and how the mistakes the men make tend to be done out of integrity, whereas the women make mistakes because they're flightier, or more shallow, or just plain not as smart as the men. Again, Sorkin disagreed"(Sepinwall "Aaron Sorkin Faces *The Network* critics at Press Tour").

For Maureen Ryan, Sorkin's weakness is Dunham's strength. Dunham's girls embody the flawed, often unamiable, but always human protagonists that were previously more often associated with masculine characters, particularly on HBO, such as Tony Soprano (James Gandolfini), Walter White (Bryan Cranston), or Sorkin's Will McAvoy (Jeff Daniels).[59] Likewise, Dunham demonstrated the ability of men to cross-read and see themselves in her images, a trait which was often only discussed as something done by women. Ryan succinctly explains:

> First, a lot of people (male and female) called out the sexism on display for what it was in these situations; I know about these occurrences because the outrage about them spread far and wide on the Internet[60] and the contempt for the attackers was visceral and plentiful. Second, it's hard not to see these attacks on these women as frantic attempts to assert privilege and status within a power structure that is no longer as stable and solid as it once was. The viciousness of the attacks is in direct proportion to the perceived (and actual) evolution of the culture industry's status quo.[61]

Girls, thus, might portray a very narrow segment (twentysomething privileged white-girls in New York), but the conversations it generates link it to the wider cultural discussion about gender and popular culture. Importantly, Ryan never once suggests that loving either *Girls* or Lena Dunham is a prerequisite for membership in the feminist sisterhood, but that the terms used to delineate what makes Dunham's *Girls* unappealing can contain germs of other misogynist

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[59]Ryan "HBO's *Girls* isn't Racist, TV is Racist (and Sexist)"

[60]Ryan's original article has a hyperlink to this article: Keith Stuart, "E3 2012: Aisha Tyler takes on the Gamer Haters with Facebook Rant." (*The Guardian*. (14 Jun. 2012). Web. <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/gamesblog/2012/jun/14/aisha-tyler-versus-gamer-haters?newsfeed=true > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[61]Ryan "HBO's *Girls* isn't Racist, TV is Racist (and Sexist)"

idealization.[62] As we saw in Sepinwall's sketch of Sorkin at the TCA's, *The Newsroom*, like *Girls*, gains as much popular-cultural-potency from its ability to inspire feminist critical responses as from the women and men depicted upon the television screen.

Sorkin's problem, for Ryan as well as others, is his obsession with the cosmetically flawed, but actually infallible hero who exists to be worshiped by women and adored by men, all of whom this benevolent patriarch must save though his wondrous intellect.[63] Sorkin's hero breaks no new ground in the realm of the masculine archetype.[64] His female characters are similarly misconstrued and carbon-datable: the "smart" girl who is an unprofessional, incapable ditz and who exists as mental porn for the men around her. Sorkin could arguably be seen as resetting television back a few centuries or so to a kinder, gentler, more Westrosian age, but Ryan's criticism performs an almost Whedonesque function that utilizes Sorkin's gender troubles as fodder for feminist revolution.

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[62]Ryan "HBO's *Girls* isn't Racist, TV is Racist (and Sexist)" On a personal note, I for one have never actually watched an entire episode of *Girls* because I found the women in question to be not the sort of *Girls* I want to spend time with. I love flawed women as much as the next girl, but the appeal of Lena Dunham is rather lost on me. That said, I think the critical conversation surrounding *Girls* makes a useful tool for the dissertation and I admire Ryan's rhetorical brilliance. Likewise, it goes without saying that *The Newsroom* makes me want to bash in my television.

[63] Maureen Ryan, "'The Newsroom' Review: Aaron Sorkin's New HBO Show Gets Almost Everything Wrong."(*The Huffington Post*. (19 Jun. 2012). Web. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/maureen-ryan/the-newsroom-review-aaron-sorkin-hbo_b_1609544.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[64] Maureen Ryan, "Aaron Sokin and 'The Newsroom's' Biggest Problem: The Cad at the Center." (*The Huffington Post*. (2 Aug. 2012). Web. < http://www.huffingtonpost.com/maureen-ryan/aaron-sorkin-newsroom_b_1731562.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

Despite their inability to make Sorkin see the error of his ways or to force the world to correctly construe Dunham's glory and Sorkin's shame, Ryan and other similar critics (e.g., Amy Berg and Jace Lacob) embody the heroick spirit that sired this dissertation, even when our paths are not the same. We share Ryan's love, and Jane Austen's before, of heroines who are not pictures of perfection.

Act IV: The Word Made Flesh

Rounding out our triumvirate of power are two actresses who exemplify the commitment and creativity that actors bring to their roles. Romola Garai (Emma Woodhouse) and Anna Chancellor (Miss Bingley) have more in common than having played roles in televised Austen classics.[65] Chancellor and Garai demonstrate both the centrality of acting to television and the power that actresses (and actors) wield in utilizing their characters as a means of self-expression and self-creation. If writing, according to T.S. Eliot, equals blood made ink, then actresses (and actors) are ink made blood.[66] Yet, actresses, sans their characters, embody the fraught struggle for power wherein subsuming yourself into your role is a necessity for great acting at the same time one utilizes acting to reveal the truth.

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[65]Anna Chancellor's turn as Miss Bingley was in the (in)famous Colin Firth adaptation of *Pride and Prejudice* (Wri. Andrew Davies. Dir. Simon Langton (1995) BBC One, 1995. DVD.). Like Chancellor, Garai acted in a television mini-series adaptation of Austen [*Emma*. (Wri. Sandy Welch. Dir. Jim O'Hanlon. (2009). BBC One,2010. DVD.)].

[66]To be fair, Eliot actually stated: "The purpose of literature is to turn blood into ink."[T.S Eliot, *The Cocktail Party*. (London: Faber and Faber, Ltd., 1949. Print.)]

Chancellor and Garai are among the multitudes of actresses who have protested the misogyny that adheres to certain aspects of their profession. Chancellor, for instance, "realize[d] that not being the heroine also has its advantages. 'For a lot of women my age, now is a cooling-off period,' she says."[67] Of course, youth can be as problematic as age. In another interview, Garai reveals: "When I was very young, I was encouraged—and when I say encouraged, I mean forced—to lose weight for a job. . . . It's destructive, and I can't handle it, psychologically. I think it's a way to remind women that they're not really in control."[68] Garai has frequently spoken out against the cultural constraints placed upon women in magazines, particularly so-called lads magazines (e.g., *Loaded*), and the pressure to conform: "It's difficult because if I refuse to do any magazines at all, my work, I think, would suffer in a very immediate way. But when I appear in these magazines, I know I'm being 'trimmed'. I'm being airbrushed a lot."[69] She continues, "And I know that people are accepting those images and are under the impression that that is really how my body looks, that I'm hairless and sexless and weigh 90 lbs. That really worries me. *And I really don't know what to do except talk about it* [italics

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[67]Tim Lewis, "Anna Chancellor: My Life Was Chaotic, But It Turned Out Okay." (*The Observer*. (20 Aug. 2011). Web. < http://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2011/aug/21/anna-chancellor-interview-the-hour> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[68]Jennifer Vineyard, "*The Hour*'s Romola Garai on the Show's Perfect Timing, the Sexist Fifties Revival, and Refusing to Lose Weight For a Role." (*Vulture*. (24 Aug. 2011). Web. <http://www.vulture.com/2011/08/romola_garai.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[69]Anita Singh, "Romola Garai: As a Size 10 I'm Too Fat for Hollywood" (*The Telegraph*. (06 Nov. 2012). Web.< http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/celebritynews/9657151/Romola-Garai-as-a-size-10-Im-too-fat-for-Hollywood.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

mine]."[70] If one upholds the oft-repeated truism about acting, then Garai wields her 'real' life to reveal the damaging fictions surrounding its misconstructions.

Lest one think that actresses are only as important as the truths they tell about the dangers of acting, Chancellor's and Garai's actual work fashions their heroick function as much as their querying of the costs of acting. Although Anna Chancellor's importance to a department of literature might arise more from the luster of her origins (Byron and Jane Austen belong to her family tree), her distinguished theatrical, television, and screen career render her useful to our dissertation. In person, Chancellor was once described by one interviewer as "looking [like] a beautifully designed weapon."[71] Though perhaps better known for her role as "Duckface" in *Four Weddings and A Funeral,* "it was playing the hard-bitten 1950s foreign editor [Lix Storm in *The Hour*] that reminded people of her acting skills."[72]

The Hour is oft compared to *Mad Men* and *The Newsroom*. *The Hour*'s creator Abi Morgan averred, "I've allowed journalists to be heroic in the 1950s in a way they are not, unfortunately, allowed to be today. I was very driven by the *heroism* [italics mine] of journalists who did investigate. . . . Who could take

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[70]Singh "Romola Garai: As a Size 10 I'm Too Fat for Hollywood"

[71]Lloyd Evans, "Feel the Force: Lloyd Evans isn't Fooled by Anna Chancellor's Flirtatious Scattiness." (*Spectator*. (29 Jun. 2013): 55-56. *Academic OneFile*. Web. 21 Nov. 2013.)

[72]"Duckface Puts Another Feather in Her Cap; The Boho Actress, Whose Family Still Use Her *Four Weddings and a Funeral* Nickname, is Leaving Audiences Awed with Her Noel Coward in the West End." (*Sunday Times* [London, England]. 7 July 2013: 27. *Infotrac Newsstand*. Web. 21 Nov. 2013.)

the time to unravel and grow a story. And good journalists still do that."[73] Morgan avows, "There's still room for that kind of journalism. I feel *The Hour* is kind of a war cry for it."[74] In addition to providing a "war cry" for good journalism, Morgan "was particularly keen to give it quick-fire dialogue. For inspiration, I watched *His Girl Friday* and *The Apartment* again, films where the dialogue is so elegant and heightened and yet quick-fire. I also wanted to write a group of characters who could return week by week."[75]

Discussing her role as Bel Rowley, Garai notes the combination between the needs of television and realism: "But there's no question that a woman of my age—I am 30—would be doing that job. And there's no problem with that, *The Hour* is a drama after all."[76] She continues, "And I do think Abi quite deliberately made Anna Chancellor's character Lix an important part of the dynamic so there was a representation of a woman working in the office who was more age-appropriate."[77] At the same time, "The problem is that with shows like ours we're essentially having a dialogue about contemporary politics.

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[73]Andrew Romano, "News, War, and Martinis." (*Newsweek* 160.24 (10 Nov. 2012): 47-48. Print.) The article may also be found online under a different title "'The Hour' Glamorizes the Glory Days of Journalism." (*Newsweek.* (3 Dec. 2012). Web. <http://www.newsweek.com/hour-glamorizes-glory-days-journalism-63513> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[74]Romano "News, War, and Martinis"

[75]Catriona Wightman, "'The Hour' Writer Rejects 'Mad Men' Comparisons." (*Digital Spy*. (13 Jul. 2011). Web. < http://www.digitalspy.ca/british-tv/s177/the-hour/news/a329592/the-hour-writer-rejects-mad-men-comparisons.html#~oOGhK7VfI8i9zr> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[76]Denise Martin, "Romola Garai on *The Hour*, Domineering Women, and Pretend Journalism." (*Vulture*. (28 Nov. 2012). Web. < http://www.vulture.com/2012/11/romola-garai-on-the-hour-and-pretend-journalism.html?mid=imdb> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[77]Martin "Romola Garai on *The Hour*, Domineering Women, and Pretend Journalism"

[Producers] want Bel to be a woman in her thirties because that's a character that viewers are going to link in with, even if it's not absolutely accurate of the period."[78]

Garai makes intriguing connections between Bel Rowley's career options in the 1950s and the current nostalgia for the 1950s:

> I think that's the problem with the fifties revival: If you can't be openly sexist, you can at least return to a time that was. Return to corsets, to the explosion of the cosmetics industry, to a really dark time for women in terms of the power dynamic at home. I don't think the women of that time would have hoped for their granddaughters to yearn to return to inches of makeup, to the obsession with appearances, and the narrow definition of what it was to be beautiful. Bel has no interest in being in front of a camera, but she wouldn't have had much of a chance anyway. That wouldn't have been an option. So Bel's lucky in a way that she really wanted the job of producer, that it wasn't second best for her. It wasn't the booby prize.[79]

As is often evident when actors and actress discuss their characters, Rowley's realness to Garai is palpable.

Garai utilizes Rowley's professional and personal struggles to construct a feminist critique of the travails facing a twenty-first century woman as much as her 1950s grandmother.[80] Garai avows, "I have always been interested in gender politics, so I'm not that keen on doing things that don't represent a truth about

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[78]Martin "Romola Garai on *The Hour*, Domineering Women, and Pretend Journalism"

[79]Vineyard "*The Hour*'s Romola Garai on the Show's Perfect Timing." See also, Catriona Wighman, "'The Hour' Romola Garai: '1950s Nostalgia is Dubious'." (*Digital Spy*. (19 Jul. 2011). Web. < http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/tv/s177/the-hour/news/a330574/the-hour-romola-garai-1950s-nostalgia-is-dubious.html#~oOIp9PMFxwJO9y> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[80]Vineyard "*The Hour*'s Romola Garai on the Show's Perfect Timing"

women."[81] Additionally, Garai has utilized her position to protest misogynistic magazines and has called upon Tesco (one of the major British grocery chains) to stop selling "lads" magazines.[82]

Mary McDonnell, who will star in chapter six of this dissertation, explains the dangers that arise for actresses who desire to change the world, or at least their roles: "It's like coming into power through the back door and wondering if you're going to get to the front of the house before the whole thing blows up."[83] While Mary McDonnell might be the closest alternate example within our dissertation's pages of another woman who wields her fictive persona for feminist purposes, it is important to realize the centrality of actresses, and actors, as cultural critics in their own right.

The dissertator can be said to be a tripartite goddess of sorts: writer, critic, and actress. Fulfilling the complicated, and often conflicting, scripts assigned to the persona of "dissertation writer in an English literature department" can be both heady and head-smashing-against-desk inducing. However, through the assistance (or enslavement, if you consider the piracy of the action) and enlightenment provided by both the figures whom we have just

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[81]Wighman "'The Hour' Romola Garai: '1950s Nostalgia is Dubious'"

[82]For more on the story, see Garai's interview outlining her position to Daniel Boffey, "Lads' Mags: 'I've Been Part of the Problem–Let Me Be Part of the Solution'." [*The Observer*. (12 Oct. 2013). Web.< http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2013/oct/13/lads-mags-problem-romola-garai> 16 Jan. 2015.) and Naomi McAulliffe "So Romola Garai Once Appeared in Lads' Mags. Shock! Horror! Hypocrite!" (*The Guardian*. (14 Oct. 2013). Web. <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/oct/14/romola-garai-lads-mags-campaign-hypocrite > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[83]Fiona Morrow, "Girls Just Want to Sound Plausible: *Battlestar Galactica* is Back-But It's Had a Feminine Makeover."(*The Sunday Times* [London, UK]. (17 Oct. 2004). Web. <http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/culture/film_and_tv/tv/article241800.ece > 16 Jan. 2015.)

encountered (Espenson and Bell, Maureen Ryan, and Garai and Chancellor), the dissertator can learn to wield her pen-power wisely and construct her own heroick identity.

Act V: Cometh the Hour, Cometh the dissertation

"It has to be the hour you can't miss"; or so goes the fervid pitch Freddie Lyon makes to the BBC powers that be.[84] Like Lyon's own fictive television program, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* aims to assemble a team of unmissable characters and stories. Putting together a dissertation about television is strikingly similar to the travails that Bel Rowley, Freddie Lyon, and Lix Storm underwent in presenting "The Hour." Bel Rowley, for instance, tells her male rival at ITV, "You try running stories with a kick whilst leveling those that cause too much of a ruckus" to which he replies, "It must be exhausting circumnavigating the truth."[85]

Had Rowley been an Americanist, she could have explained, a la Emily Dickinson, that "Success in circuit lies" and slant truths are best for non-blinding: "The Truth must dazzle gradually/ Or every man be blind." [86] Our pursuit of the story supports Dickinson's version of the truth, "Too bright for

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[84]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)
[85]"Episode One." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[86]Emily Dickinson, 'Tell All the Truth, But Tell It Slant" *(The Poetry Foundation* Web. http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/247292 [*The Poems of Emily Dickinson: Reading Edition* (The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1998)] 16 Jan. 2015.)

our infirm Delight/The Truth's Superb Surprise," at the same it emulates Rowley's and Lyon's heroic endeavors.[87]

Rather than producing a (fictive) news program, crafting this dissertation might be better compared to the process of writing a television series. The opening chapter of a television series is called the "pilot." Achieving the correct tone is notoriously difficult. A pilot must navigate the frequently conflicting imperatives inherent in the medium: introducing the characters and other important bits of world building, telling a coherent story, and pleasing its corporate masters. Like the opening chapter of a dissertation, the pilot can be seen as the crucial introduction to the themes and concepts that will occupy the viewer throughout the season.

Unlike a dissertation, the pilot episode is in truth valuable only to the select few who judge the quality of a book not by its cover, but by its opening chapter. Academics, like television critics and studios, might understandably only care about the "introduction" of a book; viewers and readers, on the other hand, tend to evaluate based on how the concept plays out.

The exigencies of the pilot's creation render it clumsy (or in some rare cases unmatchably brilliant). Moreover, television, like the novel, is fluid. For instance, *The Good Wife*, like many other broadcast shows, was initially filmed in Toronto for budget reasons and then relocated to New York, standing in for Chicago. Just as it would be folly to read only the opening chapter of *Pride and Prejudice* and believe that alone represents the key portion of the novel, so it

[87]Dickinson 'Tell All the Truth, But Tell It Slant"

would be unwise to rest the appropriation of a work only on chapter one. At the same time, "It is a truth universally acknowledged that a single man in possession of a fortune must be in want of a wife," to choose *Pride and Prejudice*'s opening line, provides an iconic establishing shot that sets the tone (ironizing) and the novel's main concerns (marriage, gender, and power). Constructing this dissertation utilizing solely Jane Austen style prose would be delightful, though more akin to *Northanger Abbey* or her juvenilia, but hélas, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* must be both a creative work and scholarly nonfiction.

Consequently, considering this dissertation as a television series, it would more closely resemble the genre of the procedural wherein each episode contains a mystery of the week (MOTW) that is solved within the hour's confines. There might be some character development (e.g., *Law and Order*), but it resembles more closely the *Sherlock Holmes* of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's original stories, rather than the current incarnations gracing our television screens (CBS's *Elementary* and the BBC's *Sherlock*). In some instances, like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or the television series we examine in this dissertation, procedurals may also be heavily serialized wherein the action furthers a season-long arc along with possessing a self-contained hour-long story. *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* leans toward the later style. It is true that any of the chapters, with the exception of the opener, could stand as self-contained stories revolving around explicating a compelling aspect of a certain television series. Yet, while each chapter does not spell out with anvils "What Makes The

Characters Heroick (or Not)," it aims to allow the wise reader, like the intelligent viewer, to put the pieces together and construct the puzzle.

After our pilot, the next two episodes delve more deeply into literature and employ *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* as a critical companion. Using *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* in a more minor role allows a multivalent renegotiation. The remaining chapters refrain from jettisoning all literary allusions or texts, but the balance between the two mediums alters.

Though the difference might be more theoretical than practical, the opening two chapters are meant to work more traditionally within the discipline. The continuation of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* as a critical companion across both chapters, as well as reoccurring throughout the dissertation, provides a steady, though not static, constant that aids the unsteady to gain traction in navigating new waters. In "What Would Jane Whedon do?: A Whedonesque Reading of Austen's *Northanger Abbey* as Feminist Fanfiction," our second chapter, Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey*, operates as *x* wherein *Buffy* equals *y* in a mathematical equation of literary and popular cultural analysis. For "Woolf and Whedon Wield Words and Wreak Wrath," our third chapter, Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas* replaces Austen and retains *Buffy* to illuminate concepts in a more simple, straightforward, and comprehendible manner incorporating its diverse, potential audiences (*Buffy* lovers and literary fans/members of an academic establishment).

In a similar manner, the remaining, more television-centric chapters incorporate literary texts to ground and provide a more familiar, comfortable

genre-conforming element to acknowledge its placement within a department of literature such as Chapel Hill's. If I was writing something for *Masterpiece Mystery*, there would be blood and bodies, but I am writing a dissertation, so there is Jane Austen and Harriet Beecher Stowe in their stead. Of the television examined within this dissertation, only *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* has received extensive, if not exhaustive, scholarly critical interest. Indeed, *Buffy* possesses its own discipline, "Buffy studies," encompassing the entirety of the Whedonverse (shows crafted by Joss Whedon) and complete with scholarly journal (*Slayage).* On the other hand, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Dollhouse,* and *Game of Thrones* have received some critical examination, but much less than *Buffy*, whereas *The Good Wife* has received no scholarly treatment, but has flourished in the popular print cultural discussion.

Though *The Good Wife* is limited to a television series on which our fourth chapter ("Chariete Eumenides; or Hell Hath No Fury Like a *Good Wife* Scorned") focuses, it could be said to govern the theme of the third and fourth chapters: domesticity and normative gender roles as both a source of empowerment and entrapment haunt *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time* as do the moral pitfalls of trying to do the right thing and uphold some moral virtue. Like Alicia Florrick (*Good Wife)*, Snow White (*Once Upon A Time*), Emma Swan (*Once Upon A Time*), and Daenerys Targaryen (*Game Of Thrones*), Laura Roslin, the heroine of "Death is Her Gift: Space and Sensibility in *Battlestar Galactica*" (our fifth chapter) fulfills the current popular television trope of "girl getting her power," women who through (extra)ordinary circumstances gain

knowledge and empowerment. That Laura Roslin's power arises from the near total annihilation of humanity on the day she discovers she has terminal breast cancer complicates and nuances the traditional dynamic of woman gaining power, as does Roslin's romantic entanglement and dyadic pairing with sometime sparring-partner Admiral Bill Adama. From Laura Roslin, we turn our final two television chapters that each examine complicated notions of identity and heroism. "No One is Their Best Here: or *Dollhouse*'s Vendible Selves and Feminist Self-formation" features *Dollhouse,* our second television entry from Joss Whedon. For reasons that will become clear, *Dollhouse* was Joss Whedon's least popular work.[88] At the same time, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* argues that *Dollhouse* might actually be more groundbreakingly feminist than our textual-mother and Goddess, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Fittingly, given its formative impact on the dissertation, *The Hour* endeth the television lesson. Promoting Bel Rowley to producer of this section empowers us to look at how Freddie Lyon's renegotiates heroick masculine identity. Finally, the conclusion plays with how precisely the dissertator might be Sydney Bristow (Ph.D. in Literature at UCLA student by day, double agent working for the CIA to take down SD-6 and defeat evil by night) and interrogates how precisely you can kick arse if all one does in reality is sit alone in an apartment staring at an *Emma* poster, watching copious amounts of television, and clicking away on a laptop

[88]While it is true *Marvels Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* tests that theory and might be even more unpopular, I discount it from the analysis since it's Whedon working as part and party of corporate-program rather than webs and worlds entirely of his own weaving.

scrivnering a dissertation, rather than slaying demons and beating up misogyny like a true Slayer should.

EPISODE TWO: WHAT WOULD JANE WHEDON DO?; A WHEDONESQUE READING OF AUSTEN'S *NORTHANGER ABBEY* AS FEMINIST FANFICTION

It was not very wonderful that Catherine, who had by nature nothing heroic[89][*ed. footnote mine*] about her, should prefer cricket, baseball, riding on horseback, and running about the country at the age of fourteen, to books—or at least books of information—for, provided that nothing like useful knowledge could be gained from them, provided they were all story and no reflection, she had never any objection to books at all.[90]

Teaser: She Was in Training for an Heroine[91]

Other than containing the first citation of baseball, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the opening chapter of *Northanger Abbey* forefronts Catherine Morland's nontraditional path to heroinehood and her unsuitability for the job for which she was chosen: heroine. Like the training montages in *Rocky* or more manly movies, Austen, through her narrator, provides us clips of Catherine Morland's strenuous workout to prepare her to be the novel's leading lady. Granted, Catherine Morland's "running about the country" and sports mania seems more appropriate to a contemporary heroine, but Austen's script

[89] Not surprising given its dedication to (de)constructing what makes Catherine Morland a heroine, there are three mentions of heroic in the opening chapter alone. The other two are a) ". . . and Catherine, for many years of her life, as plain as any. She had a thin awkward figure, a sallow skin without colour, dark lank hair, and strong features—so much for her person; and not less unpropitious for heroism seemed her mind. She was fond of all boy's plays, and greatly preferred cricket not merely to dolls, but to the more heroic enjoyments of infancy, nursing a dormouse, feeding a canary-bird, or watering a rose-bush. Indeed she had no taste for a garden; and if she gathered flowers at all, it was chiefly for the pleasure of mischief—at least so it was conjectured from her always preferring those which she was forbidden to take." and b) "Her greatest deficiency was in the pencil—she had no notion of drawing—not enough even to attempt a sketch of her lover's profile, that she might be detected in the design. There she fell miserably short of the true heroic height" (Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter I).

[90]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter I

[91]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter I

is derived from the circulating library fiction she read and adored. Thus, "But from fifteen to seventeen she was in training for an heroine; she read all such works as heroines must read to supply their memories with those quotations which are so serviceable and so soothing in the vicissitudes of their eventful lives."[92] Conversely, the snippets of poetry, all by great men, that follow demonstrate the sort of haphazard education foisted upon women that Austen delights in mocking. "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen" is a simply splendid line of poetry, and who doesn't love Thomas Gray's "Elegy in County Churchyard?"[93] Yet, as weapons go, Thomas Gray works brilliantly for an eighteenth-century poetry exam, but neither I nor anyone else would assume Austen would place our lives in its keeping. Her reading list, thus, is one of the repairs that must be made to translate Catherine Morland from average, seventeen year old girl to heroine.

Throughout *Northanger Abbey*, Austen continuously upends and upholds the stock conventions of the novel that Catherine plays by, but that Catherine never fears, since she has never read what is coming for her. Were it in her power, it is probable that Austen would have had Catherine Morland marathon *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, amongst other similar television shows, to give her the sort of advantage that sports teams gain by watching their opponents gameplay as well as adapting more readily to the Gothic. While Whedon and

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[92]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter I

[93]The importance of poetry reoccurs throughout Austen. *Mansfield Park* and *Persuasion* both feature heroines who love poetry, and *Sense and Sensibility* has Willoughby employing Shakespeare as a seduction technique. Equally, Mrs. Elton recites the same scrap of poetry in her discussion with Emma about Jane Fairfax in *Emma*.

Austen fight fire with words, Catherine Morland undergoes a hail not of bullets, but ink and print-type falling down on her like anvils from above. Rather than being cut to bits, Catherine Morland gains the power to survive her surroundings and learns how to read and respond to situations. Because she is the heroine of a late eighteenth-century/early nineteenth-century novel, Catherine Morland, like her sister heroines of the Gothic, must face her demons not with sword in her hand, but with a book holstered at her side. *Buffy* fights vampires with stake and scythes, but Catherine Morland's (and Emily St. Aubert's) heroic endeavors must not be undermined. Austen, like Joss Whedon, wields a genre-bending style and an ironizing tone to fight misogyny and not to belittle her heroine into submission. Austen's almost twenty-first century meta-narrative style can, like Whedon's campy-sounding title (Buffy the what?) throw readers off their game.

If the author of this dissertation had her way, she would hurl people who say that Austen hated the Gothic, in general, and Ann Radcliffe, in particular, through a plate glass window or at least through the fourth wall. Thankfully, like Austen and Whedon, I have recourse to the pen. As Austen employs a novel to defend and (de)construct the novel, so I use Joss Whedon and Ann Radcliffe to illuminate Austen's feminist fanfiction vision. By fanfiction, I realize that I tread into dangerous linguistic territory. *Northanger Abbey* might be a purer, more OED-definitive form of fanfiction if Catherine Morland and Henry Tilney were actually Emily St. Aubert and Valancourt. Instead, Catherine Morland and Henry Tilney are two people who love and adore *Mysteries of Udolpho* along

with their creator, Jane Austen. Thus, fanfiction qua fanfiction might apply more to discursive practices employed by Tilney, Morland, and the character inhabiting Austen's fiction.

My (mis)use of fanfiction relies on the idea that Austen *like* loves Radcliffe (Auscliffe? Radsten?) and Gothic fiction, so *Northanger Abbey* is her love letter to the writers, mainly female, that inspired her and her Taylor Swiftian slam-song to those authors, mainly male, that trade in pernicious images of women and men. When Whedon got cranky about seeing women mistreated in horror films, he created *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and Austen analogously channeled her love/hate into crafting feminist fictions.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer proves instructive when we turn to Whedon's other works. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is noted for having feminist empowerment in its DNA, a trait shared by its creator. *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* forefronts Whedon's feminist message more forthrightly and directly than his other works. As easy as it may be to desire all of Austen's novels to have such a rousing feminist speech by the narrator somewhere within their pages, it is good to remember that Whedon is often beset by backlash, which wishes to rend him from his ideals and judge any perceived misstep as selling out his feminist principles.[94] Austen suffers from the presumptions (critical and otherwise) arising from her gender; like Whedon, she always veers from too feminist to not feminist enough to collaboration with the normative strictures

[94]For instance, Natasha Simons, "Reconsidering the Feminism of Joss Whedon." (*The Mary Sue*. (7 Apr. 2011). Web. <http://www.themarysue.com/reconsidering-the-feminism-of-joss-whedon/> 16 Jan. 2015.)

(e.g. Nancy Armstrong). We, though, may follow Catherine Morland's sagacious example and see such evils for the Gothic villains that they are.

Writing a novel about novels, the most meta of forms, provides Austen the fodder and material to inhabit more of a Whedonesque fictive space. It would be wrong, though, to contend she quits it once she ceased to craft the text.[95] Throughout Austen's subsequent commitment to a more realistic vein of plot-creation and heroine-molding, she never lost her snarky sense of humor or her ability to embed a critique of the same evils and villainy (male and female) that stalk the Abbey's halls, Bath's rooms, and *Northanger Abbey*'s prose-predecessors and rivals. The defence Austen offered of the novel is as much a mission statement for her *oeuvre* as Whedon's joys (and perils) of feminist empowerment is for the whole of telefictive works.[96]

Northanger Abbey does not undermine Radcliffe et sororum's (quasi)historical based Gothic novels, but rather, provides an equally realistic, but more temporally correct, version of the villains that a woman faces. *Northanger Abbey* upholds Radcliffe's standards: trafficking in unsupernatural evils, a flawed heroine whose emotions, unlike Buffy, do not give her power, and feminist empowerment.

However ill-advised it might appear on the surface, our importation of Whedon into Austen's own Gothic setting empowers us to reclaim Austen's own

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[95]See, for instance, Margaret Anne Doody, "Introduction." in Jane Austen. *Catherine and Other Writings*. Eds. Margaret Anne Doody and Douglas Murray. (*Oxford Word's Classics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993. Print.)

[96]"Defence" is Austen's spelling of the word in *Northanger Abbey*, and it will be used throught this chapter.

feminist fan fictions as well as resituate her relationship to the Gothic as entirely more amiable, if not always unapologetic in its mockery. In a sense, our dissertation serves as its own Buffy moment, and rather than slaying monsters in alleys, it battles ill-advised critics who would force Austen and Radcliffe to fight for our entertainment. Surely, Austen (and Whedon) as well as Henry Tilney and Catherine Morland would approve of such work.

Despite Joss Whedon's vociferous praise of Jane Austen, it would be unwise to credit *Northanger Abbey* with any direct influence upon Whedon's work.[97] If anything, it is Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* that has more directly entered into the Whedonverse cannon. Any linking, likewise, between *Northanger Abbey* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* made within the framework of popular (or even scholarly) culture posits an almost hostile relationship, wherein it is frequently asserted that Austen would have ridiculed *Buffy* as she had done Radcliffe. Such sentiments misconstrue, if not grievously misread, Austen's own construction of *Northanger Abbey* and the relationship between the cultural works performed by Austen and Whedon.

Employing *Buffy* as our critical companion, consequently, allows us to rewrite these wrongs. To do so, this chapter constructs an admittedly fanciful fiction, worthy of the texts that sired our work, and places Catherine Morland and Buffy the Vampire Slayer as co-equal heroines. *Northanger Abbey* loathes neither Radcliffe in particular nor the Gothic in general. Rather, *Northanger Abbey* celebrates the female novelists such as Radcliffe, Maria Edgeworth, and

[97]See, for example, Jubei, "Jane Austen and Joss Whedon." *Jane Austen*. (14 Aug. 2006). Web. <http://janeausten.tribe.net/thread/66ab7707-42f0-4c35-aa46-7526eb3af2a9> 27 Sept. 2014.)

Frances Burney. *Northanger Abbey* lambasts male writers who were unjustly praised at women's expense. Although it is often hard to distinguish the Austen's love for her heroine through the crossfire of the topical, popular culture references that fly fast and furious, looking behind the mysterious black veil empowers us to see the secret as dangerous and dark as that concealed behind *Udolpho*'s equally celebrated curtained space.

This chapter glances first at the existing connections between Austen and Whedon, including the manner in which *Northanger Abbey* is misread, and from there, moves to examine the manner in which Austen's feminist fictive construction derives from the same sensibility that led Whedon to watch horror movies and want the women to slay the monster, rather than die at the monster's hands. Similarly, utilizing Whedon, well known for his own snarky, self-depreciating humor, enables us to re-vision Henry Tilney more positively as a man whose voice often echoes and mirrors that of his mistress-maker.

Rescuing Henry Tilney is one of the many benefits accorded to the crossover crafted within these pages.[98] Employing Whedon's own transformation of horror movies into a feminist telefiction and seeing the

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[98]Intriguingly, there appears to be a bit of a dichotomy. Hatred of Henry Tilney pervades any class that I have ever taken that features *Northanger Abbey* and occurs throughout many critical works on *Northanger Abbey* (e.g Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*, Julia Prewitt Brown's *Jane Austen's Novels: Social Change and Literary Form,* and Margaret Kirkham's *Jane Austen: Feminism and Fictions.*) I find that Henry Tilney has become more beloved. Examples within popular culture include T-shirts (http://www.cafepress.com/dd/26492569), an Old Spice-Man commercial parody (http://www.janeitejournal.com/page/3/), and fansites, such as "Cult of Da Man: The Henry Tilney Fan Site." (Web. <http://www.tilneysandtrapdoors.com/cult/main.html >16 Jan. 2015.). Scholarly examples include, Stephanie M. Eddleman, "Henry Tilney: Austen's Feminized Hero?" (*Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal* 32 (2010): 68. *General OneFile*. Web. 28 Sept. 2014.)

similarities between Sunnydale, California, situated three hours north of Los Angles and on the mouth of Hell, and Austen's Abbey, grants us the power to see Austen's own translation of the gothic to English soil, as well as appreciate the differences between Whedon's own recasting the horror and Austen's reinvention of the gothic. It is important to note that whenever the relationship between *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and horror movies is discussed, the same perceived level of antipathy never enters the discourse. Whedon, as will be seen, was filled with both loathing and love for what he beheld, but *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* is never called a satire of the genre. The stakes, therefore, are unevenly dispatched. Austen is almost always seen as mercilessly parodying Gothic fiction when in truth she comes much closer to doing what *Buffy* does and would do if *Buffy* were a Regency novel rather than turn of the century American television show. Along with the potent-potential-energy existence in the Austen (& Radcliffe) and Whedon connections, there are some minor actual overlaps.

Act I: Sunnydale meets Pemberley; or Pride & Prejudice & Vampire Slayers

Jane Espenson, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* writer and Jane Austen fangirl, has spoken at length of her love for Jane Austen in general, and *Pride and Prejudice* in particular.[99] In addition to contributing "Georgiana" to *Flirting with*

[99]For Espenson's Austen love, see her commentary on "Shindig," an episode of *Firefly* that she scripted; she goes into immense and loving depth about her desire to create an Austen ball scene, including accurate Regency dancing. Similarly, in answer to the question "Were there any particular writers you admired when you were growing up? Anyone influence your work today?," Espenson replies, "My mother introduced me to the books of Jane Austen, which I love. Austen had that wonderful observational sense of humor rooted in character. I'd love to think that influenced me"[Chris Ullrich, "Interview: Jane Espenson on 'Buffy' and 'Battlestar

Pride and Prejudice, Espenson incorporated her love of Austen into "Presumption," her story for *Tales of the Slayer.*[100] *Tales of the Slayer*, as its name suggests, provides accounts of the lives of previous slayers. Some characters (e.g., the Mayor and Nikki) from *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*'s television show make an appearance within the graphic novel/comic book form. Yet, *Tales of the Slayer*'s primary goal is to examine other slayers whose lives never grace television screens or scripts.

Within "Presumption," Jane Espenson pays homage to *Pride and Prejudice*, including allusions/homages to Austen's famed first sentence, an Austen-inflected prose, as well as dating her story 1813.[101] The slayer in question, one Elizabeth Weston, masquerades as a man (Edward) because as the narrator affirms "the life of a lady offers many limitations" and "to live as a free woman, Miss Elizabeth Weston had to live as a man." The reveal of both the vampire and the slayer comes at the end of a short interlude set at a ball, which presents like an excerpt or series of film stills from any BBC Austen adaptation. Espenson deftly handles the interweaving Austenesque inspired prose and

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Galactica'." (*ComicM!x*. (23 Jul. 2008). Web. <http://www.comicmix.com/2008/07/23/interview-jane-espenson-on-buffy-and-battlestar-galactica/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[100]I use *Tales of the Slayer* in the body of the dissertation, since *Tales of the Slayer* is the name of the initial collection in which "Presumption" was published, but for the ease of my readers, I provide the more update citation, since *Tales of the Slayer* is harder to procure. [Jane Espenson, "Georgiana." *Flirting With Pride And Prejudice: Fresh Perspectives On The Original Chick Lit Masterpiece.* (Eds. Jennifer Cruise and Glenn Yeffeth. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books.2005. 133-146. Print.); Jane Espenson, "Presumption." In Joss Whedon et al., Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: Tales.* (Milwaukie, OR : Dark Horse Comics, 2001. 37-44. Print.)]

[101] In response to my query ("Presumption is an homage to P&P, correct") Jane Espenson confirmed the relationship in a tweet to me [Espenson, Jane (JaneEspenson)."Yes it is! Thank you!" 20 Mar. 2012, 1:44 pm. Tweet.]. Moreover, other tweets have been Jane-filled, including an amusing Bingley discussion. Likewise, Espenson was very clear that her work was not meant as a critique of the Regency.

storyline into the Whedonverse. Were she an admirer of Whedon and the graphic novel, "Presumption" seems like precisely the sort of thing Austen might have included in her own juvenilia. On the surface, the tale's bleak view of the lives of ladies seems gloomier than even the darkest Austen effort, but then if Miss Bingley can be horrified about Elizabeth Bennett walking almost five miles in the rain, it can only be imagined what she might utter if her Elizabeth Bennett was the slayer of zombies or vampires.

Espenson is the lone canonical Austen/Whedon crossover. However, the fandom has been fertile with non-sanctioned attempts from adapting the entire story of *Pride and Prejudice* but replacing Darcy with Spike and Elizabeth with Buffy (as well as other name changes) to blog posts comparing Jane Austen to *Firefly*.[102]

Turning from the popular to the scholarly, Sue Turnbull employed *Northanger Abbey* in "'Not Just Another *Buffy* Paper': Towards an Aesthetics of Television."[103] Turnbull appropriates Austen's *Northanger Abbey* and Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* into her larger narrative about academia's fraught relationship with *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Turnbull bestows upon Austen's

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[102]Interestingly, not for the reasons mentioned by Espenson in her DVD commentary. See A Later-Day Bluestocking, "Jane Austen and Firefly. Wait!!…What??" (*A Later-Day Bluestocking*. (8 Sept. 2011). Web.<http://alatterdaybluestocking.com/2011/09/08/jane-austen-and-firefly-wait-what/ > 16 Jan. 2015.) For the *Buffy/Pride and Prejudice* crossover, see Fresne, "Buffy Pride and Prejudice." (*Archive of Our Own*. (27 Jun. 2001) Web. <http://archiveofourown.org/works/97152/chapters/133052> 16 Jan. 2015.). "Jane Austen's BUFFY" is another inventive fandom-crafted-fictional-crossover [Cara King (writer) Elena Greene (posted by), "Jane Austen's BUFFY." (*The Risky Regencies*. (24 Mar. 2009). Web. <http://www.riskyregencies.com/2009/03/24/jane-austens-buffy/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[103]Sue Turnbull, "Not Just Another *Buffy* paper: Towards an Aesthetics of Television." (*Slayage* 13/14 (October 2004). Web. < http://slayageonline.com/essays/slayage13_14/Turnbull.htm> 16 Jan. 2015.) *Slayage* is the online scholarly journal dedicated to Whedon studies.

novel the enviable position of founding the prejudice against the Gothic. Turnbull claims:

> Let me flip back to a putative point of origin for this prejudice against the popular with the publication of arguably the first blockbuster novel of its time, Ann Radcliffe's gothic novel of sensation, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*. First published in Britain in 1794, *Udolpho* went into five reprints before being *mercilessly sent up* [italics mine] by Jane Austen in *Northanger Abbey* published twenty four years later in 1818 (although originally written in 1798) *Udolpho* was, of course, but one ripple in a wave of gothic novels published in the second half of the eighteenth century which popularised the gothic imagery, symbolism and even the trope of the fair-haired virtuous heroine on which Whedon himself clearly draws.[104]

Turnbull continues, "Austen's comic critique of *Udolpho,* however, reveals that even at the height of its popularity, the gothic novel as a form of popular culture (before popular culture was invented) was hardly taken seriously, or at least only seriously enough to be made fun of."[105] In addition to restating the pervasive misconception that Austen hated Radcliffe and the Gothic, Turnbull misreads *Mysteries of Udolpho* and does as much, if not more, to trivialize the Gothic that she decries in others. Turnbull demonstrates the darkside of coopting larger literary debates for one's own purposes.

Radcliffe's unstable position arises not out of the nineteenth-century's loathing of the Gothic per se, but rather though academia's own distaste for the writer of the popular, particular if such a detestable creature were female. After all, it was not until Stephen Greenblatt took control of the *Norton Anthology of British Literature* as editor that the august tome featured more than two women

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[104]Turnbull 8

[105]Turnbull 9

writers and acknowledged someone other than Virginia Woolf with cultural prominence. Similarly, it is only within the past few years that the Gothic has become acceptable object of study within academia. All the same, the most cursory of searches (i.e., entering "Austen" and "gothic" in google or yahoo search bar) reveals the prevalence of the *Northanger Abbey* as parody or satire of the gothic.[106]

Women writers, such as Radcliffe, Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, and Charlotte Smith, were purveyors and constructors of the Gothic novel. Unfortunately, the cinema that provoked such an intense response from Whedon seemed shorn of the Gothic practiced by Radcliffe and her sister scribes. Instead, Whedon beheld the often misogynist, frequently gynocidal Gothic that was the heir of male writers such as Matthew Lewis (*The Monk*) and Edgar Allan Poe. I am not asserting by any means there was a woman's movement per se. For instance, Angela Carter could be seen as an heiress of Poe's prose-mantle. Rather, Radcliffe, as can be glimpsed within this chapter, or Charlotte Smith possessed a greater feminist potential within their texts than the boys, even Charles Brockden Brown (*Wieland*), the most feminist of the pre-Whedon masculine authors.

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[106]*Persuasions*, the journal for JASNA (the Jane Austen Society of North America), devoted an entire issue to *Northanger Abbey* (31.1 (Winter 2010) Web. <http://www.jasna.org/persuasions/on-line/vol31no1/toc.html > 16 Jan. 2015.). James Beggs, writing for "Yahoo Voices" offers a feminist, gothic-friendly reading of *Northanger Abbey* "The Everyday Gothic." (*Yahoo Voices*. (n.d.) Web. < http://voices.yahoo.com/the-everyday-gothic-northanger-abbey-jane-austens-2327715.html > 11 Feb. 2014.) . Another contributor "M. Faireo" on "Yahoo Voices" offers a vitriolic attack on Austen 's *Northanger Abbey* in "Jane Austen and *Northanger Abbey*." (*Yahoo Voices*. (n.d.) Web. <http://voices.yahoo.com/jane-austens-northanger-abbey-gothic-paradox-544990.html> 11 Feb. 2014.)

Act II: Sorry Joss, but Jane Austen is My Master (err. Mistress) Now

Joss Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* creation story plays a prominent part in the show's mythos. *Buffy* 's origin story is oft (re)told by Whedon. His expressed-desires for the sort of violence performed by his heroine change (slay versus 'wail on' the monster). Yet, the thematic relationship between what Whedon watches and how he reacts remain unchanged. In "Joss Whedon, Feminist" (2002), Whedon asserts:

> It basically came through my love of horror movies and having seen all of the ones that had been made [laughs] and seeing the trend of blonde girl who always got killed, like P.J. Soles in *Halloween*, who was cute, had sex, was bouncy and frivolous, always got her ass killed. I just felt really bad for her. I thought, I want to see the movie where she walks into a dark alley, a monster attacks her, and she just wails on him.[107]

Along with the complete re-vision of the girl in the alley saga, Whedon's conceptualization makes transparent his love for the horror. It would not be an absolute stretch to extend Whedon's relationship with watching horror movies to Austen's relationship with lending-library literature.[108]

In order to more perfectly behold the analogies betwixt Austen and Whedon, it is necessary to view the closest Austen ever came to her own "girl in

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[107]Longworth (52) [James Longworth, "Joss Whedon, Feminist." (*Joss Whedon: Conversations.* Eds. David Lavery and Cynthia Burkhead. *Television Conversation Series.* Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2011.42-63. Print.)]

[108]Two intriguing recent examples of scholarly criticism that relate wholly to *Northanger Abbey* are Stephanie Barron, "Suspicious Characters, Red Herrings, and Unreliable Detectives: Elements of Mystery in Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey.*" (*Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal* 32 (2010): 60. Web. 28 Sept. 2012.) and Elaine Bander, "Reading Mysteries at Bath and Northanger."(*Persuasions: The Jane Austen Journal* 32 (2010):46. Web. 28 Sept. 2014.)]. Another broader interpretation that situates *Northanger Abbey* within Austen's larger *oeuvre* may be found in Mary Waldron. *Jane Austen and the Fiction of Her Time.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. Print.)

the alley" moment: her defence of the novel in *Northanger Abbey*, situated at the end of Chapter 5.[109] Austen avows:

> Yes, novels; for I will not adopt that ungenerous and impolitic custom so common with novel-writers, of degrading by their contemptuous censure the very performances, to the number of which they are themselves adding—joining with their greatest enemies in bestowing the harshest epithets on such works, and scarcely ever permitting them to be read by their own heroine, who, if she accidentally take up a novel, is sure to turn over its insipid pages with disgust. Alas! If the heroine of one novel be not patronized by the heroine of another, from whom can she expect protection and regard? I cannot approve of it. Let us leave it to the reviewers to abuse such effusions of fancy at their leisure, and over every new novel to talk in threadbare strains of the trash with which the press now groans. Let us not desert one another; we are an injured body. Although our productions have afforded more extensive and unaffected pleasure than those of any other literary corporation in the world, no species of composition has been so much decried. From pride, ignorance, or fashion, our foes are almost as many as our readers. And while the abilities of the nine-hundredth abridger of the History of England, or of the man who collects and publishes in a volume some dozen lines of Milton, Pope, and Prior, with a paper from the Spectator, and a chapter from Sterne, are eulogized by a thousand pens—there seems almost a general wish of decrying the capacity and undervaluing the labour of the novelist, and of slighting the performances which have only genius, wit, and taste to recommend them.[110]

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[109]Of course, I mean public, print moment. One could assert quite easily and persuasively that her rejection of Clarke's officious interference could stand as another Austen as Buffy moment.

[110]Austen continues: "'I am no novel-reader—I seldom look into novels—Do not imagine that I often read novels—It is really very well for a novel.' Such is the common cant. 'And what are you reading, Miss—?' 'Oh! It is only a novel!" replies the young lady, while she lays down her book with affected indifference, or momentary shame. . . .The most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language. Now, had the same young lady been engaged with a volume of the Spectator, instead of such a work, how proudly would she have produced the book, and told its name; though the chances must be against her being occupied by any part of that voluminous publication, of which either the matter or manner would not disgust a young person of taste: the substance of its papers so often consisting in the statement of improbable circumstances, unnatural characters, and topics of conversation which no longer concern anyone living; and their language, too, frequently so coarse as to give no very favourable idea of the age that could endure it" (Chapter 5).

The gender dynamic framed by Austen's defiant narrator is as striking in its way as Whedon's (re)telling of *Buffy*'s creation myth. Although Austen avers that she defends the novel qua novel, a smart reader and candid judge can look through her words to her actions and see that the injured body she protects is her own and that of her sister writers against the men who are entirely untalented, unaccomplished, and capable only of a sort of plagiarism of the mind. Austen's defence has understandably sired hordes of critical studies—many of whom have noted the gender breakdown between those defended and those attacked—but the translation between Maria Edgeworth (*Belinda*) and Frances Burney (*Camilla* and *Cecilia)* to Ann Radcliffe (*The Castles of Athlin and Dublayne* and *The Romance of The Forest*), Charlotte Turner Smith (*Emmeline or The Orphan of the Castle*), et sororum is often overlooked.

Like Whedon's own transformation of blond girl as victim and canon-fodder to slayer of myths and monstrous (wo)men, Catherine Morland's own status as reader, heroine (and fanficer) of the Gothic cannot be underestimated. While Austen amusingly alludes to a certain set of stock villains who arise from the more sentimental/novel of manner genre (evil baronets etc.), Catherine Morland braves men who are even more fearsome, precisely because they are so banal.

Arguably, the most deadly thing about John Thorpe is his driving abilities, though the dullness of his conversation would drive many lesser a woman to hurl herself precipitously from his coach or smack him senseless with a deft application of the novel in her hand. Yet, his machinations,

particularly his mischaracterization of Catherine Morland's fiscal value, can be considered one of the primary movers of the plot. John Thorpe's actions, thus, (re)present him in the same guise as those dastardly men our narrator had been warning us about from the beginning. If Thorpe is ineffectual at inflicting on Catherine Morland's textual body what befalls girls like her (forced marriage, rape, imprisonment, torture, suicide, or some hideous combination) in other, more masculine novels, his failures at villainy spring from the venue in which he plays and the print-goddess who overlooks him.

When compared to the actual Gothic, it is possible to see the manner in which even Whedon's own valorous feminist efforts are interlaced with the same evils he was fighting against.[111] After all, girls still frequently die in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*'s alleys.[112] Whedon's motto is to give the viewers what they need, rather than what they want: "Because—and I've gotten in so much trouble for this phrase—what people want is not what they need."[113] Sometimes, for

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[111]See for instance the end of season two when Buffy has sex for the first time and her boyfriend literally becomes a monster. Of course, Buffy lives to fight another day and ends season two in the manner to which she has grown accustomed saving the world and fighting the evil boyfriend. Because it's Joss Whedon, the Big Bad Boyfriend gets transformed back to the sweet, caring guy right before Buffy has to shove a sword in his heart (and send him to a hell dimension) in order to avert an apocalypse. We will discuss the critical implications of this story more in our next chapter.

[112]The newly desouled Angel heads out to an alley and murders a prostitute, literally reversing the Buffy creation myth and upholding the conventions of horror movies that Whedon created Buffy to fight against. To be fair, Angel become a vampire from another blond girl in an alley (Darla played by Julie Benz), thus the alley is demonstrably as dangerous and fraught for women as for men. It would be probable to write an entire chapter, if not a book, investigating the permutations and their critical implications of the alley in Whedon's work.

[113]Miler "The Man Behind the Slayer" 73 [Laura Miller, "The Man Behind the Slayer." (*Joss Whedon: Conversations*. Eds. David Lavery and Cynthia Burkhead. *Television Conversation Series*. Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2011. 71-79. Print.)]

Whedon, his truths, like Austen's own, require that some cultural scripts still be kept in place so that others may be overturned.

As in her other novels, Austen might put Catherine Morland through travails in her training as a heroine. All the same, Austen is always kind enough to use blanks and prop swords, rather than live ammunition and sharp, pointy wooden or metal object. Throughout *Northanger Abbey*, Austen foregrounds Catherine Morland undergoing an entirely different technical-textual training to become a heroine. After all, the first chapter insists equally on Morland's unsuitable for heroic(k)[114] heroine status as well as elucidating the regime necessary for transforming Catherine's unheroic mental and moral "physicque" into something more worthy of leading lady status. Austen exposes her heroine to the narrator's (and hence the reader's) scrutiny about Catherine Morland's heroic(k) stature. Look at Austen's opening lines of *Northanger Abbey*, "No one who had ever seen Catherine Morland in her infancy would have supposed her born to be an heroine. Her situation in life, the character of her father and mother, her own person and disposition, were all equally against her."[115] Yet, Catherine Morland is as much a Chosen One as her more suitably heroic(k) sister, Buffy the Vampire Slayer.

If *Northanger Abbey* has a Big Bad, to employ the parlance of the Whedonverse, General Tilney would be that man. On the surface, he seems

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[114]I choose to use heroic(k) to clarify those moments where I want to delineate Austen's own discussion of what makes a young woman a good heroine from those of this dissertation. Of course, we are working in tandem, but as Jane Austen is her own self-rescuing princess and did not ask for my aid, I choose the alternaspelling.

[115]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter I

urbane, polished, and all that could be wished in his treatment of Catherine Morland. Had Catherine Morland never encountered the Gothic novel, she might never come to suspect General Tilney of anything at all. Yet, once she enters the liminal realm of the Gothic (the abbey), she starts seeing things more rightly. She is wrong in thinking that he murdered his wife, but her conflation of Tilney with Signor Montoni (arch villain of *Mysteries of Udolpho)* is not incorrect. After all, Madame Cheron was not murdered by her husband's hand, but through Signor Montoni's cruel neglect. Equally, Signor Montoni and General Henry Tilney share the same fatal flaw: their greed. Montoni and Tilney do not view their respective heroines-antagonists (Emily St. Aubert and Catherine Morland) through the lens of sexual-availability (due to their creators' feminism). Instead, Emily St. Aubert and Catherine Morland are viewed as commercial ventures. Signor Montoni means to force Emily St. Aubert to hand over her estates to him, and General Tilney means to access Catherine Morland's fortune[116] through marriage: trading his son's hand for Catherine Morland's funds.

Like her heroine, Austen's villains uphold the novelistic conventions at the same time she ironizes and upends the self-same ideas. Austen's employment of her villains serves to bind her even closer to Whedon (and to Radcliffe). Buffy frequently finds herself defeating various manifestations of the undead, most often the eponymous vampires, but she still finds herself needing to contend against the more human embodiment of evil. Even when the

[116]John Thorpe's machinations had led General Tilney to believe that Catherine Thrope was an heiress. As soon as he is undeceived of her fiscal value, he throws her out of the Abbey.

villains are human, Whedon's villains (the Nerd Troika in Season Six and Caleb in Season Seven) represent misogyny in general and gynocide at worst.

Act III: The Girl in Question

To a reader unbound by formulaic conventions and devoted to creating fanfiction, Catherine Morland would have excelled in inhabiting Buffy Summers's world, Sunnydale, California, home of the Slayer and the Hellmouth. Catherine Morland may sadly not be blessed with slayer strength or any of the other more warlike powers that attend Buffy the Vampire Slayer. The denizens of Sunnydale are quite happy to blame the spiraling death rate and the growing market in graves on "PCP gangs" and seem to be deaf, blind, and dumb to the Gothic world in which they exist. Yet, were she in Sunnydale, Catherine Morland would certainly be in no doubt of the existence of vampires, despite Morland's gothic-knowledge predating *Dracula* and the more Austen-mockworthy *Twilight* series. Catherine Morland would, like Fox Mulder (*X-Files*), believe. She might not be able to single-handily take down an alleyful of minions with Buffylike acumen, but given the right text to wield as a weapon, Catherine Morland could still prove her worth.

Other than sheer Austenesque fanjoy, the Buffy/Catherine comparison is meant to redraw Catherine Morland's heroick nature and to reclaim her from those outsiders that do not see her as suitable inheritor of her own sacred destiny: the Austen Heroine. Catherine Morland's failures as heroine are not

lost on her narrator, who takes pains to show us the flaws, or rather 'flaws,'[117] that prevent Catherine Morland from embodying true perfection. Yet, as anyone who can call to mind Austen's own comment about literary heroines that "Pictures of Perfection make me sick & wicked," Austen would not have her any other way.[118]

Looking through the word-splatter, we see how Catherine Morland's perfect home life and seeming lack of access to a lending library form her singular drawbacks. Catherine Morland inhabits a family and surroundings that appear to be completely and utterly lacking in anything like insincerity, dishonesty, or, what proves almost more detrimental, sarcasm or irony. While such a place might seem like another Eden, Catherine Morland finds a Brave New World upon entering Bath. She appears to possess enough native, Austen-given wisdom to see the outlines of irony—the gaping difference between that which is and that which is said or done. Through Catherine Morland's interactions with Gothic literature, and perhaps more meaningfully, Isabella

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[117]The difference between "flaws" and 'flaws' reflects Austen's meta-commentary on the heroines as seen in the snippets we have seen from chapter one. Her 'flaws' can be as must her failure to live up the heady realm of Austen heroinehood as much as her lack of traditional heroic accomplishments (e.g., drawing, lute-playing, and poetry-composing). Her flaws (and perhaps her 'flaws' also), however, are what make her more human and less a straw-woman. She makes mistakes, and she learns from them. Although this particular chapter (and dissertation) are not concerned with Austen's sister novelists, I would argue that Morland's flaws are perfectly in keeping with the other heroines whom Austen gently mocks for their more heroic skill-set. Like Morland (and Emily St. Aubert), the heroines of the so-called "horrid novels" (at least those composed by women), often find themselves in situations more suitable for sentimental heroines and armed with only their intellect and their strong moral compasses, rather than the more Whedonesque weaponry of scythes and stakes.

[118]Jane Austen, "Letter to Fanny Knight." (23 Mar. 1817). (*Austenrprose- A Jane Austen Blog*. Web. < http://austenprose.com/2008/01/08/sick-and-wicked/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

Thorpe, the girl who introduced Catherine to the Gothic, Catherine Morland earns herself an education.

Catherine Morland's artlessness contrasts strikingly with Isabella Thorpe's artifice. Isabella Thorpe's theatricality requires Catherine Morland as an unquestioning audience. *Northanger Abbey* is filled with Catherine and Isabella having conversations wherein Isabella aims to control Catherine's responses while Catherine Morland tries to decode her friend's hidden meanings. One of the more intriguing conversations occurs in the Bath Pump Rooms. Austen through her narrator reveals Catherine Morland's amazement at Isabella. What Catherine Morland really wants to do is discuss *Mysteries of Udlolpho* with her best friend:

> Catherine, in some amazement, complied, and after remaining a few moments silent, was on the point of reverting to what interested her at that time rather more than anything else in the world, Laurentina's skeleton when her friend prevented her, by saying, 'For heaven's sake! Let us move away from this end of the room. Do you know, there are two odious young men who have been staring at me this half hour. They really put me quite out of countenance. Let us go and look at the arrivals. They will hardly follow us there.'[119]

[119]Austen continues: "Away they walked to the book; and while Isabella examined the names, it was Catherine's employment to watch the proceedings of these alarming young men.
'They are not coming this way, are they? I hope they are not so impertinent as to follow us. Pray let me know if they are coming. I am determined I will not look up.'
In a few moments Catherine, with unaffected pleasure, assured her that she need not be longer uneasy, as the gentlemen had just left the pump-room.
'And which way are they gone?' said Isabella, turning hastily round. 'One was a very good-looking young man.'
'They went towards the church-yard.'
'Well, I am amazingly glad I have got rid of them! And now, what say you to going to Edgar's Buildings with me, and looking at my new hat? You said you should like to see it.'
Catherine readily agreed. 'Only,' she added, 'perhaps we may overtake the two young men.'
'Oh! Never mind that. If we make haste, we shall pass by them presently, and I am dying to show you my hat.'
'But if we only wait a few minutes, there will be no danger of our seeing them at all.'

Catherine Morland takes things at face value.[120] Her entire portion of the conversation represents her genuine desire to protect her Isabella from the attentions of the "odious men." Isabella Thorpe, on the other hand, cares a great deal about attracting the men and ensures that she and Catherine Morland stalk them down the street.

Isabella Thorpe's behavior is not reprehensible in and of itself. She behaves like a giddy sixteen year old girl. Jane Austen is not slut-shaming Isabella Thorpe qua Isabella Thorpe. Indeed, Isabella Thorpe's actions and flirtatiousness mirrors the man whom she will eventually marry: Captain Fredrick Tilney has no compunctions carrying on with an engaged woman. Isabella Thorpe, however, has promised to marry James Morland, Catherine Morland's elder brother. With this episode of the two leering lads, Austen provides an anvilcious hint that Isabella Thorpe will not end *Northanger Abbey* as Catherine Morland's sister-in-law, or rather not in the manner that Catherine thinks. As the exchange above illustrates, Catherine Morland glimpses behind Isabella's mask, but she does not know how to process the information. She might not yet possess the language to call Isabella by her proper name—a feat that seems nearly impossible for her to achieve—but she can rightly read Isabella's hypocrisy, even if she cannot pronounce the word.

'I shall not pay them any such compliment, I assure you. I have no notion of treating men with such respect. That is the way to spoil them.' (Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 6)

[120]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 6

Because John Thorpe's allure falls well and truly short of his sister's, Catherine Morland can see more clearly that something is far from right with her best friend's brother. It is only her politeness and "good breeding" that prevent her from pointing out how illogical and profoundly stupid he is to his face. While Eleanor and Henry Tilney seem evenly matched in sense and sensibility, John Thorpe seems much, much duller and stupider than his sister. Austen includes the telling detail, in a novel about books, that John Thorpe detests Frances Burney's *Camilla*, despite the fact that he has only read the first few pages of Burney's novel. Moreover, John Thorpe appears to be the burlesque of a villain because he kidnaps, or plotnaps, Catherine Morland in his carriage and prevents her from going out on her promised walk with Henry and Eleanor Tilney. Likewise, he refuses to stop the carriage to allow her to join the Tilneys. John Thorpe's behavior foreshadows Catherine's other unfortunate carriage ride and contrasts with Henry Tilney's own behavior towards her. Again, it must be the stressed that it is only thanks to Austen that Catherine Morland herself or her reputation were not seriously harmed by the dangers of riding with John Thorpe. Riding in carriages with boys might be one of Austen's mock dangers, but beneath her mockery lies the truth that girls do not only need to avoid dark alleys in order to escape, or defeat, monsters. Once Catherine Morland succeeds in reclaiming her walk with the Tilneys, she achieves a key victory in her path towards heroinehood. Decoding and finally defying Isabella and John Thorpe, thus, proves key to Catherine Morland's heroick development.

At a cursory glance, Isabella Thorpe makes a much better Austen villainess than Catherine Morland does a heroine. Isabella Thorpe's villainy arises not from her novel-reading, but like a proto-Lucy Steele, through her warped values. Even more disturbing, Isabella Thorpe is a bad feminist. She talks the sisterhood game, but within the same sentence, she has already derided the same "friend" whose virtues she had begun the sentence by praising.

Isabella Thorpe, as well, has not the slightest compunction in using men.[121] Yet arguably, Isabella Thorpe achieves her anti-heroine status not for Mae-Westing it through the men, but rather for her behavior to Catherine Morland. Despite her ability to mouth the lines and wear the t-shirt, Isabella Thorpe's epic lack of sisterhood renders her vicious.[122] Isabella Thorpe's coquetry is separated from Lydia Bennet's similar shenanigans not only from her ability to maintain her self-control, but also from her epic shallowness and her embodiment of worst friend ever. She might not sink to the level of similar

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[121]Isabella Thorpe could, in a different setting, provide a deliciously shallow vision of payback, a Lisabeth Salander (sans repeated sexual abuse & torture, of course) for the Regency age. Someone needs to write that fanfic.

[122]Interestingly, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* has its own Isabella Thorpe in Cordelia Chase (Charisma Carpenter), leader of the popular girls, embodiment of the shallow, valley-girl head-cheerleader stereotype, and archrival to Buffy, but since Whedon has the ability to expand and further deconstruct her character because he has more season of television (three seasons on *Buffy* and four more seasons on *Angel*, the spinoff that commenced alongside *Buffy*'s fourth season). See "Cordelia Chase." *Buffy Wikia*. ((n.d.). Web. <http://buffy.wikia.com/wiki/Cordelia_Chase.> 16 Jan. 2015.) and for an argument about Cordelia Chase's own heroick status, see Ira Madison III, "28 Reasons Cordelia Chase Should Be Your New Role Model." (*BuzzFeed Community*. (n.d.). Web. <http://www.buzzfeed.com/ira/28-reasons-cordelia-chase-should-be-your-new-role-8p6m> 16 Jan. 2015.) and Ryan McGee (writer) and Alyssa Rosenberg (posted by),"TV's Great Women Part II: Anti-Heroes, Pure Hearts, And Cordelia Chase." (*ThinkProgress*. (10 Jan. 2012). Web. <http://thinkprogress.org/alyssa/2012/01/11/401900/cordelia-chase/> 16 Jan. 2015.)

Sentimental villainesses and entrap Catherine Morland in a manner that ensure her rape and ruin, but she continually abandons Catherine Morland to her fate.[123] Were she in a more modern setting, Isabella Thorpe would be the gal who drags her friend to some dodgy bar filled with skanky guys only to abandon said friend to run off for some 'fun' with one of the guys and leave said friend to make her own way home.

One of the more intriguing scenes in the novel occurs at one of the numerous dance scenes (Chapter 13) wherein James Morland has left Bath, but Captain Fredrick Tilney, Henry Tilney's elder brother (and hence heir to the estate) has entered the city and attends the ball. Isabella, true to form, babbles away promising this thing and that to Catherine, only to abandon Catherine to run off with Tilney's brother. Catherine Morland is flummoxed by her (faux) friend's behavior. Through his education at Oxford in subjects such as alcohol consumption and horse-worth, Catherine's brother could easily deduce what Isabella is up to, but Catherine Morland's unworldliness leaves her only puzzled at Isabella's lack of character consistency. Thankfully for Catherine, she has the aid of Henry Tilney, to whom she turns for an explanation.

As he often does, Henry Tilney presents a serio-comic explanation. Catherine Morland, equally true to form, is at once dazzled, confounded, and illuminated by his discussion. While Catherine Morland never fully discovers the mystery behind Isabella's conduct until the end of the novel—once Isabella jilts James for Captain Tilney— Henry Tilney plays an integral part in Catherine

[123]"Sentimental" rather than "sentimental" to stress the genre-conventions.

Morland's learning process. To an unthinking person, the fact of Tilney's gender might mislead this misguided individual into misreading Tilney's prominence as equally paternal and patriarchal, but to do so would be guilty of an insult against not only Austen's sacred honor, but also Henry Tilney's honor. Instead, Henry Tilney serves as the double for the narrator. Henry Tilney, in some senses, allows Catherine Morland to marry the "culturally appropriate" Austen heroine as well as continuing (or pioneering, depending on how your view its placement in the timeline) Austen's own renegotiation of masculinity.

Act IV: Understanding Henry, or Unapologetic Mocker & Excellent Judge of Muslin

If we temporarily fast-forward through Austen heroes to *Pride and Prejudice*, we can see what makes Henry Tilney special and atypical amongst Austen heroes. Already by *Sense and Sensibility*'s Willoughby, Henry Tilney's prolix, witty wordplay gets realigned with Austen's villains (Mr. Wickham in *Pride and Prejudice*) and cads (Mr. Frank Churchill in *Emma*). Austen's heroes, however, are not all the strong, silent type:

> 'Mr. Darcy is not to be laughed at!' cried Elizabeth. 'That is an uncommon advantage, and uncommon I hope it will continue, for it would be a great loss to *me* to have many such acquaintance. I dearly love a laugh.'
> 'Miss Bingley,' said he, 'has given me credit for more than can be. The wisest and the best of men, nay, the wisest and best of their actions, may be rendered ridiculous by a person whose first object in life is a joke.'
> 'Certainly,' replied Elizabeth—'there are such people, but I hope I am not one of *them*. I hope I never ridicule what is wise or good.

> Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies *do* divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can.'[124]

It is true that Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet engage in scintillating banter, but it is equally clear that one can hardly imagine Darcy, Knightley, or Wentworth regaling their Elizabeth Bennet, Emma Woodhouse, or Anne Elliot with Gothic fanfiction a la Henry Tilney's tales to Catharine Morland.

More intriguingly, what should strike the amiable reader most startlingly from the above exchange is how Elizabeth Bennett, Austen's goddess of sweetness and sarcasm, resembles Henry Tilney.[125] Henry Tilney can certainly be said to possess a lively mind and an archness of tone, but he does not always embrace the sweetness that often underlined Elizabeth Bennett's own sallies. What he lacks in an agreeable temper, he supplements with his ability to judge muslin. Henry Tilney's mockery and unimpeachable muslin-judgment are accompanied by his ability to parse words in a manner that would surely impress Raymond Williams or the OED. Henry Tilney, likewise, often demonstrates a persona that emulates Austen's own authorial efforts (including *Northanger Abbey*) and resembles Catherine Morland's own love of the Gothic.

To substantiate his love of Gothic fiction to Catherine Morland, Henry Tilney reveals this own villainy in absconding with his sister's lone copy of

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[124]Austen *Pride and Prejudice* (Chap XI. Vol 1) [Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*. (London: T. Egerton, Whitehall, 1813. Print.)]

[125]Catherine Morland, however, appears to demonstrate her own Elizabethesque qualities when she dashes headlong without regard for convention to the Tilney's to throw herself on their mercy and explain what went awry (her plotnapping by John Thorpe). Such an instance of heroineism is often overlooked in talking about Catherine Morland's heroick status.

Mysteries of Udolpho and thereby, preventing her from finishing the book. Afterwards, Tilney confesses:

> It is *amazingly*; it may well suggest *amazement* if they do—for they read nearly as many as women. I myself have read hundreds and hundreds. Do not imagine that you can cope with me in a knowledge of Julias and Louisas. If we proceed to particulars, and engage in the never–ceasing inquiry of 'Have you read this?' and 'Have you read that?' I shall soon leave you as far behind me as—what shall I say?—I want an appropriate simile.—as far as your friend Emily herself left poor Valancourt when she went with her aunt into Italy. Consider how many years I have had the start of you. I had entered on my studies at Oxford, while you were a good little girl working your sampler at home![126]

In addition to the obvious, Henry Tilney's speech is valuable in that it exposes Tilney as devoted to the Gothic as Catherine Morland and provides an intriguing re-vision of an Oxford education. It is entirely probable that Henry Tilney gained the ability to talk politics and art as a result of his education, but in his speech, he, or rather Austen, reconfigures it as a place to read novels.

With these small details, Jane Austen anticipates Virginia Woolf's sarcasm against Oxbridge. Frances Burney, Charlotte Smith, and other women writers whom Austen admired make similar reconfigurations of Oxford as Hellmouth, though for them, Oxford's evils are less about novel reading and more along the lines of John Thorpe's misadventures and George Wickham's misdeeds. Burney, Austen, Smith, et sororum, consequently, see Oxford as important for the education opportunities it provides (Henry Tilney, Fitzwilliam Darcy etc.) that women cannot access. All of these writers are equally harsh on the "boarding school system" that gives women a veneer, but no true knowledge or

[126]The entire conversation about novels, occurring in Chapter 13 of *Northanger Abbey*, offers an intriguing analysis of the novel.

actual abilities: always a smattering of French and Italian, rather than the ability to read Madame de Staël (my example) in her native tongue. At the same time, Austen and her sisters anticipate Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and *Three Guineas*, which we will discuss within our next chapter, in kicking back against the idea that women's worth is dependent wholly on her ability to get into Camford or Oxbridge. The prevalence of brothers, often elder ones, who win the gender and birth order lottery to win a place in Oxford, though sometime Cambridge, only to be transformed into dissolute, drunken sluts who gamble away the patrimony and endanger the wellbeing of the family is thought-provoking to say the least.

Thus, if within Austen in general and *Northanger Abbey* in particular, women's education is haphazard and problematic, then what are we to make of men's? By his own charming, albeit somewhat snide, confession, Tilney used Oxford to read his way through the Gothic; John Thorpe speculated on ponies, gambles and seems to have all the drunkenness of Mr. Wickham (without Wickham's addiction to women); and even James Morland appears to drink more than he ought (despite Catherine's inability to see her brother's flaws). In a novel that so often trafficks in Catherine Morland's schooling in particular and women's education in general, the figuration of masculine learning and intellectual capabilities undercuts Regency societal ideologies about masculine superiority.

Tilney, equally, might tease Catherine for gazing at Bath and seeing a Radcliffian landscape, but as can be seen, he is not immune in employing an

Udolphan conceit or constructing his own Gothic fan-fictions (e.g., during the ride to the Abbey). Although Austen does not draw attention to his inconsistency or his own laundry-list moments, Austen's inclusion of Tilney's flaws allows the reader to draw her own conclusions and to evaluate Tilney's own behavior.

Henry Tilney functions as the Austen-narrator's surrogate. His voice mirrors or slides into the narrator's voice in a manner clearly distinct from the technique of free and direct discourse. When Henry Tilney makes comments that sound virulently misogynist or not femme-friendly, his voice echoes that of the narrator. Such an overlap might lead the unwise reader into seeing an unfortunate conspiracy wherein Jane Austen has betrayed her sex and more troublingly, partnered up with her male hero to lecture, berate, and humiliate her heroine. To see Austen or Tilney in such a manner completely misses the mark of her narrator's sarcasm. Such a misreading and misconstruction of Tilney as proxy is liable to make the folly of such a reader the target for Austen's jibes, or more generously, such a reader would possess Catherine Morland's own lack of a sarcasm font. The tonal similarity between the narrator's voice and Tilney can trick the unsuspecting reader into overlooking the sympathy each has for the heroine. When Catherine Morland thinks in her head "how can you be so strange," Austen's free and direct discourse allows us to see that Tilney's behavior is as worthy of snarkitude as is Catherine Morland. Catherine Morland's plain-spoken, almost pragmatic, certainly unvarnished

sense refrains from any of the linguistic tricks practiced Isabella Thorpe, Henry Tilney, or the narrator herself.[127]

As mentioned at the opening of this Act, there is not a dearth of Austen examples (narrators or even heroines) who share Tilney's voice; nevertheless, Tilney's humor more often is attached to Austen's villains than her heroes. Though Darcy certainly was capable of engaging in his own flirty banter with Elizabeth, he is more often characterized by pioneering all that is Dark, Brooding, and British. Thus, if we are looking for examples combining witty wordplay with a quirky, feminist masculinity, Joss Whedon provides an intriguing, though temporarily and genre-disparate companion to Tilney.

For instance, in season four of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Willow, Buffy's best friend, discovered that she has a lesbian attraction to Tara (Amber

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[127]Here is Austen's free and direct discourse into Catherine Morland's mind: "Catherine listened with astonishment; she knew not how to reconcile two such very different accounts of the same thing; for she had not been brought up to understand the propensities of a rattle, nor to know to how many idle assertions and impudent falsehoods the excess of vanity will lead. Her own family were plain, matter–of–fact people who seldom aimed at wit of any kind; her father, at the utmost, being contented with a pun, and her mother with a proverb; they were not in the habit therefore of telling lies to increase their importance, or of asserting at one moment what they would contradict the next. She reflected on the affair for some time in much perplexity, and was more than once on the point of requesting from Mr. Thorpe a clearer insight into his real opinion on the subject; but she checked herself, because it appeared to her that he did not excel in giving those clearer insights, in making those things plain which he had before made ambiguous; and, joining to this, the consideration that he would not really suffer his sister and his friend to be exposed to a danger from which he might easily preserve them, she concluded at last that he must know the carriage to be in fact perfectly safe, and therefore would alarm herself no longer" (Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 9). The entire conversation between John Thorpe and Catherine Morland is revelatory, particularly in how Austen concludes: "Little as Catherine was in the habit of judging for herself, and unfixed as were her general notions of what men ought to be, she could not entirely repress a doubt, while she bore with the effusions of his endless conceit, of his being altogether completely agreeable. It was a bold surmise, for he was Isabella's brother; and she had been assured by James that his manners would recommend him to all her sex; but in spite of this, the extreme weariness of his company, which crept over her before they had been out an hour, and which continued unceasingly to increase till they stopped in Pulteney Street again, induced her, in some small degree, to resist such high authority, and to distrust his powers of giving universal pleasure" (Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 9).

Benson), a college friend. Whedon had been playing Willow's growing feelings under the guise of becoming a witch. Understandably, given the contemporary climate, there was backlash about Willow's life-choice. In response, Whedon released a statement that due to the outcry, Willow would no longer be continuing in a lifestyle that was practiced by such a small minority of people: she was going to cease being Jewish.[128] Whedon's avowal sounds like exactly the sort of statement that Henry Tilney would make if he were presented with the same situation that confronted Whedon. Whedon did not directly attack the bigotry, but instead, unapologetically mocked the narrative.

Act V: Doing What Buffy Would Do or the Radcliffe in the Abbey

Joss Whedon explicates the authorial and creative choices behind translating his failed movie into a television show: "When I devised the show, it was very different from the movie. The movie has the 'girl you think is going to be killed turns out to be a superhero,' that type of thing. That's enough for a movie but not enough for a show. And the show was, 'High School is a horror movie.' And there's not a lot of people I know who don't relate to that."[129] By situating his version of hell in Southern California, Whedon at once redefined a

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[128]Another, more contemporary example:"Reddit user dbertie: 'I'm sure that killing off a character you've invested a lot of time in can be tough. Have you ever found that doing this to a particular character has had a profound emotional affect on you? Who was the toughest kill?' [Joss Whedon's answer] 'I actually find it refreshing... delightful.... vaguely arousing.... Actually, I'm, no offense, very tired of being labelled as 'the guy who kills people.' Shakespeare (he's this hot new writer) does it way more than me, and everyone's all excited about how he, as it were, holds a mirror up to nature, while I'm like the Jason Voorhees of the writing community. Unfair. Also, probably Buffy's Mom'." [For the full conversation, see "I Am Joss Whedon-AMA." *Reddit*. ((10 Apr. 2012). Web. <http://www.reddit.com/r/IAmA/comments/s2uh1/i_am_joss_whedon_ama/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)]

[129] Longworth "Joss Whedon, Feminist" 50

Gothic landscape and upheld its conventions. *Film noir*, of course, had long mined the darkness and shadows within the bright, California sun, and slasher films were equally fond of using summer camps for their hunting grounds. What Whedon did differently, though, was to twine those conventions to the more literary Gothic, with its cemeteries, vampires, and creatures of the dark. Equally, as was noted previously, Whedon's feminist fictions do not directly acknowledge Radcliffe or other women's contribution, save for that of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin's *Frankenstein*, the lone woman to make it into the canon.

While Ann Radcliffe's earlier work *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) seems more directly to entwine the Gothic and mythic, quasi Renaissance France to the Terrors besetting the actual, contemporary nation, *The Mysteries of Udolpho* still provides an intriguing commentary on her England, despite its setting in sixteenth-century France and Italy. Through allowing Emily St. Aubert to suffer tribulations in Italy and to find joy and regain possession of her paternal estate in France, Radcliffe prevents a strict bifurcation between the polluted and the Catholic. Once she has been liberated from the confines of the castle, Emily St. Aubert wields her power as manager of her estate in a manner equivalent to Austen's patrician heroes: Mr. Darcy and Mr. Knightley.

Radcliffe, like Austen, insists on equality of moral virtue as well vices that forces men to embody the same standards of chastity, rectitude, and values that society places upon women. Darcy, Knightley, or even Tilney never find their moral purity endangered and threatened in the manner that

Valancourt does, but like an Austen hero, Valancourt must prove his moral equity to Emily St. Aubert, who was willing to sacrifice the love she bore him once she thought he was no longer chaste, thereby proving him unworthy of her affections. Consequently, Emily St. Aubert is not the fabled "Last Girl" of a horror film, who escapes the evils of one villain in order to fall prey to some other knife-wielding, gynocidal psychopath in the film's next volume.

As in all Austen romances, Emily St. Aubert might be declared legally eradicated by her marriage to her reclaimed Valancourt, but her death-in-law does not reflect her role-in-life. Her theoretical dispossession does not render her the possession of her husband, no matter the law's terrible claims. While as critically unappreciated a heroine as Catherine Morland, Emily St. Aubert acts as an active heroine, with an unfortunate partiality for swooning fits, who learns to gain control of her sensibility, search out danger, and in the end, reclaims her patrimony and her boyfriend and perhaps more valuably, finally stops fainting away at the things that frighten her.

When comparing Austen's gothic vision to Radcliffe's, it is of the most importance to recollect Radcliffe's feminism and her rationalized approach to the supernatural (e.g., the resolution to Laurentina's skeleton). Catherine Morland's laundry list might be a gentle mocking of Emily St. Aubert's discoveries of secret rooms and thrilling prose. Both young women learn that while the night is dark and full of terrors, the things that endanger us are the monstrous made (fe)male. While Emily St. Aubert's fortunes might be better than Catherine Morland, Austen demonstrates what she has learned from

Radcliffe and the Gothic that Radcliffe pioneered and practiced. Like Valancourt, Austen forces Tilney to prove himself worthy of Catherine Morland.

Truly, an Austen fanboy or fangrrl might have reason to lament Henry Tilney's lack of Darcyesque Dramatic Confession. He never tells Catherine Morland that "by her, he was properly humbled." Rather, Henry Tilney reconfigures the Gothic and obtains the ability to see as Catherine Morland does, namely that the Gothic does not confine itself to foreign spaces. To complete his own heroick training, Tilney needs to gain more constancy and to learn to remember what he has seen and said.

Despite his stated devotion to Gothic fiction, he persists in the belief the Abbey he inhabits and the England in which he lives is not Gothic. Henry Tilney, in this, resembles one of those denizens of Sunnydale who read *Dracula*, but see only the sun in the Sunnydale and neither the vampires roaming the streets at night, nor the monsters lurking in the shadows, nor the mouth of Hell that lies under the hallowed space of the high school's library.

The reader has the advantage over Tilney and can turn back the pages, even if she may not rightly recall the events themselves, to see that Tilney has employed Radcliffe and the Gothic to spin a novella to Catherine as an entertainment on the journey to Northanger or to re-see the scene mentioned wherein Tilney discusses how much he loves *Mysteries of Udolpho*. Even more tellingly, the reader can discern the shadow of the Gothic within England's sacred realm, complete with blood-strewn streets. Contemporary readers of Austen's fiction would be able to look out their own windows or to their

periodicals and see the ghosts of the Gordon Riots (1780)[130] or Peterloo (1819) and other similar outbreaks of violence stalking their land.

Intriguingly, it is these sanguinary horrors that Eleanor Tilney has in mind when Catherine Morland talks about the latest horror out of London. The confusion between Catherine Morland talking about the latest volume and his sister's belief that London has once more been plunged into political upheaval bemuse Henry Tilney and blind him to the dangers that lie beneath the comic equivocation.

Austen sets her scene after Catherine Morland has already made the charming faux paux of admitting that every time she sees Bath, she thinks of Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho*. Book-lovers know the feeling, like that of romance, that translates one's actual surroundings into the book (or movie or play) that engrosses one's mind.[131] Tilney being Tilney and imperfect, he chooses to mercilessly mock her with his sister providing the Good Cop to his bad. Austen, consequently, has already primed her audience to see the interchangeability between England and Udolphoan Italy and France. The narrator allows us to see Tilney's thoughts and to comprehend how some

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[130]For a first-hand account of The Gordon Riots, Frances (Fanny) Burney provides a lively and searing account, particularly of the horrors perpetrated in Bath [Frances Burney, "Letter to Dr. Burney" (9-10 June 1780). *Journal and Letters*. Eds. Peter Sabor and Lars E. Triode. (London: Penguin Books, 2001. 162-164. Print.)].

[131]I can attest to making quite the Catherine of my own self when I saw Bath and thought of Austen, including *Northanger Abbey*, and my very embarrassing, quasi-terrible-toddler behavior/desolate fangirl at the thought of not getting to explore Bath rightly due to being part of a cruise tour. Thankfully, in my case, the cruise ship caroused to my fortune and for the remainder of my trip aboard the ship, I had people who I was fairly certain I had never met asking if I had had the chance to see Austen.

readers want to thwack Henry Tilney very hard and continuously with books, very heavy books, soundly to his head:

> Delighted with her progress, and fearful of wearying her with too much wisdom at once, Henry suffered the subject to decline, and by an easy transition from a piece of rocky fragment and the withered oak which he had placed near its summit, to oaks in general, to forests, the enclosure of them, waste lands, crown lands and government, he shortly found himself arrived at politics; and from politics, it was an easy step to silence.[132]

The narrator then includes a transition shot (like a pull out) from Tilney's mind to Catherine's speech: "The general pause which succeeded his short disquisition on the state of the nation was put an end to by Catherine, who, in rather a solemn tone of voice, uttered these words, 'I have heard that something very shocking indeed will soon come out in London.'[133] Of course, Catherine's mind has been occupied by webs of her own weaving, rather than meditating on Henry Tilney's brilliance, hence the Gothic. His sister, more used to Henry, and occupied with thoughts that the narrator chooses not to reveal obviously takes Catherine's statement at face value, setting up the dark, gallows humor comedy that follows: "Miss Tilney, to whom this was chiefly addressed, was startled, and hastily replied, 'Indeed! And of what nature?'" Catherine replies, "That I do not know, nor who is the author. I have only heard that it is to be more horrible than anything we have met with yet." Miss Tilney exclaims, "Good heaven! Where could you hear of such a thing?"[134] Catherine reveals that

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[132]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 14

[133]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 14

[134]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 14

"A particular friend of mine had an account of it in a letter from London yesterday. It is to be uncommonly dreadful. I shall expect murder and everything of the kind."[135] Miss Tilney responds, "You speak with astonishing composure! But I hope your friend's accounts have been exaggerated; and if such a design is known beforehand, proper measures will undoubtedly be taken by government to prevent its coming to effect." "[E]ndeavouring not to smile," Henry notes, "Government neither desires nor dares to interfere in such matters. There must be murder; and government cares not how much."[136]

One can tell by his "endeavouring not to smile," the peculiar, if not slightly pompous, pleasure Tilney takes at the cross-purposes and equivocations of "horror." What eludes him is the underlying societal structure that makes such black comedy possible and probable, even when he aims to explain the joke to both women:

> 'My dear Eleanor, the riot is only in your own brain. The confusion there is scandalous. Miss Morland has been talking of nothing more dreadful than a new publication which is shortly to come out, in three duodecimo volumes, two hundred and seventy–six pages in each, with a frontispiece to the first, of two tombstones and a lantern—do you understand? And you, Miss Morland—my stupid sister has mistaken all your clearest expressions. You talked of expected horrors in London—and instead of instantly conceiving, as any rational creature would have done, that such words could relate only to a circulating library, she immediately pictured to herself a mob of three thousand men assembling in St. George's Fields, the Bank attacked, the Tower threatened, the streets of London flowing with blood, a detachment of the Twelfth Light Dragoons (the hopes of the nation) called up from Northampton to quell the insurgents, and the gallant Captain Frederick Tilney, in

[135]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 14

[136]Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 14

> the moment of charging at the head of his troop, knocked off his horse by a brickbat from an upper window.'[137]

Look at the language Tilney uses and one can see the riot is not only confined to his poor sister's mind. His lurid depiction reflects a newspaper report of an actual riot, such as Peterloo as much as the scene out of a penny-dreadful novel.

And now compare Tilney denying the Gothic's presence in England in Chapter 23, only ten chapters later with the interspersed gothic fanfiction to Catherine:

> 'If I understand you rightly, you had formed a surmise of such horror as I have hardly words to—Dear Miss Morland, consider the dreadful nature of the suspicions you have entertained. What have you been judging from? Remember the country and the age in which we live. Remember that we are English, that we are Christians. Consult your own understanding, your own sense of the probable, your own observation of what is passing around you. Does our education prepare us for such atrocities? Do our laws connive at them? Could they be perpetrated without being known, in a country like this, where social and literary intercourse is on such a footing, where every man is surrounded by a neighbourhood of voluntary spies, and where roads and newspapers lay everything open? Dearest Miss Morland, what ideas have you been admitting?'

Dear Mr. Tilney, What you have not been admitting? Within either construction England is as fraught with perils and dangers as Whedon's Sunnydale or Radcliffe's Italian (and French) settings. Tilney's England, replete with imminent doom and bloodshed, seems more like an apocalyptic landscape, rather than Shakespeare's more famed "this England" speech.[138] When Tilney

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[137] Austen *Northanger Abbey* Chapter 14

[138] This royal throne of kings, this sceptred isle,
This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,

argues against Catherine Morland's vision of Abbey as Udolpho, Austen exemplifies her "other Eden" and "demi-paradise" through repeated sinister and disturbing protections: "voluntary spies" and roads and newspapers that "open up" the country. Remember Eleanor Tilney's superior education, and more suitable Austen-heroine attitude, still did not preclude her from mistaking Catherine's literary horrors for actual news from London. Had Tilney a more nuanced and realistic knowledge of his father and his homeland, he would realize how wrong he is.

His father's villainy and mistreatment of women culminates in throwing Catherine Morland out of the house when he realizes, thanks to John Thorpe, that she is not an heiress. Though a shocked Eleanor Tilney aims to intercede, nothing will come of nothing, and General Tilney has no compunction about what actual evils could befall a girl like Catherine. Making her way home penniless is a dangerous for a girl in 1813 as it would be for one in 2013. That Catherine Morland does not end up like Clarissa Harlowe or in any other sexual trafficking scenario befitting a heroine of Morland's caliber is wholly due to Austen's benevolent intervention rather than General Tilney's cruel intentions. Equally, Catharine Morland's fate literalizes the warnings about what happens to young women who enter the fray and brave the ink's lure.

This other Eden, demi-paradise,
This fortress built by Nature for herself
Against infection and the hand of war,
This happy breed of men, this little world,
This precious stone set in the silver sea,
Which serves it in the office of a wall
Or as a moat defensive to a house,
Against the envy of less happier lands,—
This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England. (Shakespeare *Richard II* II.i.40-60)

Returning to Whedon's concept about blonde girls in alleys, Catherine Morland is as much a blond girl in the alley as Buffy, though she got there for entirely different reasons and under different auspices (carriages=alley). Catherine, of course, does not slay General Tilney, sadly, but by provoking Henry Tilney's revolution and re-vision, she accomplishes as much of a victory for feminist empowerment as does Buffy, in her fashion. Catherine Morland, flawed and imperfect as she may be, survives the novel's perils, gets a heroic(k) education, earns her happily after, and lives another day.

EPISODE THREE: WOOLF AND WHEDON WIELD WORDS AND WREAK RETRIBUTIVE WRATH

And while I was writing this review, I discovered that if I were going to review books I should need to do battle with a certain phantom. And the phantom was a woman, and when I came to know her better I called her after the heroine of a famous poem, The Angel in the House. It was she who used to come between me and my paper when I was writing reviews. It was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her.[139]

Teaser: Turning Cursive Letters into Knives[140]

In diverse fashions, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and Virginia Woolf tread similar terrain and wield language effectively and affectively as a weapon to revision and reform the world. Woolf utilizes reoccurring, interlocking images in both her fiction (e.g., *Mrs Dalloway* and *To The Lighthouse*) and nonfiction (e.g., *A Room of One's Own* and *Death of the Moth*); Woolf often plays upon perspective and uses her prose like a film camera to (re)draw and (re)interpret the scene before her. Throughout *Three Guineas*, Woolf employs boldly cinematic prose that seems as searing as if it were a movie by Jane Campion or Kathryn Bigelow.

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[139]Woolf "Professions For Women" 236-237 [Virginia Woolf, "Professions For Women."*The Death of the Moth and Other Essays*. Ed. Leonard Woolf. (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1942. 235-242. Print.)].

[140]"Turning Cursive Letters into Knives is from the riotgrrl band Bikini Kill's song "Bloody Ice Cream." [Bikini Kill, "Bloody Ice Cream." *Reject All-American* (Kill Rock Stars, 1996. Audio Cassette.)]The Full Lyrics run as follows: "The Sylvia Plath story is told to girls who write/
They want us to think that to be a girl poet means you have to die./
Who is it that told me all girls who write must suicide?/
I've another good one for you, we are turning cursive letters into
Knives."

Within *Three Guineas*, Woolf concentrates her critical engagement with popular print material, such as her newspapers and her bookcase, as well as the imagined writers/recipients of the letters.[141] Woolf's re-visions London and Oxbridge and draws upon the vast differences caused by women's lack of access to education and the professions. In one illustrative passage, Woolf limns:

> And the result is that though we look at the same things, we see them differently. What is that congregation of buildings there, with a semi-monastic look, with chapels and halls and green playing-fields? To you it is your old school; Eton or Harrow; your old university, Oxford or Cambridge; the source of memories and of traditions innumerable. But to us, who see it through the shadow of Arthur's Education Fund, it is a schoolroom table; an omnibus going to a class; a little woman with a red nose who is not well educated herself but has an invalid mother to support; an allowance of £50 a year with which to buy clothes, give presents and take journeys on coming to maturity. Such is the effect that Arthur's Education Fund has had upon us. So magically does it change the landscape that the noble courts and quadrangles of Oxford and Cambridge often appear to educated men's daughters like petticoats with holes in them, cold legs of mutton, and the boat train starting for abroad while the guard slams the door in their faces.[142]

Three Guineas focuses on the concrete distinctions that arise from women's legal and societal subordination, both historical and current. As in her own action sequence that we will examine in the next section, the fictive collides unsettlingly and often brutally with the real. Woolf's vision and imagistic language becomes the cinematographer for our chapter.

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[141]Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas* (London: The Hogarth Press, 1938. Print.)

[142]Woolf *Three Guineas* 11-12

If this dissertation as a whole can be conceived as a television series concerning feminism, the events discussed by Virginia Woolf ought by rights to be visualized as an action movie of the sort traditionally helmed by Liam Neeson or Matt Damon. The machinations of the Cat and Mouse Act (1913) alone sound like the spycraft more commonly found in a John le Carré novel or a James Bond flick. Equally, the vicious cruelty meted out to the suffragettes, in Holloway and on the streets, seems more reminiscent of Jack Bauer's stint in a North Korean prison than the treatment due to citizens of Great Britain. Consequently, placing Woolf as a critical companion allows for the ability to renegotiate our ideas of both Woolf and Whedon's feminist, critical, and cultural work.

Act I: The Words That Maketh Murder[143]

A speech, "Professions for Women," delivered by so august a personage as Virginia Woolf before the Woman's Service League seems an unlikely venue for an action film to occur. Yet, situated after Woolf confides that she spent her first paycheck to buy a Persian cat, an action set-piece occurs that would not discredit a Hollywood blockbuster. What it lacks in explosions and car chases, it makes up for with one hell of a fight sequence, and Virginia Woolf does all her own stunts.

Woolf's foe is "The Angel in the House." The Angel has the temerity to hold no opinions in her own right; goddess forbid a stray thought wander into her head. At the same time, she will valiantly contend for the ideology that

[143]PJ Harvey, "The Words that Maketh Murder." *Let England Shake* (Vagrant Records, 2011. CD.)

created her. Her failure to think for herself does not translate in Woolf's construction to a woman who never acts. Her most potent superpower is her ability to act for others, but not to help the hopeless, fight for justice, or rescue puppies. The Angel, instead, "excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught, she sat in it."[144]

This villainess continually bedeviled Woolf:

> And when I came to write I encountered her. . . .The shadow of her wings fell on my page; I heard the rustling of her skirts in the room. Directly, that is to say, I took my pen in my hand to review that novel by a famous man, she slipped behind me and whispered: 'My dear, you are a young woman. You are writing about a book that has been written by a man. Be sympathetic; be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of our sex. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own. Above all, be pure.'[145]

Once the Angel made the fatal misstep "as if to guide my pen," Woolf started hitting back.[146] Woolf limns, "I turned upon her and caught her by the throat. I did my best to kill her. My excuse, if I were to be had up in a court of law, would be that I acted in self–defence. Had I not killed her she would have killed me. She would have plucked the heart out of my writing."[147] Like any arch nemesis worth her salt, the Angel does not die easily. Woolf continues:

> Thus, whenever I felt the shadow of her wing or the radiance of her halo upon my page, I took up the inkpot and flung it at her. She died hard. Her fictitious nature was of great assistance to her. It is far harder to kill a phantom than a reality. She was always creeping

[144]Woolf "Professions for Women" 237

[145]Woolf "Professions for Women" 237

[146]Woolf "Professions for Women" 237
[147]Woolf "Professions for Women" 237-238

> back when I thought I had despatched her. Though I flatter myself that I killed her in the end, the struggle was severe.[148]

When reading Woolf's prose, one quite expects the Angel to materialize right behind Woolf on the page or stage and resume their mortal combat. That never quite happens. Instead, Woolf avers that she was not alone in her battle: "It was an experience that was bound to befall all women writers at that time. Killing the Angel in the House was part of the occupation of a woman writer."[149]

Other than her turn to wielding pen-as-dagger and inkpot throwing, what is most surprising is Woolf's choice of enemies. Selecting another woman and a fictive construct to serve as the super villain she must defeat is a bold choice for Woolf's feminist revolution.[150] Woolf transforms the room of her own from sanctuary to crime scene.

Woolf's wrath falls on The Angel, rather than the men/man who made her. After all, she is not slaughtering Coventry Patmore, the man behind the myth; Leslie Stephens, the father under whose long shadow Woolf lived; George and Gerald Duckworth, her half-brothers who assaulted her and her sister during their childhood, but the woman, the actress as it were, who deliver his lines.

Woolf's insistence that the woman writer's path lay through the blood of the Angel is equal parts intriguing and disturbing. In her earlier feminist fictive

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[148]Woolf "Professions for Women" 238

[149]Woolf "Professions for Women" 238

[150]Shakespeare, of course, would illustrate the more common masculine trope of two men (dramatic foils, as they so suitably say) killing each other (Henry V versus Hotspur) rather than getting a room and sorting things out . . . one way or the other.

construction *A Room of One's Own*, Woolf claimed that all women need only five hundred pounds per annum and a room of one's own.[151] Now, Woolf's woman needs to pack a pen along with her paper and slay her personal demon in order to earn the right to "furnish her room."[152] The embrace of violence proves an intriguing foreshadowing of Woolf's final feminist polemic *Three Guineas*.

Rather than the enshrinement of the domestic ideal, Woolf's angel requires slaying for attempting to subjugate Woolf and force her into abjection. Alternatively, thus, the Angel embodies the feminist critical construct of the enemy with outposts inside your head. More intriguingly, Woolf's fight with the Angel anticipates the girl-on-girl action scenes from action-adventure movies.

Act II: No Weapons, No Friends, No Hope. Take All That Away, and What's Left? Me[153]

While both Virginia Woolf and Joss Whedon perpetrate metaphoric violence against Angels, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*'s foray into slayage provides a distinct counterpart to Woolf's actions. Buffy's Angel (David Boreanaz) represents the love of her life. Rather than aiming to tell her how to write,

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[151]Woolf's pronouncement about the need for the titular "room of one's own" and 500 pounds per annum reoccurs frequently throughout *A Room of One's Own*. It commences on page 4, though the first mention does not provide any specific monetary figure: "a woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" (4). All quotations are derived from the first American edition of *A Room of One's Own* (New York, Harcourt, Brace and Company,1929. Print.)

[152]Woolf "Professions for Women" 242

[153]"Becoming, Part Two." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Two*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (18 May. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1998. DVD.)

Angel reverts to his demonic self (Angelus) and aims to literally raise hell. The relationship between Buffy and Angel is complicated; some pertinent points are a) he's a vampire; b) as *Angelus*, he was extremely fond of torture and murder; c) upon being cursed by Gypsies, he recovers his soul and strives for redemption; and d) if he enjoys a moment of happiness, he loses his soul. Given their respective situations (vampire slayer/vampire), Buffy loving Angel is very nearly the OED definition of loving the killer.

To make matters worse, Buffy becomes the unfortunate cause of Angel's turn to the dark and slaughtery side after she loses her virginity to him on her seventeenth birthday.[154] On the face of it and under the auspices of a different author (Nathaniel Hawthorne say), the twinning of Buffy's sexuality and punishment for expressing that sexuality might seem punitive. Whedon, however, takes pains to ground the experience in non-supernatural, realistic repercussions.

Whedon averred:

> The Thing with Angel wasn't 'Don't Sleep with your boyfriend.' Giles very clearly comes out and says 'I think you were rash, but I know you loved him and he loved you, and I'm not going to upbraid you for that.' That wasn't about that. It was about what happens when you sleep with a guy and he stops calling you. What happens if you give him what he wants, and he starts treating you like shit. It was about the emotion of it. And that's a very real, emotional thing that everybody goes through. You consummate a

[154]Buffy sleeps with Angel in "Surprise." [Buffy The Vampire Slayer *Season Two*. (Wri. Marti Noxon. Dir. Michael Lange. (19 Jan. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.)] and she discovers that Angel has become Angelus in "Innocence." [Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Two*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (20 Jan. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.)]

> relationship, and it disappears out from under you, and it happens to both sexes.[155]

The sanguine-soaked, corpse-ridden fallout of their fated romance consumes the last half of season two. Angelus stalks Buffy, along with her friends and acquaintances. In his fall from grace, Angelus exemplifies the archetypal evil, abusive psycho boyfriend that haunts horror and Gothic fictions. The joy he takes in menacing Buffy contrasts with his broody, though still stalkery, personality as Angel. The aftermath of Angelus's soul-loss culminates in the two part season finale "Becoming Part I and II."[156] Buffy must shove a sword through Angel's heart in order to avert another apocalypse and save the world with the Whedonesque twist of Angelus reverting to Angel mid-sword thrust.

Despite traversing a different domain, Whedon's Angel is as hard to kill as Woolf's. Emblematic of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Joss Whedon employs his Angel as a commentary on what makes men monstrous. Angel intones to Buffy in "Amends:" "It's not the Monster that needs killing in me. It's the Man."[157] Yet, his regained humanity is what makes Buffy's sword-stakage heartrending; his mortal sins (drunkenness, lechery, and general rakishness) simultaneously redeem and rend him, making him a more depraved vampire as Angelus and a better man as Angel.

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[155]Longworth "Joss Whedon, Feminist" 57-58

[156]"Becoming Part One." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Two*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (12 May. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.); "Becoming Part Two." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Two*. (Wri. Joss Whedon . Dir. Joss Whedon. (19 May. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.)

[157]"Amends." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Three*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (15 Dec. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.)

Act III: The Worth of Women

Virginia Woolf limns in *A Room of One Own*: "For all the dinners are cooked; the plates and cups washed; the children set to school and gone out into the world. Nothing remains of it all. All has vanished. No biography or history has a word to say about it. And the novels, without meaning to, inevitably lie."[158] Her depiction of women's experiences and the lack of value placed upon them by the prevailing culture might seem like a strange companion to this section, but through putting pen to paper, Woolf corporealizes and enshrines certain truths about women's lives. She transforms the empty spaces into monuments. By situating the vista within the larger landscape of what women need to write and how to right their own lives, she dissipates the despair inherent in such an encapsulation. Woolf, moreover, refrains from condemning domesticity qua domesticity. Instead, domesticity occupies the position of theoretically valuable to the society, but utterly valueless and inherently devalued in practice.

Three Guineas is Woolf's final sustained work of literary and feminist criticism. Within *Three Guineas*, Woolf crafted responses to three different organizations requesting money. Throughout *Three Guineas*, Woolf deftly interweaves a searing critique of patriarchy, fascism, and the oppression of women.

As in *A Room of One's Own* and "Professions for Women," Woolf forefronts the importance of women's rights to write and to work as well as the

[158] Woolf *A Room of One's Own* 155

battles women face daily. Women's chief weapon, Woolf avers, is her pen and the ability to wield it freely and ably. Woolf's veneration for writing arises, as in her previous two works, because it is accessible to women. The materials are cheaply procured, and it can be practiced without inconveniencing anyone, like Jane Austen at her writing desk. The other professions, along with education, were either barred to women or are "battlefields":

> For us to attempt to reform the education of our brothers at public schools and universities would be to invite a shower of dead cats, rotten eggs and broken gates from which only street scavengers and locksmiths would benefit, while the gentlemen in authority, history assures us, would survey the tumult from their study windows without taking the cigars from their lips or ceasing to sip, slowly as its bouquet deserves, their admirable claret.[159]

The prose frequently erupts into violence against and by women that rivals a slasher flick. Woolf utilizes her own set of linguistic weapons as textual-interrogation to query: who has the power and how that power ought to be used? Influence, Woolf demonstrates, is a fiction that serves only the selected few. Like her cup metaphor, women's work is unheralded, unpaid, and if a threat against patriarchy, repudiated violently. Woolf, likewise, utilizes her power to argue that conventional women should be directly paid by the government for their role as wives and mothers. At the same time, the act of writing serves as a (re)valuing of Woolf's worth and other women who write. As in *Room of One's Own* and "Professions for Women," writing earns money, and money buys things from Persian cats to rooms of one's own to people caring what you think. Even if the three guineas she sends are as fictive as her five-

[159]Woolf *Three Guineas* 160-161

hundred pounds per annum, Woolf's contributions (re)value women's worth to society.

Act IV: Sycthe Matters, or écriture feminine and Other (wo)manly Weapons

While the weapons discussed in this section are literal, rather than linguistic, Buffy's speech and its efficacy as a fighting tool has been the subject of academic study.[160] Buffy ably combines witty-wordplay with more traditional fighting forms. Willow précises, "The Slayer always says a pun or-or a witty play on words, and I [Willow] think it throws the vampires off, and, and it makes them *frightened* because I'm wisecracking. . . ."[161] To which Xander replies, "I've always been amazed with how Buffy fought, but... in a way, I feel like we took her punning for granted."[162]

A stake, her primary weapon of choice, has undeniable overtones that have not gone unnoticed in the critical discourse. Yet, while stakes, swords, and even number two pencils can handily dispatch a vampire, Buffy possesses less traditional, but equally dangerous means to combat her enemies. The two that

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[160]An example can be found in Karen Eileen Overbey and Lahney Preston-Matto, "Staking in Tongues: Speech Act as Weapon in *Buffy*." [*Fighting the Forces: What's at Stake in* Buffy the Vampires Slayer. (Eds. Rhoda Wilcox and David Lavery. Lanham MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002. 73-84. Print.)].

[161]"Anne." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Three*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (29 Sep. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.)

[162]"Anne." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Three*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (29 Sep. 1998). Fox Searchlight, 1999. DVD.)

will be touched on are Willow's magic and a scythe, which Buffy "King-Arthured" out of a stone at the end of season seven.[163]

Willow's magic tends to be treated in a positive, empowering light through much of *Buffy* and gained an additional valence with her growing attraction to and then relationship with Tara, beginning in season four. Yet, in the infamous season six, Willow's magic took a darker turn.[164] It becomes first a metaphor for drug addiction; and then after Tara's murder, it propels Willow into Big Bad status.[165] Season seven, therefore, reclaims magic as a force for feminist empowerment.

Buffy proclaims, in her own St. Crispin's Day style speech:

> So here's the part where you make a choice: What if you could have that power now? In every generation, one slayer is born because a bunch of men who died thousands of years ago made up that rule. They were powerful men. This woman is more powerful than all of

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[163]"End of Days." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Seven*. (Wri. Jane Espenson and Douglas Petrie. Dir. Marita Grabiak. (13 May 2003). Fox Searchlight, 2003. DVD.)

[164]Poor Marti Noxon is still known by some fans as Noxious Noxon for her tenure as showrunner of season six whilst Whedon was busy on *Angel* and *Firefly*. Whedon argued that he was responsible for the show's tone and it was necessary for two reasons: a) Buffy coming back from the dead had to be earned and b) the season's villains (the nerd troika and then Dark Willow) embodied the evils of adulthood, rather than those of adolescence or college. Noxon, however, does have her defenders, including Joss Whedon himself. Within academia, see, for instance, David Perry, "Marti Noxon: *Buffy*'s other Genius." [Buffy *Goes Dark: Essays on the Final Two Seasons of* Buffy the Vampire Slayer *on Television*. Eds. Lynne Y. Edwards, Elizabeth L. Rambo, and James B. South. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2009. 13-22. Print.)].

[165]The inclusion of Tara caused a fair amount of fan ire. Her death equally pleased the people who loathed her and infuriated those who thought that Whedon sold out by killing off the lesbian. Sample critical response include Brandy Ryan, "'It's Complicated. . . Because of Tara': History, Identity Politics, and the Straight White Male Author." Buffy *Goes Dark: Essays on the Final Two Seasons of* Buffy the Vampire Slayer *on Television*. (Eds. Lynne Y. Edwards, Elizabeth L. Rambo and James B. South. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2009. 57-76. Print.) ; Alissa Wilts, "Evil, Skanky, and Kinda Gay: Lesbian Images and Issues." Buffy *Goes Dark: Essays on the Final Two Seasons of* Buffy the Vampire Slayer *on Television*. (Eds. Lynne Y. Edwards, Elizabeth L. Rambo and James B. South. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 2009. 41-56. Print.); and Anne Billson, Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: A Critical Reading*. Bfi TvClassics. (London: British Film Institute,2005. Print.).

> them combined. So I say we change the rule. I say my power should be our power. Tomorrow, Willow will use the essence of the scythe to change our destiny. From now on, every girl in the world who might be a slayer will be a slayer. Every girl who could have the power will have the power can stand up, will stand up. Slayers every one of us. Make your choice. Are you ready to be strong?[166]

Buffy tasks Willow with translating the power imbued in the women-forged weapon, the scythe that had been the provenience of only the slayer (i.e., Buffy and Faith) to all women who are capable of becoming the slayer, whether or not these women and girls are aware of their power.[167] In addition to its magical properties, the scythe functions as a powerful weapon: the centerpiece of the final battle wherein Buffy and her Potentials, now sister-slayers, descend into the Hellmouth to battle the First Evil (aka Satan) features the scythe's transmission among the women as a weapon of war.

Of course, our discussion of women's weapons and of feminine, feminist sentences becomes more complicated, as it ought to be, when we consider the auspices under which our heroine operates and the true forger of her being. What do we make, then, of our women's weapons and her sentences? Does an actress speaking the lines written by a man create a sort of transubstantiation,

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[166] "Chosen." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Seven*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (20 May 2003). Fox Searchlight, 2003. DVD.)

[167]Buffy's choice to make all the Potentials slayers is not universally admired; some critics as well as fans, instead, see Buffy as unilaterally making decisions for all women (and girls) and stripping them of their power. Although not surprising, given the series' own feminist potential is subject to similar doubts, such a view does not seem sustained by the events within the show (wherein the potentials are given the choice to be strong). For more on *Buffy* and feminism, see Elena Levine, "*Buffy* and the 'New Girl Order': Defining Feminism and Femininity." *Undead TV: Essays on* Buffy the Vampire Slayer. (Eds. Elena Levine and Lisa Parks. Durham, NC: Duke University Press,2007. 168-189. Print.) and Zoe-Jane Playden. "'What You Are, What's to Come': Feminisms, Citizenship, and the Divine." *Reading* Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: An Unofficial Critical Companion to* Buffy *and* Angel.(Ed. Roz Kaveney. London: Tauris, 2001. 120-147. Print.)

like Willow's magic acting upon the Scythe, that remakes the sentence as feminine; if so, does that then mean that the opposite would be true and a woman writer's words would be rendered masculine if spoken by an actor? One could easily see the chaos and discord that would arise if we took a determinist, biology as sentence's destiny approach.

Moreover, what makes a sentence a woman's sentence? Virginia Woolf, for instance, advocates in *A Room of One's Own* that such a creature exists. In this, of course, she anticipates the French Feminist movement's critical construct of *écriture féminine*.[168] But what then of Whedon? Joss Whedon might be able to write the Slayer and forge, through his pen, the scythe. But does his masculine gender deprive him of the ability to laugh like Medusa and scythe-wield, so to speak, to empower women and battle misogyny?

Kicking Ass is Comfort Food resists an essentialist attitude that (wo)men write, speak, or think only in a certain manner. Our dissertation embraces the Scythe's power to empower any girl who can have the power to have the power. Yet, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* uses some magicks of its own to enfranchise men as co-participants in feminist change. This rhetorical move more clearly and correctly reflects both how men operate within the Buffy-and Whedonverse and Joss Whedon's role as mothertext.

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[168]*écriture feminine* was coined by the pied noire, French feminist, Hélène Cixous, *Le Rire de la Méduse* (1975). The following year, it was translated and published in *Signs*, the leading scholarly journal of women's studies [Hélène Cixous, "The Laugh of the Medusa," trans. Keith Cohen and Paula Cohen, (*Signs* 1. 4 (1976): 875–93. Print.)] .

Act V: People Call Me a Feminist, or What's in a Name?

If Virginia Woolf is the Slayer, then Rebecca West deserves to share the title. As in *Buffy*, West's adventures and pen-prowess, for now, are confined for our purposes to her pithy definition of feminism: "I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a door mat or a prostitute."[169] For our final comparison between Woolf and Whedon, we look at the importance of names. Virginia Woolf's *Three Guineas* makes an intriguing and somewhat surprising rhetorical turn towards its end.

Woolf pauses amidst her vigorous defense of the rights of women and claims:

> The daughters of educated men who were called, *to their resentment* [italics mine],'feminists' were in fact the advance guard of your own movement. They were fighting the same enemy that you are fighting and for the same reasons. They were fighting the tyranny of the patriarchal state as you are fighting the tyranny of the Fascist state. Thus we are merely carrying on the same fight that our mothers and grandmothers fought; their words prove it; your words prove it. But now with your letter before us we have your assurance that you are fighting with us, not against us.[170]

According to Woolf's construct, the ideas upon which feminism is based are all fine and dandy, but it is the very name itself with which Woolf and her heroines take umbrage. The fact that men and women are fighting together does not seem to undermine the necessity for feminism, since believing in the equality

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[169]West "Mr Chesterton in Hysterics" 219. [Originally: "Mr Chesterton in Hysterics: A Study in Prejudice," *The Clarion*(14 Nov 1913); Rebecca West, "Mr Chesterton in Hysterics: A Study in Prejudice." (*The Young Rebecca: Writings of Rebecca West 1911-17*. (Ed. Jane Marcus. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982. 218-222. Print.)]

[170]Virginia Woolf *Three Guineas* 184

between men and women does not linguistically or logically result in battling against men qua men.

If we turn towards Joss Whedon's controversial and most current Equality Now speech, we might get a clearer idea of what troubles Woolf about being called a feminist.[171] On November 4, 2013, Equality Now hosted "Make Equality Reality" and honored Whedon for his commitment to gender equality.[172] Whedon confesses:

> And that's when I realize what my problem is (well, one of my problems). My problem with feminist is not the word. It's the question. It's the question. 'Are you now, or have you ever been, a feminist?' The great Katy Perry once said–I'm paraphrasing–'I'm not a feminist but I like it when women are strong.' That's lovely Katy. Don't know why she feels the need to say the first part, but listening to the word and thinking about it, I realize I do understand. This question that lies before us is one that should lie behind us. The word is problematic for me because there's another word that we're missing. That words have failed us.[173]

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[171]Sample examples of the outrage directed against Whedon's speech are "No, Joss Whedon 'Feminist' is not a Dirty Word" [Katie McDonough, "No, Joss Whedon 'Feminist' is not a Dirty Word." (*Salon*. (11 Nov. 2013). Web. <http://www.salon.com/2013/11/11/no_joss_whedon_feminist_is_not_a_dirty_word/ >16 Jan. 2015.)] and "What Joss Whedon Gets Wrong about the Word 'Feminist'" [Noah Berlatsky, What Joss Whedon Gets Wrong about the Word 'Feminist'." (*The Atlantic*. (8 Nov. 2013). Web. <http://www.theatlantic.com/entertainment/archive/2013/11/what-joss-whedon-gets-wrong-about-the-word-feminist/281305/> 16 Jan. 2015.)]. Positive responses include "A Room Full of Feminists Just Applauded a Guy who Attacked Feminists. Wait For It. . ."[Rebecca Eisenberg, "A Room Full Of Feminists Just Applauded A Guy Who Attacked Feminists. Wait For It. . . ." (*Upworthy*. (n.d.). Web. < http://www.upworthy.com/a-room-full-of-feminists-just-applauded-a-guy-who-attacked-feminists-wait-for-it-re2-7a> 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[172]See Jezebel's "Watch Joss Whedon Make the Perfect Speech" for a video of Whedon's speech, commentary on the speech, and for the heated, generally extremely negative reaction to what Whedon said and to Whedon himself within the comments [Kate Dries, "Watch Joss Whedon Make the Perfect Speech About the Word Feminist." (*Jezebel*. (7 Nov. 2013) Web. <jezebel.com/watch-joss-whedon-make-the-perfect-speech-about-the-wor-1460080685> 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[173] Joss Whedon, "Equality Now's 'Make Equality a Reality Event Honoring Joss Whedon'." [Montage Hotel, Beverly Hills, CA. 4 Nov. 2013. Keynote Speech.] All quotations derive from Kate Dries, "Watch Joss Whedon Make the Perfect Speech about the Word Feminist." For Equality Now's announcement of Whedon's involvement in the event, see the program announcement "Make Equality Reality." (*Equality Now*. (4 Nov. 2013). Web.

Whedon's brilliantly invokes the communist trials' formula for belonging ("Are you now or have you ever been"). Equally, Joss Whedon could be addressing Woolf and West with the same ease that he talks about Katy Perry. Woolf and Perry, though, appear to have distinct and separate issues with feminism until one reexamines *Three Guineas*.

Before Woolf moves on from her tangential aside about the evils of feminism, she calls for some word slaughter:

> What more fitting than to destroy an old word, a vicious and corrupt word that has done much harm in its day and is now obsolete? The word 'feminist' is the word indicated. That word, according to the dictionary, means 'one who champions the rights of women'. Since the only right, the right to earn a living, has been won, the word no longer has a meaning. And a word without a meaning is a dead word, a corrupt word. *Let us therefore celebrate this occasion by cremating the corpse* [italics mine].[174]

Now we know what so vexes Woolf about "feminist." It is not as one might have supposed previously: the idea that feminism equals the hatred of men. Rather, once the victory has been achieved, feminism is irrelevant.

Woolf's call for word-murder resembles both her early slaughter of the Angel and the violence directed against women by the patriarchy. Like her Angel's demise, the idea that the women's labor rights can be so easily achieved

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http://www.equalitynow.org/event/make_equality_reality > 16 Jan. 2015.) and "Equality Now to Honor Joss Whedon at 'Make Equality Reality' Event." (*Equality Now*. (n.d.) Web. <http://www.equalitynow.org/equality_now_to_honor_joss_whedon_at_make_equality_reality_event > 16 Jan. 2015.), which includes a video of Whedon's 2006 speech on feminism and media culture. Equality Now was founded by a student who had been in Joss Whedon's mother's high school class and who was inspired by Whedon's mother (Lee Stearns) to create *Equality Now*. Whedon talks more about his mom's influence on his work in Luke Benedictus, "The Ladies Man." (*The Age* [Melbourne, Australia]. (25 Sept 2005). Web. <http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2005/09/22/1126982178268.html> 16 Jan. 2015.).

[174]Virginia Woolf *Three Guineas* 184

are not held out by the entirety of the argument that she has made throughout *Three Guineas*. The strange juxtaposition, a jump-cut as it were, to "die feminism" is even odder once Woolf resumes her previous stream of thought.

Though it was published posthumously, there is no reason to believe that Woolf did not exercise her usual vigor in constructing her argument. Perhaps it is best to see it as another example of the wars women need to fight, a sort of Hamletesque self-slaughter or another angel-cum-monster that a woman has to kill in order to learn how to wield her weapon and right the world (or write the word). For Whedon, "feminist" is as unnatural as for Woolf.

He contends:

> Let's go back to this 'ist,' okay. Let's rise up a little bit from my obsession with sound to the meaning. 'Ist' in its meaning is also a problem for me. Because you can't be born an 'ist.' It's not natural. You can't be born a Baptist; you have to be baptized. You can't be born an atheist or a communist or a horticulturalist. You have to have these things brought to you. So feminist includes the idea that believing men and women to be equal, believing all people to be people, is not a natural state. That we don't emerge assuming that everybody in the human race is a human, that the idea of equality is just an idea that's imposed on us. That we are indoctrinated with it, that it's an agenda.[175]

Like Whedon's Angel, the "feminist" becomes demonic through its inherent qualities. It has lost its soul not through id, but through *ist*. The diminutive operates like a call sign for Woolf's Angel signaling that equality is at best a fiction and at worst, forever guiding our pens and keeping us from writing what we want and being whom we wish to be. Whatever their Angel's agenda, Woolf and Whedon uphold vigorously the rights of women as well as men to wield

[175]Whedon "Equality Now's 'Make Equality a Reality Event Honoring Joss Whedon'

their own pen and to combat the evils that beset them, even if those evils appear to be virtues and Angels amongst us.

EPISODE FOUR: "YOU KNOW WHAT YOU LOVE. NOW GO KILL IT.":[176] DOMESTICITY AND THE (DE)VALUATION OF VIRTUE IN *GAME OF THRONES* AND *ONCE UPON A TIME*

Daenerys Targaryen: I don't want to be his Queen. I want to go home.
Viserys Targaryen: So do I. I want us both to go home, but, they took it from us. So tell me, sweet sister, how do we go home?
Daenerys Targaryen: I don't know.
Viserys Targaryen: We go home with an army. With Khal Drogo's army. I would let his whole tribe fuck you-all forty thousand men-and their horses too if that's what it took.[177]

Teaser: So Much for My Happy Ending

For a series that trafficks on the potency of "true loves kiss" to awaken sleeping beauties and charming princes, *Once Upon a Time* cannot be read as a wholesale endorsement of the power of love to overcome evil. On the balance, love does not often conquer all. Trials and tribulations, as well as triumphs, beset Snow White and Prince Charming at every turn; and yet if *Omnia vincit amor* could be affixed as emblem to any couple, it would be still Snow White and Charming. The conquests that love makes, though, are often bloody and

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[176]**Regina [Evil Queen]:** Tell me what will suffice?
Rumpelstiltskin: The heart of the thing you love most.
Regina [Evil Queen]: [angry] What I love most died because of Snow White.
Rumpelstiltskin: [in mock sympathy] Is there no one else you truly love? This curse isn't going to be easy. Vengeance never is, dearie. You have to ask yourself a simple question: How far are you willing to go?
Regina [Evil Queen]: As far as it takes.
Rumpelstiltskin: Then please stop wasting everyone's time, and just do it. You know what you love. Now go kill it. ["Pilot." Once Upon a Time Season One. (Wri. Edward Kitsis & Adam Horowitz. Dir. Mark Mylod. (23 Oct. 2011). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)].

[177]"Winter is Coming." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Tim Van Patten. (17 Apr. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

unstable. Charming and Snow White's ability to always find each other is matched by the equal prevalence of losing one another.

Like *Once Upon a Time, Game of Thrones* occupies a terrain where no happy couple makes it out unscathed, if alive at all. Love, within the *Game of Thrones*, be it familial or romantic, often becomes a weakness. The Starks uphold all the values and ideals commonly associated with nobility and heroick virtue, but those selfsame virtues doom them within their world or rather outside of the North to virtual annihilation. Existing in space where you win or you die, living is predicated not on moral virtue, benevolence, or leading an honorable life, but on game-playing and the sort of maneuvering found in the Early Modern European royalist systems, which George R. R. Martin(GRRM), who wrote *A Song of Ice and Fire*, used for inspiration. The Lannisters, for instance, are portrayed as in the ascendency because they mix familial love, incestuous and otherwise, with a single-minded dedication to the preservation of Lannisterness, politicking, and debt paying: the familial motto that "A Lannister Always Pays His (or Her) Debts" is a terrifying threat as much as a promise.

Discussing the role of women within the *Game of Thrones*'s second season, Michelle Fairley (Catelyn Stark) avers: "They're second-class citizens. They're intelligent. What makes them more dangerous than men is that they take a longer time to work their revenge because they have to scheme it. You don't expect it to come from them. You do not expect ruthlessness from

women at all."[178] Women performing the unexpected and attempting to subvert expectations of their capabilities feature heavily in both *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time*. Although Jane Espenson might be the only actual overlap between *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon A Time*, the shows are strikingly similar.[179] *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon A Time* traffick heavily in the worth of people, individuals, and ideas. Women are often devalued commodities within *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon A Time*, particularly the Enchanted Forest. *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time* share a fondness for extracting bloody payback, human trafficking, and arranged marriages that seem more like bartering livestock than achieving lifelong happiness. The exchange, quoted above, between siblings Viserys (Harry Lloyd) and Daenerys (Emilia Clarke), illustrates the economic significance of women within the society. To their (dis)credit, *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time* do not spare men from the same commodification that befalls the women.

Once Upon a Time and *Game of Thrones* forefront family. Both shows interrogate the fraught paths to heroism for women as well as men and the sanguine-drenched costs to the family and personal happiness arising from attempting to be honorable and morally upright in a dystopic universe. Equally, *Once Upon a Time* and *Game of Thrones* view fatherhood and husbandhood as threatenable and potentially (dis)empowering and damaging, to the state and

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[178]Bill Keveney, "In 'Game of Thrones,' Women are Winning." (*USA Today*. (9 Mar. 2012). Web. <http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/life/television/news/story/2012-03-28/game-of-thrones/53836540/1 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[179]Jane Espenson wrote an episode("A Golden Crown") for the first season of *Game of Thrones*, and Espenson is a consulting producer for *Once Upon A Time*. Moreover, she has written 11 episodes (so far) for *Once Upon A Time* throughout all its seasons.

self, as motherhood and wife-hood have traditionally been spoken of in regard to women within normative literatures.

Of course, the problematic role of women is not limited wholly to fantasy telefiction, but sometimes spreads. As can be extrapolated based upon our discussion in chapter one, *Once Upon a Time* and the fairytales upon which it trades are not likely candidates for feminist revolution as depicted within academic criticism. Thankfully, we are not bound by the previous conventions that see value inherent only in that criticism crafted within the ivory's towers hallowed walls. No less an august print-body than *The New York Times* sparked a firestorm with Ginia Bellafante's misguided and insulting *Game of Thrones* review.[180]

In addition to a regrettable lack of actual reviewing (she never even mentioned the characters' names), Bellafante argued that women in their entirety do not like science fiction. Consequently, *Game of Thrones* was inherently something that women by their very nature would not like or understand.[181] Bellafante deeply, deeply needs to be smacked repeatedly in the

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[180]Ginia Bellafante, "A Fantasy World of Strange Feuding Kingdom." (*The New York Times*. 15 Apr. 2011: C4. Print.)

[181]Alan Kistler did a splendidly snarky take down of "boy fiction": "Your experience tells you that no women will demand Tolkien? Okay. Let's talk about my experience. I saw many women in movie audiences thrilled to see Orlando Bloom kick butt as an elf, not just because he has a pretty face but because he was a great character in an epic tale. I saw a lot of women in line to have their photo taken with the *Game of Thrones* display at WonderCon in San Francisco recently. I regularly read online pieces by geek girls such as Amy Ratcliffe, Teresa Jusino, Janna O'Shea and Jill Pantozzi. I listen to the 'Geek Girls Network Podcast' and the women of 'The Escape' on GetThePointRadio.com. I visit GeekGirlCon.com and The League of Extraordinary Ladies. I follow the work of Blair Butler, Amber Benson, Grace Randolph, Jessica Mills and Felicia Day. I read books by Richelle Mead that involve a woman enacting quite a bit of violence on vampires. One of my favorite superhero writers? Gail Simone. An artist I love who is great at depicting action scenes in superhero comics? Amanda Conner. And hey, here's something

head with the collected works of Ursula Le Guin or some other women who write those "boy books." Instead, male and female writers rose up in revolt and took up arms or at least furiously typed away on keyboards. Subsequent seasons of HBO's *Game of Thrones* have provoked outraged articles wondering "Does 'Game Of Thrones' Have A Misogyny Problem?" or "Rape of Thrones: Why are the Game Of Thrones Showrunners Rewriting the Books into Misogyny?," but those writers interrogated the show's utilization of sexual violence as a plot point, rather than insulting women's intelligence.[182] After all, one does not assume that *Sex and the City* should be seen as more valuable in Bellafante's critical calculus because those benighted women love to watch it.

Rather than upholding Bellafante's misguided notions of women and fiction, the male creators of *Once Upon A Time* and *Game of Thrones* belie the hoary and infuriating mistruth that men are incapable of writing complicated,

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shocking. Do you know who recommended the book *Game of Thrones* to me? My girlfriend and four other women. Amazingly, they read it despite the fact that it was in the Boy Fiction section of the bookstore. I don't know how they were even allowed to enter that section and were able to convince the store to let them purchase books from it, but they're quite crafty and skilled so I imagine a pulley system and a sonic screwdriver must have been involved." [Alan Kistler, "OP/ED: Hey NY Times-Geek Girls Really Do Exist!." (*Newsarama.* (15 Apr. 2011). Web. <http://www.newsarama.com/7452-op-ed-hey-ny-times-geek-girls-really-do-exist.html>) 16 Jan. 2015.). For other reactions, see Amy Ratcliffe, "A Response to the *NY Times Game of Thrones* Review." (*Tor.* (15 Apr 2011). Web. < http://www.tor.com/blogs/2011/04/a-response-to-the-ny-times-game-of-thrones-review> 16 Jan. 2015.), Annalee Newitz, "Really, Why Would Men Ever Want to Watch 'Game Of Thrones'?"(*Jezebel.* (15 Apr. 2011). Web. <http://jezebel.com/5792574/really-why-would-men-ever-want-to-watch-game-of-thrones > 16 Jan. 2015.), and Ilana Teitelbaum, "Dear *New York Times*: *A Game of Thrones* is Not Just for Boys." (*The Huffington Post.* (16 Apr. 2011). Web. < http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ilana-teitelbaum/game-of-thrones-hbo_b_850014.html > 16 Jan. 2015.).

[182] Erik Kain, "Does 'Game Of Thrones' Have a Misogyny Problem? (*Forbes.* (21 Apr 2014). Web. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/erikkain/2014/04/21/does-game-of-thrones-have-a-misogyny-problem/> 16 Jan. 2015.); Sonia Saraiya, "Rape of Thrones: Why are the Game Of Thrones Showrunners Rewriting the Books Into Misogyny?" (*TV Club.* (20 Apr. 2014). Web. <http://www.avclub.com/article/rape-thrones-203499> 16 Jan. 2015.). I am sure someone could write a fascinating dissertation chapter on that particular scene and the polarizing response it elicited, including the comments made by the show's director, actors, and creators.

nuanced female characters and are capable of only crafting fetishized, torture porn femme-fantasies. Emily Rome queried Adam Horowitz and Edward Kitsis, creators of ABC's hit series *Once Upon A Time*: "As we've moved beyond Prince Phillip saving Aurora and are now post-Ariel, post-Belle, post-Tiana, with modern fairy tales the damsel in distress-type female characters are a thing of the past. Is that type of character something you're actively trying to avoid and turn on its head?"[183] To which Adam Horowitz replied, "I'd say from the first scenes of the pilot, that's what we were trying to do. Snow White pulls out a sword. We did not want to have the damsel in distress. We did not want to have the princess who needs saving." Edward Kitsis, his co-creator, further asserted:

> The perfect example is how they met. Snow meets Charming because she steals from him and then knocks him out. We weren't interested in writing damsels in distress. We were interested in writing really tough women that were not afraid to use power because we feel like that's what's relevant today and that's what's interesting as writers.

Speaking with Bill Kevenay, D. B. Weiss, one of the co-creators of *Game of Thrones* confessed, "I think there's a mistaken notion (that) fantasy is a boys' club and aimed more at teenage boys. These books are aimed at adults and had, if anything, more strong female characters than male."[184] He continued, "Television is such a great place to fill that gap that seems to have opened up in film, where I don't think you see the strength and depth of female characters. It was something [we] wanted to emphasize in the show in the second season."

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[183]Emily Rome, "'Once Upon A Time' Team: We Show Women Who Aren't Afraid of Power." Hero Complex. (*Los Angeles Times*. (12 Feb. 2012). Web. < http://herocomplex.latimes.com/tv/once-upon-a-time-team-we-show-women-who-arent-afraid-of-power/> 16 Jan.2015.)

[184]Keveney "In 'Game of Thrones,' Women Are Winning"

Both creative partnerships behind their respective shows, thus, make a concerted effort to craft well-rounded female characters. Weiss's contention, moreover, about television's superiority to cinema works wonderfully with this dissertation's claims and aims.

Once Upon a Time and *Game of Thrones* have been wildly embraced by the television viewing publics (American and abroad), popular print culture (i.e., magazines as well as cultural critics), and equally important, online social media (twitter, tumblr, and fansites in general). *Game of Thrones* has surpassed *The Wire* and *The Sopranos* as the most viewed show in HBO history.[185] Swanqueen (Emma/Evil Queen shippers), CharmAttack (fans of Prince Charming, Snow White, and Emma Swan) and other similar pairings have transfigured viewers around the world. *Game of Thrones* has likewise garnered critical acclaim and the honor, dubious perhaps, of being the most pirated television show four years running.[186] Characters of *Game of Thrones* can be so polarizing and well-known that their popularity crosses over into the actor's lives. Kit Harrington, who plays Jon Snow, often unnervingly finds himself

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[185]James Hibbard, "*Game of Thrones* Whacks *The Sopranos* to Become HBO's Most Popular Show Ever." (*EW*. (5 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://insidetv.ew.com/2014/06/05/game-of-thrones-sopranos-ratings/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[186]*Game of Thrones* popularity as illegally consumable commodity has generated a fair amount of press over the years the show has been on air. For example, Erensto, "Game of Thrones Crowned Most Pirated Show of the TV Season." (*TorrentFreak*. (8 Jun. 2012). Web. <https://torrentfreak.com/game-of-thrones-most-pirated-tv-show-of-the-season-120608/ > 16 Jan. 2015.) In 2014 alone, the show had 8.1 million illegal downloads ["'Game of Thrones' is the Most Pirated TV Show of the Year Again." (*Ace Showbiz*. (27 Dec. 2014). Web. <http://www.aceshowbiz.com/news/view/00078483.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)]. The numbers, of course, do not include all the people who illegally use HBO Go to watch the series.

publically hailed "Bastard," wholly due to his character's unfortunate origins.[187] Ginnifer Goodwin and Josh Dallas, Snow White and Prince Charming respectively, met, married, and had finally had a child together (which was written into the storyline) on *Once Upon A Time*, thus making their fictive romance a literal real-life fairytale.[188]

Walking up to Sophie Turner and trashing Sansa Stark offers a darker aspect of fandom and fame. Yet, as we have seen in our "Pilot" and Maureen Ryan's feminist critical responses to Aaron Sorkin and Lena Dunham, even the unfortunate loathing of Sansa Stark, played by Sophie Turner, can still be remade into a spot for feminist action. Explaining her annoyance at what she perceives is the misogynist underpinnings of the fan attacks on Sansa's character, Sophie Turner contends:

> This is what frustrates me. . . .People don't like Sansa because she is feminine. It annoys me that people only like the feminine characters when they act like male characters. And they always go on about feminism. Like, you're rooting for the people who look like boys, who act like boys, who fight like boys. Root for the girls who wear dresses and are intellectually very strong.[189]

Putting aside a certain infelicity of gender theory inherent within her speech (hello, *Buffy*, paging Joss Whedon*)*, Sophie Turner speaks for this dissertation

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[187]Hanh Nguyen, "*Game of Thrones*' Kit Harrington: 'Oh God, I'm a Bastard'."(*TV Guide*. (29 Apr. 2011). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Game-Thrones-Kit-Harington-1032548.aspx> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[188]Nardine Saad, "*Once Upon a Time* Ginnifer Goodwin,Josh Dallas Welcome Baby Boy." (Ministry of Gossip. *Los Angeles Times*. (2 Jun.2014). Web. <http://www.latimes.com/entertainment/gossip/la-et-mg-ginnifer-goodwin-josh-dallas-baby-boy-20140602-story.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[189]Sadie Gennis, "Defending Sansa: Why *Game of Thrones*' Girly Girl is the Hero We Need." (*TV Guide*. (16 May. 2014). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Game-Of-Thrones-Defending-Sansa-1081921.aspx > 16 Jan. 2015.)

or at least espouses a perspective in keeping with its aims. I am as averse to suggest a gender determinist identity as I am to devalue Turner for her terminology choices.[190]

I think the core of her argument that holds girls like Sansa as weak and valueless because they tend to conform to more normative notions of gender is a fascinating one that supports *Kicking Ass Is Comfort Food*'s cultural work. Likewise, Turner's speech upholds the power of an actress to utilize her role as a means of self-fashioning. Rather than a mindless automaton, Sansa Stark and Sophie Turner both represent young women who take cultural scripts and attempt to navigate them and make something of themselves. Even Sansa Stark by the end of season four learns to play the Game of Thrones better than either her brother or her father and survives moving from the Westerosian equivalent of frying pan to fire.[191]

Discussing the double-bind women in Westeros are placed in, Gennis avers:

> That's the double-edged sword for women in *Game of Thrones* (and often in our world, as well). When you follow the path society lays out for you, you're seen as weak and inferior. But when you act like 'one of the boys,' you face punishment for breaking the norm. Few can manage the socially acceptable balance between the two (though Dany continues to impress), yet why should they have to?

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[190]Arya Stark (Masie Williams) and Brienne of Tarth (Gwendoline Christie) more conventionally rebellious heroines who "act like boys" suffer blowback for their inability to conform to gender roles that Sansa Stark receives from external detractors.

[191]Littlefinger, under whose 'care' she now resides basically started the entire war that destroyed Westeros out of creepy, pervy love for Catelyn Stark. His behavior towards Sansa is only a miniscule less creepy and pervy than in the books, since HBO Sansa is at least a teenager and appears to try to wield power in her own right, even if it is through working within Littlefinger's rules. Of course, if it goes all sexual, I will renounce this footnote entirely and return to the oh Lords of Kobol, that's made of wrong.

> Why does it seem so hard to appreciate the strength underneath Sansa's femininity?[192]

Gennis does traffic in a binary that I find problematic as does Turner, but given their status outside of the realm of academia, I can forgive a certain slackness of terms, especially as it reflects the other side of the discourse we talked about in chapter one. Moreover, Gennis's larger defense of Sansa as a heroine certainly works within the heroick tradition and helps to define the ideas that are fundamental to this chapter in particular and the dissertation in general. My main beg to differ point arises from the suggestion that gender breaks down along the lines that the article suggest, since Jon Snow and Robb Stark have their own problems arising from masculinity and aiming to conform to societal standards.

Similarly, both *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time*'s princesses and queens occupy spaces that are often seen as anti-feminist. Cosplaying as a Disney princess, having a princess birthday party, or giving your daughter (or someone else's) a princess doll can be seen within popular cultural as selling out one's feminist ideals. And there is something deeply wrong with that. The diversity of princesses from Emma Swan to Daenerys Stormborn to Cinderella and Snow White herself show that women's power should not be discounted wholly because they wear a tiara to go along with their pretty dress. Moreover, the women who star in our chapter are self-defined Mothers. Maternity is as problematic within the discourse as is femininity, but *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* claims a place for all women in our heroick pantheon. With our

[192]Gennis "Defending Sansa: Why *Game of Thrones*' Girly Girl is the Hero We Need"

examination of Jon Snow and Prince Charming's own fraught paths as well as those of the shows' creators, *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* offers the same opportunity to our heroes as well. Before we delve into our specific heroines, it would be wise to get some grounding in the tangled stories of both *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time*.

A Song of Ice and Fire, to give *Game of Thrones* its actual literary title, conjoins the typical fantasy elements (ice zombies and dragons) with a historically-founded (re)vision of the War of the Roses and Europe in the Middle Ages. "Winter is Coming" serves as both the sigil and the watchword for Starks. Westeros, as the show opens, is coming to the end of the blessed climate known as the long summer. The denizens are unaware of another menace, the return of magic: The emergence of three dragons from their fossilized eggs, belonging to Daenerys Stormborn of the House Targaryen (Emilia Clarke) demonstrates magic's rebirth within Essos, the eastern (and only other) continent within George R. R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* sage. Daenerys plans to use her dragons to retake the Iron Throne (made of swords) and avenge her family's virtual annihilation and exile. Westeros faces an equally portentous magical menace: the return of the whitewalkers, a mythic race like zombies, who are coming from the North. Like another Sunnydale, Westeros and Essos face human and mystical threats to their existence.

While the demons and dragons in *The Game of Thrones* lack the moral component of those within Joss Whedon's world, the unequal distribution of magical ability and the lack of awareness of magic are similar. The Night's

Watch, the guardians of the Ice Wall in the North, soon discover the reappearance of whitewalkers, who were believed to be an ancient myth, and set about trying to defeat them. For those south of the Ice Wall, threats more human, though equally treacherous, abound. The rest of Westeros reels from the death, or rather the murder, of their king Robert Baratheon (Mark Addy), the execution of Ned Stark (Sean Bean), the imprisonment of Stark's daughter Sansa (Sophie Turner) in her betrothal to Joffrey Baratheon, and the rebellions that follow: Baratheon's brothers (Stannis and Renly), Robb Stark, and the Lannisters, who are aiming to secure their stranglehold on the throne and the power that comes with it. The dragons and their 'mother' poised to the East and the massive zombie army from the North seem destined to arrive at ruined, war-torn, depopulated Westeros.

All of these events occupy only the opening season of *Game of Thrones*. As the series progresses, things only become more dire and dystopic. By the current season (four), the war of the five kings appears to be at end. House Lannister might hold the throne, but House Lannister appears to be getting a harsh dose of payback. Joffrey is dead. The family's patriarch was executed, sitting on the privy, by a crossbow shot by his own son. Oh, and he learned the terrible truth about his grandchildren. Cersei's brood are not her husband's, but rather the product of incest with her brother, Jamie.[193] Such news does seem to balance out the fates a bit more equally given the decimation perpetrated against the Starks (the moral centers of the show), but with the war-ravaged

[193]"The Children." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alex Graves. (15 Jun. 2014). Home Box Office Television. 2014. DVD.)

landscape and the kingdom still weltering in blood, the Lannister's downswing does not come off as the rousing victory for truth, justice, and the safety of puppies. Likewise, the Wildings who live beyond the wall and who flee the whitewalkers have been repulsed from their attack upon the Wall, but not without serious casualties among the Night's Watch and the civilian populations in the surrounding areas. The Wilding armies might have been repelled, therefore, but to borrow the Stark's sigil, "Winter is [Still] Coming," and the undead zombie army does not look set to surrender or melt away any time soon.

One would assume that *Once Upon a Time* with its indebtedness to its corporate overlord Disney would be a saccharine take on fairytales—all mass merchandising and sugary moral messages. *Once Upon a Time* may be by no means as grim as *Grimm* (NBC), which translates Grimm's Fairytales into a procedural set in Portland, Oregon, but it reflects the source material in all its own ghastly glory. *Once Upon A Time* employs a fractured-fairytale retelling of princesses and princes from the Disney film oeuvre intermixed with other literatures (e.g., Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein*). The genesis behind *Once Upon a Time* evolves from the Regina or the Evil Queen (Lana Parrilla) cursing all the inhabitants of Fairy Tale Land (also known as the Enchanted Forest), ripping them away from their happy endings, and trapping them in town, wittily called Storybrooke, Maine, crafted out of their despair that is their hell and her heaven.[194] *Once Upon A Time* possesses a surprisingly complicated

[194]As the placard before the "Pilot" declares: "Once Upon A Time

terrain and genealogy that could use a similar title sequence to that of the famed *Game of Thrones*. As the series has progressed, what was once a binary between our world and Fairy Tale Land (i.e., the Enchanted Forest) has expanded to include Wonderland, Neverland, Oz, and *Frozen*'s Arendelle. Similarly, *Once Upon A Time* adapts the usually complicated familial relationships and knits them even closer together. For instance, Regina Mills is Snow White's step-mother, as in the traditional fairytale, and also the adoptive mother of Snow White's grandson (initially unbeknownst to both Snow White and Regina). To make things more complicated, Cora (Barbara Hershey), Regina's mother, is equally the Miller's Daughter from the Rumpelstiltskin's fairytale, the Queen of Hearts (*Alice in Wonderland*), and the Wicked Witch of the West's birth-mother.

Though perhaps not as unceasingly dire as *Game of Thrones*, *Once Upon a Time* refuses to gloss over the many unsavory, often disturbing, aspects inherent in fairytales. Both *The Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time* occupy a space wherein children (either sons & daughters or brothers & sisters) are barterable goods and may be exchanged, like unwanted gifts, for something more desirable, like wealth, prestige, or an army.

Prince Charming exemplifies equally the evils and archetypal virtues of Fairytale land. Prince Charming's life is rendered more complicated by the fact

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There was an enchanted forest filled with all the classic characters we know.
Or think we know.
One day they found themselves trapped in a place where all their happy endings were stolen.
Our World.
This is how it happened. . . ."["Pilot." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Mark Mylod. (23 Oct. 2011). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD)]

that he is no true prince, but rather a shepherd's child whose twin had already been traded to King George (Alan Dale) via Rumpelstiltskin (Robert Carlyle) to free Charming's parents' farm from debt.[195] Once the original twin is slain in battle, the king finds himself in need of a replacement. Charming, to call him by the name given him by Snow White, makes a similar bargain to render services (dragon-slayage and pretend-son-being) for the safety of his mother and their farm. Since Charming is a grown man and not a malleable baby, King George resorts to threats and violence to keep Charming in his clutches. King George requires that he be bartered for gold or rather entered into an arranged marriage with King Midas's daughter.[196] Since Abigail (Anastasia Griffith), King Midas's daughter, already loved someone else (Frederick), Charming, however, rebels and chooses to marry Snow White, but not before rescuing Abigail's lost love.[197] Abigail, more importantly, had already been helping Charming in his evasion of King George.

To make matters more intriguing, Regina chooses to debut her curse at that most beloved of fairytale venues—no, not the christening, the wedding.[198]

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[195]"The Shepherd." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss and Ian Goldberg. Dir. Victor Nelli. (4 Dec. 2011). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)

[196]"The Shepherd." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss and Ian Goldberg. Dir. Victor Nelli. (4 Dec. 2011). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)

[197]In return, Charming reunites her with her true love Frederick through heroic deeds in "What Happened to Frederick?" [Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. David H. Goodman. Dir. Dean White. (19 Feb. 2012). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)].

[198]**Evil Queen [Regina]:** [crashes Snow White and Prince Charming's wedding] Sorry I'm late.[She advances towards the altar. The guards try to stop her, but she magically pushes them away.]
Doc: [to Snow White and Prince Charming] It's the Queen! Run!
Snow White: [grabs Prince Charming's sword and aims it at the Queen] She's not a queen anymore! She's nothing more than an evil witch!

While Snow White and Prince Charming's wedding ends better than those within *Game of Thrones* (much less gory death), it is striking that both shows subvert the ideal of happily ever after. Though *Once Upon A Time* does not slaughter Snow White and Prince Charming, it does interrogate the psychological cost of what the Evil Queen did to them and their countrymen and women when she stripped them of their identities and forcibly relocated them to our world.

For our purposes, *Game of Thrones*'s so called "Red Wedding" stands as the most compelling comparison to *Once Upon a Time* because Robb Stark (Richard Madden) comes closest to epitomizing the traditional fairy tale Prince Charming, and not because Richard Madden plays a Disney prince in Sir Kenneth Branagh's *Cinderella* (2015). No, Robb Stark, like his father, believes strongly in family, duty, and honour and upholding the moral values that traditionally represent heroic masculinity.

Robb Stark's chooses to wed Talisa (Oona Chaplin), the woman whom he loves and with whom he has sex, rather than the daughter of Lord Walder Frey (David Bradley), Lord of the Twins, a castle that straddles the Trident River and

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Prince Charming: No, no, no. Don't stoop to her level. There's no need. [takes his sword back and addresses the Queen] You're wasting your time; you've already lost. And I will not let you ruin this wedding.
Evil Queen [Regina]: Oh, I haven't come here to ruin anything. On the contrary, dear. I've come here to give you a gift.
Snow White: We want NOTHING from you!
Evil Queen [Regina]: But you shall have it! My gift to you is this happy, happy day, but tomorrow my real work begins. You've made your vows, now I make mine: soon everything you love, everything all of you love, will be taken from you forever. Out of your suffering will rise my victory. I shall destroy your happiness if it is the last thing I do. ["Pilot." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Mark Mylod. (23 Oct. 2011) ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)]

the Crossing.[199] Making a politically motivated, rather than a maternal choice, Lady Catelyn Stark, his mother, previously promised his hand in marriage to Lord Frey's daughter in order to gain critical access to a bridge that Robb needed to cross to combat the Lannister armies, who were responsible for the murder and beheading of his father, Lord Eddard Stark (Sean Bean), and the ravaging of his mother's native lands.[200] Robb Stark's romantic choice leads to horrendous consequences: the brutal murder of himself, his wife and his mother (i.e., *The Red Wedding*) and the seeming destruction of the hopes of House Stark, Guardians of the North and Lords of Winterfell, to avenge their honour and their father's murder.[201] That Catelyn Stark knew it was coming, in every single aspect of that word, makes it no less blood-curdling.[202]

Even more disconcerting, Talisa and Robb Stark are the closest that *Game of Thrones* comes to the traditional "fairytale" romance. Robb's decision to act honorably by marrying the woman with whom he has had a sexual relationship and whom he loves passionately gets twisted into the worst possible decision. He aims to mend his misdeeds by allowing his uncle to be bartered in his place.

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[199]"Valar Morghulis." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (3 Jun. 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2012. DVD.)

[200]"Baelor." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff & D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (12 Jun. 2012). Home Box Office, Television, 2011. DVD.)

[201]"The Rains of Castamere." Game of Thrones *Season Three* (Wri. David Benioff & D. B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (2 Jun. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

[202]Catelyn Stark demonstrated immense political acumen in foreseeing the evils that would befall the family after Robb breaks his oath. Although a moral woman, she counseled against Robb's marriage to Talisa and urged him to apologize to Walder Frey. In the books (as opposed to the television series), she becomes Lady Stoneheart, and she exerts a sanguine-soaked vengeance on the Freys and their allies who murdered her family. Likewise, Talisa, or rather Jeyne Westerling (the character's name in the books] survives the slaughter within George Martin's novels.

It is at this replacement marriage, known to fandom as the "Red Wedding," where the massacre of Robb, his pregnant wife, his mother, and his banner-men occurs. Robb Stark, along with his father, is one of the lone men to uphold what is conventionally defined as noble and honorable masculinity and such actions result in wholesale slaughter. Although Snow White and Prince Charming and their wedding guests are not all put to the sword by the Evil Queen, she does inflict her own brand of bloody payback.

Although Emma Swan exhibits noticeable differences from Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Emma Swan and Buffy Summers share something more than their blond hair color, mythic bloodlines, and chosen-one status. Each woman struggles to combine her understanding of the world around her within her previous sense of self. As can be seen from the Swan/Slayer connections, the bifurcated terrain (our world is their hell) of Storybrooke lies closer to other televised lands, especially *Game of Thrones*'s Westeros and Joss Whedon's *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, than would be apparent from their placement on a map. Indeed, glancing across the channel at *Game of Thrones*'s dystopic landscape, with a nod at Sunnydale, provides an useful comparison and contrast with *Once Upon a Time*'s own magical landscapes and allows for an appreciation of the dystopia upon which Storybrooke sits. For as we discover in episode "That Still Small Voice," the Evil Queen's ideal city is situated not on a hill, but on what seems to be the ruins of Fairy Tale Land itself.[203] The architecture creates an intriguing, if unintentional, reversal of Whedon's conceptualization of the

[203]"That Still Small Voice." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul Edwards. (27 Nov. 2011). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)

Hellmouth and Sunnydale with Evil Queen as anti-Buffy trying to keep her citizens from escaping their prison and finding some path or portal back to their version of a promised land. Even once Regina has turned into a Good Witch, Storybrooke is still as cursed as Sunnydale.

The Evil Queen, or to call her by her Storybrooke name Regina, compounded her curse by trapping the residents in a sort of stasis where time stands still. Like a sort of evil witness protection meets purgatory, the ex-denizens of Fairy Tale land have had their identities stripped, reformatted, and translated into alternate selves. For instance, the Evil Queen, who retains all the knowledge, though none of the magical powers, of her Fairytale-self assumes the role of Regina Mills, mayor of Storybrooke; Snow White becomes Mary Margaret Blanchard, an elementary school teacher; Prince Charming is coma-patient (David Nolan), who in this alternate universe is married to Midas's daughter, and Jiminy Cricket becomes Archie Hopper (Raphael Sbarge), the town's psychotherapist.

At the start of the series, the only person who suspects the truth is Henry Mills (Jared S. Gilmore), Regina's adopted son and Prince Charming and Snow White's grandson, but as we learn, Mr. Gold, Rumpelstiltskin/The Dark One in Fairy Tale Land, shares both Regina's knowledge and power over the town's inhabitants. The fact that Henry alone aged, all the clocks were stopped, and it was impossible for anyone other than Henry to successfully cross the town's boundaries should have alerted someone to the rottenness in Maine; but Regina's curse was so powerful that people believed that they experienced time

in a normal manner. Thing only changed when Henry tracks down his bail-bondswoman mother Emma Swan (Jennifer Morrison) on his tenth, and her twenty-eighth birthday, and convinces her to return with him to Storybrooke.

By the end of season one, Emma Swan has succeeded in her role as savior and ensured that the citizens of Storybrooke regain their Fairytale Land identities.[204] Television series, like fairy tales, cannot exist without conflict and their world would end if the ending remained happy. Consequently, new evils arose to beset the sleepy hamlet, even as the Evil Queen aimed to refashion herself into someone different.

After the end of season one, Regina transforms from Evil Queen to savior and conflicted force for virtue. For instance, Regina makes her own heroick self-sacrifice to defeat a curse cast by Peter Pan, which would replicate Regina's initial curse and transform Storybrooke into the new Neverland. Regina, instead, undoes the initial curse that opened the series and replaces everything back where it belongs.[205] In order to do so, she exiles herself from her beloved son, Henry, and sends him along with Emma Swan, his birth mother, to live a happy life, even if it means Emma and Henry forget everything and everyone they knew in Storybrooke. Similarly, Regina wields light magic to defeat her evil half-sister, The Wicked Witch of the West (Rebecca Maeder) at the end of season

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[204]"A Land Without Magic." Once Upon A Time *Season One*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Dean White. (13 May. 2012). ABC Studio, 2012. DVD.)

[205]"Going Home." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis & Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker (15 Dec. 2013). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)

three.[206] Consequently, for all its darkness, gloom, and despair, especially within Fairy Tale Land, *Once Upon a Time* is chartered on the premise that good can triumph over evil, and virtue endures and preservers over vice.

At the same time, Regina's transformation demonstrates the show's devotion to "Hope" and the belief that sometimes the good that overcomes evil arises from the person's self-transformation and reclamation of their own soul from darkness. Lana Parrilla illuminates: "She's come full circle. She's had a beautiful arc from where she used to be as this Evil Queen and going through that second year of redemption to this third year of becoming this hero. She's really come out on top. She's become this really full, well-rounded human being."[207] Therefore, while Regina has not been absolved of all the blood she has spilled and the lives she has destroyed, her commitment to virtue in general and to her adopted son in particularly complicate the moral structure of *Once Upon a Time*'s universe. Conversely, *Game of Thrones* seems to simultaneously see virtue as praiseworthy but doomed to raining down fire and blood on any of its practitioners, particularly the Starks.

Both *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon a Time* possess fascinatingly complex villains, but our chapter will concentrate on Daenerys Stormborn and Jon Snow, the two presumptive heirs to rule what's left of Westeros—the saga is after all called *A Song of Ice and Fire* (Daenerys's dragons representing fire, of

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[206]"Kansas." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss and Kalinda Vazquez. Dir. Gwyneth Horder-Payton. (4 May. 2014). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)

[207]Natalie Abrams, "*Once Upon a Time*: Will Regina Find Love with Robin Hood?" (*TV Guide*. (28 Mar. 2014). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Once-Upon-Time-Regina-Robin-Hood-Parrilla-1079788.aspx> 16 Jan. 2015.)

course, and Jon Snow's position on the Wall representing Ice.)—and Emma Swan and her parents, Snow White and Prince Charming. Daenerys Stormborn Targaryen and Emma Swan overcome their tragic upbringings to search for justice and strive to be good mothers to their disparate children. Like her daughter, Snow White demonstrates that saving the world is not undermined by maternity and by the struggle to become a good mother.

Although neither Jon Snow's nor Prince Charming's roles are typically viewed as feminist within the popular-cultural-critical setting, both men aim to overcome social stigma and lead meaningful lives. Jon Snow's desire to be his father's son, even as he can lay no claim to being his mother's, embodies the perils of illegitimate birth in his world. Charming might be his parents' acknowledged son and heir (even it is only his tiny farm), but his identity is as questionable and vexed as Jon Snow's. Charming's devotion to his family helps define him as much as his wife and daughter's attempts to be good parents and make the world a safe, better place. In addition to an interrogation of the fraught roles family plays in our heroes and heroines lives, our chapter follows the exemplar set by our shows and examines what precisely makes an ending happy and who is worthy of the much sought prize? What does it mean in the fantasy setting both series occupy when virtue is often punished, rather than rewarded? What after all makes an ending happy?

Act I: I Will Do What Queens Do. I Will Rule[208]

In his analysis of *Game of Throne*'s fourth season entitled "Valar Morghulis: Game of Thrones' Women Are Going to Rule the World," Scott Bixby avers, "in short, television's bloodiest show had its bloodiest season yet—and for the few surviving male characters, winter is definitely coming. But if you're a woman of Westeros, the fifth season of HBO's most-watched show in history is shaping up to be a glorious summer."[209] Speaking of Daenerys Stormborn, he contends:

> At face value, Daenerys's journey from girl to queen has been archetypally feminist—there aren't character arcs more packed with girl power than those that begin with nude bathing scenes with incestuous overtones and end with the liberation of multiple slave armies with dragons and castrated automatons. Despite the deaths of her husband, her brother, and her unborn child, Daenerys' faith in herself and in the power of her bloodline have conquered many figurative—and literal—trials by fire. Once sold as chattel herself, Daenerys uses her WMD-grade dragons to free hundreds of thousands of slaves, becoming their 'Mhysa,' or 'Mother.'[210]

However, his praise for Daenerys's accomplishments is not untroubled. Bixby argues that "there are anti-feminist aspects of Daenerys's story."

Counterpointing his previous claims, Bixby contends:

> Many of her successes, at least initially, are due to the actions of the men who support her—whether it's her husband, Dothraki man-slab Khal Drogo, trusted adviser Jorah Mormont, or her thousands of Unsullied warriors. She first gains the respect of Khal Drogo by pleasing him sexually. The idea that a mother's greatest

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[208]"First of His Name."Game of Thrones *Season Four* (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (4 May. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[209]Scott Bixby, "Valar Morghulis: Game of Thrones' Women are Going to Rule the World."(*The Daily Beast*. (17 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2014/06/17/valar-morghulis-game-of-thrones-women-are-going-to-rule-the-world.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[210]Bixby "Valar Morghulis: Game Of Thrones's Women are Going to Rule the World"

> accomplishment is her children isn't exactly ripped from the pages of *The Second Sex*, either—even if those children happen to be fire-breathing dragons.[211]

Bixby's claims about Daenerys's feminist potential are by no means rare. While Bixby sees Daenerys's femininity as a downside, Jessica Bene resists such a toxic suggestion.[212]

Bene, instead, maintains that "Daenerys Targaryen is the best of both worlds-she is traditionally beautiful, but strong-willed, independent, and powerful. Her femininity does not get in the way of her desires and goals. She has moved from being treated as property to ruling cities that she conquered and freed slaves in, with an army that she acquired."[213] Moreover, Bene maintains, "While she has male advisors, she makes it clear that she runs the show. Daenerys accepts their advice, but is sharp and demanding of them. When any of her advisors doubt her, she puts a quick stop and usually proves them wrong." For our chapter, we will concentrate on Daenerys's vexed embodiment of motherhood, whether it be her dragons or the people she means to save.

Before Daenerys's embarks on an abolitionist campaign that would make William Lloyd Garrison look like a pacifist, she must first gain supplies and regain her captured dragons. Jorah Mormont (Iain Glen) has devoted himself to

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[211]Bixby "Valar Morghulis: Game Of Thrones's Women are Going to Rule the World"

[212]Jessica Bene, "Game of Thrones: War, Dragons, Sex, and Feminism? (*GeekInsider*. (10 Jul. 2014). Web. < http://www.geekinsider.com/game-thrones-war-dragons-sex-feminism/#o0EHZoSxQFiDKS7e.99 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[213]Bene "Game of Thrones: War, Dragons, Sex, and Feminism?

Daenerys since he first saw her. He first attempted to help her successfully navigate the Dorthraki lifestyle. After the loss of her husband and baby, Mormont is one of few to stand by Daenerys. Before she can reclaim her birthright, she needs wacky things like water, food and fighters. Once her dragons-babies are dragonnapped, Mormont attempts to dissuade her from tracking them down. Instead, he informs her that he has procured a ship. In one of the more intriguing constructions of maternity, she refuses to go, "They have my dragons. A mother does not flee without her children." [214]

Mormont and Daenerys conduct their dragon-retrieval-conversation employing radically different definitions of motherhood to construct their arguments:

> **Jorah Mormont:** They're not your children. I know they call you the Mother of Dragons and I know you love them, but you didn't grow them in your womb, they didn't suckle at your breasts. They are dragons, Khaleesi, and if we stay in Qarth we'll die.
> **Daenerys Targaryen:** You should sail to Astapor, I'm sure you'll be safe there.
> **Jorah Mormont:** . . . You know I would die for you. I will never abandon you. I'm sworn to protect you, to serve.
> **Daenerys Targaryen:** Then serve me! If my dragons are in the House of the Undying, then take me there.
> **Jorah Mormont:** That's what the warlock wants, he told you so himself. If you enter that place, you will never leave again. His magic is strong.
> **Daenerys Targaryen:** And what of my magic? You saw me step into the fire, you watched the witch burn. What did the flames do to me, do you remember?
> **Jorah Mormont:** . . .Until my last breath, I will remember. After I have forgotten my mother's face . . .

[214]"The Prince of Winterfell." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (20 May 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2012. DVD.)

> **Daenerys Targaryen:** . . . They are my children. And they are the only children I will ever have . . . Take me to them.[215]

Mormont takes the understandably biologically determinist approach to Daenerys's motherhood of dragons. His evocation of his mother's face equally demonstrates his sentimental affection for Daenerys and contrast actual motherhood with metaphoric. Similarly, Daenerys's employment of her childless status to defend why she must protect her fictive children is powerfully effective and affective.

Although her dragons do answer her and defeat the trap, her ability to command her fiery, scaly faux-children becomes increasingly different as the series progresses and as the dragons age. If you think parenting toddlers is hard work, mommying growing dragons is certainly a struggle. While Daenerys might see her dragons as both her children and her tactical advantage, her dragons are still wild creatures, even if they do love their "mother." Once she determines to stay in Meereen to "do what queens do" and "rule," her dragons end up understandably becoming problematic.[216]

At first, her dragons only steal the odd sheep here and there. Daenerys, as a good queen, makes sure her subjects are compensated adequately. Yet, in the fittingly titled season four finale "The Children," Daenerys comes face to face with a debt that money cannot repay: a smoldering body of a child. While the specific dragon who perpetrated the crime is still on the lam, so to speak,

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[215]"The Prince of Winterfell." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (20 May 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2012. DVD.)

[216]"First of His Name." Game of Thrones *Season Four* (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (4 May. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014 . DVD.)

Daenerys tricks the remaining two dragons into a prison where she chains them up and leaves them behind as they plaintively squeal behind her.[217] Emilia Clarke's acting against CGI as well as her character's decisions frequently gained praise in reviews of the show's season finale.

As one writer avers,

> She must make compromises that wind up making her look like a leader in the old world, but the scenes in Meereen tonight show just how far the character has come and how she's grown into her responsibilities and duties. The Dany of seasons two or three would not be so flexible, would be too blinded by her vision and her desires to even consider putting the dragons in chains. There's an acceptance there—and a strength, mirrored by the way Brienne beats the snot out of The Hound—lacking in other pretenders to the Iron Throne. (The difficulty of the situation is written all over Emilia Clarke's face, an impressive emotional display toward creatures that are just 1s and 0s in some faraway computer.)[218]

Consequently, Dany's abandonment of her "children" demonstrates both her personal and professional growth. It can be argued that she reconfigures her maternal obligations from her dragons to the populace she has liberated and now rules.

Yet, it is equally true that her dragons are what empowered her to free slaves and wreak retributive wrath. Though she now wields an extraordinary army, it was her ability to use her dragons' rather impressive firepower to compel recalcitrant slave owners to surrender that helped liberate enslaved peoples. Season three sees Daenerys Stormborn raining down fire and blood (to

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[217]"The Children." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alex Graves. (15 Jun. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[218]Erik Adams, "*Game Of Thrones* (newbies): 'The Children'." (*AV Club*. (16 Jun. 2014). Web. <http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/game-thrones-newbies-children-205834 >16 Jan. 2015.)

borrow house Targaryen's sigil) on anyone who dares to enslave another. She had already freed the slaves under her control. What at first started as quest to procure what she needs to conquer Westeros becomes something much more personal. Despite her dragons' potency, her own intellect and her ability to utilize other's misogyny against them should not be undermined. Daenerys Stormborn flaunts her ability to play gender in a manner that would impress our other blonde savior, Buffy.

Like Buffy, Daenerys recognizes that violence, or at least the threat of it, is often the only option when dealing with Evil. Once she has purchased her army of Unsullied, she uses them to slay their masters whilst still safeguarding the innocent: "Unsullied! Slay the masters, slay the soldiers, slay every man who holds a whip, but harm no child. Strike the chains off every slave you see!"[219] The masters misread her. Her opponents only saw her as a stupid little girl. She was not only fluent in their (and her) mother-tongue Valyrian, but she also had no plans to play by their rules.

Even before they were slain upon her command by their former slaves, the masters already had the shock of their lives once they knew that she was cognizant of the insulting comments they were making about her gender and her mind.[220] Walking off with Missandrei (Nathalie Emmanuel), the equally wise (and newly freed) translator, Daenerys turns one of the most famous sayings on

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[219]"And Now His Watch Is Ended." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alex Graves. (21. Apr. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

[220]"Walk of Punishment." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Benioff. (14 Apr. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

its head (Valar Morghulis means all men must die): "Yes. All men must die, but we are not men."[221] Indeed, Daenerys and Missandrei are not all men. They are both women who survived in horrifying conditions, and though she was handed to Daenerys Stormborn like a gift with purchase, Missandre's linguistic accomplishments allow her to help Daenerys lead.

Yunkai, the next city that Daenerys liberates does not fall as easily as Astapor. Razdal mo Eraz (George Georgiou) does not heed her warning, but the following exchange exemplifies Dany's capabilities as a leader:

> **Daenerys Targaryen:** [briefly contemplates the slaves]I have a gift for you as well. Your life.
> **Razdal mo Eraz:** My life?
> **Daenerys Targaryen:** And the lives of your wise Masters, but I also want something in return. You will release every slave in Yunkai. Every man, woman, and child shall be given as much food, clothing, and property as they can carry as payment for their years of servitude. Reject this gift, and I shall show you no mercy.
> **Razdal mo Eraz:** You are mad. We are not Astapor or Qarth. We are Yunkai, and we have powerful friends; friends who would take great pleasure in destroying you. Those who survive, we shall enslave once more. Perhaps we'll make a slave of you as well! [Razdal stands. One of the dragons menaces him] You swore me safe conduct.
> **Daenerys Targaryen:** I did, but my dragons made no promises. *And you threatened their mother.* [italics mine].
> **Razdal mo Eraz:** Take the gold.
> [the slaves move to obey, but the dragons frighten them off]
> **Daenerys Targaryen:** My gold. You gave it to me, remember? And I shall put it to good use. You'd be wise to do the same with my gift to you. Now get out.[222]

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[221]"Walk of Punishment." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Benioff. (14 Apr. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

[222]"The Bear and the Maiden Fair." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. (Wri. George R.R. Martin. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (12 May. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

When Yunkai and its slave owners make war upon her, she destroys them not with dragons, but through her ability to think like a good general and commander of men (and women).

The exchange, equally, demonstrates the continued entwinement of maternity with Daenerys's identity ("you threatened their mother"). Dany's motherhood extends from her dragons to her people. Of course, rulers throughout history frequently refer to their subjects as children, but *Game of Thrones* through its use of the potent gender trope of motherhood continues to provide Daenerys Stormborn with intriguing dimensions. The conflation becomes all the more emotionally and narratively compelling in the show's moving season three finale, entitled "Mhysa" (Ghiscari for Mother).[223]

While she wants to be treated as close to an equal as a girl with dragons and an army can be, she is still seen as their savior, which makes her somewhat abashed as she does not want to assume ownership of them. Attempting to empower her subjects to season three, Daenerys informs the newly-freed people of Yunkai that she is not their savior and that they must take their own freedom.[224] She will willingly accept them into her army, but they must make the choice. The final shot features a soaring soundtrack and Daenerys encircled

[223]"Mhysa." Game of Thrones *Season Three.* (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (9 Jun. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

[224]"Mhysa." Game of Thrones *Season Three.* (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (9 Jun. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

by her new "children" (the newly liberated slaves) calling her mother or "Mhysa" and lifting her aloft while her other "children," her dragons flying overhead.[225]

However, as anyone who has recently looked at a newspaper or has the slightest knowledge of history understands, freeing people does not make them free. After all, it is not like our heroine is leaving garrisons of troops behind to safeguard the new republics she has created. Moreover, she finds the truth she stated in "Mhysa" to be widespread: "People learn to love their chains." Likewise, her total warfare approach begins to have some problems. It is entirely possible that like the American South, not all of the masters whom she slaughtered were sadists who liked to mix baby killing with their afternoon cup of tea. Her conquest of Meereen brings her strategies' strengths and weaknesses into sharp focus.

After the Meereenese slave holders determine to mark her way to their city with crucified children as signposts, she retaliates with some shock and awe of her own.[226] Once she has won the city by both potent political displays (she hurls the chains of her freed slaves at the slave owners) and stealth (she sends a detachment of her troops to infiltrate the city and arm the slaves), she starts dealing out the vengeance.[227] She immediately decrees that a master be

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[225]"Mhysa." Game of Thrones *Season Three.* (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (9 Jun. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

[226]"Two Swords." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. D.B. Weiss. (6 Apr. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[227]"Breaker of Chains." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alex Graves. (20 Apr. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

crucified for every slave child.[228] Her death for death approach shows her as a leader who will not flinch from the sight of blood.

Conversely, one of her advisors Ser Barristan Selmy (Ian McElhinney), late of King's Landing and House Targaryen loyalist, chides her, "The city is yours. All these people are your subjects, now. Sometimes it is best to answer injustice with mercy."[229] She refrains from issuing a pardon and continues with wreaking the retributive wrath that she believes to be just. She informs Ser Barristan: "I will answer injustice with justice."[230] The tension between what is and what is not justice resonates throughout Dany's rule in Meereen and *Game of Thrones* as a whole.

Her bloody-mindedness in battle contrasts with her mercy in rule. After she learns that her military success did not result in a wonderful utopia, she utters the words, "I will do what Queens do. I will rule." [231] Her defense for laying aside her long-cherished desire to return to Westeros at the head of her armies shows her to be someone who starts to take the actual business of heading up a state or nation more seriously. She tells Jorah, "How can I rule seven kingdoms if I can't control Slaver's Bay? I will not let those I have freed

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[228]"Oathkeeper." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. Bryan Cogman. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (27 Apr. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[229]"Oathkeeper." Game of Thrones *Season Four* (Wri. Bryan Cogman. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (27 Apr. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[230]"Oathkeeper." Game of Thrones *Season Four* (Wri. Bryan Cogman. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (27 Apr. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[231]"First of His Name." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (4 May. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

slide back into chains."[232] Daenerys, of course, makes an excellent point. She cannot hope to effectively rule Westeros if she cannot retain what she has accomplished in liberating the slaves. From what we have already seen on screen throughout season four, Daenerys will find ruling people as rewarding and problematic as mothering dragons.

Act II: Because You Deserve a Happy Ending, Emma. And Happy Endings Always Start with Hope[233]

From powerful blond saviors who wield dragons to those who kill them, Emma Swan shares more than a little in common with Daenerys Stormborn than their hair-color and penchant for world-saving. Emma Swan, like Daenerys Stormborn is the orphaned daughter of royalty who endured a bad childhood. Though Daenerys's treatment under Viserys was, of course, more disturbing, Emma Swan's foster care upbringing was traumatic. Sent to the "real world" by her parents via a magic wardrobe, Emma's parents were trying to save her from the Evil Queen's curse. For Emma Swan, all she knew until her 28th birthday was that she was found as a baby by the side of the road.

After her discovery along the side of a road, Emma grew up in the foster care system. Her childhood seemed to be the stuff of Dickens. She fell pregnant with Henry at 18 and gave birth to him in prison. Even with her own unhappy experiences, she put her baby up for adoption, since she did not think she

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[232]"First of His Name." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (4 May. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[233]"Ariel." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ciaran Donnelly. (3 Nov. 2013). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)

would be a fit mother. After her traumatic decision to surrender her parental rights, Emma Swan manages to turn her life around and works as a bail-bondswoman. Indeed, it is Emma Swan's quotidian struggles that render her so relatable.

Reviewing the show in *Bitch Magazine*, Avital Normal Nathman notes, "*Once Upon A Time* also takes on a series of other issues that only occasionally make their way into other TV shows. Young pregnancy, adoption, and what 'makes' [*ed.* Nathman's quotation marks] a mother is looked at when Henry's biological mother, Emma Swan, enters the picture."[234] She continues, "In fact, with Emma's introduction comes a slight feminist twist to the story." Nathman explicates her reasoning, "Emma isn't waiting for her own Prince Charming to save the day, or even help her save the day. She's not pining over a guy, cleaning up after seven dwarfs, or fretting over what to wear." Rather, "Emma trusts her instincts, ability to read people as she attempts to figure out the truth about Storybrooke."[235] Emma Swan's self-saving thus proves that she is her mother's daughter. Seeing Emma Swan as a feminist role-model is a common feature within reviews of *Once Upon a Time*.

In her review for *Ms.* Magazine, Natalie Wilson claims:

> The most exciting piece of the show is Emma Swan as feminist heroine. Her pursuit of a 'happy ending' is not about finding a man or going to a ball all gussied up, but about detective work, about building a relationship with her son Henry, and about seeking the

[234]Avital Norman Nathman, "Mom and Pop Culture:Once Upon a Remake." (*Bitch Magazine*. (17 Nov. 2012). Web. < http://bitchmagazine.org/post/mom-pop-culture-once-upon-a-remake > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[235]Nathman "Mom and Pop Culture:Once Upon a Remake"

> 'truth' as to why time stands still in the corrupt Storybrooke world. Emma doesn't believe she can save the day, but, as Henry points out, 'The hero never believes at first, if they did, it wouldn't be a very good story.' For once a female is poised to be the hero–and with no Prince Charming by her side. Woot![236]

Once Upon a Time makes the intriguing choice to entwine Emma Swan's role as savior with her maternity. Emma Swan is understandably ambivalent about both. She only knows the stories as fairy tales, and she has no reason to believe otherwise.

The tension for the first season derives from the Henry's attempts to convince his mother that his adopted mother was the evil queen and all the inhabitants of the town were actual fairytale characters. Henry, moreover, endeavored to convert Emma into the belief that she was the town's savior, destined to break the curse on the occasion of her twenty-eighth birthday. When Henry shows up on Boston with his tall-to-her-tales, she takes him back home at once. Indeed, had Regina not acted so threateningly towards Emma, it is more than likely that Emma Swan would have returned home to Boston. Yet, Emma responds to Regina's provocations by getting a room in Storybrooke. Her decision proves monumental as it causes time to literally start.

We learn about the procurement of Henry by Mr. Gold, but little to nothing about why Regina so desires a child. Henry's adoption, though, does continue the theme of baby trade and provides an intriguing callback to Charming's as well as Emma's origins. When Regina uses her power and

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[236]Natalie Wilson, "What a Difference a Strong Snow White Makes." (*Ms. Magazine Blog*. (13 Nov. 2011). Web. < http://msmagazine.com/blog/2011/11/13/what-a-difference-a-strong-snow-white-makes/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

influence to harass Emma, Emma moves in with Mary Margaret and then becomes the deputy, later Sheriff of Storybrooke. In addition to continuing her parent's tradition of world saving, it enables her to combat Regina. Henry is more often than not the battleground. Emma Swan doubts Henry's sanity, but she tries to respect his beliefs. Regina plays upon Emma Swan's uncertainties and attempts to use them as a wedge to pry Emma and Henry apart.

Regina insists that Emma has no legal right to Henry. She ensures Emma's wayward youth is splashed across the pages of the *Daily Mirror*, the local newspaper, where Henry can read all about it. Regina seems unconcerned how her treatment of Emma further alienates her son. Regina seems to love Henry deeply, but she was never shown or taught how to be a decent mother. According to Lana Parrilla, her portrayer, Regina's own horrible relationship with her mother informs her own parenting style. Parrilla explains, "Cora loves her daughter, but she wants the best for her and she controls and manipulates the situation in the same ways that Regina does with Henry."[237] Emma Swan struggles throughout the first season to navigate her newfound responsibilities. She has missteps and miscalculations. The show eschews motherhood as an automatic connection, but instead focuses on how motherhood, and fatherhood, are learned behaviors. Lacking a mother figure, Emma Swan shares a surprisingly similar need to learn to be a good mother as does Regina.

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[237] Natalie Abrams, "*Once Upon a Time*'s Mama Drama: Will Emma Finally Learn the Truth?" (*TV Guide*. (9 Mar. 2012). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Once-Upon-Time-1044657.aspx?rss=keywords&partnerid=imdb&profileid=01> 16 Jan. 2015.)

In a strange, serendipitous twist, Emma Swan's maternal role has been fulfilled by Emma's own biological mother, Snow White/Mary Margaret. It is Mary Margaret who aims to help Henry by giving him the book that starts him on the quest to find his mother and that results in Emma Swan breaking the curse.[238] Of course, season one Emma Swan is skeptical, inquiring, "How's a book supposed to help?" Mary Margaret Blanchard replies, "What do you think stories are for? These stories, the classics . . . there's a reason we all know them. They're a way for us to deal with our world—a world that doesn't always make sense."[239] Putting aside the irony of Snow White handing the story of her life to her grandson and in essence saving herself, the elucidation of what makes a book important is particularly important in a show such as *Once Upon a Time*.

If both Emma Swan and Daenerys Stormborn desire to learn to be good mothers to their disparate children, they are equally linked by a search to enact justice and find self-meaning. We will see in another section how Snow White's heroick journey proves similar to her daughter's, but Emma Swan and Daenerys Stormborn both want to get back a birthright. Even though Emma Swan exhibits no true desire to go home to her parents' dominion in Fairytale Land and reign as Queen someday, she does miss the stories she read about as a child. Growing up, Emma was sold the Disney story; for Emma to find out that

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[238]"Pilot." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Mark Mylod. (23 Oct. 2011) ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)

[239]"Pilot." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Mark Mylod. (23 Oct. 2011). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.)

Disney's fairytale-"fictions" are facts is as disconcerting for her as it is for Daenerys to know that her blood makes the rightful ruler of Westeros.

Although it is not freeing slaves, Emma Swan's first step to embracing her heritage comes from her choice to run for town sheriff. Before she knew her as mom, Emma Swan looked at Snow White/Mary Margaret as a best friend. Rather than seeing justice for its own sake, Emma wants to run for the Sheriff's office for her son: "That is why. I want to show him that a hero can win. And if I'm not . . . if I'm not a hero and I'm not the savior, then what part do I have in his life?"[240] Emma Swan's identity crisis entwines with what she was destined to be, what her son thinks she is, and her attempts to reconnect with her now-teenage son.

At the same time, her troubled childhood and the uncertainty that she is capable of actual day-saving make her more complicated and ground her as a realistic, relatable woman in a mythic universe. Learning your parents sent you through a magic wardrobe so you could save the world in twenty-eight years is hard for anyone. After season one ends and Emma Swan has fulfilled her "purpose," her life is not automatically sunshine and unicorns. Even though she finds her parents, her life is not magically better. The pain and trauma of losing her parents is not erased. In a conversation with her daughter, Snow White seems uneasy that Emma Swan is not magically cured of her almost three decades of loss: "We're together, finally. And I can't help but think you're not

[240]"Desperate Souls." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Michael Waxman. (8 Jan. 2012). ABC Studios, 2013. DVD.)

happy about it."[241] Emma tells her mom: "Oh, I am, but . . . see . . . [sighs]. Here's the thing. No matter what the circumstances, for 28 years, I only knew one thing—that my parents sent me away." Her mother replies, "We did that... to give you your best chance." Emma rejoins, "You did it for everyone, because that's who you are-leaders, heroes, princes and princesses, and that's great and … and amazing and . . . wonderful, but . . . it doesn't change the fact that for **my** entire life . . . I've been alone." Her mom tries to explain that "if we hadn't sent you away, you would've been cursed, too." But Emma sees it differently, "But we would've been together. Which curse is worse?"[242] If you ignore the part about evil curses, their conversation resembles what normal, everyday people deal with when they have reconnected with lost families. Moreover, Emma Swan's own status as a mother who gave up her son so that he could have a better life allows her to understand more clearly what her parents did.

After a spell backfires at the start of the show's second season and Emma Swan and her mother are sent back to the Enchanted Forest, Emma sees the world she should have inhabited, including what was meant to be her bedroom in her parents' castle. She appreciates her mother's prowess as a leader and a warrior and learns that the Enchanted Forest is the one place where when you bring a gun to a knife fight, the gun loses. Emma Swan and Snow White unite to get back home, which is now Storybrooke and no longer the Enchanted Forest.

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[241]"Broken." Once Upon a Time *Season Two*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis & Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (30 Sep. 2012). ABC Studios, 2013. DVD.)

[242]"Broken." Once Upon a Time *Season Two*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis & Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (30 Sep. 2012). ABC Studios, 2013. DVD.)

After their plan to get home appears to go horrible awry, Snow White and Emma have a heart-to-heart in Emma's nursery and bond over both what might have been and their shared maternal and savior status:

> **Snow White [Mary Margaret]:** You had to put Henry first.
> **Emma Swan:** I was angry at you for so long . . . wondering how you could choose to let me grow up without you. But then, just seeing all this . . . You gave up everything for me. And you're still doing that. [She becomes teary-eyed] I'm sorry, I'm not good at this. I . . .I guess I just . . . I'm not, I'm not used to someone putting me first.
> **Snow White [Mary Margaret]:** Oh . . . [she embraces Emma] Well, get used to it. [243]

Seeing what should been her nursery allows Emma to reconnect with whom she might have been and lets her utilized their shared motherhood to bond with her mom. Emma and her father find a different manner of building their relationship: daddy-daughter policing. Prince Charming transfers his leadership skills to working as his daughter's deputy. Her father assists her in policing Storybrooke's ever-present crime-spree of evil relatives (e.g., Regina's mom, Regina's half-sister, Henry's great grandfather) coming back to wreak retributive wrath.

After Regina begins to remake herself, she and Emma move from enemies to frenemies to friends. *Once Upon a Time*'s second season features a fascinating role-reversal, wherein Emma Swan defends Regina and argues that Regina can be redeemed. Emma relies on her own past experiences as well as how Henry's love transformed her to champion her position, even if it means defying the entire town and her own parents. Regina's path to virtue is by no

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[243]"Lady of the Lake." One Upon a Time *Season Two*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss and Ian Goldberg. Dir. Milan Cheylov. (14 Oct. 2012). ABC Studios, 2013. DVD.)

means easy or unfettered. Her past role as Evil Queen means that the entire town loathes her and wants her to pay by whatever means necessary.

Like Emma Swan's own mother, Henry undergoes a dramatic change. He never demonstrated anything other than fear and distrust for Regina throughout the first season, but he seems to offer her the same opportunities to stay in his life and to become a better person that he gave to Emma. Charming/David Nolan even allows Regina to help co-parent Henry when Snow and Emma are sucked into the remains of Fairy Tale Land. Season one Regina would have basked in the opportunity to be rid of her foes for good, but season two Regina uses magic to ensure that Emma Swan and Snow White make it back to Storybrooke unscathed.[244] Once Regina works with Emma, Charming, and Snow White to rescue Henry in Neverland, it cements the ruined bonds, though thankfully Emma never starts calling Regina "Grandmother." Lana Parrilla elucidates: "Regina feels pretty comfortable working with them. . . .She is a changed woman. She's come to a different plateau in her life, and a lot of that has to do with Henry and taking responsibility for things, consciously wanting to change and putting in the effort of making that a reality for her."[245]

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[244]As the second season progress, Regina is caught between the redemptive love she holds for Henry and the toxic relationship she holds with her own mother. Regina endeavors to follow Emma Swan's example and to relearn how to be a loving and good mother. Cora, however, makes no such attempt. Her first action once she arrives in Storybrooke is to set her daughter up for murder because Cora wants her daughter to be entirely destroyed and utterly ruined, and hence to need Cora.

[245]Natalie Abrams, "*Once Upon a Time*'s Lana Parrilla Debunks Big Theory, Teases Wickedness Ahead."(*TV Guide*. (21 Mar. 2014). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Once-Upon-Time-Lana-Parrilla-1079568.aspx > 16 Jan. 2015.)

Similarly, Regina aids Emma Swan to gain control over her newly discovered magic powers: "Focus. Concentrate," Regina tells Emma in one of their training scenes.[246] Swan snarks, "It's kind of hard when you're talking in my ear." Regina replies in kind, "And when the wind blows, or it's raining, or someone's shooting arrows at you. Yes, concentration's hard. That's the point."[247] Importantly, it is only under Regina's tutelage that Emma Swan learns to control her magic: "Regina—until Emma [met] Elsa—was the only one who was able to teach her anything about magic or how to control it and these powers she had. Emma is totally fine to work with Regina."[248] Moreover, Jennifer Morrison contends, "Emma is determined for them to be friends and allies; they've gone through too much to go back to being enemies in her mind. . . . And she understands Regina, and she understands how redemptive her story has been. . . ." [249] Regina overcomes her bitterness at Emma's unintentional world-wrecking[250] to join their magical powers and attempt to defeat the Snow Queen.[251]

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[246]"Ariel" Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ciaran Donnelly. (3 Nov. 2013). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)

[247]"Ariel." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ciaran Donnelly. (3 Nov. 2013). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)

[248]Marisa Roffman, "ONCE UPON A TIME: Lana Parrilla and Jennifer Morrison Tease Emma and Regina's Tension in 'Breaking Glass'." (*Give Me My Remote*. (26 Oct. 2014). Web. <http://www.givememyremote.com/remote/2014/10/26/once-upon-a-time-lana-parrilla-and-jennifer-morrison-tease-emma-and-reginas-tension-in-breaking-glass/#sthash.15JKR56c.dpuf > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[249]Roffman "ONCE UPON A TIME: Lana Parrilla and Jennifer Morrison Tease Emma and Regina's Tension in 'Breaking Glass'"

[250]In the season three finale, Emma saved Maid Marian from the Evil Queen's dungeon and takes her back to Storybrooke. As Robin Hood was Storybrooke-Regina's one true love, the return of

Indeed, Regina and Emma have become the show's strongest example of female friendship.[252] Emma and Regina even bond over drinks and mom-mocking ("Hope" is Snow White's deal, not Emma's) when Regina has done the heroic thing and sent her true love (Robin Hood because Storybrooke is that confusing), his cursed wife, and child away from Storybrooke (to which they can never return) to save Marian's life.[253] Thinking about where Emma Swan and Regina started, their shared journey exemplifies how *Once Upon A Time* rewrites the concept of happy endings.

In answer to the question "What does that mean for Emma when it comes to her happy ending? That it isn't about love for her?," Adam Horowitz contends, "Happy endings aren't always about other people. They're not about whether you're going to wind up with this person or that person. Happy endings are about yourself. The show has been about Emma's journey over three seasons so far; about who she is, who she was and who she's going to become."[254] Consequently, Emma Swan's heroic journey is not discounted

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his long-mourned wife caused a bit of a furor. Then, the Snow Queen, the newest in our long line of Evil Queens, freezes Marian and Regina tries to save her. True loves kiss does not work, since Robin Hood still loves Regina. It gets more complicated—the finale of which (well as of this writing) appears in the main text.

[251]"Breaking Glass." Once Upon a Time *Season Four*. (Wri. Kalinda Vazquez and Scott Nimerfro. Dir. Alrick Riley. (26 Oct. 2014). ABC Studios, 2015. DVD.)

[252]Possibly rivaled by Snow's continued concern and care for Regina that seems less like a devoted step-daughter and more like a friend (or maybe a pesky little sister) and Snow's continued BFF more than step-mommy-daughter bond.

[253]"Heroes and Villains." Once Upon a Time *Season Four*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (14 Dec. 2014). ABC Studios, 2015. DVD.)

[254]Kitsis limns, "What we said in Episode 11 this year, 'Going Home,' which was the winter finale, is that happy endings aren't always what we think they are. That is an important thing because

because it involves her becoming a better mother to her son, daughter to her parents all while she learns to harness her magical powers and navigate the more earthly dilemmas of a new baby brother, who enjoys the growing up with their parents that she never enjoyed, and having a boyfriend after the love of her life (Neal, Rumpelstiltskin's son and Henry's father) was murdered. Her path to saviordom might have been not of her choosing because she was after designed to break the curse from her birth. Yet, how she chose to behave once she discovered the truth and even after her destiny was achieved defines her as much as her parents "true love" for one another.

Act III: You Know Nothing, Jon Snow[255]

Poor Jon Snow. It is disconcerting enough that his portrayer is frequently called "Bastard" due to Snow's unfortunate status.[256] However, Jon Snow's

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at the end of the day, our show at its core is about hope. That is, in a lot of ways, what the theme of the season is, that happy endings aren't always what we think they are." [Natalie Abrams, "*Once Upon a Time* Season Finale: Will Emma Change Her Future?" (*TV Guide*. (8 May. 2014). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Once-Upon-Time-Season3-Finale-Spoilers-1081544.aspx> 16 Jan. 2015.)]

[255]"A Man Without Honor." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (13 May. 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2010. DVD.)

[256]For the perils of bastardy in *Game of Thrones*'s world,Snow explaining why he has never partaken of the popular prostitute pastime suffices to give an idea: **Jon Snow:** What's my name?
Samwell Tarly(John Bradley): Jon Snow.
Jon Snow: And why is my surname Snow?
Samwell Tarly: Because . . . you're a bastard from the North.
Jon Snow: I never met my mother. My father wouldn't even tell me her name. I don't know if she's living or dead. I don't know if she's a noblewoman or a fisherman's wife . . . or a whore. So I sat there in the brothel as Ros took off her clothes. But I couldn't do it. Because all I could think was what if I got her pregnant and she had a child, another bastard named Snow? It's not a good life for a child. ["Cripples, Bastards, and Broken Things." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. Bryan Cogman. Dir. Brian Kirk. (8 May. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)]

predicament gained him a Hitfix's 2014 Sad Bastard Award.[257] Donna Dickens explicated her reasons for selecting Jon Snow:

> It's hard at there for an illegitimate son of an honorable traitor. Whether it's killing your commander to gain the trust of the enemy, or sleeping with the enemy (literally), or falling in love with the enemy, or watching as a small child enact righteous vengeance on your enemy lady love, or trying to form an unofficial peace treaty with the enemy while your 'allies' wish you death, the only thing Jon Snow truly knows is 'FML.'[258]

Sarcasm aside, Dickens does a rather good job of summarizing what Snow accomplished during his sojourn with the Night's Watch and the stigma he has labored under as "Ned Stark's Bastard." Contrariwise, she underestimates the strength and moral character Jon Snow exhibits in synthesizing his disparate identities of bastard and brother of the Night's Watch.

The Night's Watch is composed not of heroick women who are Buffylike in their feminist rhetorical guises, but rather "bastards and broken things" who occupy the watch as punishment (i.e., criminals), protection from exterior evils (i.e., Sam who fled an abusive father that told him to either choose the wall or death), and bastards, such as Jon Snow, who would have no other opportunities for honor outside of the wall.[259] Jon Snow, like Emma Swan, faces the struggle between family and duty. When his father (or perhaps 'father' given the speculation over his true parentage) is murdered and Robb Stark, his brother,

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[257]Donna Dickens, "Jon Snow (Kit Harrington)." The 2014 Sad Bastard Awards. (*HitFix*. (13 Dec. 2014). Web. < http://www.hitfix.com/galleries/the-2014-sad-bastard-awards#4pgYMU5gXOjCCRWY.99 > 16. Jan. 2015.)

[258]Dickens "Jon Snow (Kit Harrington)"

[259] "Cripples, Bastards, and Broken Things." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. Bryan Cogman. Dir. Brian Kirk. (8 May. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

rises in revolt, Snow attempts to desert the wall and return to fight alongside his brother.[260] He is on way his South when he was called back his new family, his Brothers in the Night's Watch. He then goes North over the wall to battle the wildlings . . . and then thing go very badly.

Before hell breaks looks, it is important to understand how much Ned Stark did for Jon Snow.[261] While the Night's Watch may be seen by the rest of Westeros as the space where you place things you do not want, the Starks historically and currently take a radically different view. Lord Eddard Stark's own brother, Benjen, chose to journey to the Ice Wall and become a Ranger. Last name excepted, Jon Snow was raised alongside Ned's other children and treated as if he were part of the family.[262] For example, like Ned Stark, Jon Snow

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[260]"Baelor." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff & D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (12 Jun. 2012). Home Box Office, 2011. DVD.)

[261]**Will:** [to Ned, just before his execution] I know I broke my oath. I know I'm a deserter. I should've gone back to the Wall and warned them, but . . . I saw what I saw. I saw the White Walkers. People need to know. If you can get word to my family . . . tell 'em I'm no coward. Tell 'em I'm sorry.[Ned pauses, then nods. The guards force Will onto the chopping block, and Ned draws his sword] Forgive me, lord.
Eddard Stark: In the name of Robert of the House Baratheon, the First of His Name . . .
Jon Snow: [aside, to Bran] Don't look away. Father will know if you do.
Eddard Stark:. . .Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, and Protector of the Realm, I, Eddard of the House Stark, Lord of Winterfell and Warden of the North, sentence you to die.[Ned decapitates Will]
Jon Snow: [to Bran] You did well.["Winter is Coming." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Tim Van Patten. (17 Apr. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)]

[262]I know what people say (a simple google search will give you an idea of the general loathing held against her) about Catelyn Stark, but there was never the suggestion that she was an evil stepmother to him. He was not abused, starved, or otherwise mistreated. It is true that she loved her actual children above him, but his father (or uncle if you believe Ned's sister is Jon's true mother) appeared to give Jon all the advantages of the Stark name. Equally, the vile invective spewed against Catelyn because of her 'ill-treatment' of Jon Snow is infuriating. The lone time we saw her turn against him was when Bran was dying, and Catelyn would be so stressed that she really ought not to be held responsible for her action, especially as she believed the Lannisters were trying to murder Bran. It was really Littlefinger behind the entire ruin of Westeros and seemingly all because of his pervy stalkertastic infatuation for Catelyn.

supports his sister Arya's rule-breaking behavior. Arya, his sister, evinces her non-traditional interest in the more masculine arts of sword fighting, rather than embroidery.[263] Jon Snow informs Arya, "First lesson: stick 'em with the pointy end." She replies, "I know which end to use." Snow says, "I'm going to miss you. . . .All the best swords have names you know."[264] Arya answers, "Sansa can have her sewing needles. I have a Needle of my own." The sword he buys her serves her well. "Needle" allows Arya to navigate the brutal aftermath of their father's death.

More importantly, Ned Stark instils in his son a strict moral code. Both Jon Snow and Robb Stark firmly uphold their father's commandment: "The man who passes the sentence should swing the sword. If you would take a man's life, you owe it to him to look into his eyes and hear his final words."[265]

Being "Ned Stark's Bastard" defines Jon Snow's life as much as his constant quest to be an honorable man and claim his heritage as his father's son. When Snow is unsettled about his father's fate in King's Landing, he desires to stand by his family and quit the Wall:

> **Maester Aemon** (Peter Vaughan): Tell me, did you ever wonder why the men of the Night's Watch take no wives and father no children?
> **Jon Snow:** No.
> **Maester Aemon:** So they will not love. Love is the death of duty. If the day should ever come when your lord father was forced to

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[263]"The Kingsroad." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Tim Van Patten. (24 Apr. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

[264]"The Kingsroad." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Tim Van Patten. (24 Apr. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

[265]"Winter is Coming." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Tim Van Patten. (17 Apr. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

> choose between honor on the one hand and those he loves on the other, what would he do?
> **Jon Snow:** He . . .He would do whatever was right. No matter what.
> **Maester Aemon:** Then Lord Stark is one man in 10,000. Most of us are not so strong. What is honor compared to a woman's love? And what is duty against the feel of a newborn son in your arms? Or a brother's smile?
> **Jon Snow:** Sam told you.
> **Maester Aemon**: We're all human. Oh, we all do our duty when there's no cost to it. Honor comes easy then. Yet sooner or later in every man's life there comes a day when it's not easy. A day when he must choose.
> **Jon Snow:** And this is my day? Is that what you are saying?
> **Maester Aemon:** Oh, it hurts, boy, Oh, yes. I know.
> **Jon Snow:** You do not know! No one knows. *I may be a bastard, but he is my father and Robb is my brother* [italics mine]![266]

Though Jon Snow might sound like the petulant teenager in some parts of his conversation with Maester Aemon, the discussion about honour and love is intriguing. "Love is the Death of Duty" might certainly apply to Robb Stark's ill-fated choice, and the Maester's words certainly seem apt in a world as bleak as the *Game of Thrones*.

Conversely, it was love that inspired Jon Snow to stay.[267] When his commanding office Ser Jeor Mormont[268] queries, "When dead men, and worse,

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[266]The conversation continues: **Maester Aemon**: [chuckles] The gods were cruel when they saw fit to test my vows. They waited till I was old. What could I do when the ravens brought news from the South? The ruin of my House, the death of my family? I was helpless, blind, frail. But when I heard they had killed my brother's son, and his poor son, and the children. Even the little children!
Jon Snow: Who are you?
Maester Aemon: My father was Maekar, the First of his Name. My brother Aegon reigned after him, when I had refused the throne, and he was followed by his son Aerys, whom they called the Mad King.
Jon Snow: You're Aemon Targaryen.
Maester Aemon: I am a master of the Citadel, bound in service to Castle Black and the Night's Watch. I will not tell you . . . to stay or go. You must make that choice yourself, and live with it for the rest of your days. As I have. ["Baelor." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff & D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (12 Jun. 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)]

[267] Well, love and honour: **Jeor Mormont:** Honor made you leave, and honor brought you back.

come hunting for us in the night, do you think it matters who sits on the Iron Throne?"[269] Snow answers, "No." Mormont replies, "Good. Because I want you and your wolf with us when we ride beyond the Wall tomorrow."[270] An incredulous Snow asks, "Beyond the Wall?" Mormont harangues:

> I will not sit meekly by and wait for the snows. I mean to find out what's happening. The Night's Watch will ride in force against the wildlings, the White Walkers, and whatever else is out there. And we will find Benjen Stark, alive or dead. I will command them myself. *So I will ask you once, Lord Snow, are you a brother of the Night's Watch, or a bastard boy who wants to play at war* [italics mine]?[271]

Bastard or Brother is the choice that Snow is presented with. Snow, however, chooses both. He upholds his father's ideals by defending the realm and searching for the evil behind the wall.

Even Snow's choice to break his vows comes in services to his vows and arises from his propensity to make Stark choices. When he encounters Ygritte (Rose Leslie), a wilding warrior, he repels the attack against him and his brother "crows," the wildlings' insult for the Night's Watch based on their all-black wardrobe. While he has no problems battling a woman like an equal, he

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Jon Snow: My friends brought me back.
Jeor Mormont: I didn't say it was **your** honor. ["Fire and Blood." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (19 Jun. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)]

[268]Yes, that would be our Daenerys's advisor's father—Ser Jonah was banished by Ned Stark for trafficking in slavery.

[269]"Fire and Blood." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (19 Jun. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

[270]"Fire and Blood." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (19 Jun. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

[271]"Fire and Blood." Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (19 Jun. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.)

understandably quails at beheading her.[272] Instead, he spares her life and makes her his prisoner.[273] Ygritte subsequently escapes and captures Jon Snow and Qhorin Halfhand (Simon Armstrong). Ygritte saves Snow's life by playing the Ned Stark's bastard card.[274] Qhorin Halfhand convinces Snow that Snow should go undercover with the Wildlings to gain intel. To convince the Wildings that Jon Snow has turned his cloak, Halfhand convinces Snow to Halfhand.[275] He further sells his cover by sleeping with Ygritte.[276] Jon Snow, being of Stark blood, falls in love with Ygritte. Of course, he loved honor more. He refused to kill an innocent man and hence his cover-story broke down.[277] Though he was able to escape with his life, he was still shot by Ygritte, but made it back to the Wall.[278] Once he has joined his brothers behind the wall, he finds himself compromised. Though he alone knows the evils that are coming to beset the wall, the new people in charge do not heed him. Even when the Wildlings began

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[272]"The Old Gods and the New." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. Vanessa Taylor. Dir. David Nutter. (6 May. 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2012. DVD.)

[273]"A Man Without Honor." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (13 May. 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2012. DVD.)

[274]"The Prince of Winterfell." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (20 May 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2012. DVD.)

[275]"Valar Morghulis." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. (Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (3 Jun. 2012). Home Box Office Television,2012. DVD.)

[276]"Kissed by Fire." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. (Wri. Bryan Cogman Dir. Alex Graves.(28 Apr. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

[277]"The Rains of Castamere." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. (Wri. David Benioff & D. B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (2 Jun. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

[278]"Mhysa." Game of Thrones *Season Three.* (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (9 Jun. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.)

slaughtering the civilians, Snow has a difficult time trying to change the policy.[279]

Jon Snow's big moment is both romantic and warlike. After the Wildings and their forces attack Castle Black, Jon Snow steps into action. "The Watchers at the Wall" mirrors the momentousness of the occasion through its use of all the aspects of television.[280] Reviews of the episode might be divided about whether or not Jon Snow warrior is any more thrilling than Jon Snow Bastard or Jon Snow Brooder, but most of them agree on appreciating the craft that went into the direction and design of the episode.[281] The episode ends with a Jon Snow walking off to treat with the enemy, knowing he will probably die a slow, bloody death: "The Castle Black team are still hugely outnumbered and cannot hope to win. Capping many scenes of raging heroism, Jon tells Sam he's going

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[279]He manages to persuade the leaders to allow him and a small band to where he does some Daenerys actions of his own and liberates some women who went from an incestuous evil rapist for a father (and grandfather &c.) to the compounded evils of Rogue Nightwatchmen who rape and terrorize them ["Oathkeeper." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. Bryan Cogman. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (27 Apr. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014 . DVD.)].

[280]"The Watchers on the Wall." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Neil Marshall. (8 Jun. 2014.) Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

[281]For Neil Marshall's insight into the shooting of "Watchers on the Wall," please see Gina McIntyre,"'Game of Thrones': Neil Marshall details 'Watchers on the Wall' strategy." (*Hero Complex*. (*The Los Angeles Times*. (8 Jun. 2014). Web. <http://herocomplex.latimes.com/tv/game-of-thrones-neil-marshall-details-watchers-on-the-wall-strategy/#/0 > 16 Jan. 2015.). For an example of a rave review, please see David Crow, "Game Of Thrones: The Watchers On The Wall Review." (*Den of Geek!*. (9 Jun. 2014). Web. <http://www.denofgeek.us/tv/game-of-thrones/236280/game-of-thrones-the-watchers-on-the-wall-review > 16 Jan. 2015.).

to walk (unarmed) to meet the Wildlings in hopes of killing their leader. 'You're right, it's a bad plan. What's your plan?' Jon counters when Sam objects."[282]

Hibbard, at least, appreciates Snow's "raging heroism." The Battle of Castle Black features the intersection of Snow's love and duty when Ygritte is in the forefront of the battle and as has since he broke her heart, swears to kill. Though it might be seen as pulling its punches when Ygritte cannot kill him, it does set up a powerful cinematic moment:

> It all leads up to the inevitable confrontation—Ygritte drawing an arrow on Jon. She has a clear shot but doesn't take it. But who does have a clear shot? That little kid who has been living at The Wall ever since the Thenns killed his parents. He's got pretty good aim for a peasant boy and gets Ygritte right through the heart. As people slash at each other's throats all around, Jon cradles Ygritte during her last moments. 'Remember that cave?' she asks him, referring to the place where they shared their most intimate moments together. 'We should go back there.' In an episode filled with special effects and extras getting slaughtered, this was the key moment. One of the reasons The Wall/North of The Wall storyline has never been too interesting is because of its lack of complication. There are good guys and bad guys and the lines between the two are clear. The Ygritte/Jon relationship deviated from that. In a show filled with unlikely and doomed romances, theirs was in many ways the most simple and classic (falling in love across feuding factions, not exactly novel) but that's also what made it so effective.[283]

While I would disagree that Snow's story was uncomplicated and filled with clear-cut lines separating good from bad, Malitz does explain what made the Ygritte-Jon story something interesting. Moreover, Ygritte's death denies Snow

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[282]James Hibbard, "Game of Thrones recap: Where the Wildlings Are." (*Entertainment Weekly*. (8 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://tvrecaps.ew.com/recap/game-of-thrones-watchers-wall/3/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[283]David Malitz, "'Game of Thrones' Recap: 'The Watchers on The Wall'—Giants and Mammoths and Thenns, Oh My." (*Washington Post*. (9 Jun. 2014). Web. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/style-blog/wp/2014/06/09/game-of-thrones-recap-the-watchers-on-the-wall-giants-and-mammoths-and-thenns-oh-my/> 16 Jan. 2015.)

any ability to have a traditional happy ending. Even if his vows had allowed it, he was never going to win the girl, get married, and have a happy life. All he has left is duty and honor and his fraught legacy as his father's son.

For in the end, it is Ned Stark's ghost that saves the day. After Snow encounters Mance Rayder (Ciarán Hinds), he aims to put his spectacular stupid plan into action: "Are you capable of that, Jon Snow? Killing a man in his own tent when he's just offered you peace? Is that what the Night's Watch is? Is that what you are?"[284] Yet, when Stannis Baratheon's (Stephen Dillane) armies demolish Rayder's forces, it is Jon Snow or rather Ned Stark's bastard that convinces Stannis to spare Mance's life: "Stannis asks Jon Snow what his father would do with Mance, and Jon tells him that Mance showed mercy, and that Ned Stark would have taken him prisoner and listen to what he has to say. Stannis agrees."[285]

Moreover, "When Jon introduces himself to Stannis, it's absolutely thrilling to see him interact with somebody from the south, from his past, connected to Ned Stark."[286] It was Ned Stark that alerted Stannis Baratheon to the incestuous connections between Jamie and Cersei that rendered Robert's children bastards and Stannis the true king of Westeros. It was Ned Stark's

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[284]"The Children." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alex Graves. (15 Jun. 2014). Home Box Office Television. 2014. DVD.)

[285]Erik Kain, "'Game Of Thrones' Season 4 Finale Review: The Children And The Dead." (*Forbes*. (16 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://www.forbes.com/sites/erikkain/2014/06/16/game-of-thrones-season-4-finale-review-the-children-and-the-dead/> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[286]Amanda Michelle Steiner, "'Game Of Thrones' Finale Recap: Tyrion Becomes A Killer-Twice." (*Hollywood Life*. (15 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://hollywoodlife.com/2014/06/15/game-of-thrones-finale-recap-tyrion-kills-shae-tywin-the-children-season-4-episode-10/> 16 Jan. 2015.)

honor that prevented him from going straight to Stannis with the news, since he knew what happened the last time a woman came between a throne and a force of men: blood and death and rape and the butchery of her and her children. Ned Stark was not going to let that horror befall another woman, even if she had the blood of her husband and Ned Stark's son on her hands. Ned Stark died for his heroic and honorable sentiments.

Yet, Stark's death arguable sets up the salvation of his son, Jon Snow, and allows Snow to uphold Stark's legacy. Stannis, after all, recognizes the Snow's inheritance of his father's legacy and hence trusts his word. Indeed, Snow even ensures that Ygritte is buried in the fashion of her people (burning on a pyre) north of the wall.[287] The sigil of his house may be "winter is coming," but Snow knows that winter is here. Even with Stannis Baratheon's marital assistance swelling the ranks of Castle Black, it does not make for a glorious summer for the son of Stark. An army of virtually unkillable ice-zombies and White-Walkers are still heading South. The Ice Wall and Castle Black are still the lone thing standing in between them and the Seven Kingdoms. Since Jon Snow has yet to gets his hands on a dragon, Stannis's armies will be brilliant at helping keep the Wildings in order, but much less useful at slaying ice-demons. Stannis's witch and her god the Lord of Light might be more helpful, but still, things are not looking rosy and bright at Castle Black.

Though Donna Dickens might love Jon Snow, it is a toss-up whether Jon Snow is more reviled within Westeros or in our World. Like his brother Robb, it

[287]"The Children." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. (Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alex Graves. (15 Jun. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.)

would seem that Jon Snow's moral earnestness makes him "the boring, old hero."[288] Indeed, if there is a word that is more often than not paired with Jon Snow in the hardscrabble, dystopic world of the critical review, it is "boring." Even what seems to be a victory for the character rates a yawn from some critics. It may be popular to dislike Jon Snow and the heroick tradition he equally represents and redefines, but *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* takes no part in that heartlessness. We like are heroines and heroes flawed and embrace the potential for villains to change, but there is something off-putting about the critical love and valorization for men like Walter White at the expense of those like Jon Snow. Maintaining his virtue and consistently trying to do the right should be honored rather than reviled. Were we in the mood to pick fights with other characters, we could say that Walter White made the easy choice, rather than the interesting one. Thankfully, we are not alone in our valorization of Jon Snow's heroick nature. As the aptly named David Crow avers in his review of "Watchers of the Wall," the episode "reminds audiences why Jon Snow is such a likable character. And it isn't because he has the coolest direwolf of all the Stark kids or that he gets to fight the occasional ice zombie: it's due to being

[288]Brandon Norwalk, "*Game Of Thrones* (newbies): 'The Watchers On The Wall'." (*TV Club*. (9 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/game-thrones-newbies-watchers-wall-205544 > 16 Jan. 2015.). Todd VanDerWerff is even more ruthless, ". . . I am not looking forward to Jon being commander of the Night's Watch on the show. That feels like it could be dreadfully boring." [Todd VanDerWerff, "*Game Of Thrones* (experts): 'The Watchers On The Wall'." (for experts)." (*TV Club*. (8 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/game-thrones-experts-watchers-wall-experts-205541> 16 Jan. 2015.)].

the most true-blue fantasy hero in a series that despises fantasy archetypes."[289] Crow contends:

> Unlike Robb Stark who thought the world would bend its knee to his wishes, Jon Snow is a 'good son' of Eddard that lacks the illusions of his father and siblings about the kindness of strangers. As a bastard, he will never amount to much more than he is now as a brother of the Night's Watch. But his dedication to this purpose rarely seems foolish, save if Ygritte's biting words are around, and his altruism is genuinely refreshing in a show stuffed with so many scheming and self-serving narcissists.[290]

When Jon Show determined to sacrifice his own desires to those of the greater good, he made the tough choice. His continued struggle to be, on one hand, his own man and, on the other, upholding the freighted legacy of House Stark makes him a more than suitable heroick figure. In his journey, he resembles both Daenerys Stormborn and Emma Swan. He might be old-fashioned, but he aims to be virtuous as well as pragmatic in a world where domesticity and goodness are always in danger of destruction. Even if the fandom's hopes are not correct and he never marries Daenerys Stormborn to legitimate *A Song of Ice and Fire*, Jon Snow's values of family, duty, and honor fashion him into a ray of light in the darkness of Westeros.

Act IV: Snow White, Blood Red

Though off-screen Rose Leslie's and Kit Harington's romance ended more sanguinely than their on-screen avatars, it does point to one of those pervasive

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[289]David Crow, "Game Of Thrones: The Watchers On The Wall Review." (*Den of Geek!*. (9 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://www.denofgeek.us/tv/game-of-thrones/236280/game-of-thrones-the-watchers-on-the-wall-review > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[290]Crow "Game Of Thrones: The Watchers On The Wall Review"

elements in television and cinema: on-screen romances continuing once the cameras are no longer watching.[291] When the couple is as storied as Snow White and Prince Charming, you can imagine how the story plays off-camera. When that couple marries, it is of course treated as a "fairy-tale wedding." Or as proclaims, "Once upon a time, a beautiful princess and a handsome prince met on the set of the prime time ABC series 'Once Upon A Time' and lived happily ever after (or at least got married in 'intimate California ceremony'on Saturday, April 12)."[292] While Ginnifer Goodwin and Josh Dallas seem to be universally beloved, their Storybrooke selves are not so lucky. It would seem being the face and force of Goodness is as apt get one a bad reputation as Jon Snow endures being Ned Stark's bastard in Westeros.

The following comments are illustrative of some of the typical reaction to team Charming: "The Charmings get more pointless with each passing week: "Do you remember the night Emma was born . . . you said we have to give her her best chance?" Are you kidding? You only pull that quote out just about

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[291]Hannah Lockley, "'Game Of Thrones' Couple Kit Harington And Rose Leslie 'End Relationship'." (*Entertainmentwise*. (11 Aug. 2013). Web. <http://www.entertainmentwise.com/news/123352/Game-Of-Thrones-Couple-Kit-Harington-And-Rose-Leslie-End-Relationship> 16 Jan. 2015.). Also, there is some speculation that they got back together (however briefly): Mike Vulpo, "*Game of Thrones* Co-Stars Kit Harington and Rose Leslie Spark Romance Rumors—Find Out Why!"(*E!Online*. (26 Jun. 2014). Web. <http://www.eonline.com/news/563434/game-of-thrones-co-stars-kit-harington-and-rose-leslie-spark-romance-rumors-find-out-why> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[292]Lauren Duca, "Ginnifer Goodwin Marries Josh Dallas, Literally Proves There Is A Happily-Ever-After For Snow White." (*The Huffington Post*. (14 Apr. 2014). Web. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/04/13/ginnifer-goodwin-josh-dallas_n_5141987.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

every single episode."[293] What a difference from the initial critical love for Prince Charming and Snow White: "[in] this shaken-up fairy tale, both the prince and Snow White are equally badass (actually Snow might be a touch more badass . . .)."[294] Though the characters are still as beloved by the fandom, their travails have ceased to be as praiseworthy to many critics.

Speaking of her character's arc during season four, Ginnifer Goodwin divulges, "Her journey this season is finding a place where she can let go of the guilt over having let Emma go as a child and also, trying to find her self-worth as a mother."[295] You can imagine how some might find such a journey less admirable or enthralling when compared to Fairy-tale Land's Snow White adventures in counter-insurgency, throne-retaking, and Evil Queen battling.

Yet, Ginnifer Goodwin's construction of her character's journey does not deny her status as feminist paradigm. The fairy tale is still fractured when Snow White (or Mary Margaret to employ her Storybrooke name) must balance raising a baby with a bloodless take-over of the mayorship from Regina and the usual evils that come with living on a hellmouth like Storybrooke. It is true her skill-set of sword-fighting and queenship has prepared her more for ruling her domain in Fairytale Land then Storybrooke. The important point is that Mary Margaret is still in charge of her territory and given the nature of Storybrooke's

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[293]Gwen Inhat, "*Once Upon A Time*: 'Smash The Mirror'." (*The AV Club*. (17 Nov. 2014). Web. <http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/once-upon-time-smash-mirror-211819> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[294]Nathman "Mom and Pop Culture: Once Upon a Remake"

[295]Sadie Gennis, "On the Set of *Once Upon a Time*: Can Mary Margaret Let Go of Her Guilt?" (*TV Guide*. (20 Nov. 2014). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Once-Upon-Time-Ginnifer-Goodwin-Josh-Dallas-1089528.aspx > 16 Jan. 2015.)

propensity for invasion by fairytale forces, combatting the same evils that she would menace her lands in her home-world.

One of the most intriguing scenes is seeing Snow White, wielding her new baby in one arm, and aiming to solve the power outage plaguing Storybrooke. She is able to utilize her experience of breastfeeding Neal to spark a winning plan to bring back power to the generator.[296] Her struggles over returning to work ground her in a tradition that proves relatable to the perils of contemporary motherhood while seeming unique to Snow White. Her uncertainty and overprotectiveness, if such it is, of Neal, the new baby, arise not from having read too many of those normative fictions besetting modern womanhood, but from her heroick decision to sacrifice her own personal happiness and that of her husband for the good of her people. She and Charming have a second chance to raise a child together, rather than bonding with an all grown-daughter who is almost the same age as her parents.

I will be so brazen as to aver that watching Mary Margaret try to negotiate her life in Storybrooke might be more groundbreaking than *Once Upon A Time*'s transformation of Snow White from celluloid Angel of the House to the Robin Hood of Fairytale Land: "*Once Upon a Time* centers on strong female characters (think *Snow White: Disney Princess Slayer*–no, she doesn't slay princesses in the literal sense, but she does slay the notion that females are only good for

[296]Snow looks at Neal and suddenly equates the need to breast-feed Neal with the need of power to get its own 'food' ["White Out." Once Upon a Time *Season Four*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Ron Underwood. (5 Oct. 2014). ABC Studios, 2015. DVD.)].

befriending small animals and riding around in pumpkins.)."[297] Mary Margaret's attempts to befriend Regina, her formerly evil stepmother in addition to reformed Evil Queen, are as radical as all the changes made to her fairy-tale self. *Once Upon a Time*'s Snow White story includes many of the same plot elements from the Disney movie: poisoned apple, glass coffin, seven dwarves, and Charming waking her with a kiss. Snow White encounters Grumpy not in an enchanted woodland setting, but in the dungeon of King George, Prince Charming's 'father.' After some mutual rescuing, she joins the dwarves in their forest cottage not for some quality singing and cleaning, but rather to hide out from the queen and plan how to defeat her.

Moreover, she has earned the queen's loathing not through superior beauty, but through an accidental childhood mistake. She confides Regina's secret love for the stable-boy to Regina's mom, Cora, who retaliates by murdering the stable-boy. Likewise, while Regina murdered Snow White's father, Regina also murdered her own father ("the thing you love the most") to bring out the initial curse that spawned Storybrooke and the series. Cora was responsible for the murder of Snow White's mother; in some rather unexpected payback, Snow White killed Cora to save someone's life and to prevent Cora from continuing to terrorize Storybrooke.[298] Snow herself and the show do not

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[297]Wilson "What a Difference a Strong Snow White Makes"

[298]**Regina [Evil Queen]:** You have no right to be here. And you have no right to **that**!
Mary Margaret [Snow White]: I was going to give it to you.
Regina[Evil Queen]: What?
Mary Margaret [Snow White]: She can't love you, you know. She doesn't have her heart. With it, maybe she can. But that's why you've never felt she loved you. She doesn't have her heart. But I do.

allow Cora's death to go unforgotten. While villain-killing is the provenience of fairy-tale-heroines, Mary Margaret becomes depressed and wants Regina to kill her so does not live the pain. Regina refrains so Mary Margaret can endure the blackness in her heart.

Fast-forward a season and Snow White crushes Prince Charming's heart to enact Regina's initial curse.[299] Charming persuades Snow White to sacrifice him to save the world:

> **Charming:** We've always shared one heart. It'll only grow strong when you look at that baby's face . . . and see the love I have for you in its eyes.
> **Snow White:** I've loved you since the first moment I saw you.
> **Charming:** And I'll love you until my last.[300]

Devastated, Snow White convinces Regina to rip out her heart and break it into two, so she and Charming can literally share one heart. It works. Snow White and Charming, consequently, demonstrate the ability to make tough decision involving literal self-sacrifice. Additionally Snow White, Prince Charming, and

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Regina [Evil Queen]: You're doing this for me?
Mary Margaret [Snow White]: Think about it. What would happen if Cora had her heart back, back inside her?
Regina [Evil Queen]: She told me she took it out to protect herself.
Mary Margaret [Snow White]: And did it work? The person she was before, do you think that person survived? She can't love, so she can't love you.
Regina [Evil Queen]: She always wanted the best for me. That's love.
Mary Margaret [Snow White]: Imagine real love. You'd have a mother, and a start on making a family Henry could be a part of. Or you could have her be the Dark One. The choice is yours. ["The Miller's Daughter." Once Upon a Time *Season Two*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (10 Mar. 2013). ABC Studios, 2013. DVD.)]

[299] "A Curious Thing." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (27 Apr. 2014). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)

[300] "A Curious Thing." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (27 Apr. 2014). ABC Studios,2014. DVD.)

Regina work together to try and defeat evil utilizing the same curse Regina cast to strip away Charming and Snow White's happy ending.

Snow White, thus, demonstrates her capability to make tough decisions. She and Charming, from what we see, appear to be tactically capable battle strategists who defeat superior forces, King George and the Evil Queen, and retake their lands. Although magic wardrobe and baby might not be what most of us would think would be a winning combination to defeat Regina's Storybrooke curse, it does bring about the desired effects. Through giving up their child, Charming's heart, and then Snow White's heart splitting, Snow White and Prince Charming demonstrate their own ability to make hard choices. While neither of them have dragons or the magical powers that their daughter Emma wields, both try to fight the good fight.

Of all Snow's choices, allowing Regina to live once Regina had been captured in the Enchanted Forest certainly would have a blunder. More surprisingly, Snow letting Regina live only truly proves to be a wise as well as a benevolent decision once everyone has been exiled to Storybrooke. As we have seen in the Emma Swan section, Storybrooke might have started as a curse, but it became conversely a blessing for Regina. *Once Upon a Time*, accordingly, resists an easy bifurcation of morality.

Act V: Villains Don't Get Happy Endings[301]

When Regina's creators were asked if she was "off the hook for all the things she has done," Horowitz answered simply, "No," but Kitsis explained, "Of course not. Every day, we have to strive to be better people. Some days we give into weakness and sometimes we give into strength."[302] Regina's salvation sets up an interesting moral point within the universe that *Once Upon a Time* inhabits. Rarely, if ever, do villains get the chance to change. The murderous witch who ate children will not have a change of heart and start rescuing children from sexual slavery to make amends for her evil, evil ways. In that instance, the moral politics of typical fairy-tale land seem much closer to *Game of Thrones*. Even if he had not been slaughtered by his son Tyrion, Tywin Lannister was not going to open an orphanage, feed the hungry, and outlaw cruelty to dwarves. He might be a complex character, but rarely do villains get the chance to adapt a wholesale transformation like Regina.[303] As Henry, her adopted son, informed her when she needed a pep talk to use white magic to

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[301] **Regina [Evil Queen]:** Henry, I was wrong, too. It wasn't your fault. It's mine. I cast the curse out of vengeance. And I'm . . . I'm the villain. You heard Mr. Gold. Villains don't get happy endings.

Henry: You're not a villain. You're my mom. ["Going Home." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (15 Dec. 2013). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)]

[302]Natalie Abrams, "Lightning Round 13: *Once Upon a Time* Bosses Answer Your Burning Questions." (*TV Guide*. (7 May. 2014). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Once-Upon-Time-Lightning-Round-13-Kitsis-Horowitz-Spoilers-1081425.aspx > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[303] Given the sister-rape, I am not including Jamie Lannister in this discussion, even though the creators and the writer and the show's own plot appear to think that the rape did not occur. For more on what happened in the series, please see Eliana Dockterman,"The Game of Thrones Sex Scene Can't Be Both Rape and Not Rape." (*Time*. (21 Apr. 2014). Web. <http://time.com/70829/game-of-thrones-rape/ > 16 Jan. 2015.) and Laura Hudson, "That *Game of Thrones* Scene Wasn't a 'Turn-On,' It Was Rape." (*Wired*. (21 Apr. 2014). Web. <http://www.wired.com/2014/04/game-of-thrones-rape/ > 16 Jan. 2015.).

defeat her half-sister, "Once upon a time you were a villain, Mom. But you've changed. You're a hero now. And defeating bad guys is what heroes do. I believe in you. Now you need to believe, too."[304]

Defeating bad guys does not necessarily lead to happily-ever-afters. Team Charming might be a family once more, but the reunion does not erase all that occurred in the cursed twenty-eight years. In *Once Upon a Time*'s world, remembrance is the blessing, while forgetting is a curse. Yet, what makes an ending a happy one? Regina and Henry have teamed up in season four to track down the Author who wrote the Book that has played such central role to Storybrooke's story. The Author is the only magician powerful to change the story and change the book and give Regina the happy ending she wishes. Yet, we should ask ourselves how is Regina not happy? Season one Regina had custody of son who felt himself imprisoned like a prince(ss) in a tower. Now, Henry calls her Mom and devotes himself to helping her achieve want she desires. The Regina-Henry pairing mirrors season one's Henry-Emma pairing complete with cute mission codenames and parent-child bonding. Henry's love is what strengthens Regina's resolve to be a Good Person. So, then, what is missing?

The boy. Robin Hood loves her; she loves Robin Hood; and even Maid Marian was not going to destroy their chance for true happiness. Once Regina has to make the selfless choice to save Marian's life and give her what she needs—her husband and son—to survive in the strange new world that is our

[304]"Kansas." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss and Kalinda Vazquez. Dir. Gwyneth Horder-Payton. (4 May. 2014). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.)

universe, Regina feels cursed. Is Regina wrong to feel that way? Is the centrality of domesticity wrong? Should Regina's happily ever after be something more noble—whatever that is? More radically, should Regina get to decide for herself what her happy ending is? She thought when she cursed team Charming-White that she would be living in bliss. She did for a while, but then, it became as much of a prison for her as it was for them. If she feels her reward for redemption involves the mythic boyfriend, then who are we to attack her? Romance is after all a central conceit in the majority of our stories, even if they were not written in the same mode as those who.

Henry's logical proposition about Regina as hero(ine) clashes against the title of our section: "Villains don't deserve happy endings." Could Regina's problem be that heroines and heroes might deserve happy endings, but still might not get them? We have only to look at the fate of the Starks in *Game of Thrones* to see the truth of the old adage that no good deed goes unpunished. Even Jon Snow manages to succeed by entwining his virtue and honor with a certain pragmatism.

More problematically, Henry's equation leads us back to our dear Daenerys's struggles to enact justice in Meereen. In a just universe, villains would always get punished. Yet, if Daenerys had been the judge and jury of Regina, she would have been her executioner. Based upon the blood Regina spilled, it might seem unfair to her victims that she gets her son and joy as well. One assumes the vast majority of people whom Regina slaughtered were not the equivalent of Meereneese slavers, but as in the case of Maid Marian,

whom Emma saved from Regina's Fairytale Land dungeons, decent people whose only crime was supporting Snow White in her battle to defeat the Evil Queen. The larger issue about What Justice is runs throughout our dissertations pages, particularly the following chapter on Alicia Florrick and *The Good Wife*.

EPISODE FIVE: CHARIETE EUMENIDES; OR HELL HATH NO FURY LIKE A *GOOD WIFE* SCORNED

Glenn Childs: You know he's using you, don't you? Peter blames me for his downfall. He's using you to get to me.
Alicia Florrick: How do you figure?
Glenn Childs: Mrs. Florrick, please. He told you about the pitted trace evidence [*ed.* evidence thrown in trash can]. Don't make yourself collateral damage here, for your own sake.
Alicia Florrick: Mr. Childs, the day you leaked that sex tape to the press and forced me to shield my children from every cable news station that played it in a 24-hour rotation, that was the day I became collateral damage. If you're worried about my husband, Mr. Childs, you've obviously never made a woman angry.[305]

Teaser: Art May Imitate Life, but Life Imitates TV[306]

More Hillary Clinton, to whom she is often compared, than Elizabeth Edwards, Alicia Florrick (Julianna Margulies, who won the Best Actress Emmy in 2011 and 2014 again for her performance) makes the fraught journey from domestic, private space to the contentious and cutthroat world of law, or "bloodsport" to use the telling term of Diane Lockhart (Christine Baranski).[307]

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[305]"Pilot." The Good Wife *Season One*. (Wri. Dir. Robert and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (22 Sep. 2009). CBS Productions, 2010. DVD.) For the sanity of the dissertator, the events covered in this chapter are only those of seasons one through five. Alicia Florrick's running for (and then winning) her husband's old job of State's Attorney is a fascinating arc, but trying to keep up with *The Good Wife's* plot twists propensity would not radically alter the underlying ideas of this chapter, but would have necessitated slaughtering the perfectly lovely and innocent chapter now in your hands. In addition to Alicia's campaign, another casualty was the powerful and moving season six episode on sexual assault on college campuses, which is particularly wrenching writing at UNC under the cloud of our own scandal about abuses like those showcased in the episode. Had we both world enough and time…

[306]DiFranco's actual lyrics are "Yeah, art may imitate life,/but life imitates T.V." [Ani DiFranco, "Superhero."(*Dilate*. Righteous Babe, 1996. CD.)].

[307]More intriguingly, "The Kings gave Ms. Kushnick a prompt: 'Law is a blood sport.' Diane's accessories are shades of red. She concedes nothing to the boys. A small sculpture is a phallic obelisk; a bottle of Scotch is tucked in a cabinet. Her desk has no clutter, no computer. That's what assistants are for. In her only office photo, Diane poses with Hillary Rodham Clinton" [Jan Hoffman, "*The Good Wife* and Its Women." (*New York Times*. (29 Apr. 2011). Web.

Alicia Florrick's world is as brutal and fraught with dangers as Buffy the Vampire Slayer's, but she would not be conventionally viewed as an action heroine within the academic discourse. *The Good Wife* possesses a name that sounds like a conduct book from an earlier age, but the dangers that beset Alicia Florrick are far from historical. Instead, she fights a two front-war, professional and domestic, with enemies ranging from rival lawyers, like Patti Nyholm (Martha Plimpton), to her husband's professional enemies (e.g., Glenn Childs [Titus Welliver]), and the lingering fallout from her status as scorned wife. Alicia Florrick's battles arise as much from navigating thorny legal terrain as they do from having an annoying, meddling mother-in-law and raising two teenage children in the public eye.

With its thought-provoking title and diverse array of women and wives, *The Good Wife* intentionally and intriguingly refashions the narrative of wronged wife from "His Scandal" to "Her Story," the tagline for season one of the show:

> *The Good Wife* opens with a shot of Alicia Florrick and her husband Peter (Chris Noth) as they hold hands and proceed silently down a corridor. They arrive at a flashbulb-rampaged press conference where Peter approaches the microphone and announces he is stepping down as the state's attorney for Cook County, while Alicia stands at his side, ghostly and inanimate. He claims he's not corrupt or an adulterer, but Alicia's dead eyes indicate otherwise.[308]

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/01/fashion/01CULTURAL.html?partner=rss&emc=rss > 29 Apr. 2011.)].

[308] Louis Virtel, "On TV: *The Good Wife*."(*Movieline*. (22 Sept. 2009.) Web. <http://movieline.com/2009/09/22/on-tv-the-good-wife/ >16 Jan. 2015.)

The opening scene, so described, has all the ubiquity of flipping on CNN, seeing what the latest political scandal du jour is, and watching it unfold under the searing glare of the public's gaze. Indeed, Alicia Florrick's husband Peter's scandal resembles what we have grown accustomed to seeing beset high-profile politicians beginning in the 1990s (e.g., Bill Clinton, John Edwards, Elliot Spitzer, Mark Sanford, Rod Blagojevich, and Italian Premier Silvio Berlusconi). Michelle and Robert King, creators of *The Good Wife*, were fascinated by the real life spectacle that opens their own show, and the wife always standing silently at her husband's side.

The Good Wife pivots the story on how Alicia Florrick is forced to react to the wholesale nuclear annihilation, so to speak, of her world and having to re(re)invent herself as the legal rising-star she was before she gave up her career to raise her children and support her husband. The pilot episode illuminates how Alicia's professional and personal lives entwine.

As Louis Virtel notes in his review of the pilot episode, "[When] we watch Alicia take the reins on a doomed-seeming case, it's clear that her decision to reenter the workplace is necessary, a proper step in rejoining the living and professionally distancing herself from her husband, who sits in jail."[309] Moreover, "Upon working the case of a wrongfully accused wife who may have killed her ex-husband and framed it to look like a car-jacking, Alicia finds a way to relate woes, telling her [the accused woman] to settle down, take

[309] Virtel "On TV: *The Good Wife*"

a shower, wear nice clothes and makeup, and show no one."[310] Florrick, thus, utilizes her own status as victimized wife to make connections to her client. She equally employs her personal connection with her husband to determine that the government has no case against the wronged wife and subsequently wins the case.

The Good Wife's pilot succinctly and compelling makes a case for what Alicia Florrick has to gain from the law and how the law can benefit from Alicia Florrick's knowledge-base. To reiterate the snippet from crucial fight between Florrick and Childs quoted at the start of the chapter, "Mr. Childs, the day you leaked that sex tape to the press and forced me to shield my children from every cable news station that played it in a 24-hour rotation that was the day I became collateral damage. If you're worried about my husband, Mr. Childs, you've obviously never made a woman angry."[311]

Within *The Good Wife*'s worldview, Alicia Florrick's ability to conjoin her domesticity with her rage makes her an excellent lawyer. In so doing, she combines the contemporary masculine action hero, such as Liam Neeson (*Taken*) or Mel Gibson (*Patriot)*, that encourages a man to defend his family, take no prisoners, and wreak retributive wrath with the more feminine ideals, like Florence Nightingale or the Angel of the House, that trade in a woman's relationship to the home and to nurturing.

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[310]Virtel "On TV: *The Good Wife*"

[311]"Pilot." The Good Wife *Season One*. (Wri. Dir. Robert and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (22 Sep. 2009). CBS Productions, 2010. DVD.)

Alicia Florrick has experienced vast changes in her personal life. Prior to the start of the show, Alicia had willingly resigned from her prestigious career for twelve years to raise her children. Reviewing the show's first season for *Time*, James Poniewozik summarizes all that Alicia Florrick endured:

> Over the first season, Alicia struggled to keep up at the office and see her kids through the ongoing scandal. (Peter was guilty of cheating but seemed to have been framed on the associated corruption charge.) To keep her job, she had to play hardball and make ethical compromises, including accepting insider help from her ex. For her family's sake, she sought to help Peter get out of jail and come to terms with his infidelity. All this while dealing with her firm's financial troubles and the internal politics between its partners Diane Lockhart (Christine Baranski) and Will Gardner (Josh Charles)—oh, and the lingering attraction between her and Will, an old classmate from Georgetown.[312]

The following seasons have only seen more complications arise as Alicia has struggled to juggle her duties to her children, her complicated love/hate relationship with her husband, her attraction for, and subsequent affair with, Will Gardner, and the minefield that is her job.

By season five, the entwinement between *The Good Wife* and her real-life sisters has saturated the media narrative. In an article entitled "Julianna Margulies: Does She Consider Huma Abedin a *Good Wife*?," Margulies avers, "The headlines are now imitating us because both of these politicians–Spitzer and Weiner–have gotten back into the game of politics. And now newspapers are saying, 'Huma, take some advice from Alicia Florrick. Go back to work, don't

[312] James Poniewozik, "Uncommon Law Wife." (*Time*. 176.17 (25 Oct. 2010):72. Print.)

read the papers'."[313] That a real woman should take her direction from a telefictional one provides one of the more intriguing layers in a story that refashions real life political-personal narratives that oversaturate our television screens into a television show that both critiques and (re)defines those narratives. Margulies herself is quick to admit that her own views on the sort of woman she depicts were radically transformed by wearing her fictive shoes for real: "Watching Huma [Abedin] on the podium, standing there next to her husband and saying she was going to stand by her man, I only had compassion and empathy for her, and felt like none of us know what she's going to do yet."[314]

The Good Wife has earned critical plaudits, including numerous Emmy awards and nominations, as well as excellent Nielsen numbers. *The Good Wife* destabilizes the conventional notion that a show's popularity requires the stupidity of the viewing publics. *The Good Wife* has received a great deal of critical acclaim within the popular media, but has been largely ignored within scholarly circles. Scwartzbaum, Nigro, and Nussbaum explicate different

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[313]Michele Stueven, "Julianna Margulies: Does She Consider Huma Abedin a Good Wife?" (*People* (30 Jul. 2013). Web. < http://www.people.com/people/article/0,,20721791,00.html> 16 Jan. 2015.) Other examples include Kay Stieger, "8 Lessons Huma Abedin Should Learn From 'The Good Wife'." (*The Raw Story*. (24 Jul. 2013). Web. <http://www.rawstory.com/rs/2013/07/24/8-lessons-huma-abedin-should-learn-from-the-good-wife/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)]; "What Huma Abedin Could Learn from *The Good Wife*." (*CNN*. (31 Jul. 2013). Web. <http://marquee.blogs.cnn.com/2013/07/31/what-huma-abedin-could-learn-from-the-good-wife/ > 16 Jan. 2015.), and Joel Keller, "Margulies Doesn't Think Patti Blagojevich is a Good Wife: TCA Report." (*HuffPost TV*. (3 Aug. 2009). Web. <http://www.aoltv.com/2009/08/03/margulies-doesnt-think-patti-blagojevich-is-a-good-wife-tca-r/ > 16 Jan. 2015.).

[314]Stueven "Julianna Margulies: Does She Consider Huma Abedin a Good Wife?"

aspects of what makes *The Good Wife* popular with critics as well as more average television viewers.

Writing for *Entertainment Weekly*, Lisa Scwartzbaum contends that "the truth—passed from woman to every TV-watching woman I know—is that this traditionally constructed 10 p.m. show is the most pertinent, articulate, observant, and realistically feminist network-TV drama on the air today."[315] Regina Nigro lauds the show for its ability to transcend the binaries that condemn both the possession of femininity and the failure to be feminine: "One of the most refreshing qualities of 'The Good Wife' is its refusal to assert that strong women need to be less feminine or that femininity is weakness. Alicia does not need to bury the 'good wife' in her to be successful."[316] Emily Nussbaum sees something more searing and disturbing:

> Put simply, *The Good Wife* is to adultery as *24* was to torture. It's a timely, tangled, unsettling meditation on what comes after that primal scene—the press conference that exposes a sex scandal. The show gives us a stage to work through our anxieties about women and ambition, not to mention the debate about 'character' that has haunted the country since the Clinton era. It's about the ways a highly controlled woman—who has spent years cocooned in her famous marriage—reacts when that protection explodes. Is she his victim or his co-conspirator? A patsy, a partner, a pragmatist, or Lady Macbeth? Is she staying out of forgiveness or calculation? (There is far less mystery about what the husbands are thinking in these situations.) The show is too sly to fully answer these questions, but it has built a case that the political wife's psychology

[315] Lisa Schwarzbaum, "Why 'The Good Wife' Is Good TV for Women." (*Entertainment Weekly*. (20 Nov. 2009). Web.< http://www.ew.com/ew/article/0,,20322138,00.html >16 Jan. 2015.)

[316] Regina Nigro, "*Damages* and *The Good Wife* Look at Female Ambition." (*America: The National Catholic Magazine*. (15 Mar. 2010). Web. <http://americamagazine.org/issue/729/television/womens-work > 16 Jan. 2015.)

> is not in fact a private matter, that it's okay to want to know what's in the black box at the center of every high-flying relationship.[317]

The Good Wife, woman (or women) and show, are exemplary not for their singularity, but rather for their ability to be accessible to everywoman, those who undergo a similar public reckoning and those who watch it occur from the confines of their homes, safely ensconced on their couches.

Home, for Alicia Florrick, occupies a multivalent and complicated position. As such, she resembles women throughout history, especially the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when women of Alicia Florrick's class regained the ability to work outside the home.[318] Women, such as Charlotte Smith or E.D.E.N. Southworth, more often turned to writing rather than lawyering because the legal profession did not open to women until the 1890s.

Alicia Florrick's situation mirrors her foremothers' lives. Indeed, a woman's ability to support herself and aid her children because men were often improvident and intemperate, if not abusive, functioned as one of the primary arguments in defense of women's right to work in the nineteenth century (e.g., Anna Jameson and Caroline Healey Dall). Rather than fiscal irresponsibility or violence, Peter Florrick's fatal flaw is more carnal in nature, but he would otherwise provide an ideal illustration for their arguments.

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[317]Emily Nussbaum, "What Was She Thinking? The Irresistible Inscrutability of the Betrayed Political Wife." (*New York*. (27 May. 2011). Web. <http://nymag.com/news/intelligencer/nussbaum-political-wives-2011-6/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[318]I use writing as my example since it comes the closest to Alicia Florrick's current working position. While women wrote within their homes, they were still considered public women. Likewise, Florrick resumed her former career and did not support her family in any of the jobs, such as governess, seamstress, bar-maid, factory worker, saleswoman, &c., that correspond to the options available to working class and gentlewomen who were unable or unwilling to make it as writers (or actresses for that matter).

We can further appreciate Alicia Florrick's heroick and representative nature by examining how Caroline Sheridan Norton's (22 March 1808–15 June 1877) pamphlet writing translated the abuses she suffered first from her husband and then from the law's ignorance and insolence into actual changes to British Common Law. Indeed, Caroline Sheridan Norton's writings are said to have influenced the passing of the *Custody of Infants Act of 1839*,[319] *Matrimonial Causes Act of 1857*, and the *Married Women's Property Act of 1870*. The first time married English women had a legal identity separate from their husbands dates to the passing of the Married Women's Property Act. As in voting, American women gained property and divorce rights much earlier than their British sisters. Luckily for our fictive heroine, Indiana possessed liberal divorce laws throughout the nineteenth century; therefore had Alicia Florrick lived during the nineteenth century, she would have obtained shockingly easy access to rights over her children and her property.[320] Next, this chapter will

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[319]For a summary of the parliamentary battles surrounding **The Custody of Infants Act**, please see "The Custody of Infants Act 1839." (*British Women's Emancipation since the Renaissance*. Web. < http://www.historyofwomen.org/custody.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[320]From personal experience, my great..great grandmother divorced her drunken and abusive husband and kept everything, including full custody of her children and all the property. For a fascinating discussion of the 'shockingly' lax divorce lawas in the Hoosier State, see "The Divorce Mill of the Midwest." A snippet of how the Hoosier's law were viewed by the state's Chicago neighbors seems particularly apt: "However, the ease with which one could terminate a marriage in Indiana did not enhance the state's reputation nationwide. An October 13, 1858, story in the *Chicago Press and Tribune* wrote of the 'divorce scandal in Indiana.' The article counted 10 divorce cases alone pending in the Vigo Circuit Court, and 17 in Tippecanoe County—14 of which involved couples from other states—leaving the paper to wonder why the people of Indiana had tolerated this 'crying disgrace' for so long. In a more strident editorial printed on December 14 of the same year, the same Chicago newspaper condemned the 'cheap and easy method of divorce' available in Indiana, and charged that Indiana lawmakers had 'practically legalized Free Love and its endless and nameless abominations, not only for themselves but for half the Union besides' ["The Divorce Mill of the Midwest." Moments of Hoosier History. (*Indiana Public Media*. (5 Sep. 2011). Web.

look at Alicia in action, working within the law to fight for justice like some kind of superheroine, or at least like Caroline Sheridan. Finally, we return to the entwinement of life and television when we consider how an actor's choice to leave the show impacts the story.

Act I: The Law and the Lady[321]

From the perspective of a transatlanticist, *The Good Wife* occupies an analogous position to nineteenth-century treatises such as Caroline Sheridan Norton's *English Laws for Women in the Nineteenth Century* (1854)[322] and Caroline Healy Dall's *Woman's Rights Under the Law: in three lectures, delivered in Boston, January, 1861* that flooded American and British popular print markets. However, it would be unwise, if not mendacious, to suggest that Michelle and Robert King or any of those connected with *The Good Wife* explicitly drew from or responded to these nineteenth century feminist law treatises. Yet, the law that Alicia Florrick practices and the rights as a wife and mother she enjoys are explicitly and implicitly derived from the triumphs and tragedies of these texts and their progenitors. Her very ability to maintain

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<http://indianapublicmedia.org/momentofindianahistory/divorce-mill-midwest/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[321] *The Law and The Lady* is the title of a novel by Wilkie Collins. There is no crossover between the novel and this dissertation, though Collin's novel does have a heroick young woman who turns amateur detective to prove her new-husband innocent of his first wife's murder [Wilkie Collins, *The Law and the Lady*. (London: Chatto & Windus, 1875. Print.)]. In another fascinating note, Collin's novel is credited with starting the female detective trend. I might beg to differ, since I think Gothic heroines, such as Emily St. Aubert, function as amateur detectives trying to solve crimes and figure things out, but such an argument would be an interesting chapter for a second season or sequel to the present dissertation.

[322] Caroline (Sheridan) Norton, *English Laws for Women in the Nineteenth Century*. (London: Printed for Private Circulation, 1854. Print.)

control of her finances as a married woman depends on the protections of the law she practices. For much of the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth, Alicia Florrick would not have enjoyed a separate existence from her husband. Consequently, *The Good Wife* allows us to revel in the long way baby that we have come at the same time it as clearly reveals the long way we have to go.

We stipulate for the record, of course, that Caroline Sheridan Norton was an actual woman who lived in England and that Alicia Florrick is a fictive twenty-first century wife, attorney, and mother who inhabits Chicago. Notwithstanding the obvious differences of time and medium, both women wield words as weapons to change laws and fight for their families. Equally, each woman was subjected by her husband to public humiliation, endured the withering gaze of the public, was turned into print-fodder transfiguring their publics, and finally turned to work to support themselves. More importantly, both women translated their personal suffering into public good.

Briefly to review the facts of Caroline Sheridan Norton's case, she was the granddaughter of the playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan.[323] In order to allow a younger sister to marry, she was persuaded to marry the Honorable Charles Chapple Norton, barrister and MP for Guilford. Quite quickly, Caroline Sheridan Norton found out that his wealth, as well as his character, was misrepresented. He was frequently abusive, utterly improvident, and forced Caroline to beg her

[323]For a fascinating analysis of the artistic representations of Caroline Sheridan Norton, particularly her embodiment of "Justice" for Daniel Maclise's fresco *Justice* in the Palaces of Westminster, see Kieran Dolin, "The Transfigurations of Caroline Norton." (*Victorian Literature and Culture*. 30. (2002). 503-527. Print.)

family and friends for funds and for promotions for her husband. When she finally separated from him due to his cruelty and continuous abuse in 1836, he deprived her of her own possessions, the money she had earned through her pen, and more importantly custody of their three children.[324] For the most part, her children were kept from her and were shamefully treated. Even after Caroline Sheridan Norton succeeded in obtaining legal rights to her children,[325] her husband thwarted her by keeping their children in Scotland, which was out of the reach of the law.[326] He sent the children off to live with a mistress and then his sister. In 1842, William, her youngest son, was injured in a fall from a horse and died as result of his injuries remaining untreated. Caroline was not

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[324]For instance, Caroline Sheridan Norton affirms in *English Laws for Women:* "About the same period, a dispute having arisen after dinner, I said I really was weary of my life with the perpetual wranglings; that I had a great deal to do, and would sit no longer with him, but go to the drawing-room and write for a Periodical, of which I then had the editorship; that I only asked him to stay where he was, and smoke there, instead of upstairs. He answered, that the house was his,–not mine;–that he should sit in what room he pleased; and that I should find I could not carry things with such a high hand as I desired to do. I left him; called my maid, desired her to bring her work and remain in the room, as I did not feel well, and locking the door of the drawing-room for further security, prepared to write. Mr Norton came and demanded admittance. I refused, and said I was undressing. After repeating his demand, and saying, if the door was not instantly opened he would break it open, he was as good as his word. He forced in the door, forcing away the framework with it, and rushed forward. He stopped short on seeing my maid, and desired her instantly to leave the room. I said she must stay, for I was afraid of being left alone with him. Mr Norton then gave way to the most frantic rage, blew out the candles, flung the furniture about, and seized my maid to turn her out of the room by force. I clung to her, and being extremely frightened, and naturally at that time less strong than usual, I became very faint, and some of the other servants entering, Mr Norton desisted. He then lighted a taper, examined the door, asked where the carpenter lived, and left the room. I thought the worst was over; but I was mistaken. Mr Norton returned almost immediately, and seizing me, forced me out of the room and down on the stairs. I really feared for my life; I shrieked for help, and said I was sure Mr Norton was 'gone mad.' The man-servant held back his arm while he was struggling with the maid, who was terrified to death,–and at length, assisted by the servants, I retired once again to the nursery, and slept with the nurse; leaving Mr Norton master of the room he had broken into, and my literary tasks and the furniture scattered over the ground" (34-35).

[325]She was awarded custodial rights in 1839 as a result of her tireless campaigning and the resultant law-change affording women like herself custody over their children. [For Caroline Sheridan Norton's relation of the events, please see *English Laws for Women* 52-53.]

[326]Norton *English Laws for Women* 53-54

informed until too late. Her husband *generously* relented and allowed her supervised visits with her remaining two sons. So far, so different from Alicia Florrick, who never once lost custody of her children or was subjected to the indignity of having her husband's whores care for her children when she could not.

Norton expanded his vile abuse into a public trial for adultery in 1836. At first, George Norton attempted to blackmail Lord Melbourne, the Prime Minister of England (and married to the infamous Lady Caroline Lamb), for 10,000 pounds, but Melbourne refused. Norton, not content with kidnapping their children, further terrorized his wife.[327] Since Caroline Sheridan Norton possessed no legal existence of her own, George Norton sued Lord Melbourne

[327]Again, from Caroline Sheridan Norton *English Laws for Women*: "Mr Norton, however, soon proved what measures are at an English husband's disposal, whose wife demurs to any terms he chooses to impose. Those who saw their own advantage in our quarrel, advised him to make Lord Melbourne an object of attack; and under our mercantile law of 'Damages,' Mr Norton saw *his* advantage in adopting the suggestion. Lord Erskine, in one of his divorce cases, had obtained a verdict of 7,000£.; (a sum which, in that particular case, was said to involve the whole fortune of the defendant) and Sir W. Follett did his best to emulate Lord Erskine, in urging this main object on the jury. He repeated, in every form, his argument for aggravated compensation to his client. Sometimes he put it as a simple and inevitable legal result,–*'If you are satisfied (as satisfied I think you must be, of the facts stated), it remains for you to consider what DAMAGES you will give.'* Sometimes with a skilful and business-like allusion to the wealth which made a large sum a natural and proper award,–'Of course,' he says, *'Of course, the position of the parties in this case, the rank of one of the parties, and the mode in which they lived being considered, it is for you, Gentlemen, under all circumstances, to say what may appear to you a proper amount of DAMAGES.'* Sometimes, as an evidence of the wrongs sustained, and the degree of that wrong,–*'The amount of DAMAGES,–though not as a personal compensation,–must be considered in the result.'* Sometimes, as an appeal to the passions and sympathies of the jurymen; saying of Lord Melbourne,–*'His rank is an aggravation–his age is an aggravation–and the hollow pretence of his being a friend of the plaintiff, is a still greater aggravation. . . . It is then for you to say what DAMAGES you will give.'* Sometimes, with a sort of admonition to the jury to prove their own strictness of principle, by the amount of the penalty enforced,–*'I call upon you to mark by your verdict,–in the only way in which the law allows,–your sense of the conduct of the defendant.'* Nothing was omitted to be urged that could be urged, on this point; and no doubt,–if the accusation had been believed,–very heavy damages would have been awarded; but the jury pronounced against Mr Norton, without even retiring to discuss their verdict, and the speculation failed; both as regarded political and pecuniary interests" (30-31; italics, and punctuation, are Caroline Sheridan Norton's to mark her quotations from actual letters).

for criminal conversation in 1836. Caroline Sheridan Norton was found innocent of adultery, or rather Lord Melbourne proved the victor. Yet, the scandal nearly brought down Melbourne's government, sundered his friendship with Caroline, and haunted Caroline Sheridan Norton, since she was marked a "Painted Wanton."[328]

When her husband rebrought the suit in 1854, Norton finally fought back by divulging all the bitter truths of her married life. Norton knew the risks writing *English Laws for Women* would bring, but she considered the rewards for all women greater:

> To publish comments on my own case for the sake of obtaining sympathy; to prove merely that my husband has been unjust, and my fate a hard one, would be a very poor and barren ambition. I aspire to a different object. I desire to prove, not my suffering or his injustice, but that the present law of England cannot prevent any such suffering, or control any such injustice. *I write in the hope that the law may be amended; and that those who are at present so ill-provided as to have only 'Truth and Justice' on their side, may hereafter have the benefit of 'Law and Lawyers'* [italics mine].[329]

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[328]Norton *English Laws for Women* 46

[329]Norton *English Law for Women* 1 Caroline Sheridan Norton's prose is full of the powerful, almost beautiful, and always searing passages that characterize the law that we see on film (Atticus Finch in *To Kill a Mockingbird*) and television (Sam Waterston in *Law and Order).* If one were looking to more clearly connect CSN to the American discourse, this passage provides an interesting example (and one that could be considered controversial in certain areas of the academe):"I, too, had a contract. My husband being desirous to raise money settled on me and my sons, to employ on his separate estate, and requiring my consent in writing before that could be done, gave me in exchange for such consent a written contract drawn up by a lawyer, and signed by that lawyer and himself. When he had obtained and employed the money he was desirous to raise, like Mr Patton of Virginia he resolved to *'rescind the contract.'* When I, like the slave Norris, endeavoured to struggle against this gross breach of faith,–I was informed that by the law of England, *'a married woman could not make a contract, or have monies of her own.'* When I complained of it,–I was punished by a flood of libellous accusations, published in all the English newspapers; libels for which, though *proved* falsehoods, I could obtain no redress, because they were published by my husband. The circumstance that Mr Norton, like Mr Patton, had obtained all the advantage he sought when he went through the formality and pretence of making a contract with me, made no difference; and as to money, even that which I earned by literature was subject to the claim of my husband, as the manual labour of the slave was subject to the claim of his master,–because a married woman is, by the code of England, (as

As can be seen from *The Good Wife*, Caroline Sheridan Norton's plan worked. Alicia Florrick, like Caroline Sheridan Norton, is empowered by law to seek truth and to uphold her rights to her children and her money, no matter the status of her relationship towards her husband. Unlike Alicia Florrick, Caroline Sheridan Norton was the sole supporter of her family throughout both her marriage and its bitter aftermath:

> I rejoiced, then, at finding,–woman though I was,–a career in which *I* could earn that which my husband's profession had never brought him. Out of our stormy quarrels I rose undiscouraged, and worked again to help him and forward the interests of my children. I have sat up all night,–even at times when I have had a young infant to nurse,–to finish tasks for some publisher. I made in one year a sum of 1,400£ by my pen.[330]

Sam Norris by the code of Kentucky) *non-existent* in law. It is fit that I should add, in behalf of English hearts and English love of justice, that when I stood, with that vain contract in my hand, in the Westminster County Court; (I, an intelligent educated woman, grand-daughter of a man sufficiently distinguished to have obtained sepulture in Westminster Abbey, hard by,) and when the law was shown to be, for me, what it is for the slave of Kentucky, there was, in the court-room of the Westminster County Court, as there was in the court-room of the Covington Circuit Court, evidence of strong sympathy. My case,–which opened up a history of wrong, treachery, libel, and injustice endured for years without redress–was evidently considered like that of Norris, to be 'one of great hardship and cruelty,' and the concluding words with which Mr Norton vehemently attempted to address the court, were drowned in the groans and hooting of an excited crowd. But sympathy could do no more for me than for Mr Patton's slave. It could not force open for me the iron gates of the LAW which barred out justice. It could not prevent libel, and torment, and fraud; the ripping up of old wounds, or the infliction of new. The LAW alone could do that, if fit laws of protection existed for women. That they do not exist, is my complaint" (Norton *English Laws for Women* 19-20).

[330]Norton *English Laws for Women* 26-27. Norton continues, "All last winter I was residing in Italy with my two sons; occupied in completing a work to be published by Messrs Hurst and Blackett, the profits of which were devoted to the Oxford expenses of the youngest. I had just nursed him through one of those tedious Neapolitan fevers, from which he had suffered for nine weeks,–I had myself been confined to my room for five weeks,– and *this* was the time chosen by Mr Norton, as husband and father, for a vain battling correspondence, compelling my return to England, to debate at law the contract I thought had been settled for life. This was the time chosen,–by subpoenaing my publishers, and claiming to reckon my literary gains as his own personal relief,–to establish his legal right to annul even the service I could render my son: and to revive libels he himself had a thousand times admitted to be false: by which he once more put me in the same position, *as to the repelling of accusation,* that I had been in when our separation took place, in 1836" (46).

Unlike Alicia Florrick, Caroline Sheridan Norton had no rights to her own money and her husband was enabled to claim the proceeds of her writings even after their separation. Yet, despite the radical differences in their husbands, both Caroline Sheridan Norton and Alicia Florrick suffer for their husbands' misdeeds and aim to write and right their lives through the laws that govern women's lives.

English Laws for Women, in concert with Carolina Sheridan Norton's additional persuasive pamphlets and her tireless efforts, made actual changes to the laws of England. *The Good Wife* can be accorded no such honors. How then do we evaluate change? *The Good Wife*, of course, aims not at rewriting law. Michelle and Robert King are attempting to use Television as a means of changing hearts and minds. From Norton to Florrick, across bounds of time and space, fact and fiction, women have often been subjected to public ridicule for standing by or failing to stand by their man.

Another fascinating feature of *The Good Wife* arises from looking at how the laws that shape women's lives have both reshaped the culture and changed nothing. The society that could argue that a woman living in Caroline Sheridan Norton's era was a slut who had it coming because she wore that dress, ventured onto that street at night, or walked into that bar remains shockingly unchanged despite the sexual revolution that was supposed to return control of a woman's sexuality to herself and not the government or the men who surrounded her. Caroline Sheridan Norton or any other woman from her time period could watch *The Good Wife* (or *Law and Order: SVU* etc.)'s treatment of

rape or view an actual rape-trial and find, much to their chagrin, how pernicious, persisting, and prevalent social mores are even if the law itself has altered.

Truly, the idea of rapeworthiness is heinous and seemingly too horrifying to contemplate. Yet, the society in which we live and the justice system under which we exist trades in such atrocious moral calculus. Moreover, due to our own system's shameful and barbaric treatment of its own female students, those of us at the University of North Carolina know all too well how sexual assault is either ignored or allowed to persist and the victim herself held responsible for her attack. Consequently, despite the fact that we live in a "post-sexual revolution age," *The Good Wife* demonstrates the failures of said revolution. Slut-shaming, of course, is not a practice confined to the law, as the constant surge of protests across the globe have clearly shown; but the law, in theory, should occupy a more hallowed space than the mere quotidian. Unfortunately, the law, equally in fact and in television, is of an entirely different cast. Viewing the manner in which *The Good Wife* treats rape allows us insight into the still dangerous intersection between a woman's body and the world she lives and breathes in.

Act II: Not the Justice You Were Looking For

As the critics have noted frequently, *The Good Wife* excels at complicated plot and characters. Robert King avers, "What we're looking for is not exactly 'ripped from the headlines,' it's usually below the fold, or even buried in

another section."[331] Throughout its tenure, *The Good Wife* has dealt with a profusion of a cases (e.g., divorce, wrongful death, class action, and murder) and venues (e.g., military, arbitration, Blue Ribbon Panel, and Coroner's Inquest). Given both the feminist focus of this dissertation and our previous glimpse at Caroline Sheridan Norton's legal misadventures in the nineteenth-century, we will examine the four cases throughout *The Good Wife* dealing with sexual assault: "Stripped," "VIP Treatment," "The Art of War," and "Rape: A Modern Perspective."[332] Each of these episodes offers *The Good Wife*'s own unique and complex view of stories that echo real-life events.

Rape and its intersection with the law have always been an incendiary topic and a popular source for television (*Law and Order: SVU)* and cinema (*The Accused* and *Boys Don't Cry*). Similar to these other depictions of rape, *The Good Wife* deals in the difficult truth pervasive in modernity: rape might be a criminal act, hence illegal. Yet, this desired-victory that feminists from Christine de Pizan (*Le livre de la cité des dames* [Book of the City of Ladies] (1405)) onwards desired is compromised by the singular truth that our culture still holds many of the same carbon-datable, or at least Medieval, notions of

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[331]Meredith Blake,"'The Good Wife' Marries Politics with Drama."(Showtracker. *The Los Angeles Times* (14 Mar. 2011). Web. < http://articles.latimes.com/print/2011/mar/14/entertainment/la-et-good-wife-politics-20110314 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[332]Since this chapter ends its analysis with season five, the amazing "Red Zone" [The Good Wife *Season Six*. (Wri. Nichelle Tramble Spellman. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (9 Nov. 2014). CBS Productions, 2015. DVD.)] will not be discussed. "Stripped." The Good Wife *Season One*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (29 Sept. 2009). CBS Productions, 2010. DVD.); "VIP Treatment." The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions, 2011.DVD.); "The Art of War." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King and Ted Humphrey. Dir. Josh Charles. (4 Nov. 2012). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.); and "Rape: A Modern Perspective." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. J. C. Nolan. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (4 Apr. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013.DVD.)

gender that hold the victim responsible and traffick in notions of deserving and undeserving victims.

It would seem surprising that Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1748)[333], whose heroine, Clarissa Harlowe, is abused, raped, and then hounded to death, offers a more progressive model of feminist empowerment than twenty-first century case law.[334] Rather than blaming Clarissa Harlowe, Samuel Richardson venerates her as a saint whose chastity might have been forcibly taken from her by Lovelace, but whose virtue remains unscathed, even as her mind struggles to deal with the aftermath of the brutality inflicted on her body and the consequences she endures. Moreover, Richardson argues the society that wanted to sell Clarissa Harlowe into marriage and treats her as a commodity places her into the paths of men like Lovelace and other rakes who already view women as objects for sexual trade. Richardson, thus, along with other moralists, attacks the 'rape-culture' that flourished within eighteenth-century England (and America). Likewise, the rape-culture that Richardson and his contemporaries attacked seems disturbingly similar to the sort of brutalities

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[333] Samuel Richardson, *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady*. (London: Printed for S, Richardson, 1748. Print.)

[334]Completely random but utterly fascinating fact, Clara Barton's actual name was Clarissa Harlowe Barton. Also, this chapter's employs Richardson's *Clarissa* despite the fact that contemporary readers tend to rather disturbingly side with the villain. Rape tended to be more frankly spoken about in slave narratives, such as Harriet Jacob's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave* Girl, but other examples outside of that discourse are Mary Hays's *Victim of Circumstance* and Elizabeth Barrett Browning's *Aurora Leigh.* Seduction narratives tended to be more common, but however a woman 'fell,' she met the same distressing ends–prostitution and suicide. The prevalence of suicide remains the same for current women as it did for their fictive literary forbearers (and potentially actual living women as well). Women, now, of course are less likely to hurl themselves in ponds, but the shame and cultural-judgments that drive women to take their own lives or to keep silent lingers.

practiced by Steubenville's football players, amongst other stories that flood our newspapers and television screens nightly.

Through *The Good Wife's* presentation of legal cases and our sympathetic identification with Alicia Florrick, we may gain similar enlightenment about our society's vexed relationship between law and gender that a reader of *Clarissa* or *English Laws for Women* would gain about their society. The stories they tell are different, but one thing remains consistent: the victim herself is the one on trial. In *The Good Wife*, the audience's sympathies are consistently tested. We are forced to ask ourselves about the law and the lady. We are often made codefendants. We, as viewers, have a co-equal experience with what to expect from our victim and our attackers. The calmness with which the masseuse makes her case and her failure to sob and be convulsed with grief could easily lead us to see her story as false.[335] Likewise, promiscuous sexual history, for profit or pure pleasure, might indeed make us think, however briefly and however much to our chagrin, that the victim had it coming, or to borrow *The Good Wife*'s own words "That a call girl can't be raped."[336] By using our own sympathies and intellectual, emotional engagements with Alicia Florrick and her world, the audience experiences alongside Alicia the manner in which the law is inflected by the personal. As in Alicia Florrick's own life, we learn how

[335]"VIP Treatment." The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)

[336] "Stripped." The Good Wife *Season One*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (29 Sept. 2009). CBS Productions, 2010. DVD.)

the public and private spheres intrude on one another, sometimes to great personal cost, and sometimes to self-benefit.

Justice is often spoken of as blind. *The Good Wife* shows that blind Justice aims to question that theory. Diane Lockhart supports Christy Barborosa (Paloma Guzmán), a stripper who had worked as an escort, automatically in "Stripped," and as automatically, she sides with the attacker against Laura White (Natalie Knepp), a masseuse, in "VIP Treatment." *The Good Wife*, however, does not pull punches. It points out inconsistences. It places its viewers in the midst of the action and forces us to ask questions along with Alicia Florrick and Lockhart Gardner. Will Gardner pointedly tell Diane that she has switched positions from the last time when she had heroically maintains the masseuse had been attacked. At the same time, Will Gardner himself had maintained that Christy Barborosa, the victim, in "Stripped" was lying and making a false rape allegation. Therefore, *The Good Wife* forces us to see how cultural ideas shape and misshape our construction of victimhood.

To be fair, what persuades Diane Lockhart to misjudge the victim in "VIP Treatment" is the nature of the accuser: she cannot believe that a man who is renowned as a fierce and vocal defender of the rights of women could be guilty of such a foul and loathsome crime.[337] It would be like finding out that Joss Whedon or John Stuart Mill was running a sex trafficking ring. Equally, it is the

[337]Joe Kent, the assailant in "VIP Treatment" has a record as a champion of women's right and on the cusp of getting a Noble Peace Prize for his work with women's rights. To make matters even more disconcertingly, Kent's wife rings Diane Lockhart to defend Kent and to persuade Diane to drop the case. Intriguingly, we never see or hear from Kent directly ["VIP Treatment." The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)].

persecutors in "Stripped" who make Diane Lockhart trust the victim's version of events.[338] After all, it is easier to believe that the scion of a wealthy family rapes a stripper at his bachelor party than to think a warrior for woman's rights would secretly be perpetrating assaults on the very group he is determined to protect and avenge.[339] What is fascinating though is that in both cases a) the victim has previous ties with the sex trade or another 'unsavory' career; b) the crime that the women alleged occurred actually transpired; and c) the justice dealt is unequal. In "Stripped," Lockhart Gardner fails to achieve justice for the wronged woman, but through Alicia using her connections with her husband, Lockhart Gardner turn up evidence that had initially been discarded. This new evidence allows the victim to be vindicated and charges to be brought against her attacker.[340] Once she realizes what she will be subjected to once her case goes to trial, Laura White, on the other hand, flees, despite the fact that Lockhart Gardner via Kalinda's sleuthing determine that her attacker is a serial offender.[341] Thus, though Lockhart Gardner has the physical evidence the masseuse's left behind and a trail of other victims, there does not seem to be

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[338]"Stripped." The Good Wife *Season One*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (29 Sept. 2009). CBS Productions, 2010. DVD.)

[339]Respectively, "Stripped." The Good Wife *Season One*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (29 Sept. 2009). CBS Productions,2010.DVD.) and "VIP Treatment." The Good Wife Season Two. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions, 2011.DVD.)

[340]"Stripped." The Good Wife *Season One*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (29 Sept. 2009). CBS Productions, 2010. DVD.)

[341]Laura White does leave behind the evidence she collected (a towel with the subject's DNA on it.), so I suppose in off-screen-land, there is a possibility that he was punished ["VIP Treatment." The Good Wife S*eason Two*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)].

any suggestions either within the episode itself or in any other subsequent episodes that the perpetrator has been brought to justice.[342] The only change is that Diane Lockhart has been disabused of her former veneration of her idol and Laura White learned how much it cost to assault her and get away with it.[343]

The failures of justice to uphold the law on its books extends to the victims in the other two cases as well. "The Art of War" and "Rape: A Modern Perspective" have more traditionally sympathetic victims: an army JAG and a teenage girl. Captain Laura Hellinger (Amanda Peet), the victim in "The Art of War," is an army lawyer who was attacked by a military contractor while working in Afghanistan.[344] Her case was brought to the attention of Alicia Florrick by an army judge who knew that the victim would not be able to bring charges in military court and who had prior dealings with Lockhart Gardner. Even though Lockhart Gardner are able to compellingly demonstrate that the victim was assaulted, they lose the case, since the attacked occurred after the contractor fell under military jurisdiction.[345] Captain Hellinger resigns from the

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[342]"VIP Treatment." The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)

[343] "VIP Treatment." The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)

[344]"The Art of War." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King and Ted Humphrey. Dir. Josh Charles. (4 Nov. 2012). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

[345]"The Art of War." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King and Ted Humphrey. Dir. Josh Charles. (4 Nov. 2012). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

army, but Alicia Florrick is able to secure her a position, through Peter, in the District Attorney's office.[346]

Like Captain Hellinger, Rainey Selwin (Makenzie Leigh) seeks redress from a change of venue when she is unable to gain justice from criminal prosecution. Selwin is a high school student, and her case mirrors the horrors perpetrated on the Steubenville victim.[347] Once Selwin is hurled in prison for tweeting that she was raped and by whom, Anonymous enters the fray and brings its own unique brand of vigilante justice to the proceedings. Rather than rescuing the (re…re)victimized girl from her (false) imprisonment, Anonymous complicates Alicia Florrick's case and infuriates the judge.[348] Moreover, the judge decrees that Selwin will be freed from prison if she retracts her statement that she was raped. Selwin heroically refuses to do so and chooses to remain imprisoned.[349]

Indeed, it is only due to Kalinda Sharma's (Archie Panjabi) nearly-superheroic(k) skill set that Selwin gains some modicum of justice. Sharma was able to persuade the police officer who investigated Selwin's assault to hand over a copy of the officer's interrogation, wherein the perpetrator confessed to raping Selwin. Sharma, then, uploaded the video anonymously to the internet,

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[346]"The Art of War." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. Robert King and Michelle King and Ted Humphrey. Dir. Josh Charles. (4 Nov. 2012). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

[347]"Rape: A Modern Perspective." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. J. C. Nolan. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (4 Apr. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

[348]"Rape: A Modern Perspective." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. J. C. Nolan. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (4 Apr. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

[349]"Rape: A Modern Perspective." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. J. C. Nolan. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (4 Apr. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

thereby vindicating Selwin's claim, and enabling Alicia Florrick to convince the judge to free Selwin from prison.[350]

Even in this small plot summary, you can see the byzantine labyrinth in which a rape victim may become enmeshed. The viewing publics of "Rape: A Modern Perspective" were, probably, much more familiar with the actual occurrences that *The Good Wife*'s case emulates. Therefore, the viewer knows that although Selwin might be fictive, women and girls like her are all too real.

What are we then to make of the law and its entwinement with gender, specifically sexual assault? The valiant battles fought to make rape an illegal act seem pyrrhic when we see how unable and unwilling lawyers and the law itself are to prosecute rapists and focus instead on harrowing the victims. More importantly, the viewer must inquire what is justice?[351] Sara Bibel, in her review of "Rape: A Modern Perspective," avers that "Alicia, as always, is the thin grey line between idealism and the law."[352] How does that help? Alicia Florrick, in these cases, cannot save the world. She cannot magically or via vigilante means hunt down the offenders and rain down blows and bloody vengeance; as we see

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[350]"Rape: A Modern Perspective." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. J. C. Nolan. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (4 Apr. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

[351]As blood-curdling as these crimes are, sexual assault is not the only crime against women that comes across Lockhart Gardner's desk. Two of its most profitable clients are wife-murders: one of whom (Lemond Bishop [Mike Colter]—think the drug dealing, African-American equivalent of Michael Corleone) ordered the hit to keep custody of his son and the other escaped justice for murdering his wife only to be imprisoned for the murder of a woman he did not in fact commit (it was self-defense). To make matters even more creepy, both men value Alicia Florrick highly, particularly the campy, but still chilling Colin Sweeney (Dylan Baker), who appears to have a bit of a crush on Alicia.

[352]Sarah Bibel, "'The Good Wife' Takes on Steubenville and Anonymous." (*Xfinity*. (15 Apr. 2013). Web. < http://xfinity.comcast.net/blogs/tv/2013/04/15/the-good-wife-takes-on-steubenville-and-anonymous/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

throughout the show, she often cannot even utilize the law to prosecute their misdeeds. The viewer can feel pleased that Alicia Florrick, and Kalinda Sharma, are on the case, but surely, the fates of the four victims we behold cannot make us sanguine about our own fates in general or about the fictive Cook County justice system in particular.

It is true that the viewer herself need not rely on *The Good Wife*'s telefictions to tell her that rape exists or that the law is often unjust. What *The Good Wife* does allow is for that viewer to become conscious about the complexity of the situation and how intelligent men and women, like Will Gardner and Diane Lockhart, can hold divergent views and prejudge the truth of a situation. The viewer may learn that even our valiant heroine Alicia Florrick can kick arse, be an amazing lawyer and yet still lose to the law itself. Alicia Florrick offers an alternative to viewers conditioned to see lawyers as godly crusaders against injustice like Atticus Finch (Gregory Peck) or Jack McCoy (Sam Waterston).[353] She neither turns to extralegal means a la Daredevil or Batman to fight evil nor does she offer an inviolate ideal. Indeed, the closest thing that *The Good Wife* has to the more conventional action heroine can be found its own leather-clad badass, Kalinda Sharma. If Alicia Florrick embodies the "the thin grey line between idealism and the law," then Kalinda Sharma illustrates the vigilante hero who breaks laws or legs to make the world a better place.

[353] Of course, Atticus Finch loses the case in *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and McCoy & the other stable of lawyers on the *Law and Order* incarnations do now and then fail to win a case. Yet, Alicia Florrick never gets the standing ovation and hero's treatment that happens to Atticus Finch.

Act III: One Girl in All the World

Like some sort of comic book crime-fighting team *Saint Alicia and the Boots of Justice*, Alicia Florrick and Kalinda Sharma battle injustice while reforming ideas of virtuous wifehood and wielding the vexed power of female friendship. The centrality of female friendship might be one of *The Good Wife*'s most groundbreaking achievements: providing equal, if not greater weight, to a relationship between two women that is deep, abiding, and powerful without being Sapphic is rare on television.[354] Alicia and Kalinda's relationship resonates throughout the series. Kalinda Sharma plays an integral Alicia's professional and personal life. Within *The Good Wife*'s world, Alicia and Kalinda's prominence makes them ripe for drama.

Despite the fact that their bond has noticeably weakened since the opening season, Alicia and Kalinda often demonstrate a willingness to metaphorically go to war for one another.[355] Until the murder of Will Gardner,

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[354]Of all the plotlines within the show, fans were most anxious to see Kalinda and Alicia reunited. Archie Panjabi confessed: "It got to a point where just as Kalinda was about to move on, Alicia displayed a degree of warmth, so that definitely is a ray of hope for her. The time has come now where if we continue the ice between the two, the audience is going to get impatient. So I think the timing of the two getting together is spot on. People just love that friendship so much. I've always known it tested well in the pilot. But when you actually hear people from different backgrounds and different countries rave on about it, you really realize just how much people love that bond. . . .The writers are very keen to move it on to that place. I think their friendship might be different, but hopefully the two of them will be buddies again"[Kate Stanhope, "*The Good Wife*'s Archie Panjabi: Kalinda Has Had a Tough Year." (*TV Guide*. (27 Apr. 2012). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Good-Wife-Finale-Archie-Panjabi-1046601.aspx> 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[355]Both Alicia and Kalinda needed to do heroick acts to win back the other and to regain the trust. Darcyesque, Kalinda tracked down Alicia's errant daughter, from her baptism, returned her to the family home, and threatened her baptizer, rather than seducer, with violence if he dared to go in Grace's presence. She insisted that Grace and Zach, Alicia's children, refrain from telling Alicia, and she wanted her role in the reunion to be kept secret. Only when Alicia finds out from the baptizer, whom she had gone to confront on her own, does she find out what Kalinda had done. While the reunion is not a reset to their previous level of intimacy, the

the cruelest and most heartrending loss suffered by Alicia Florrick arose not from her husband's infidelity. Alicia, instead, makes the brutal discovery that Kalinda, her only friend, has had an affair with Peter Florrick.[356] That the affair happened well before Alicia knew Kalinda fails to soften the blow. The knowledge appears to shatter and destroy Alicia more than Peter's initial adultery scandal. Rather than celebrating her husband's regaining power, Alicia Florrick walks out. Learning of her husband's infidelity leads her to separate from Peter and to quite literally throw him out of their shared apartment. Alicia, likewise, severs her personal ties with Kalinda. Alicia acts much more irate and hurt towards Kalinda than Peter. As Michelle King explains, the revelation about Kalinda's perfidy "reopens a wound with him. But the friend's betrayal is awful and different. And Alicia doesn't have a lot of friends. It

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Austenesque machinations do result in Alicia making overtures of friendship to Kalinda and set them on the road to mending their shattered bonds. Alicia, additionally, utilizes her legal prowess to help save Kalinda from the FBI; in the current season, Alicia aims to free Kalinda from her reappearance of Kalinda's husband and his Gothic villainy cum English gangster. Within the story, Kalinda reacts, very probably with violence, once her Alicia has been threatened. Nick had previously shown himself capable of violence by having Cary Agos severely beaten. Yet, when Nick finds out that person for whom Kalinda has a special voice is Alicia, Kalinda is forced into action. All we see is the conversation between Nick and Kalinda, wherein Kalinda hurls his money at him and tell him to get out; when Nick refuses, the episode cuts quickly to Alicia waiting at a bar for Kalinda and Kalinda breezily walking in, comforting Alicia that all is well ,a scene that recalls similar scenes between Alicia and Kalinda post-Peter-knowledge. Precisely what Kalinda did is unknown to either the audience or to Alicia; Kalinda appeared to be wearing the same clothing in both conversations and no signs of blood or other indications of an altercation.

[356]Alicia Florrick has the epiphany in the final seconds of "Foreign Affairs."[The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Meredith Averill (story). Dir. Frederick E.O. Toye. (12 Apr. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)]. It resounds through the remaining episodes of season two "In Sickness." [The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Steve Lichtman (story). Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (3 May. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)]; "Getting Off." [The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Roxann Dawson. (10 May. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.); and finally, "Closing Arguments." [The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Corinne Brinkerhoff (story). Dir. Robert King. (17 May. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)], wherein Alicia and Will commence their affair.

strikes Alicia at the most enjoyable part of her new life: her work. So it's right in her face. She's questioning herself: Why did I not see this?"[357] In fact, Kalinda might be Alicia's only true friend, and Alicia's trauma arises as much from learning that Kalinda's regard proceeded from pity and an attempt to make amends as from actual regard for Alicia.

The storm cloud menacing the friendship proved more fraught because we, as viewers, had the advantage of dramatic irony. Viewers knew well before Alicia that Leila was Kalinda and that Leila had a one-night stand with Peter. The tension, thus, arose from seeing others learn about the secret and from waiting for the metaphoric other shoe to drop. Viewers heard discussions about the awful and terrible effect that the news would have on Alicia and Kalinda's bond.[358] Echoing the surreal juxtaposition that opened the series, Alicia learns about Leila's affair with Peter as the sound of celebration reverberates behind her; Peter is once more State's Attorney, and Alicia is once again confronted with the specter of his infidelity.[359]

More Bond than Bondgirl, Kalinda exploits sex and sexuality for information; the viewers shared with Alicia an understanding of Kalinda's fluid

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[357]Jan Hoffman, "*The Good Wife* and Its Women." (*New York Times*. (29 Apr. 2011). Web. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/01/fashion/01CULTURAL.html?partner=rss&emc=rss > 29 Apr. 2011.)

[358]For instance, Kalinda and Cary Agos (Matt Czuchry) have a conversation outlining just How Very Bad It Would Be in "Wrongful Termination." [The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Ted Humphrey. Dir. Phil Abraham. (5 Apr. 2011). CBS Productions,2011. DVD.)], and Peter Florrick knows that his secret is in danger of leaking in "Killer Song." [The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Karen Hall. Dir. James Whitmore Jr. (29 Mar. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)].

[359]Alicia Florrick realized the bitter truth in the final seconds of "Foreign Affairs." [The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Meredith Averill (story). Dir. Frederick E.O. Toye. (12 Apr. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011 DVD.)].

sexual mores. That Kalinda would have had sex with Peter without caring that he was married should come as no surprise to anyone, even Alicia herself. At that time, Alicia was "just the housewife" to Kalinda.[360] Consequently, Alicia's anger shows both how much she values Kalinda's friendship and how friendless Alicia is.

Despite the fact that we know how fleeting Alicia's pre-scandal friendships were, she had at least the illusion of being surrounded by other mothers and women with whom she could relate on a personal level. Now, Alicia is alone. Whilst Alicia Florrick works at Lockhart Gardner, she finds that Diane Lockhart is not the mentor that she would hope, particularly given Lockhart's lip service to women-power. Once Alicia "breaks up" with Kalinda, the usually stoic and unflappable Kalinda devolves into a flood of tears before resuming an even stonier mask of indifference. At the same time, Kalinda Sharma seems much closer to the people surrounding Alicia than to Alicia herself, which makes Alicia Florrick seem further alienated. Kalinda seems to move on whereas Alicia has lost the only two people that really mattered to her, Will and Kalinda, and has no one left to go to. Intriguingly, Will Gardner might be said to represent Kalinda Sharma's most strong bond. For instance, Kalinda Sharma not only warns Will Gardiner that Alicia Florrick will be leaving with the fourth year associates, but also stays behind and remains loyal to Will Gardner once Florrick Agos severs their ties from Lockhart Gardner.

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[360]"Getting Off." The Good Wife *Season Two*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Roxann Dawson. (10 May. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.)

More intriguingly, Will Gardner's murder becomes the tragic event that draws Kalinda Sharma, Alicia Florrick, and Diane Lockhart together. Kalinda honors her bond with Will by transfer her loyalty to Diane Lockhart. In the aftermath of Gardner's murder, Christine Baranski notes:

> The one after that [i.e., Will Gardner's death and the episode she's talking about is "The Last Call"], I think, is a beautifully written and constructed episode as well, where you begin to see all three of the women gain strength. I still find it so wonderful that the women keep breaking freer and freer and becoming stronger and stronger without being defined by the men. Diane has been defined by her partners at the firm and having to struggle with them. Alicia, by her husband and being pulled in the direction of Will. And Kalinda, of course, who's strong and yet curiously also falls into these patterns of behavior. *I don't think this was ever meant to be a feminist show* [italics mine] but it is certainly compelling to see female characters just keep digging in and having to find their strength and I think you're going to see some of that as the season ends.[361]

Baranski's asservations are tantalizing for two reasons: pertinence to our dissertation ("feminist show") and argument about the show's meaning.

Christine Baranski correctly calls "The Last Call" as germinal to her character's growth.[362] The aftermath of Will's murder transformed Kalinda, Diane, and Alicia into Furies, as it were, spurred on to avenge Will's death and to honor his life. At the same time, Will Gardner's centrality, even if it is akin to a black hole or suppurating wound, still means that all three women are defined by their relationship to a man. Christine Baranski's argument is flawed

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[361]Kate Stanhope, "Christine Baranski on *The Good Wife*'s Big Exit: 'I'm Still in Disbelief'." (*TV Guide*. (18 Mar. 2014). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Good-Wife-Christine-Baranski-Will-Death-1079775.aspx > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[362]"The Last Call." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Jim McKay (30 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

in suggesting that Will's loss means freedom from having to define oneself in relationship to a man.

In losing Will, Diane lost her literal partner in the firm; indeed, Will and Diane were often characterized as the lone happy marriage on the show, even though their relationship was purely platonic. Without Will, Diane is undefended and alone in the law firm she helped to found and which in part bears her name. She handles her "widowhood" with much more verve and fire than Alicia Florrick (whom we will discuss in our final act).[363] She summarily dispatches the firm's largest client and ensures he cannot get legal representation in the city of Chicago as punishment for the client's audacity to not insist on meeting almost the very moment Lockhart Gardner learns of Will Gardner's murder.[364] Diane looks as fierce and Amazonian as Buffy herself, even though Diane wields words to put the stake through the heart of her foe, rather than Buffy's witty-wordplay and actual stake combo.

Kalinda Sharma goes even more Elektra (to use Daredevil's feminine counterpart). She uses her wiles to meet the man who murdered Gardner; she gets him alone, and then taunts him viciously: she tells him that she knows he wants to die, and she holds the belt inches away from him through the bars, a and then she tells him that he will now have to live with what he has done and

[363]"A Material World." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Craig Turk. Dir. Griffin Dunne. (13 Apr. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[364]"The Last Call." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Jim McKay (30 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

death is a mercy she is not going to extend.[365] Watching Archie Panjabi's masterful performance conveys more powerfully than these poor words the fury she inflicts; she manages to embody emotionless fury and righteous, cold-burning rage.[366]

While a truer more comic book or other archetypal hero would have strung him up, Kalinda and her "boots of justice" serve a much colder, more calculated, and designed to inflict maximum pain. As once she protected Will and Alicia, Kalinda Sharma now serves Diane Lockhart and aims to assist her in implementing what Will would want in Lockhart Gardner and protect Diane from getting ousted from her own firm.

Consequently, Will's death does not seem to bring Alicia and Kalinda back together as a pair (primarily since Kalinda's having relations—in all senses of that word—with Cary Agos [played by Matt Czuchry]). These women need to refashion (literally and figuratively) themselves as survivors of the nuclear annihilation of their lives and world brought about by Will Gardner's brutal demise, which upholds Baranski's assertions. Moreover, Baranski's encapsulation gets at one of the primary things that people celebrated within the print-popular-cultural-coverage of Will's death: the liberation of Alicia from romantic pawn fought over by two men and a prize to be won, rather than a person in her own right.

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[365] "The Last Call." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Jim McKay. (30 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[366]"The Last Call." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Jim McKay. (30 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

While I understand and admire the feminist basis for such a viewpoint, I have to push back against it for precisely the same reasons that I must push back against Baranski's idea that this is not a "feminist" show. Some real women occupy an analogous position to Alicia Florrick. They might not be lucky enough to have Mr. Big (Chris Noth's role in *Sex and the City*) or Josh Charles for their options, but some women choose between two men. Likewise, the show's focus on Alicia Florrick rescues her from an object with no interiority who might as well be a horse or a castle as a woman. Her desires are grounded on realistic as well as romantic logics. Will Gardner was her boss. Even when she became a partner, their relationship still could prove damaging to Gardner (as we shall see in the next act), and Peter might be a cheating slut, but he is still the father of her children and grants her some measure, however fleeting or endangered, of security.

Moreover, would a show be devalued and a male hero rendered a mindless automaton if he were torn between two women? It is precisely these sorts of reasons that render *The Good Wife* feminist. Peter Florrick and Will Gardner are as much defined by Alicia as she is by them.

If one were being petty and pedantic, one would turn to the nearly universally agreed upon dictionary-type definition that "feminism means that women are equal to men." *The Good Wife* can earn the feminist merit badge on that account alone. Any inequality we have seen arises not because *The Good Wife* as an entity avers that women are inferior creatures, but the inequity arises from the show's examination of society. *The Good Wife*, as we will see in

the next section, puts as much of a litmus test on Peter's ability to be a good and faithful husband as it does it on Alicia's wifely virtues. Indeed, even if she no longer embodies the 50s hagiographic stereotype of "good wife," the show takes pains to show and tell us that such a 'fall' arises wholly from Peter's infidelity and betrayal.

If by feminist show, Baranski means feminist in the *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* sense wherein *The Good Wife* had "the joys of feminist empowerment" coded into its DNA, then we have ourselves an intriguing situation. I would aver that even in that version, *The Good Wife* meets the Whedon test. For if Joss watched horror movies and wanted the hot blonde to kill monsters, then the Kings watched those press conferences and wanted the wife to speak for herself.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer operates within a set of genre-conventions that requires slayage and weapons. Buffy can be as witty as she pleases, but it's not her words that do the killing.[367] Alicia Florrick is not a policewoman, but a lawyer. Thus, to expect her to pack heat and shoot bullets in order to be considered a worthy heroine is antithetical not only to the dissertation, but to the world in which Alicia Florrick lives. Alicia Florrick is not a pioneering heroine because she kills demons. What makes her groundbreaking and the Kings' choice so Whedonesque arises from finally empowering a woman like her

[367] You could include Giles, Willow, or others who use magics (i.e., Book goes on fire. Giles says, "Don't Speak Latin in front of the books, Xander" as words equal weapons but that would be taking the simile a bridge too far methinks.

to speak for herself. Huma Abedin, Hillary Clinton, and other real life women, granted, are not shrinking violets who require Alicia Florrick to save them.

If *The Good Wife* enables its viewers to see hard truths about our justice system's treatment of rape victims, then it likewise facilitates our ability to see inside the life of a woman like Alicia Florrick. It does not demonize her for being a stay-at-home mother or suggest that all women should be like Alicia Florrick. Alicia Florrick is not even like the Alicia Florrick whom we first glimpsed standing stalwartly by her husband in the "Pilot." While she might be at times referred to as "Saint Alicia," for obvious reasons, *The Good Wife* feels no need to write her hagiography or to turn her into conduct literature consumed passively by the masses. By making Alicia Florrick a woman who aims to do the morally just thing and not always succeeding at saving the day or at even being the most perfect mother in the world, the show's creators, its writers, and most importantly, Julianna Margulies herself deserve credit for enacting and inspiring feminist critical conversation. Similarly, in placing Alicia Florrick in a richly characterized world inhabited by women as diverse as Kalinda Sharma and Diane Lockhart, it prevents Alicia Florrick from being alone, though she might herself often feel like the sole survivor or to borrow *Buffy*'s phrase, "one girl in all the world." As can be seen from the previous sections, *The Good Wife* does not refrain from casting an equally critical eye on the men its world and in Alicia Florrick's life.

Act IV: Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

The Good Wife highlights the permeability of the domestic sphere: it repels and attracts external threats from the first breach in its security made by her husband's infidelity through Alicia Florrick's reentry into the workforce.[368] Prior to the scandals surrounding her husband, Alicia Florrick appears to have been content to reside within the domestic sphere and to serve in the more traditional roles of helper to her husband, thus further aligning her with similar women from her generation.

Indeed, as Michelle King, co-creator of *The Good Wife* reveals, "If Alicia didn't have to work, it wouldn't have occurred to her. She was contentedly going about. The tragedy with her husband was what allowed her to realize herself."[369] Alicia Florrick's domesticity proves advantageous to her work: "In fact, the compassion and understanding required to raise a family, support a husband and forgive that husband's transgressions do not threaten her ability to litigate; they strengthen it."[370] At the same time, Peter Florrick demonstrates

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[368]The reappearance of Alicia's old homestead on the market at the same time she is danger of losing her new apartment serves as an important reoccurring plot during the final six episodes of season three, starting with "Long Way Home." "I Lost My House; I'm Working With It," or so remarks Alicia Florrick, with barely concealed fury to Kalinda Sharma ("Blue Ribbon Panel"). Almost all of her actions post-"Long Way Home" are powered by Florrick's emotional loss and the turmoil that comes about from the possibility that she could actually go home again, even if it is the "long way." As in her other domestic battles, Florrick uses her emotions to great advantage. For instance, she follows up the her confession to Kalinda by turning on her heels, striding back into the meeting she and Kalinda had just left, approaching the computer, and blisteringly rejects the attempts made against Kalinda by the IRS, calling out the person responsible and telling them to show themselves. More importantly, she broaches the subject of a raise with Dianne, and then uses a competing offer from another firm (Louis Canning) to force Diane to give her the raise, which she uses to rebid on the house ("Gloves Come Off").

[369]Hoffman "*The Good Wife* and Its Women"

[370]Nigro "*Damages* and *The Good Wife* Look at Female Ambition"

the difficulty for men to navigate the domestic and public spheres, even as his indiscretions are what help to threaten the safety and sanctity of his home. His inability to be the Good Husband to his *Good Wife* spurs Alicia Florrick's personal growth and demonstrates how *The Good Wife* never refrains from interrogating the merits and the implications of its title.

Peter, like Alicia, exhibits a dedication to defending his family, particularly his children. We see his ruthlessness in repelling any attacks directed against his family. For instance, he punches his political rival for the Illinois Governorship, Mike Krestava (Matthew Perry), in the men's room and makes it seem like Krestava fell due to inebriation in retaliation for Krestava's smear campaign against Peter and Alicia's son, Zach Florrick (Graham Philips).[371] Initially, Peter Florrick acted as though Alicia would return home once he was released from prison, but he has grown to actively support his wife's career. When Alicia needed money to get her partnership in Lockhart Gardner, Peter Florrick provided her the money, since she did not possess enough of her own money.[372]

Though they are currently married legally, Peter Florrick and Alicia Florrick maintain separate domiciles and lives. Even before Alicia and Will commenced an affair, Peter was angered by Alicia's relationship with Will. Peter's infelicitous decision to bring up Will to a grieving Alicia precipitates a

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[371] "Death of a Client." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Robert King. (24 Mar. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

[372] "The Seven Day Rule." The Good Wife *Season Four*. (Wri. Keith Eisner. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (27 Jan. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.)

sundering of their bond for anything other than show.[373] Throughout the series, Alicia Florrick willingly plays the role of dutiful "good wife" and publically supports her husband's political campaigns. Indeed, it is a truth universally acknowledged that Alicia Florrick is her husband's secret weapon, the reason he wins over constituencies, and a potent political argument for why someone should choose to stay with and/or vote for Peter Florrick. Peter Florrick may be able to live without his wife, but Peter Florrick, governor and politician, needs Alicia Florrick by his side at least in the public eye and in the camera's glare. She is his secret weapon. Though her commitment to her marriage is over, her commitment to the façade of the marriage to protect her children and uphold her husband's career is as firm as ever.

One could argue that such a move on Alicia's part makes her immoral and unheroic. She might be calculated, but their careers depend on functioning as a unit. Florrick Agos's sole ability to hold its ground as an upstart law firm trades in Alicia's status as the Governor's wife. Granted, her status is charged because she loses as many clients as she gains. Likewise, Peter's attempts to be a good husband and support his wife once he becomes governor prove problematic: the photo op with a drug dealer (Lemond Bishop) is the attack ad that writes itself as Peter was being a selfless, Good Husband showing up to his wife's Christmas party.[374] Now that he is governor of the State of Illinois,

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[373]"A Material World." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Craig Turk . Dir. Griffin Dunne. (13 Apr. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[374]"The Decision Tree." The Good Wife *Season Five* (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (1 Dec. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

Margulies maintains "the two of us just start to plow people down. Bill and Hillary didn't plow people down, but there's power in numbers. As a couple, I think they're finding their stride and she loves it. She loves that part. I don't know if she agrees with it, but she's definitely going to utilize it while she can."[375]

Even before the fifth season, Peter Florrick often haunts her professional and personal lives. "Another Ham Sandwich" perfectly embodies these vexed interactions between home and work.[376] The episode title "Another Ham Sandwich" derives from a Chicagoland truism, explicated to unknowing viewers within the show, that a Cook Country grand jury will indict everything, including a ham sandwich. The particular grand jury in question involves Will Gardner and accusations of judicial bribery. Yet, the real reason Will Gardner is under attack is because of Peter Florrick's jealousy. Will Gardner and Alicia Florrick did not commence a relationship until Alicia has separated from her husband.[377] Their relationship has ended due in part to Peter's legal shenanigans.[378] Peter, nevertheless, had accused Alicia of an inappropriate relationship with Will on numerous occasions long before such a relationship

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[375]Chris Harnick, "Julianna Margulies: 'The Good Wife' Season 5 Is 'Intense,' 'Exciting' & 'Full Of Change'." (*The Huffington Post*. (25 Sept. 2013). Web. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/09/25/julianna-margulies-the-good-wife-season-5_n_3983174.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[376]"Another Ham Sandwich." The Good Wife *Season Three*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Frederick E.O. Toye. (29 Jan. 2012). CBS Productions, 2012. DVD.)

[377]"A New Day." The Good Wife *Season Three*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Meredith Averill (story). Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (25 Sept. 2011). CBS Productions, 2012. DVD.)

[378]"Parenting Made Easy." The Good Wife *Season Three*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Courtney Kemp Agboh (story). Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (4 Dec. 2011). CBS Productions, 2012. DVD.)

ever occurred. In this instance, he employed his position as state's attorney to punish his wife's lover, and Peter's actions resulted in Gardner's six-month suspension. The only reason Gardner was not disbarred and his relationship with Alicia made public was due to the Lockhart Gardner's strategy to implicate Peter Florrick during the grand jury's hearing.

During the season-four finale, Alicia Florrick makes the radical decision to divorce her current firm and join with Cary Agos in forming their own firm. The revolutionary nature of her decision is highlighted by the evident structural and televisual parallels to when she broke off her relationship with her husband. Both times, Alicia Florrick abandons her husband's victory celebration to think, drink, and act. The viewer is even manipulated into believing that the man for whom Alicia Florrick leaves and to whom she opens the door is Will Gardner.

As Alicia Florrick attempts to separate herself from Lockhart Gardner, she finds herself in a brave new world. She attempts to uphold her moral code. Yet, she finds herself at odds equally with the old ways and the new. The only individual amongst the other fourth-year associates to respect her is Cary Agos. She wants to do the honorable thing and leave once the case she's working on is completed, but the rest of Florrick Agos are determined to wait for bonuses. Their stubbornness puts Alicia Florrick in the unenviable and untenable position of double-agent, trying to protect the fourth years while not committing any illegal acts that could result in her disbarment. Instead of disbarment, Alicia Florrick has her partnership stripped from her and is perp-

walked like she's wearing a Scarlet Letter past all her officemates and ends up sobbing bitterly in the elevator.[379] Moreover, she finds her character and good names smeared to all her clients.[380]

Likewise, the fact that Peter now uses his power to help Alicia, rather than to restrain her, further entwines the domestic and the professional. As noted earlier, Peter goes so far into the ethical mire that he trades in his Governorship to wreak wrath against his wife's enemies: denying Diane Lockhart the judgeship he promised her and 'convinces' an errant client ChumHum to side with Alicia by threatening social networking firms with enormous taxes.[381] Furthermore, Peter uses some shady, Chicagoland style tactics to persuade, to put it politely, or to all-but-blackmail a senator to get the NSA to cease surveilling Alicia Florrick.[382]

To make matters more confusing, the NSA only cares because Zach, the Florricks' son, broke up with his girlfriend to help his father's campaign. The girlfriend in question had a Somali last name (read terrorist) with a grandfather who had questionable links (read maybe an actual terrorist sympathizer). After her dumping, the girlfriend behaved in typical heartbroken teenage-girl fashion: calling Zach constantly and sobbing hysterically on the phone. Consequently,

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[379]"Hitting the Fan." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. James Whitmore, Jr. (27 Oct. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[380]"The Next Day." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (3 Nov. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[381]"The Next Day." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (3 Nov. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[382] "Goliath and David." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Luke Schelhaas. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

the NSA uses a tenuous connection from one of Lockhart Gardner's former clients to obtain a wiretap on Alicia Florrick due to aforementioned Somali-terrorist connections.[383] From there, the wiretap expands to encompass all Alicia Florrick's home, her work, and her husband's life and work. From this oversimplification of the events, you can see how enmeshed Alicia's lives are. Thus, throughout Season Five, the viewer was regaled by NSA geeks listening to wiretaps and doing snarky commentary on what amounts to *The Good Wife*: NPR radio edition.

Even if she wants to be as pure as snow and as chaste as ice, Alicia Florrick cannot escape calumny. On one hand, Alicia Florrick endeavors to resist the moral compromises she sees occurring daily at Lockhart Gardner; on the other, she is "betraying people who I love and trust, who gave me my start. That moment when Will Gardner walks into Alicia's office and says 'No one would hire you' and we have this huge fight—he's right! It's a betrayal. It's horrible."[384]

Even before Will's office-outburst, Alicia Florrick had learned her hiring is a result of Will Gardner calling in a favor to hire her and not, as she believed, a result of Alicia's own merits.[385] *The Good Wife*, though, delights in complexity. "A Few Words," the episode prior to Will's demise allows the viewers to glimpse

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[383]"The Bit Bucket." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Ted Humphrey and Robert King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (6 Oct. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[384]Harnick "Julianna Margulies Goes Behind ''The Good Wife' Betrayal"

[385]The information is first revealed to both the audience and Alicia Florrick in "Marthas and Caitlins."[The Good Wife *Season Three*. (Wri. Ted Humphrey. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (23 Oct. 2011) CBS,2012. DVD.)].

Alicia Florrick right before she becomes the woman we know and love today.[386] "A Few Words" prompts a re-reckoning of Alicia's journey from "wronged wife and stay at home mother to law goddess or at least legal eagle."[387] "A Few Words" coalesces around Alicia Florrick's attempts to write the keynote speech for the American Bar Association's conference in New York:

> The way the show uses this speech of Alicia's is fantastic. Alicia attempting to write her own story, of how she became a name partner at her own firm, is her attempt to write the story *The Good Wife* has been telling us for the last five years. She almost can't do it—Alicia hates self-reflection. It requires her to exist beyond pure duty and gut instinct, and that's an uncomfortable space for her (and for most of us; hence, therapy). And when she's working on it, she's pulled in a few different directions. Is everyone there just to hear the disgraced wife speak? Or do they see her as a strong feminist role model? There's all of this framing, both by Alicia herself and the people around her, to try to fit her into some kind of context. And maybe some of those contexts work. But Alicia is a person, first, and *The Good Wife*'s first interest is her character[388]

Numerous scenes[389] of Alicia attempting to write a speech are juxtaposed with Alicia's newfound prominence (Florrick Agos are trying to land a lucrative client) and a timorous, tentative Alicia aiming to get a job.

In the time just after her husband's scandals have been made public, she frantically tries to find a job. Her status as scorned wife makes her toxic and no

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[386]"A Few Words." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (16 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[387]Sonya Saraiya, "Review *The Good Wife*: 'A Few Words.' (*The TV Club*. (16 Mar. 2014). Web. <http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/good-wife-few-words-202142 > 16 Jan. 2015.). Sonya Sariaya's analysis demonstrates the capability of popular television criticism directed at the average fan of the show, rather than doctoral students or cultural studies professor, to be savy, wise, and witty.

[388]Saraiya "Review *The Good Wife*: 'A Few Words'

[389] As an aside, all the focus on Alicia Florrick having a miserable time constructing her speech made me a very happy dissertator as I felt akin to Alicia Florrick sans epick red wine consumption.

one will touch her due to the stench of her husband's infidelity.[390] One person alone views her as intelligent and capable. One person treats her like a capable human being. Will Gardner is that person. Gardner's admiration of Alicia is grounded in their law-school relationship. Throughout the flashbacks, Josh Charles's acting choices and those of the writer and director never make it seem as if Will Gardner is hiring Alicia Florrick for reasons that are just shy of sexual harassment.[391] He might love her, but he is not hiring her so he can sleep with her. Rather, Gardner defies all the partners, including Diane Lockhart, to give Alicia Florrick the job at Lockhart Gardner.[392] The glimpses at Will Gardner's initial engagement with Alicia Florrick clarify Gardner's anger when she leaves to found Florrick Agos. He acts like a bitter boyfriend whose jilted lover left him and took the fourth year associates along with her.

At the same time, Will Gardner is the lone member of Alicia's coterie to attend her keynote speech the American Bar Association, stays till the end (after it is interrupted by breaking news that sends the lawyers scurrying), and actively listens to what Alicia says. He even consoles her as she wallows in a coffee shop and tricks the viewer into believing the reconciliation will lead to a rekindling of their friendship. "A Few Words," moreover, demonstrates how Gardner's career is once more in jeopardy due to Peter Florrick's questionable

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[390]"A Few Words." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (16 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[391]"A Few Words." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (16 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[392]"A Few Words." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (16 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

choice: in this a case ballot box, the last scene in the season four finale and percolating as a time bomb in the episodes right before the actual gun goes off. We believe that Gardner will protect Peter, whom he loathes, to save Alicia, whom he still loves. Only Gardner's death frees Peter from the information that Gardner possesses.

Although Florrick seems empowered and self-confident in her choice to form Florrick Agos, her portrayer contends: "I think if she and Will had never started anything and she didn't know him at all, I don't think she would have left. She's the partner at a huge law firm doing very well."[393] Alicia Florrick seems to rebel against her desire and choose herself. Moreover, Margulies avers, in the same interview, "When she sees how Diane and Will also work, there's a very slippery slope of moral integrity that happens with Alicia. I think she doesn't want to be around it. She believes—or she's trying to make herself believe—that she can have a firm with distinct morals and values that is not the path of Lockhart/Gardner."[394]

Reviewing "Hitting the Fan," Jace Lacob asserts, "For both sides in this not-so-civil war, there's a real sense of purpose and righteous anger, further amping up the narrative stakes in a season already brimming with possibility."[395] The fierce brutality with which Will Gardner exerts his vengeance

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[393]Harnick "Juliana Margulies: *The Good Wife* Season 5 is Intense"

[394]Harnick "Juliana Marguilies: *The Good Wife* Season 5 is Intense"

[395]Jace Lacob, "'The Good Wife' isn't Just on Fire, It's a Narrative A-Bomb." (*The Daily Beast* (n.d.) Web. < http://www.buzzfeed.com/jacelacob/the-good-wife-hitting-the-fan-review#lu19px > 16 Jan. 2015.)

has all the dripping poisonous scorn of a woman scorned.[396] The blood and fire rains down leaving the sort of scorched earth that is traditional associated with romances gone wrong.[397] Having *The Good Wife* hurl the vindictive fury at the dissolution of the law firm, rather than Alicia and Peter's marriage shows the value placed on Alicia's work.

Marching forward, a new Alicia rises phoenix like from the ashes of her former self: "What we really wanted is kind of a warrior princess Alicia. There's a kind of gauntlet set down between her and Will that actually makes her a more competitive person. She's sent off on a war path. . . .more ballsy, . . . kicking ass and kind of enjoying kicking ass."[398] Helas, of course, Alicia Florrick's journey toward self-empowerment demands a blood sacrifice. In comic book parlance, one of the most disturbing tropes is the woman in the fridge: the hero's girlfriend who prays the ultimate price as retribution or raison d'etre for his heroick journey.[399] With the murder of Will Gardner, *The Good Wife* can be said to have experienced its own fridge-moment.

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[396]"Hitting the Fan." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. James Whitmore, Jr. (27 Oct. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[397]"The Decision Tree" allows us an unparalleled glimpse into Gardner's mind as he must face Alicia in quote and then question her as a witness ["The Decision Tree." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (1 Dec. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)].

[398]Kate Stanhope, "Postmortem: The Good Wife Bosses on That Heart-Crushing Exit and 'Warrior Princess Alicia'." (*TV Guide*. (27 Oct. 2013). Web. < http://www.tvguide.com/News/Good-Wife-Alicia-Exit-Postmortem-1072581.aspx?rss=breakingnews&partnerid=huffposttv&profileid=breaking > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[399]Here's the wiki entry: "Women in Refrigerators." *Wikipedia*. (Web. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_Refrigerators >16 Jan. 2015.). More importantly, here is the site that spawned it all: Gail Simone, "Women in Refrigerators." ((n.d.). Web. <http://www.lby3.com/wir/> 16 Jan. 2015.).

Act V: Punitive Damages, or a Man's Place is in the Fridge

We end as we began with the collision between the real and the fictive. *The Good Wife*'s creators were faced with a problem at the end of season four: Josh Charles wanted out of his contract. Series television, even of the exemplary caliber of *The Good Wife*, can be demanding, and Charles was burned out. Such are the problems with television. It seemed that Charles's Will Gardner was destined to be with Margulies's Alicia Florrick, particularly at the end of season four. Florrick and Gardner seemed to be as meant to be in the romantic-comedy sense as could be expected in a show centered on law and morality and not on its more soapier aspects, such as *LA Law*. Florrick and Gardner's quasi-predestination was hammered home ever so cruelly in the episode before.[400]

The show's creators certainly had ideas for what was going to happen with Alicia and Will. Similarly, as noted in a prior section of our chapter, Will Gardner was equally invaluable to Christine Baranski's Diane Lockhart and Archie Panjabi's Kalinda Sharma. Thus, it seemed impossible for Season Five to begin with no Josh Charles, and unlike soap operas or even *Game of Thrones* wherein such issues can be resolved by simply changing the face to the name, *the Good Wife* was not able to go that route and hire another actor to replace Charles and allow Gardner to remain on the show. If there was going to be a Will Gardner on *The Good Wife*, he would be played by Josh Charles and not recast with a different actor.

[400]"A Few Words." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (16 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

Instead, the creators rang Julianna Margulies, who was both a producer on the show and one of Josh Charles's closest friends. Indeed, she was the sole reason why he got the part in the first place. According to Margulies, the phone call went like this:

> 'We need to tell you something. Josh is gonna be leaving the show.' And I said, '**Why***?*' And they said, 'Well, his contract is up, and he doesn't want to renew.' My head just started spinning. I said, 'Well, well, well, wait. Did you see if he could do less episodes? Maybe offer him more directing gigs," she recalled to much laughter. '*I just became Alicia the lawyer trying to figure out how to negotiate this contract*' [italics mine]."[401]

Margulies continues:

> I called Josh, and I gave him terrible Jew guilt [ed. note: both Charles and Margulies are Jewish.]. I knew he was about to get married. I'm good friends with his wife, and they're dear friends of ours [ed. Margulies and her husband]. I said, 'Josh, how about this: 15. Think about it. Wait. **Think about it**. Money in the bank for 15 episodes. Do you know how expensive it is to have a baby in New York City?' I went right to the kid thing, and it was disgusting, honestly.' We were looking at kindergarten for our son at the time, and I was like, 'Do you know how much private school is in New York?' I went on this whole thing about kids and family, and he was like, 'Well, 15? Let me think about that.' And I said, 'And two directing slots!' And then I hung up and called [the Kings], and I was like, 'How about 15?' And immediately they both said, 'If we have an arc, and we know we can write starting next season and finish up this season as planned, we can do this.' And so I said [to Josh], 'They're gonna write amazing stuff!' And the next thing I knew, it happened.'"

Margulies's participation exemplifies the crossover between the real and the fictive. She "became Alicia" and used her knowledge to compel Charles to change his mind. Even the arguments Margulies make are significant.

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[401]Mandi Bierly, "'The Good Wife': Julianna Margulies Explains How She Negotiated Josh Charles' Season 5 Contract."(*Entertainment Weekly*. (27 Mar. 2014). Web. <http://insidetv.ew.com/2014/03/27/good-wife-josh-charles-julianna-margulies/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

Other than the offer to direct two episodes of season five, all her persuasion is grounded in the personal and the domestic. Charles, thus, appears to be won over by his immense personal amity for Margulies as well as appeals to the well-being of his wholly hypothetical child. While Margulies might call it "disgusting," her tactics show how much she has learned from embodying Alicia. Margulies's was victorious. Her negotiations meant that there was a Josh Charles in season five.

Conversely, Margulies's success meant disaster for Alicia Florrick. Margulies's power and her ability to exert some measure of control over Charles's actions differ radically from what befalls her fictive counterpart. Within *The Good Wife*, Alicia Florrick is so devastated by Gardner's death that she stays in bed, crying ceaselessly, marathoning *Darkness at Noon,* a horribly bad (faux) television series she had earlier despised,[402] and generally cocooned in her pain.[403] She only escapes from her stupor to support and defend Finn Polemar (Matthew Goode), the Assistant DA who was in the courtroom with

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[402]*Darkness at Noon* is commonly thought to be *The Good Wife* writers mocking AMC's *Low Winter Sun*. The show reoccurs throughout season five and six. Although the *Darkness at Noon* are some of my favorite pop-cult bits of a show not known for its popular-cultural shoutouts, it is not universally popular with critics: "*The Good Wife* loves filling its universe with fictional properties (e.g., Chum Hum), but what was the deal with the *Low Winter Sun* rip-off *Darkness at Noon*? Don't get me wrong, it was pretty cute to watch Alicia try to enjoy some TV with Grace, and the 'I need more wine' joke was pretty killer, but it feels a little harsh to mock *Low Winter Sun*. Hasn't that show been skewered enough? Sure, you could argue that the hackneyed dialogue on *Darkness at Noon* ('there's crossing lines and then there's crossing lines') highlighted some of the moral quandaries facing our protagonists, but *The Good Wife* is usually a bit slicker than that."[Joanna Robinson, "*The Good Wife* Recap: Getting the Band Back Together." (*Vulture*. (10 Mar. 2014). Web. < http://www.vulture.com/2014/03/the-good-wife-recap-season-5-episode-13.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)]

[403]"The Last Call." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Jim McKay. (30 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

Gardner during the shooting, and to fight the NSA, who had been listening to her personal conversations, hence invading her domestic life. [404]

To solve their problem, the Kings went for the tried and true solution, beloved by Julian Fellow's *Downton Abbey*: death. In "Dramatics, Your Honor," Will Gardner is killed in a courtroom shooting. He died heroically, aiming to talk his client into putting the gun down and saving Finn Polemar's life. [405] Of all the ways for Josh Charles to leave, killing him off was certainly deserving of the now ironicizing title "Dramatics, Your Honor."

My initial reaction, beyond the usual yelling at the television, wondering aloud why I do this to myself, the mind-numbing pain, the anger, and the omgs, my dissertation, can be summed up by the notes I scrambled to affix to my now kabloomed dissertation chapter: "I think that's why the Will thing troubles me so much: killing him to serve Alicia's education seems Henry James punitive & sexist."[406] You see, twitter, tumblr, and the interwebs were less than thrilled with the sanguinary-dispensement of Will Gardner. The outrage of a character's death was only rivaled by *Game of Thrones* infamous "The Red Wedding." To an

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[404]"All Tapped Out." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Julia Wolfe and Matthew Montoya. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (20 Apr. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[405]"Dramatics, Your Honor." The Good Wife *Season Five*. (Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (23 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.)

[406]Thoughts continued: "you know if the genders were switched and JM wanted to leave like Charles and she was murdered off, tumblr and the internet would go into flames over the misogyny of it. yet, the fandom gets angry about killing will and we get portrayed as weak little fangirls and condemned i think JM can act the hell out of it, and i will still watch the show the same way i still watch *Game of Thrones*. I honestly believe that JM and the Kings have feminist ideas and aren't unintentionally being gynocidal, but it still seems like a vicious move."

outsider, it would seem like madness and folly: Josh Charles was actually phoning fan's distraught mothers to calm them down.[407]

The Kings wrote a Letter to the show's fans defending their decision to kill off Charles.[408] For our purposes, the most important parts run as follows:

> *The Good Wife*, at its heart, is the 'Education of Alicia Florrick.' To us, there always was a tragedy at the center of Will and Alicia's relationship: the tragedy of bad timing. And when faced with the gut punch of Josh's decision, made over a year ago, to move on to other creative endeavors, we had a major choice to make. We could 'send him off to Seattle,' he could be disbarred, or get married, or go off to Borneo to do good works. But there was something in the passion that Will and Alicia shared that made distance a meager hurdle. The brutal honesty and reality of death speaks to the truth and tragedy of bad timing for these two characters. Will's death propels Alicia into her newest incarnation.[409]

There is something disingenuous, to say the least, to argue that the show is about Alicia Florrick's education and to trade so heavily in "the tragedy is bad timing." Had the situations been reversed and a heroine of Gardner's caliber been slaughtered to further the hero's journey, we would find ourselves in the same territory as Gail Simone's "Women in Refrigerators."

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[407]See for instance, Kate Stanhope, "Josh Charles Sounds Off on *Good Wife* Death: 'Everything's Going to Be OK'." (*TV Guide*. (24 Mar. 2014). Web. <http://www.tvguide.com/News/Josh-Charles-Good-Wife-Death-Late-Show-1079631.aspx> 16 Jan. 2015.), Hillary Lewis, "'Good Wife' Shocker: Delia Ephron Thinks It's 'Extremely Selfish'." (*The Hollywood Reporter*. (26 Mar. 2014). Web. <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/good-wife-shocker-delia-ephron-691331?utm_medium=referral&utm_source=t.co>16 Jan. 2015.), and Esther Breger,"'The Good Wife' Can Compete with Cable Drama, But it Shouldn't." [*The New Republic*. (26 Mar. 2014). Web. <http://www.newrepublic.com/article/117166/good-wifes-shocking-death-it-doesnt-need-violence-beat-cable-tv?utm_content=4561191&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter> 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[408] The link to the full letter can be found here: Michelle King and Robert King, "A Letter from Robert and Michelle King." (*CBS*. (22 Mar. 2014). Web. <http://www.cbs.com/shows/the_good_wife/news/1002177/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[409]The "Send him off to Seattle" references George Clooney's departure from *ER* that left Julianna Margulies's character Nurse Carol Hathaway a single mother to their twins.

If we concur that Gardner's been a victim of fridging (and you can make the case black humor alone)[410], then what does that mean for *The Good Wife* ? Is it the brave choice that Michelle and Robert King wish to argue that it is? No, not really. Any of us who watch television are well used to character deaths as a plot point. Does it destroy the show? It certainly set off the equivalent of a nuclear bomb in Alicia Florrick's world, and the shrapnel has reverberated in every episode since it occurred. Is it realistic, which is another of The Kings' arguments? Yes, people die horribly and suddenly all the time. Crime shows as well as newspapers and the viewers' own lives are replete with such woeful tales. And well, it is certainly Whedonesque.

Despite the fact that I have seen the reverberations of character deaths playing out on several shows that I have been fans of (*ER*, for instance), *The Good Wife*'s treatment of Will Gardner stuck me as very *Buffy*ian. You could probably write a brilliant dissertation chapter on that alone, but suffice it to say, the fact that Will Gardner's gender and his integrality to Alicia Florrick are what would mark him for death in Whedon's world.[411]

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[410]Since he was last seen (or last scene if we're being punny) in the morgue on a table, he most certainly was literally fridged.

[411]Footnoting spoilers: After all, Joss Whedon killed Buffy's mom and Willow's girlfriend Tara by human means—Joyce Summers from complications of her brain cancer and Tara by a bullet shot from a crazed gynocidal lunatic. Thus, in Whedon's case, he pulled the trigger on two important women. Likewise, Buffy did die twice, and her struggle to come to terms with being alive again (in season two's opening episodes and throughout season six) show that even superheroines get the blues. Moreover, some, me included, felt "The Last Call" was strikingly reminiscent of "The Body," when Buffy discovers her mother's corpse and the banal aftermath of dealing with typical human death. This is not to say that the writers, directors , and c. were directly emulating Buffy, but rather it goes toward a certainly commitment to emotional realism.

Like her husband's adultery, Will Gardner's death shatters Alicia Florrick and forces her to reevaluate. Though her actions might be more active and ass-kicking in the guise of her living body (i.e., Margulies convincing Charles to stay), Alicia Florrick's journey towards self-knowledge and self-control is undiminished; even if her very creators aim to wrest that control from her grasp, they equally provide her with the tools (or weapons) to achieve self-determination and aim to once more reinvent herself. It is easier to be infuriated, and to confess it I am, that Alicia Florrick does not achieve the sort of happy ending in the romantic relationship sense that one would desire, but strangely enough, that lack and loss sets her on the path to be more heroick in the traditional sense at the same time its banality twines her into the quotidian rhythms of everyday life. In this as in everything else, Alicia Florrick proves herself to be strong like an amazon.[412]

[412] In keeping with "The Body," "Strong like an Amazon" refers to an exchange between Willow and Tara where Tara reassures a weeping Willow that she can survive the grief-waves of Joyce's death ["The Body." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Five*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (27 Feb. 2001). Fox Searchlight, 2001. DVD.)].

EPISODE SIX: DEATH IS HER GIFT, OR SPACE AND SENSIBILITY IN *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA*

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft swell and fall,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.[413]

Teaser: A Half-Finished Book is a Half-Finished Love Affair[414]

Repeating the message given to her by The First Slayer, Buffy intones to Willow, "Death is my gift. It's what I do. Come on, you've known me for how long? It's what I'm here for, it's all I am."[415] Coming in a completely different form, Death can be said to be Laura Roslin's gift as well as Buffy's. Though the death they deal-in is radically different, both women fight to save humanity from annihilation while still remaining humane. *Battlestar Galactica*, like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, refashions gendered binaries about (wo)men and power. Roslin and Adama, likewise, embody the fluid boundaries of *Sense and*

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[413]John Keats, "Bright Star." (1819) (*The Plymouth and Devonport Weekly Journal*, 1838. Print.)

[414]*Cloud Atlas*. Wri. And Dir. Lana Wachowski ,Andy Wachowski, and Tom Tykwer. (Warner Bros., 2012. DVD.) The film was based on David Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* (London: Sceptre, 2004. Print.), and the line occurs in both versions.

[415]"The Weight of the World." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Five* (Wri. Douglas Petrie. Dir. David Solomon. (15 May 2001). Fox Searchlight, 2001. DVD.)

Sensibility or *Pride and Prejudice* that typify the heroes and heroines of Austen novels. The conjoinment of romance and sickbeds has all the hallmarks of nineteenth-century fictions. As President of the Thirteen Colonies, Roslin represents the head of civil society, and as Captain of the Battlestar Galactica, Adama the military. While Roslin does not always hold the office of President, her relationship with Adama blossoms from imposed equality to a shared administration of power that become defined as the Rosdama administration.

Based on a much maligned 1970's television show, the reimagined *Battlestar Galactica,* or GINO (Galactica in Name Only) to its detractors, entered the scene soon after 9/11. Ronald D. Moore and David Eick designed their space opera to be less like *Star Wars* and more like a dark and gritty examination of humanity at its bleakest and most heroic, reflecting the changed reality of life after the towers' fall. *Battlestar Galactica*, or BSG for short, begins with the annihilation of humanity (the so-called Twelve Colonies of Kobol) by the Cylons, robots originally created to serve as humanity's helpers.

The "rag-tag fleet" is led by two individuals: President Laura Roslin (Mary McDonnell) and Admiral Adama (Edward James Olmos). In her capacity as Secretary of Education, Laura Roslin represented the government at the decommissioning of *Galactica,* the space equivalent of a battleship, during the Cylon attack. After the other forty-two people ahead of her are eradicated in the attacks, Roslin is sworn in as president, a position she holds for much of the series. Further complicating matters, Roslin was diagnosed with terminal breast

cancer on the same date of the attack; Roslin, therefore, must face her own imminent mortality while heroically trying to keep humanity from obliteration.

McDonnell expounds, "When we started working on this show, I think Ron Moore thought Laura's cancer was going to force her into a position of fear at times, and she was going to be really pushed into making some difficult choices and some bad decisions at times."[416] Along with her cancer and the continued battles against the Cylons, Roslin's presidency becomes complicated once she begins to experience visions from the chamala, an herbal supplement she takes to fight her cancer. Since "a dying leader who will lead her people to salvation" was foretold in *Pythia*, one of the books of Scripture, Roslin's visions demonstrate to her, and to a sizeable portion of the fleet, that she is destined to lead humanity to a new home.[417]

Adama begins *Battlestar Galactica* on the verge of his own decommissioning; like the Battlestar Galactica, he survived the Cylon attack (as well as the first Cylon War that occurred almost fifty years prior to the one that opens the series) only to be called into service once the rest of the fleet is destroyed in the initial attack. On the surface, Adama is the tough military

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[416]Bassom Battlestar Galactica *The Office Companion* 102 [David Bassom, Battlestar Galactica *The Official Companion*. (London: Titan Books, 2005. Print.)]. Despite its title, *The Official Companion* deals with the opening season of *BSG*. The quotation occurs in an a section devoted to Laura Roslin and features some utterly fascinating critical analysis voiced by Mary McDonnell of her character's character.

[417]"Flesh and Bone." Battlestar Galactica *Season One.* (Wri. Toni Grapha. Dir. Brad Turner. (6 Dec. 2004). Universal Network Television, 2005. DVD.) "Kobols Last Gleaming: Part 1." Battlestar Galactica *Season One*. (Wri. David Eick (story) and Ronald D. Moore (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (25 Mar 2005). Universal Network Television, 2005. DVD.) "Kobol's Last Gleaming: Part 2." Battlestar Galactica *Season One*. (Wri. David Eick (story) and Ronald D. Moore (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (1 Apr. 2005). Universal Network Television, 2005. DVD.)

leader. As the series progresses, we glimpse his emotional outbursts, including weeping, combined with intemperance. Indeed, Roslin more often embodies the pragmatism and emotional affectations associated with the popular cultural portrayals of military masculinity. Roslin sometimes being the better man coexists with Adama being the better woman.

Admiral Cain (Michelle Forbes), Captain of the Battlestar Pegasus, only appears in a few episodes, but she offers an intriguing variation on the gender dynamics represented by Roslin and Adama. Elucidating her character's fraught place in *Galactica's* panoply, Forbes limns:

> She's lost perspective. People ask, 'Is she insane? Is she psychotic?' I hope that's not how she came across because that was never the intention . . . but this is a woman who did what she had to do in order to survive during some very brutal conflicts. Along the way, Cain lost her sense of judgment as well as her sense of reason and rationale.[418]

As another death-marked woman who uses her trauma to guide her ideas, Admiral Cain serves as Laura Roslin's foil. Unlike Roslin and Adama, Cain eschews all sentiment and transforms herself or, perhaps more correctly, is transformed by the Cylon's assaults upon her family and home, into a weapon of war: a razor.[419]

On one hand, Laura Roslin's identity is entangled with her status as a dying leader; on the other hand, she rarely plays the role of the sentimental

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[418] Maureen Ryan, "'Battlestar Galactica: Razor' Cuts to the Heart of the Matter." (The Watcher With Maureen Ryan. *The Chicago Tribune*. (20 Nov. 2007). Web. <http://featuresblogs.chicagotribune.com/entertainment_tv/2007/11/battlestar-ga-1.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[419] *Battlestar Galactica: Razor*. (Wri. Michael Taylor. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (24 Nov. 2007). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)

heroine who haunted the pages of the nineteenth-century novel, such as Little Nell or Little Eva. Her ability to combine steely resolve with the trappings of sentiment transcends the traditional boundaries delineating a heroine's role: "Roslin is something else, something you rarely see on television, a consummate politician who is nevertheless treated sympathetically."[420] Likewise, Roslin "is a woman whose composure almost never ruffles, whose strength lies [in] her ability to dissemble expertly and act expediently when necessary."[421] Correlatively, William Adama's affiliations denote him as a man of sensibility while his position as Captain, and then Admiral, of the fleet mark him as the archetypal figure of masculine heroism. Roslin and Adama, consequently, both refuse easy gender stereotyping.

Rather than her femininity per se, Roslin's policies, including airlocking cylons, polarized the fleet and created backlash against her regime. As noted above, Laura Roslin demonstrates the ability to combine pragmatism with the more traditionally feminine traits of gentleness and caring. Roslin, after all, is only able to persuade Adama to cease and desist from heedless and reckless pursuit of the Cylons, leading to almost certain death for all of humanity, when

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[420]Moreover, "Both Adama and Roslin are 'good,' but they aren't always right, and 'Battlestar Galactica' is exceptionally comfortable with allowing some of their decisions rest in the gray regions between the right and wrong. When Apollo was ordered to destroy a civilian ship that had probably been infiltrated by cylons, he was haunted by the possibility that he'd killed innocent human beings. He tried to talk to his father about it, but Adama told him to suck it up and stop dwelling on it: 'A man takes responsibility for his actions, right or wrong.' Roslin, detecting Apollo's distress, told him that, on the contrary, a good leader should remember and learn from his mistakes, even if he must show perfect confidence about his past decisions in public. She keeps the name of the destroyed ship written on a piece of paper in her pocket" [Laura Miller, "Where No TV show Has Gone Before." (*Salon.* (9 Jul. 2005). Web. <http://www.salon.com/2005/07/09/battlestar_galactica_3/ >16 Jan. 2015.)].

[421]Miller "Where No TV show Has Gone Before"

she informs him, "We need to start making babies if humanity is supposed to survive."[422]

Adama's growing love for Roslin empowers the viewer with an alternative formula to (re)value Roslin. Their textual exchanges form one of the more fascinating aspects of their partnership. The centrality of books to Roslin and Adama's relationship render them the perfect pair for a dissertation. Even when they can barely get along, Roslin and Adama bond over Adama's shipboard library and their shared love of Caprican popular fiction (e.g., *Searider Falcon*). The letters they exchange reside bound in books, but the import of books renders their bond epistolary fiction. Underlined like the metaphoric copy of Shakespeare inhabiting Hartfield's Library,[423] the course of true love never did run smooth for Roslin and Adam. Their romance progressed like something out of *Emma* or another Austen novel. Roslin and Adama began with misapprehensions about each other's character and grew through a series of trials and tribulations, suitable to their genre, to form an all-powerful love, founded on mutual respect, admiration, and equal capabilities. The following exchange, from "Colonial Day," presages the shape of things to come:

> **Adama:** Politics. As exciting as war. Definitely as dangerous.
> **Roslin:** Though in war, you can only get killed once. In politics it can happen over and over.
> **Adama:** You're still standing.

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[422]*Battlestar Galactica: The Miniseries*. (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Michael Rymer. (8-9 Dec 2003). Universal Network Television, 2004. DVD.)

[423]An allusion to Jane Austen's *Emma* per Emma Woodhouse's discussion with Harriet Martin. Hartfield is the name of Emma's home.

Roslin: So are you.
Adama: And I can dance (offers her his arm).[424]

Importantly, the dance scene equally represents the lone time that we see Roslin and Adama dance and the culmination of Roslin's acceptance of her power. Previously, she served because she was the last woman standing, and she believed in a strong civil government to protect the needs of the civilians. Her beliefs are unchanged, but in "Colonial Day," Roslin takes active, deliberate measures to secure her success and defeat the challenge of a candidate she thinks will choose personal glory over public good. Likewise, their exchange encapsulates their relationship. Roslin is as much a warrior as Adama. To his credit, Adama acknowledges and honours Roslin's warlike nature. Were this an Austen or another novel, the reader would know wholly by the viewing the brief snippet of dialog that Roslin and Adama are meant to be and represent an ideal partnership.

Though there has been some analysis of Roslin and Adama's complex relationship, this chapter examines Adama as the sentimental foil to and co-equal leader with Laura Roslin.[425] *Battlestar Galactica* has found favor as suitable subject for scholarly study (Porter, Lavery, & Robinson 2008; Potter & Marshall 2008; Steiff & Tamplin 2008). Despite her centrality to the story, Laura Roslin has surprisingly remained much less studied. This chapter,

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[424]"Colonial Day." Battlestar Galactica *Season One*. (Wri. Carla Robinson. Dir. Jonas Pate. (18 Mar. 2005). Universal Network Television, 2005. DVD.)

[425]Even those articles that discuss Roslin rarely offer anything more than a cursory analysis of Laura Roslin. Instead, it might be a paragraph about in an article on Adama. This critical elision contrasts sharply with Laura Roslin's centrality to the popular cultural discourse.

consequently, will make an important contribution to the field. Though she is overlooked within academia, Laura Roslin has achieved a fandom of her own; evidence of which can be seen in the profusion of Laura Roslin websites in social media (e.g., Tumblr and Livejournal) and at Mary McDonnell's public appearances, such as sci-fi conventions, wherein she is hailed by the ecstatic screaming and cheering of fangirls (and fanboys) as well as by multiple cosplay copies of Laura Roslin.

Within feminist critical discourse, the entwinement of death and heroism often renders a heroine tainted. The repeated staging of sickness and death, particularly of Laura Roslin, form one of the more striking aspects of *Battlestar Galactica* for someone whose training is in nineteenth-century literature. Having witnessed her own mother's death from breast cancer, Laura Roslin was fully aware of what battling and succumbing to her illness would entail.[426] Laura Roslin's role as death defying yet dying savior interacts intriguingly with the feminist critical conversation surrounding the fraught figure of the dead woman.

Sara Crosby's "The Cruelest Season: Female Heroes Snapped into Sacrificial Heroines" examines heroines' deaths in *Dark Angel*, *Buffy* and

[426]Both Ronald D. Moore (RDM) creator of *Battlestar Galactica* and Mary McDonnell lost their mothers to breast cancer. Moore chose breast cancer because he wanted something human and relatable, rather than an alien illness. McDonnell has spoken in interviews about her own personal struggles with her mother's illness imbued her portrayal of Laura Roslin. Were it not for the personal connections, one could suggest a much more sinister, even Freudian, interpretation for Roslin's particular brand of cancer. She could have something more gender neutral after all. That said, though an inquiry of that kind could be intriguing, this dissertation chooses to take the approach that Laura's cancer was not meant as a commentary on gender, but rather as a cancer that can easily be overlooked and oft fatal.

Xena.[427] Crosby nuances the traditional argument that women's death is overwhelmingly, if not universally, punitive. Crosby's limited purview prevents her from interacting with other historically grounded, death-centric discourses, such as Sentimentalism.

Rather than embedding *Battlestar Galactica* in the academic discourse, such as Ann Douglas's *The Feminization of the American Culture* (1977) or Jane Tompkins's *Sensational Design: The Cultural Work of American Fiction* (1986), surrounding nineteenth century Sentimentalism, "Death is Her Gift" turns to a more direct heroick comparison: Harriet Beecher Stowe's groundbreaking *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The use of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, consequently, proves apt on multiple levels. Within *Battlestar Galactica*, the use of books, particularly *Searider Falcon*, embodies the textual exchanges permeating the show's depiction of Roslin and Adama's relationship. Their shared love of books forms a bridge of communication amidst their initial dislike.[428]

Given *Battlestar Galactica*'s own interplay of space with sensibility, this chapter employs Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852) to provide a critical counterpart and counterpoint. Harriet Beecher Stowe's groundbreaking, popular fiction sought to wield sentiment and topical criticism to change hearts and minds.

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[427] Sara Crosby, "The Cruelest Season: Female Heroes Snapped into Sacrificial Heroines." Ed. Sherrie A. Innes. *Action Chicks: New Images of Tough Women in Popular Culture*. (London: Palgrave Macmillan,2004. 164-178. Print.)

[428]For more on books in *Battlestar Galactica*, particularly those exchanged by Roslin and Adama, please see the informative and quasi-scholarly "Art and Literature of the Twelve Colonies." *Battlestar Galactica Wiki*. ((n.d.) Web. <http://en.battlestarwiki.org/wiki/Arts_and_Literature_of_the_Twelve_Colonies > 16 Jan. 2015.).

More than any specific character in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, Laura Roslin most resembles the work's author, Harriet Beecher Stowe. Both women employed religion as a mean of world saving and felt themselves called by god. Each woman found herself (literally and figuratively) in the midst of a cataclysmic threat to humanity. Laura Roslin's death sentence from breast cancer fired her resolve to rescue humanity from the clutches of Cylon extermination, whatever the moral, psychological, or personal costs; Harriet Beecher Stowe channeled her heart-rending grief at the loss of her son into the maternal sympathetic exchanges that power her text and make abolitionist affective/effective connections between the work and the reader as well as among characters within the text.

That Harriet Beecher Stowe, steeped in Evangelical Christianity from birth, the daughter, sister, and wife of minsters, should utilize Christianity as a weapon to defeat the demons of slavery and cleanse her beloved faith from the sins of upholding and defending slavery comes as no surprise. Laura Roslin would have happily made a deal with the devil and sold her soul to Satan to save the remains of humanity.

Harriet Beecher Stowe and Laura Roslin accomplished their chosen goals, but Laura Roslin's more multifaceted engagement with her faith complicated her employment of her biblically appointed role of savior, unlike Stowe who could more calmly, though equally daringly, announce that God had called upon her to write *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Both Roslin and Stowe achieved their desired ends: Roslin finally found Earth, and Stowe's text won hearts and minds

and helped "win" the war that ended slavery. Yet, the earth that Roslin's visions led her to was a nuclear wasteland, and Stowe's post-Civil War America was not much better than Roslin's earth.

Act I: I Have Read a Fiery Gospel Writ in Burnished Rows of Steel[429]

Laura Roslin is thrust into greatness as a result of the worst of circumstances on the most hellacious of days, personal and global. Roslin has made tough and calculated decisions throughout the series. During the pilot, she abandoned the civilians' ships that were unable to use their jump drive and left them to be destroyed by the nuclear device detonated by the Cylons. She ordered the destruction of the civilian ship, the *Olympic Career*, because it had been infiltrated by Cylon operatives and transformed into a nuclear weapon delivery system.[430]

Roslin, likewise, overcame her personal, pro-choice beliefs to ban abortion in order to maintain humanity.[431] She connived to steal an election from her former Vice President Gaius Baltar because she feared that his plan to resettle the remains of civilization on New Caprica would be disastrous.[432]

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[429]Julia Ward Howe, "The Battle Hymn of the Republic." (*The Atlantic Monthly* 9.52 (Feb. 1862):10. Print.) It is line 7 or the opening line of the third stanza. "She Hath Loosed the Fateful Lightning with Her Terrible Swift Sword" is an almost verbatim from the third line of the opening stanza "He Hath Loosed the Fateful Lightning with His Terrible Swift Sword."

[430]"33." Battlestar Galactica *Season One*. (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Michael Rymer. (18 Oct. 2004). Universal Network Television, 2005. DVD.)

[431]"The Captain's Hand." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Jeff Vlaming. Dir. Sergio Mimica-Gezzan. (17 Feb. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[432]Roslin had previously 'fired' her former Vice Presidential running-partner and hired Baltar in order to maintain her Presidency ("Colonial Day"). Baltar runs against Roslin with Zarek's help

Intriguingly, it was only Adama's employment of moral suasion that rendered her amenable to reneging and allowing Baltar to win.[433]

Roslin has led mutinies and revolutions, been put in the brig and freed, imprisoned as rebel leader twice (once by Adama and once by the Cylons), and nearly executed on New Caprica.[434] When Adama rescued the remaining civilian population from the Cylon-occupied New Caprica, she made sure that she retook her ship, *Colonial One*, and with it her presidency.[435]

Talking about what she loves about Roslin, McDonnell says, "What's been really fascinating to me about Laura's journey is that she's really grown into her role as President and had become a woman who has nothing to lose."[436] She continues, "I kept coming back to the idea that Laura has nothing to lose and is learning to deal with what's in front of her in the best way possible."[437]

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in "Lay Down Your Burdens: Part One." [Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Michael Rymer. (3 Mar. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)].

[433]"Lay Down Your Burden: Part Two." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders and Mark Verheiden. Dir. Michael Rymer. (10 Mar. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[434] We see Roslin's role both as a teacher and a member of the resistance in "Occupation." [Battlestar Galactica *Season Three*. (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Sergio Mimica-Gezzan. (6 Oct. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)]. She is arrested and imprisoned, along with Col Tigh, by Baltar and the Cylon occupational forces and rescued from execution by rebel forces in "Precipice."[Battlestar Galactica *Season Three*. (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Sergio Mimica-Gezzan. (6 Oct. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)].

[435] We see Laura Roslin working with the rebel forces to be ready to flee the planet once Adama arrives in "Exodus: Part 1." [Battlestar Galactica *Season Three*. (Wri. David Weddle and Bradley Thompson. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (13 Oct. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)]. Roslin's taking back her ship from Baltar occurs in "Exodus: Part 2." [Battlestar Galactica *Season Three*. (Wri. David Weddle and Bradley Thompson. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá (20 Oct.2006). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)].

[436]Bassom Battlestar Galactica *Official Companion* 102

[437]Bassom Battlestar Galactica *Official Companion* 102

According to McDonnell, "All she wants to do is to ensure the survival of the human race, and her determination to achieve that goal makes her clearer, stronger, and faster." Conceiving her character in such a manner empowered Mary McDonnell. She made "a very liberating discovery for me, as an actress."[438] As she explains in another interview, "I didn't draw on anyone in particular; instead I draw on the feeling of unpreparedness, a woman thrust into power. I was very excited to play a middle-aged woman who discovers power."[439] McDonnell's analysis of Roslin is important to us for two reasons: a) it demonstrates the ability of an actress to wield her role within the power structure to make the point that she wishes to make without invalidating the writers', showrunners', and creators' desires and b) Roslin's journey transcends the fictive and entwines with the real.

Although *Battlestar Galactica* exists, supposedly, in a space of gender equity, Laura Roslin's former profession is held against her, especially in the earlier episodes. The disdain expressed in Olmos's line reading of "schoolteacher" drips with the sort of contempt that belies the show's equity. McDonnell, however, was able to successful combat the stereotyping, and the use of schoolteacher as an insult was scaled back. Moreover, Edward James Olmos was able to convey Adama's growing respect for Roslin through his

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[438]Bassom Battlestar Galactica *Official Companion* 102

[439]Matthew Breen, "Queers and Battlestar Galactica." (*Out Magazine*. (6 Mar. 2006). Web. <http://www.out.com/entertainment/2006/03/09/queers-and-battlestar-galactica > 16 Jan.2015.)

changing attitude towards her former job, which created an organic demonstration of the character's thawing, eventually romantic relationship.

Laura Roslin's path to power becomes even more complicated when we learn about her past. During the series finale ("Daybreak"), we learn Roslin had been with Adar's political campaign since the beginning.[440] During his Presidency, Roslin was an "outstanding teacher handpicked by Adar to be his Minister of Education."[441] At one time, she became romantically involved with Adar:[442] "Ron had this notion that this was a woman who had a secret love life. One of the reasons it felt right for me was because when I read the pilot it was clear that Laura was a woman who has some kind of a shadow inside her. That she hadn't been fully out there for many reasons."[443] McDonnell further elucidates, "Almost minute-by-minute is that we get caught in sub divisions of power and quite often the sexuality interferes and women don't fully become what they can be as leaders, and become the secondary leaders to the male leaders and quite often there's romance."[444]

In "Epiphanies," the audience discovers that Roslin had supported the teachers' strike against the government and was threatened with the loss of her

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[440]"Daybreak." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Michael Rymer. (13 Mar. 2009; 20 Mar. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[441]Ian Cullen, "Mary McDonnell Explores Laura Roslin." (*SciFi Pulse*. (16 Feb. 2009). Web. <http://scifipulse.net/2009/02/mary-mcdonnell-explores-laura-roslin/ > 16 Feb. 2009.)

[442]"Epiphanies." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Joel Anderson Thompson. Dir. Rod Hardy. (20 Jan 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[443]Cullen "Mary McDonnell Explores Laura Roslin"

[444]Cullen "Mary McDonnell Explores Laura Roslin"

job. Roslin, though, refused to go quietly into that good night. Instead, she insisted that she would fight for her job once she returned from attending Battlestar Galactica's decommissioning ceremony.[445] Of course, her journey off-world saved her life and allowed her to become the president of the Twelve Colonies. Yet, it is important to realize that Laura Roslin's life on Caprica would still have involved her becoming her own woman, learning how to wield her own power, and fighting for justice. It is a minor detail often easily overlooked because pre-annihilation Roslin is so rarely glimpsed, and her memories and our understanding of them are so tempered by the Cylon's genocide.

Despite the strained end to their relationship, Roslin acknowledged her indebtedness to Adar and the education she received from their longstanding working relationship. When Roslin challenged Adar's response to the striking teachers, he intoned: "One of the most interesting things about being President is that you don't have to explain yourself. To anyone."[446] The viewer gets the idea that Adar used that motto fairly often. On notable occasions, we see Roslin repeating Adar's catechism, as it were, as her own at moments when her own leadership is challenged. Within "Epiphanes," *Battlestar Galactica* takes advantage of its medium by staging back to back scenes with Roslin's challenging Adar about the strikers, Adar telling Roslin his maxim (A President never needs to explain himself), and then flashing forward to present-day

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[445]"Epiphanies." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Joel Anderson Thompson. Dir. Rod Hardy. (20 Jan 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[446]"Epiphanies." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Joel Anderson Thompson. Dir. Rod Hardy. (20 Jan 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

Galactica where a wheelchair-bound Roslin arises from her death bed to deliver the same pronouncement to a rebel leader and Cylon-collaborator who had suborned mutiny and perpetrated violence against the civilian populations.[447]

Act II: She Hath Loosed the Fateful Lightning with Her Terrible Swift Sword

To better understand Laura Roslin, the viewer can look to another comparison within *Battlestar Galactica*'s environs: Admiral Cain. Cain is often regarded as what would have become of Adama without Roslin's salvic grace. Admiral Cain, the commander of the Battleship Pegasus, had been a character in the original incarnation of *Battlestar Galactica*, but like Starbuck, Admiral Cain underwent a gender transformation (from Lloyd Bridge to Michelle Forbes) as well as promotion, moving up in rank from Commander to Admiral. Altering Cain's gender averted the fan-outrage that greeted Starbuck's (Dirk Benedict to Katee Sackhoff).

Cain's actions, however, spurred much scrutiny both within the show's universe and external to its world. Academic criticism has focused either on analyzing Cain's homosexuality (e.g., Jones; Burrows) or comparing her to real life political leaders, such as George W. Bush (Mulligan).[448] Rarely is there any

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[447]"Epiphanies." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Joel Anderson Thompson. Dir. Rod Hardy. (20 Jan 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[448]Admiral Cain is a much more popular figure in academic criticism than is Laura Roslin. For the articles mentioned above, see Matthew Jones, "Butch Girls, Brittle Boys, and Sexy, Sexless Cylons: Some Gender Problems in *Battlestar Galactica*." [Battlestar Galactica: *Investigating Flesh, Spirit, and Steel*. Eds. Roz Kaveney and Jennifer Stoy. (London, I.B. Tauris, 2010. 154-184. Print.)]; Karen K. Burrows, "The Luxury of Being Simply Human: Unwritten and Rewritten Queer Histories in *Battlestar Galactica*." [Battlestar Galactica: *Investigating Flesh, Spirit, and Steel*. Eds. Roz Kaveney and Jennifer Stoy. (London, I.B. Tauris, 2010. 199-218. Print.)]; and Rikk Mulligan, "The Cain Mutiny: Reflecting the Faces of Military Leadership in a Time of Fear."[*Cylons in*

attempt to draw parallels between Roslin and Cain, despite the profusion of such examples within *Galactica*. Before we do just that, it's useful to understand a little something about Admiral Caine herself.

In "Resurrection Ship," the audience discovers the "path of sadism that these people [Admiral Cain and the crew of the Battlestar Pegasus] have gone down, and we're fully able to see exactly what happened to this group aboard the Pegasus. There were some pretty difficult choices they had to make, too, in regard to the Cylon prisoner Gina and that whole dynamic."[449] In an interview with Maureen Ryan, Michelle Forbes reveals what she believes to be Cain's motivations: "There's always a sense in that universe that your time is about to be up. You have to prepare whatever future there is. Cain is always aware of her mortality and is quite willing to sacrifice her life and she expects the same of everyone around her."[450] While Roslin utilizes her death-sentence to fight for humanity and save them from extinction, Cain hurls herself and her crew towards annihilating Cylons whatever the cost.

We learn that the Pegasus had encountered its own band of civilian ships soon after the Cylon attacks.[451] While Laura Roslin attempted to gather as many civilians as possible, Admiral Cain used the civilian ships as spare parts. Admiral Cain stripped the civilian ships and took everything she needed for the

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America: Critical Studies in Battlestar Galactica. Eds. Tiffany Porter and C.W. Marshall. (New York: Continuum, 2008. 52-63. Print.)].

[449]Ryan "'Battlestar Galactica: Razor' Cuts to the Heart of the Matter"

[450]Ryan "'Battlestar Galactica: Razor' Cuts to the Heart of the Matter"

[451]"Pegasus." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders. Dir. Michael Rymer.(23 Sep. 2005). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

Battlestar Pegasus. When the passengers of the ships rebelled against the treatment meted out to them, like having families separated, she ordered the soldiers to massacre those who resist.[452] Likewise, when a Cylon operative (Gina, one of the 6s) with whom she had previously been on terms of intimacy sabotaged the ship during battle, Cain ordered the Cylon prisoner tortured and allowed her crewmen to gang-rape Gina.[453]

Admiral Cain encounters the Galactica and its civilian fleet six months after the Cylon's destruction of the Twelve Colonies and one and a half seasons into the show. Although there initially was understandable jubilation, the mood quickly turned once news about the Pegasus's prior complications was revealed. Because Cain outranks Adama and sees Adama as a lax disciplinarian, she melds the ships' crews and removes Adama's son, Lee "Apollo" Adama (Jamie Bamber), and Kara "Starbuck" Thrace (Katee Sackhoff), the woman whom Admiral Adama thinks of as daughter, to the Pegasus. While the move would have caused friction, things might have continued well until Cain ordered the execution of Adama's men—Galen Tyrol (Aaron Douglas) and Helo Agathon (Tamoh Pennikett)—for the murder of Lieutenant Thorne. Tyrol and Agathon attempted to rescue Agathon's wife Athena (Grace Park), another Cylon (an 8), from rape.[454]

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[452]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer(teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[453]*Battlestar Galactica: Razor*. (Wri. Michael Taylor Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (24 Nov. 2007). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)

[454]We initial see the scenario in "Pegasus," but we get more information in "Razor."

Even before the near-civil war in the fleet, Roslin was already displeased about the transformation of the power structure. Admiral Cain demonstrated a clear disrespect for both Roslin's position and for the rest of the fleet by refusing to provide rations or materials after Roslin requested them. Rather than upholding the women beware women trope, Cain's dislike of Roslin is founded on the same foundation as her dislike for Adama: sentiment.[455]

The audience knows both Adama and Roslin are more than capable of engaging in violence and playing the part of strict disciplinarians. Yet, Roslin's noted penchant for airlocking Cylons and Adama's fondness for hurling people in the brig cannot suade a woman who executed her own CAG in cold-blood, and in view of her entire crew, for disobeying a direct order and who ordered the gang rape and torture of the Cylon-operative who had won her heart and mind (and body).[456] Intriguingly, Cain's treatment of Roslin, as well as Adama, mirrors Adama's initial treatment of Laura Roslin, including imbuing "schoolteacher" with a smoldering, contempt-dripping tone. Conversely, the utility of Roslin's prior training is exemplified as Cain and Adama behave like

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[455]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer(teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[456]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

squabbling children.[457] This interplay is staged literally and figuratively when Roslin summons Cain and Adama to Colonial One.

While Adama rivals Hamlet in sulkiness and Cain fairly drips superciliousness, Roslin embodies calm professionalism and the authority of having spent a career in the classroom and as Minster of Education.[458] Speaking with precision, Roslin queries Cain, "Admiral, surely . . . The spirit of the law requires something more here than summary executions?"[459] Cain disdainfully replies, "Is this what the two of you have been doing for the past six months? Debating the finer points of Colonial law? Well, guess what, we're at war! And we don't have the luxury of academic debate over these issues." To which Roslin rejoins, "You want to cut through it, fine. You have *Pegasus*, he has *Galactica*. Two heavily armed, very powerful warships. Now, I am sure that *Pegasus* would prevail in any fight—."Adama interjects sulkily "I wouldn't count on that," and Roslin continues, "But certainly, there'd be heavy damage, and you'd take significant casualties. So you can go out there and fight it out with *Galactica*, or you can compromise. And those are the only two options on the table, period." Cain sneers, "How the two of you have survived this long, I will never know."

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[457]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[458]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[459]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

After Cain leaves, Adama and Roslin continue their discussion. Roslin had been sitting behind her desk, while Cain and Adama faced her sitting in opposed chairs like recalcitrant children before their principal, but she moves to a more intimate position sitting along Adama and facing him directly.[460] She begins, "I'm afraid this can only end one way. You've got to kill her." Surprised by her assertion, Adama returns, "What the hell are you talking about?" Roslin calmly and dispassionately continues:

> Like she said, let's cut through it. The two of you were willing to go to war today. Do you think she's going to step down from that? She's going to bide her time and hit you the first chance she gets. That's a given. I hate to lay this on you Bill, but she is dangerous and the only thing that you can do is to hit her before she hits you.[461]

To which Adama replies, "I'm not an assassin."

Though Adama initially disagree with Roslin, he becomes quickly reconciled to her point of view and asks his pseudo-daughter, Starbuck, to assassinate Cain whilst Cain has already put a plan in motion to assassinate Adama using her CAG (Commander of the Air Group).[462] Cain, however, relents

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[460]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[461]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[462]Ronald D. Moore did a stint in the Navy (primarily ROTC). Had he not been given the job at *Star Trek Deep Space Nine* as a writer, Moore had intended to pursue a career in the navy. Consequently, all of the *Battlestar Galactica* is infused by Moore's real world experiences and hews more closely to a real-world ship, rather than the traditional science-fiction interpretations. For Ronald D. Moore's navy and its relationship to his art, please read Erich Simmers, "Battlestar Galactica's Ronald D. Moore Answers Veterans' Questions and Explores His own Deep Ties to the Military." (*Weaponized Culture*. (26 September 2013). Web.

only to be assassinated by Gina, her former-lover. Cain, in spite of her best intentions, is slain by the sentiment she so despised. After Roslin utilizes her powers as president to raise him to the position of Rear Admiral, Love's sanguine-soaked conquest takes an even wilder turn when Adama kisses Roslin as the "Roslin and Adama" theme plays underneath in the soundtrack.[463]

The textual snapshot of the exchange, as you can see, reveals Roslin's command of the situation as well as the mutinies of her admiralties. Ronald D. Moore loved "the scene where Laura tells Adama he must kill Cain [; it is] actually one of my favorite scenes of the season."[464] Moore explains, "I loved Laura coming up with the idea to kill Cain and Adama is taken aback by it. It's another of those moments where we reverse the traditional dynamics and it's completely believable. Roslin is dying and she doesn't want to leave someone as dangerous as Admiral Cain in charge of the civilian fleet."[465] The impact of Roslin's increasing sickness makes her lucidly fierce and more determined to protect humanity from the newest threat. By the end of the episode, Roslin has reached death's door.

<https://www.weaponizedculture.org/2013/battlestar-galacti cas-ronald-d-moore-answers-veterans-questions-and-explores-his-own-deep-ties-to-the-military/ > 16 Jan. 2015.).

[463]To add another layer, Gina is only allowed to roam free because Gaius Baltar's fell in pity and lust with her. He had already caused the end of the world as he knew it after his seduction by another 6, who haunts his dreams. Love in Galactica's (and *Galactica*)'s world may not be many splendored, but it is multifaceted in its sentimental potency ["Resurrection Ship :Part Two." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two* (Wri. Ronald D Moore and Michael Rymer. Dir. Michael Rymer. (13 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)].

[464]Basson Battlestar Galactica: *The Official Companion Season Two* 66

[465]Basson Battlestar Galactica: *The Official Companion Season Two* 66

Cain's willingness to slaughter civilians is shocking enough, but as a woman who seems bound by the military code of conduct to a fault, her willingness to eradicate another military division seems equally farfetched until we recollect how Cain has remade herself into a weapon of total war. She will do whatever it takes to destroy the Cylons: whether that means engaging in wholesale slaughter of innocent civilians or executing members of the military who deft her.

Even more intriguing is the manner in which the universe (within and without of the show's confines) upholds and upends Cain's cultural value. Truly, Cain would have annihilated Galactica and its protectorates, and *Galactica* (ship and show) provide the halcyon alternative to Cain's more hellacious reign. At the same time, Cain's ability to sway Adama's "daughter" Starbuck to aid her cause brings about the momentous result of destroying the Resurrection Ship, wherein the Cylons literally and figuratively are reborn from the dead, and hence, is a necessary and significant win for Cain, Adama, and Roslin and their worlds combined.[466]

Throughout *Battlestar Galactica*, Cain is presented as a complex figure. Moreover, her villainy arises not from her gender, but from her actions. The crucial difference between Roslin and Cain is not, as Cain would think, that of the dove and the hawk. Both women are "bloody minded," to borrow Adama's

[466]Perhaps not unintentionally, the next time we see the Resurrection Ship arise as a plot point is "The Hub." [Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul A Edwards. (6 Jun. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)], which is another crucial narrative area for Roslin, Adama, and the war to save humanity and defeat the Cylons. We will discuss that battle further in the chapter.

eponym for Roslin. Roslin operates under a system of checks and balances—her desire to protect humanity and Adama's power over the military—while Cain is unchecked and sacrificed her humanity to transform herself into a "Razor," a single-minded weapon of war. Cain serves as a sort of mirror for Roslin had she wielded military power and been driven into pure vengeance much as what Adama would have been like without Roslin's intercession.[467] Roslin is as hardcore in her fashion as Cain. Roslin was willing to spill the blood of Cain, through her word if not by her own hand. In so doing, she proves the wisdom and ruthlessness of her leadership whilst wooing, as it were, Adama to her side.

Act III: Bright Star, Would I Were Steadfast as Thou Art

In the extended version of "Unfinished Business," we get to see what life might have been like for Roslin and Adama off the ship.[468] The audience has already glimpsed pre-Cylon-occupation-Roslin enjoying her return to teaching schoolchildren. Likewise, Roslin helped to lead the rebellion during the Cylon occupation, including imprisonment and near-summary execution. Similarly, we know Adama feels guilty for having abandoned the citizens to their fate once the Cylons appear; his emotional and sartorial dishabille reflect his mental breakdown as well as the breakup of his family.

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[467]"Resurrection Ship: Part One." Battlestar Galactica *Season Two*. (Wri. Anne Cofell Saunders (story) and Michael Rymer (teleplay). Dir. Michael Rymer. (6 Jan. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2006. DVD.)

[468]"Unfinished Business." Battlestar Galactica *Season Three*. (Wri. Michael Taylor. Dir. Robert M. Young. (1 Dec. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)

Laura Roslin was the one to persuade Adama to allow his crew to resettle on New Caprica:

> **Roslin:** Is this really it, Bill? Is this how we're gonna spend all the rest of our days? Hmm? Maybe we should just enjoy this.
> **Adama:** I am.
> **Roslin:** No, no, I mean enjoy being here on this planet as long as it lasts. I mean, maybe the Cylons come back, maybe they don't, but for now, right now . . . We've got a break.
> **Adama:** I've got people that want to get off the ship, move down here.
> **Roslin:** Can't say as I blame them. I mean, what are you gonna do?[469]

Roslin and Adama bask in the freedom from being leaders of the free world and enjoy each other's company as people. The conversations provide a bit of a role reversal, since Roslin was so against settling on New Caprica and a Baltar presidency that she acceded to a coup to rig the election.

Much of Adama's crew including Colonel Tigh, his beloved partner in bromance and ship-ruling, resettle on Caprica. At this stage, losing Roslin pales in comparison to the sundering of his bonds with Tigh, or so we think. Without Roslin, moreover, Adama risks life, limb, and civilization on a suicide mission to redeem humanity from the Cylons' occupation.[470] Since Roslin retakes/liberates *Colonial One* and captains her own ship, the role reversals are

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[469]"Unfinished Business." Battlestar Galactica *Season Three*. (Wri. Michael Taylor. Dir. Robert M. Young. (1 Dec. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)

[470]The fact that Lee, who now Captains the Pegasus, defies his father's orders and proves invaluable in rescuing the civilians provides a suitably lovely and intriguing twist, since Adama *fis* is Roslin's heir apparent and performs the same familial role to Roslin that Starbuck does for Adama *pere*.

effective and affectively achieved.[471] As can be expected, the chance at finding a home, even if it's not the one foretold in the prophecies, and then having that home fall like the old one—New Caprica might not have been the wisest name choice—has setbacks, which in turn reflect and refract those that occur once Home is actually achieved.

Although curtailed in the telecast, Roslin and Adama on land provide an alternate universe version of themselves freed from the cares and burdens of world saving. New Caprica Roslin and Adama act like rebellious high-schoolers who smoke weed, drink, flirt shamelessly, culminating with them spending a night together under the stars, rather than amongst them.[472] Amidst the brief bliss, Roslin tells Adama, "In the mountains north of here there's this little stream that comes down into this lake the water is so clear it's like looking through glass. I'm thinking of building a cabin."[473]

Like the actual books exchanged between them, the cabin becomes a shared textual metaphor and the symbol for the potential to dwell in possibility, which is always a fairer house than prose. The motif of the cabin stands in for all that could have been, but to focus on the fact that Roslin never got her Dream Home elides the fact that she did get her cabin in the stars.

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[471]While unplanned, it equally presages Roslin's role in "The Oath" and "Blood on The Scales:, wherein Zarek and Gaeta are the ones leading the revolution, and Roslin, overcoming the increasing fragility brought on approaching cancer-death, commandeers a Cylon baseship to fight for Adama.

[472]Roslin and Adama's New Caprica scenes are fan favorites, often gifed, and form the popular subject of fanfiction (e.g., https://www.fanfiction.net/topic/27946/1673526/Laura-Roslin-and-William-Adama); Roslin's outfit is a popular for cosplay.

[473]"Unfinished Business." Battlestar Galactica *Season Three*. (Wri. Michael Taylor. Dir. Robert M. Young. (1 Dec. 2006). Universal Network Television, 2007. DVD.)

Throughout much of the series, *Colonial One* functions as Roslin's oval office as well as her living quarters. Once her cancer returns, Roslin begins to divide her time between *Colonial One* and Battlestar Galactica's sickbay, then into Adama's quarters. The entwinement of Roslin and Adama's professional and personal lives causes as much, if not more, consternation within the fleet as had their former estrangement and frisson.

Maureen Ryan argues that Roslin's relationship with Adama eviscerated that "[o]ne trope: A successful woman can't have a fulfilling personal life."[474] Ryan claims, "Laura Roslin led the Galactica survivors for years and took on more responsibility than she ever thought she could handle, but most women shown in powerful positions on television either have no personal life or have a pitiable, contemptible personal life."[475] Roslin's relationship with Adama equally showed the repercussions for Adama. Roslin's romance with Adama, thence, becomes problematic not from a Hawthornesque perspective equating sexual womanhood with evil. Instead, the blowback of Adama and Roslin's unification, particularly from Tom Zarek and his loyalists, arises from the idea the Roslin-Adama administration concentrates the military and civilian power in one person: Rosdama.

Once Roslin's health and, then, her life become endangered, the peril to the fleet becomes even more intense. William Adama had been previously prone to suspending everything in a mad pursuit for justice or saving his loved ones

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[474]Maureen Ryan. Personal Interview. 15 Jan. 2013.

[475]Maureen Ryan. Personal Interview. 15 Jan. 2013.

(e.g., vainly searching for Starbuck), but Roslin was always there to provide the rational counterpoint to his emotional desires. Once Roslin is kidnapped at the end of "Guess What's Coming to Dinner?," Adama completely falls apart in "Sine Qua Non." Adama's grief at Roslin's abduction causes him to put the fleet in jeopardy.[476] Consequently, Adama and Roslin both simultaneously undergo experiences ("The Hub" And "Sine Qua Non") meant to teach them about the relationship between heart and mind and the central role their love plays in the dynamic.

"Sine Qua Non" literally and figurative forces Adama to realize that Laura Roslin is the thing which he cannot live without. Michael Taylor, the episode's writer, clarifies, "Adama is coming to terms with . . . realising [*sic*] that he has been driven to take action that he should know better—putting the entire ship, the entire fleet in danger out of love for this woman. . . .there's the one thing . . . that he cannot sacrifice that he c*annot* lose . . . and it's Laura."[477] He undertakes what his son, his best friend, and everyone else believe to be a suicide mission: having the entire fleet jump away to safety while Adama waits behind alone in his shuttle for Laura Roslin to come back.[478]

In another affective and effective moment, Adama waits to reunite with Roslin by reading the charred copy of *Searider Falcon* left behind in the

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[476]"Sine Qua Non." Battlestar Galactica Season Four. (Wri. Michael Taylor. Dir. Rod Hardy. (30 May. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[477]Gosling Battlestar Galactica: *The Official Season Four Companion* 55. [Sharon Gosling, Battlestar Galactica: *The Official Season Four Companion*. (London: Titan Books, 2009. Print.)].

[478]"Sine Qua Non." Battlestar Galactica Season Four. (Wri. Michael Taylor. Dir. Rod Hardy. (30 May. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

shuttle.[479] The burned book operates doubly as powerful symbol: it anticipates Roslin's setting Pythia aflame in "Sometimes a Great Notion" and it underscores the centrality of *Searider Falcon* as romantic talisman for Adama and Roslin (e.g., "Escape Velocity").

Act IV: Uncle Tom's Cabin Islanded in a Stream of Stars

As Laura Roslin succumbs to the final stages of her illness, Adama becomes more intemperate in both drinking alcohol and spilling tears. The thought of losing her begins to wreck greater havoc than the loss of armies. Roslin, for the most part, remains stoic and committed to heroically battling her illness and trying to stave off political threats, civil war, and annihilation. She evidences a willingness, throughout her illness, to make the hard decisions and to roll the hard six, to borrow Adama's catchphrase. Despite her prior Cylon-slaying policies, Roslin works alongside the splinter group of rebel cylons to find a place called Home. Her choice to make peace with the Cylons leads not only to dissonance with the fleet, but also to an epiphany.

As we have seen, *Battlestar Galactica* takes a multivalent approach to Roslin's sentimentality and her lack thereof. Notwithstanding the overall celebration of Roslin's ability to combine pragmatism and world-saving, she is forced to learn the lesson of the heart in "The Hub."[480] "Roslin has always been a very pragmatic character. . . .I [Jane Espenson] wanted to give her the chance

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[479]"Sine Qua Non." Battlestar Galactica Season Four. (Wri. Michael Taylor. Dir. Rod Hardy. (30 May. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[480]"The Hub." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul A Edwards. (6 Jun. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

to think about the moral costs of those actions for her people. If Laura Roslin stops being able to temper her pragmatism with love, then we're in trouble."[481] Roslin almost allows Gaius Baltar to die of his wounds as a punishment for the crimes he committed against humanity. Then, thanks to divine (and authorial) intervention, she saves his life. The overtly moral nature of the lesson driven into Roslin's heart and into the audience's head is presented in very nineteenth-century, sentimental fiction terms.

"The Hub" subjects Roslin, and the audience, to multiple stagings of her death.[482] She is (re)shown with Admiral Adama, his son Lee, and Starbuck weeping by her bedside whilst William Adama tearfully puts a wedding ring on her lifeless hand and confesses his everlasting ardor for her.[483] The scene is rendered more powerful and heart-tugging by its visual restatement of the multiple previous occasions wherein we saw Roslin in the same position enduring her 'chemo' treatments while Adama sweetly read her novels, particularly *Searider Falcon*.[484]

Though the previous enactments of Roslin's death were by no means lacking in the trappings of nineteenth-century Sentimentalism, "The Hub" reads like a homage, though an entirely unintentional one, to all the other girls who

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[481]Gosling Battlestar Galactica: *The Official Season Four Companion* 61

[482]"The Hub." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul A Edwards. (6 Jun. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[483]"The Hub." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul A Edwards. (6 Jun. 2008) Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[484]We see Adama reading to Roslin while she gets cancer treatment in "Escape Velocity." [Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Edward James Olmos. (25 Apr. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)].

die of wasting illness throughout transatlantic fiction. Roslin's deathbeds and her need to learn to wield both heart and head mark her as the heiress of all those other dying girls who went before her into that good night; however briefly, Laura Roslin is transfigured into Little Eva in space.

It is true that Little Eva is a dying child trying to save the world, or at least her inner family circle, from the evils of slavery through a conversion to Christianity.[485] It is equally true that Uncle Tom, Stowe's much maligned figuration of heroic enslaved black masculinity, serves as the maternal, Christlike figure, so that both he and Eva share the mantle of sentimental saviors. Moreover, Little Eva might affectively succeed by bringing her family and loved ones to tears, but within the novel, she fails utterly to achieve the goal she desired: Uncle Tom is sold down the River to the Devil himself, Simon Legree wherein Uncle Tom endures a Christlike martyrdom. Uncle Tom defies his master to protect a fellow slave and is brutally whipped to death. As can be seen, popular cultural has thus misshapen Stowe's heroick envisioning of Uncle Tom as divine Savior and actual rebellious actor, rather than the obsequious

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[485]Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin; Or Life Among the Lowly* (Cleveland, OH: John P. Jewett & Co, 1852. Print.) Stowe initially published *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in weekly installments (40) in Jewett's abolitionist periodical, *The National Era*, staring on 5 June 1851. Jewett was convinced that *Uncle Tom's Cabin* would be still be commercial viable as an actual book, but Harriet Beecher Stowe needed to be convinced. Jewett was correct, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin* sold out its first printing and proved to be a best-seller as well as force for moral change. Watching *Battlestar Galactica* (or any of the television studied) in real time (i.e., either on demand or over the air) allows us a similar textual-consuming experience to our foremothers (and fathers) who too had serial popular cultural addictions. Moreover, anyone who has watched a television series on DVD (or Netflix or Amazon Prime) can appreciate how vastly different it is (in feeling and in appreciation of plot and artistry) between binge watching and watching the same show on a week by week basis. Consequently, it allows us to comprehend, though in a differing medium, what it must have been like for readers of Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to read the book versus the weekly-periodical format. Again, Stowe's choice to both publish in a periodical and to print a novel of that initial text was a fairly common one for authors of her era.

sycophant signified by current usage of "Uncle Tom."[486] Harriet Beecher Stowe, consequently, conjoins sanctity with abolitionist sensationalism to make a poignant and potent argument about slavery.

Little Eva's lone triumph, other than as harbinger of tears, is her influence over and engagement with Tom. Like Roslin and Adama, Little Eva and Uncle Tom share textual exchanges, but rather than sensational novels, Little Eva and Uncle Tom read the Bible. The Bible as site for textual exchange is suitable for numerous reasons: for Stowe, of course, the bible had been perverted by the South and denatured into a poisonous, pro-slavery text and needed to be redeemed from sin, and, most importantly from our perspective, Little Eva and Uncle Tom are not meant as figures of romance, but rather co-Christ-like figures and shared sights of affective authorial and audience engagement.

By having us feel alongside Uncle Tom as well as Little Eva, Harriet Beecher Stowe is helping to envision and create the world she wants to see reformed and refounded in her America. *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, on the surface, operates within a vastly different rhetorical and cultural terrain than does *Battlestar Galactica*. Or does it? Jane Espenson and the creative staff behind *Battlestar Galactica* want to use *Galactica* to comment on the post-911 world,

[486]Intriguingly, Little Eva and Uncle Tom failed to make the transition as signifiers of revolution and social change from the nineteenth century into the twentieth and twenty-first. Everyone from James Baldwin's "Everybody's Protest Novel" to Ann Douglas's *Feminization of American Culture* saw Harriet Beecher Stowe as a sort of sentimental Simon Legree, who ruined American culture and trafficked in emasculating ideas of gender. The fact that sentimental masculinities and femininities flourished within normative English and American cultures, both as a means of social control and revolutionary rhetoric, still remains a battleground with academia, but are outside the purview of our paper—although the idea that girlyness is evil continues to bedevil the women of whom this dissertation speaks.

and they desire Laura Roslin's death to resonate and to be integral to her character arc. At the same time, they do not need Laura Roslin's death and Adama's sentimentality to operate from the same signification that Stowe requires from Little Eva and Tom. Rather, Laura Roslin's dying leader is less Jesus Christ and more Moses leading her people to the Promised Land.

Little Eva wears the rhetorical dress of Sentiment more fashionably than Laura Roslin. Throughout "The Hub," Roslin communicates not with Stoweian speeches, but with Jane Espenson's hallmark wry, almost Austenesque humor.[487] Even if she refrains from letting Baltar die and regains her heart. Roslin frequently mocks the theatrical production of the deaths. For instance, she informs her spirit guide, Elosha, "If you're my subconscious, I must say, I'm pretty full of myself." Likewise, *in media res,* Roslin acidly informs Helo Agathon (Tamoh Pennikett), who wants to save the other versions that look like his wife (a Cylon 8 named Athena), "You are not married to the entire production line. I cannot afford to be sentimental right now. I cannot afford you to be sentimental either. If you can't do this job, find me someone who can."[488]

Roslin's heart-failure, though, remains simultaneously inescapable and entirely redeemable. It might be considered somewhat on the nose to have Roslin literally watch her heart fail, via the ever-present heart monitor, and

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[487]"The Hub." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four.* (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul A Edwards. (6 Jun. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[488]"The Hub." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four.* (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul A Edwards. (6 Jun. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

Adama dissolving into floods of tears, slipping the wedding band on her finger, and lachrymosely intoning, "You go. You go. You go to your rest now. I'm not gonna be selfish anymore. You go. Rest."[489] At the episode's end, actual Roslin and Adama reunite, exchanging laconic words and tender embraces:

> **Adama**: Missed you.
> **Roslin**: Me too.
> **Roslin** [Embracing Adama]: I love you.
> **Adama** [Breaking the embrace; looks into her eyes]: About time.

The heart's lesson, though, seems learned and undercut by the episode's events. Roslin saves Baltar, but ensures that Adama knows that he must destroy the Cylon basestar should it prove a threat to the rest of humanity.[490] Thus, Roslin demonstrates that she is still more than willing to sacrifice her literal heart and mind, as well as Baltar's, for the good of humanity. As much as *Battlestar Galactica* insists Laura Roslin be subjugated to the heart's desires, it requires her to resist sentiment as much it requires her to trust that the heart has reasons that reason knows not of.

Laura Roslin's sentimental journey, therefore, occupies multiple narrative terrains: alongside her Virgil-version-vision (in her case the priestess Elosha), she traverses the empty passageways of Galactica, like a ghost, seeing her death; she makes the personal progression from killing Baltar to letting him live; she enacts a mini-romance of reunion with Adama when they reunite upon

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[489]"The Hub." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Paul A Edwards. (6 Jun. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[490]"Revelations." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four* (Wri. Bradley Thompson and David Weddle. Dir. Michael Rymer. (13 Jun. 2008). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.) The biblical significance of a title should be self-evident, even as it accurately and anvil-y relates what occurs in the episode, including finding Earth.

her rescue, and in the proceeding episode, she leads her people—both the remnants of humanity and the rebel Cylons—to the envisioned, long awaited earth. Despite all these accomplishments, Laura Roslin remains pragmatic and outwardly unsentimental, whatever the newfound state of her heart. Roslin's heart-stakes are particularly troubled in "Revelations," the episode immediately following "The Hub." Home sweet home it is not. "Earth" is not as we know it. Instead, it is a devastated ghostland that has suffered from a nuclear annihilation that rendered it as inhabitable as Caprica and the places our heroic colonists had fled. All that is left of the promised land is ruined spaces and abiding nature.

Once the earth that her visions lead her to is a nuclear wasteland, Roslin does break under the pressure. She collapses in her quarters aboard Galactica, burns her book of Pythia that had foretold her as the savior, and tells Adama: "You shouldn't have listened to me. When the Cylons first attacked, you should have held your ground and kept fighting. Because I was wrong. I was wrong about everything. And all those people who listened, they trusted me and they followed me. All those people . . . they're dead."[491] Adama, in this instance, is the strong and fearless one: reassuring Roslin, comforting her, trying to get the fleet back on track, and taking the reins of government. Roslin and Adama had promised the people from the start that they would lead them to salvation.[492]

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[491]"Sometimes a Great Notion." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Bradley Thompson and David Weddle. Dir. Michael Nankin. (16 Jan. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[492]*Battlestar Galactica: The Miniseries*. (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Michael Rymer. (8-9 Dec 2003). Universal Network Television, 2004. DVD.)

Once that promise is kept and yet broken, "Frak Earth" becomes the watchword, literalized as actual graffiti on Galactica's walls.[493]

With an unintentionally brilliant wordplay, "Sometime a Great Notion" comes before "A Disquiet Follows my Soul."[494] Finding Earth as a home was indeed a marvelous and great notion, but encountering a nuclear wasteland proves disquieting to more than Roslin's soul. Adama re-proves that "he is willing to let the fleet go to hell, really for Laura."[495] Roslin has already anticipated his go-to-hell moment when she jettisons her role as dying savior for the guise of living for the day. Adama begs Roslin to go back on her meds, stop running about the ship (literally), and retake her rightful place as president.[496]

To these entreaties, she responds with equal parts bitterness and joy:

> I've played my role in this farce. 'A dying leader will guide the people to the . . .' Blah, blah, blah. Frakking . . . Blah, blah. I've been there, I've done that, now what? Is there another role that I have to play for the rest of my life? Do you remember what we said on New Caprica? How we talked about trying to live for today? Well, you better think about that, because maybe tomorrow really isn't

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[493]"Sometimes a Great Notion." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four* (Wri. Bradley Thompson and David Weddle. Dir. Michael Nankin.(16 Jan. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[494]For a fascinating and critically-scintillating discussion of "A Disquiet Follows the Soul", see Maureen Ryan's interview with Ronald Moore who made making his directorial debut with this work [Maureen Ryan, "'Battlestar Galactica's' Ron Moore Discusses 'A Disquiet Follows My Soul'." The Watcher. (*Chicago Tribune*. (23 Jan. 2009). Web. <http://featuresblogs.chicagotribune.com/entertainment_tv/2009/01/battlestar-galactica-ron-moore-disquiet-follows-my-soul.html?cid=146126744> 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[495]Gosling Battlestar Galactica: *The Official Season Four Companion* 79

[496]"A Disquiet Follows My Soul." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four.* (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Ronald D. Moore. (23 Jan. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

> coming. Maybe today is all we have left. And maybe, just maybe, I've earned the right to live a little before I die.[497]

Once more, we have a pivoting on our compass: Adama's sensibilities are effecting and affecting his ability to lead his fleet, and Roslin is jogging around the ship, hurling away her medicine, and taking a carpe diem approach. You can see how such a situation, including the continued cooperation with the rebel Cylons, sets up the coup that follows. Roslin's newfound frak-it-all approach culminates in the episode ending with Roslin and Adama actually in bed. [498] Ronald D. Moore, who both wrote and directed the particular episode, argues that we are seeing the aftermath of the 'first time' for Roslin and Adama to culminate their relationship. Moore notes that "Mary and Eddie thought that their characters had indeed hooked up that night ["Unfinished Business"] on New Caprica and had continued having sporadic sexual encounters since then."[499]

Whatever approach one chooses to believe, Roslin's pragmatic, near-hedonism is an intriguing aftermath of both "The Hub" and "Sometimes a Great Notion." She is only drawn back on to the battlefield when there is a mutiny on the fleet, and she is called upon once more to rally the people and save Adama. After Tom Zarek (Richard Hatch) has falsely informed her that Adama is dead, Laura Roslin swears vengeance, but not before Zarek tries to talk some

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[497]"A Disquiet Follows My Soul." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four.* (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Ronald D. Moore. (23 Jan. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[498]"A Disquiet Follows My Soul." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four.* (Wri. Ronald D. Moore. Dir. Ronald D. Moore. (23 Jan. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[499]Gosling Battlestar Galactica: *The Official Season Four Companion* 79

surrender into her, "You have to think about the people of this fleet now, and surrender."[500] In a speech of pure Fury, Laura Roslin responds hurling invective and rage, "No. Not now. Not ever. Do you hear me? I will use every cannon, every bomb, every bullet, every weapon I have down to my own eye teeth to end you! I swear it! I'm coming for all of you!"[501] She does not actually come for them, but her words have the desired result. Adama retakes his ship, and the coup is put down.

Act V: There is Another Sky[502]

Drawing upon her storied, varied theatrical career, Mary McDonnell delivered the Kenan Lecture at Transylvania University "An Actress' Journey Through Roles Demanding Leadership: From Stands With A Fist to Laura Roslin" (March 10, 2010).[503] McDonnell utilized her roles to illustrate different aspects of femininity and to make a complicated feminist argument analyzing gender and power. Her speech at Transylvania does not represent her final word on the subject. For instance, McDonnell did an impressive job of answering questions about health care and other public policy issues, as well as advancing feminist positions, during the 2009 Dragoncon *Battlestar Galactica*

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[500]"Blood on the Scales." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Michael Angeli. Dir. Wayne Rose. (6 Feb. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[501]"Blood on the Scales." Battlestar Galactica *Season Four*. (Wri. Michael Angeli. Dir. Wayne Rose. (6 Feb. 2009). Universal Network Television, 2009. DVD.)

[502]"There is Another Sky" is the opening line of Emily Dickinson's poem "There is Another Sky"(Written in 1851) and first published in *Poems by Emily Dickinson, First Series* (1890).] It is equally the title of an episode of *Caprica*, the prequel to *Battlestar Galactica*.

[503]Mary McDonnell, "An Actress' Journey Through Roles Demanding Leadership: From Stands With A Fist to Laura Roslin." (Transylvania University. Lexington, Ky. 10 March 2010. Kenan Lecture.)

panels. While subsequent appearances at Dragoncon (e.g., 2011) did not contain the same amount of public policy querying, McDonnell is lauded for her portrayal of strong women from Laura Roslin to her Oscar-nominated She Who Stands With a Fist (*Dances With Wolves*) and Captain Sharon Raydor (TNT's *Major Crimes*).

Battlestar Galactica might be long over, but time has not decreased Laura Roslin's popularity. Laura Roslin remains the subject of much fan-acclaim in a variety of forums: from Dragoncon to social media (livejournal, tumblr, &c), and to other popular cultural critics, such as Maureen Ryan. Though one would think Laura Roslin would be tailor made for academic investigation, she is overlooked. Consequently, popular cultural criticism and fandom fills in where academia fears to tread: valuing women who would otherwise be overlooked within a scholarly, critical discourse. People, men and women alike, love Laura Roslin for diverse reasons. A cursory glance through the interwebs could show the forms such ardor takes: tattoos, fanfiction, cosplay, fanart, and intelligent analysis of Laura Roslin's character. In constructing this dissertation, I attempted to conduct a little nontraditional research: employing social media, I asked people to tell me why they like Laura Roslin.

Of the selections, tumblr user Tinkertaylr made some fascinating connections between Laura Roslin and Buffy the Vampire:

> I guess I can really only speak for myself, but I suspect that lots of people (women esp.) love Laura (as well as Buffy!) because on one side of the coin she is deeply human and relatable and on the other she possesses strength, determination, the ability to make tough

> calls . . . a whole host of admirable qualities which I think we all hope to embody.[504]

Equally, employing a relationship developed over twitter, I asked Maureen Ryan to tell me why she likes Laura Roslin.

Before we (re)turn to Maureen Ryan, Tinkertaylr explicates the intriguing comparison between Laura Roslin and Buffy the Vampire Slayer:

> I actually think that Laura and Buffy share lots of similarities as characters and I love them for many of the same reasons. They both have power and responsibility which they never asked for or wanted thrust upon them quite suddenly (Buffy as The Slayer and Laura as president, obviously). Suddenly their lives aren't solely theirs anymore because other peoples' existences literally depend on the choices they make . . . and that's a heavy burden, certainly. But rather than seek the easy way out—deny their responsibilities or stick someone else with them—they rise to the occasion. Buffy and Laura possess what would typically be seen as 'male' responsibilities and power and they OWN those responsibilities and that power. They have a sense of pragmatism about them, make the tough decisions, do their jobs well . . . all of this while still being women who completely retain their femininity and more maternal side, and who absolutely possess emotions, fears, flaws, etc.[505]

Tinkertaylr's analysis seems perfectly fashioned for our dissertation. Though Tinkertaylr only talks about Buffy and Laura Roslin, the delineation of what makes Laura and Buffy awesome heroines could be said to include all the women, and with some pronoun changes, the men, who occupy *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food*'s pages. After all, William Adama is equally able to transcend gender binaries and be as sensitive and emotional, if not more so, as Laura Roslin.

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[504]Tinkertaylr. Personal Interview. 13 Jan. 2013.

[505]Tinkertaylr. Personal Interview. 13 Jan. 2013.

Cultural critics, both professionals (e.g., Maureen Ryan) and amateur (e.g., social media users like Tinkertaylr), admire flawed and relatable women. In her reading of Roslin's character, Ryan avers that Laura Roslin "was, in short, one of the most complex women ever seen on television, and neither the show nor the character ever apologized for that complexity or tried to marginalize it. Roslin ended up being one of the saviors of humanity, in part because she never let anyone else's rules or perceptions define her. I miss her still."[506] Likewise, Roslin "was defined by her leadership, by her decisions, by her friendships and by her humanity, which she tried to keep alive in desperate circumstances."[507] Ryan shares her praise with the actress behind the role: "Mary McDonnell brought incredibly heart, compassion and strength to the role, and she literally made my hair stand on end in some of Roslin's scenes."[508] For fans and critics alike as well as McDonnell herself, Laura Roslin's appeal, thus, arises from her ability to transcend the traditional gender dichotomies.

Laura Roslin, equally, and her battle with cancer resonate with fans. Rather than seeing her death as punitive, the death scene resonates almost as much Little Eva's, producing tears and memorials. For some, Roslin's cancer fight inspired fans whose own mothers, like Mary McDonnell's and Ronald D. Moore's, succumbed to cancer. Even four years after her 'death,' the livejournal

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[506]Maureen Ryan, Personal Interview. 15 Jan. 2013.

[507]Maureen Ryan, Personal Interview. 15 Jan. 2013.

[508]Maureen Ryan, Personal Interview. 15 Jan. 2013.

community "Remember Laura" continues to feature daily displays of fanart and detailed discussion devoted to Laura Roslin and crafting an exegesis of her life.

Returning to our earlier textual exchange, Roslin's death is indeed her gift. It is as self-making in its fashion as Buffy's deaths, rebirths, and slaying. Throughout her lives, Buffy the Vampire Slayer is haunted by death; it is her curse at the same time she is told by the First Slayer, "Death is your gift; you make it with your hands."[509] In Buffy's case, she gives her life to save her sister and thus, in this instance, translate Death into the gift of life. Eventually, Buffy is reborn through the agency of her friends.[510]

Roslin, like Buffy, dies twice. Like Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Roslin's life, rather than her deaths, matters. Roslin utilizes her death to (re)make her meaning and her mission. That she finds time to save the world and have a boyfriend might make her somewhat more successful than Buffy the Vampire Slayer at having it all. Likewise, William Adama's self-sacrificing and overly-emotional hero empowers him as gender-bending and genre-breaking, as with Laura Roslin. If she proves that genius has no sex, then William Adama embodies the idea that masculinity need to be toxic and antagonistic to feminist empowerment. Indeed. Adama's re-figuration of sentimental masculinity re-embodies sentimental fictions more concretely and conclusively then does Laura Roslin. He might not be a better Uncle Tom then she is a Little

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[509]"Restless." Buffy the Vampire Slayer *Season Four*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (23 May. 2000). Fox Searchlight, 2000. DVD.)

[510]Buffy's rebirth goes badly. Season six is not a fan favorite. But then, being ripped out of a heaven and clawing your way out of your own grave might be the way to make an entrance, yet it is not the best way to regain your sanity.

Eva, but his ability to weep and feel and still retain his wits (mostly) about him situate him as the heir to the Man of Sentiment. Rosdama might be somewhat problematic from a governmental perspective but the unitarian aspects make for a power revision of gender as well as working within existing structures of fiction and gender ideologies (i.e., Jane Austen). Likewise, Admiral Cain is not evil because she is a woman in charge. Instead, it is her decisions as a leader that render her villainous.

In arguing for what renders Roslin invaluable, Maureen Ryan reasserts that flawed and fallible is fabulous:

> But that's another thing you don't see much of on TV: A strong woman who admits her mistakes. A fierce woman who feels doubt. A tenacious woman who is sometimes too stubborn. Television is full of believably flawed men with charisma and intelligence, but there aren't enough women like Roslin, that's for sure. [511]

As evidenced by this dissertation, Ryan and I might disagree about the dearth of flawed femmes flickering across our television screens, but we agree on Roslin's characteristics: Roslin's ability to espouse Sense and Sensibility in Space.

[511]Maureen Ryan, Personal Interview. 15 Jan. 2013.

EPISODE SEVEN:"NO ONE IS THEIR BEST IN HERE," OR *DOLLHOUSE*'S VENDIBLE SELVES AND FEMINIST SELF-FORMATION

I held it truth, with him who sings
To one clear harp in divers tones,
That men may rise on stepping-stones
Of their dead selves to higher things.[512]

Teaser: This is Not Your Typical Whedon Show[513]

Out of all the intriguing avenues for analysis located in Whedon's *Dollhouse*, "No One Is Their Best Here" asserts that *Dollhouse* is Whedon's most ground-breaking feminist work, an idea supported by Whedon himself: "Whedon ranks the character [Echo/Caroline] as one of his best, saying 'she's absolutely the essence of strength boiled down. She's at her strongest when she's at her least powerful. She has an extraordinary tenacity'."[514] Brent Lamb

[512]Alfred, Lord Tennyson wrote *In Memoriam A.H.H.* between 1830 to 1850, though it is more commonly dated as 1849. Tennyson published it anonymously ["In Memoriam." *Encyclopædia Britannica. (Encyclopædia Britannica Online.* Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2014. Web. <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/284370/In-Memoriam>. 16 Jan. 2015.)]. The quotation comes from the opening stanza (1-4) of the first poem (I) [Alfred Tennyson, *In Memoriam*. (London: Edward Moxon, 1850. Print.)].

[513]Joss Whedon on *Dollhouse:* "This is not the typical, well, if there is a typical Whedon show, this is not it. It's not the lighthearted romp that the other shows were. The fact of the matter is there's definitely funny stuff coming up. There's always moments of funny, but it doesn't build like a comedy. It wasn't designed to be a comedy. It's not going to play that instrument. You have to do different things at different times. If people are feeling like it's too serious, then either their expectation has to be changed, or we need to lighten up a little. But, yes, I don't think they're ever going to see the same sort of long, six page runs of just pure humor. This is not that show" [Daniel Fienberg, "Joss Whedon Reminds You to Watch this Friday's 'Dollhouse'." (*HitFix*. (19 Mar. 2009). Web. < http://www.hitfix.com/articles/2009-3-19-joss-whedon-reminds-you-to-watch-this-friday-s-dollhouse/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[514]Jevon Phillips, "Whedon Returns to TV with 'Dollhouse'." (Show Tracker. *Los Angeles Times*. (31 Oct. 2007). Web. < http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/showtracker/2007/10/whedon-returns-.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

substantiates Whedon's asservations, "In *Dollhouse,* Whedon uses a science-fiction concept to delve into the world of human trafficking and prostitution."[515] Moreover, "According to Catherine Coker in *Sexual Rhetoric in the Work of Joss Whedon,* the show is 'in many ways Whedon's most provocative piece of work . . . The feminist ethos of *Dollhouse* is a thorough explication of what makes society an enemy of women, and how women can fight society and hopefully make it better'."[516] Echo/Caroline (Eliza Dukshu), the central character, on one hand, follows an heroick journey into selfhood and world-saving that resembles the path of the traditional Whedon heroine. More than Whedon's prior works, *Dollhouse* employs a diversity of women's roles and affords women as well as men the opportunity at self-reformation (or self-re-formation) and transformation. This chapter will by necessity engage with Caroline/Echo, but it expands to include how the inmates of the Dollhouse aim to control their own destiny and refashion their own lives.

Given the popularity accorded to Joss Whedon in the mainstream post-*Avengers Assemble* as well as the impassioned fandom for Whedon's other works, *Dollhouse* stands out.[517] Whedon illuminates what he wanted *Dollhouse*

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[515]Lamb "Whedonesque Women: One Man's Quest for Positive Gender Representations" 108 [Brent Lamb, "Whedonesque Women: One Man's Quest for Positive Gender Representations."(*Screen Education*. 61 (Autumn 2011):104-111. Print.)]. Lamb locates *Dollhouse* (108-109) within the larger framework of Joss Whedon's oeuvre. Likewise, Lamb represents one of the rare examples of *Dollhouse*'s coverage within academic journals.

[516]Lamb "Whedonesque Women: One Man's Quest for Positive Gender Representations" 108

[517]Although this dissertation has only chosen to concentrate on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, for obvious reasons, *Angel* (*Buffy*'s spin-off), *Firefly* and its cinematic follow-up *Serenity*, and *Dr. Horrible's Sing Along Blog*, Whedon's pioneering web-series, all have passionate and devoted followings. Likewise, to be fair, Dragoncon has featured *Dollhouse* panels in its television lineup that had as long lines as those for *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*.

to contain: "Sexuality was a big part of it and certainly the most edgy and titillating part of it, but not in any way the only part of it.[518] Whedon, then, attempts to delineate what makes the show special:

> When I pitched it, it was 'Alias' meets 'Quantum Leap.' I thought of her [Echo/Caroline *ed.*], more than anything, as a life coach. As the kind of person you absolutely need in your life at a certain moment who will either change you or comfort you or take your life to the level you want it to be. And that could be nice, evil, sexual. It could be any number of things. It was never meant to be the one. The one just took over because it's the one that frightens people the most and also obviously interests them the most. I think we ended up not going there as much as we would have in the first few episodes because we were still in that dialogue with some of the people at the network. You end up doing a disservice if you just gloss over it and don't hit it head-on.[519]

Whedon's conceptual pitch of an *Alias/Quantum Leap* crossover seems, on the surface, no less surreal then his idea that his active or dolls were "life coaches," particularly given the dark swelling undercurrents of violence and slavery permeating every aspect of the series and its world. To his credit, *Dollhouse* does "hit it head-on": characters in the show comment, with increasing frequency, both on the fiscal irresponsibility of buying the Dollhouse's products (surely an actual midwife would be more cost effective and easily procurable than Echo) and on the fallibility of its premises of benevolence and utility.

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[518]Maria Elena Fernandez, "Joss Whedon on 'Dollhouse's' Humor, Layers and 'Ick Factor'." Show Tracker. (*Los Angeles Times*. (18 Mar. 2009). Web. <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/showtracker/2009/03/joss-whedon.html> 16 Jan. 2015.); see also Jace Lacob, "Valley of the Dolls: Joss Whedon Discusses 'Man on the Street' Episode of 'Dollhouse'." (*Televisionary*. (20 Mar. 2009). Web. <http://www.televisionaryblog.com/2009/03/valley-of-dolls-joss-whedon-discusses.html > 16 Jan. 2015.).

[519]Fernandez "Whedon on 'Dollhouse's' Humor, Layers and 'Ick Factor'"

Joss Whedon is not known for simplistic ideas. Yet, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* could, at least, be boiled down to something pithy about girls slaying monsters. Unlike *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and Whedon's other works, *Dollhouse* does not really lend itself to the "elevator pitch" format or the two-sentence delineation, though Brent Lamb makes an attempt: "*Dollhouse* is a dark tale of exploitation that follows the experiences of Echo, who has signed herself over to a sinister organization that removes women's consciousnesses so that they can be imprinted with different personalities, knowledge and skills before being hired out to private clients."[520] Writing in a review of the show's second season, Jake Meaney expands on Lamb's, and Whedon's, description:

> Set in a verging on dystopic present, *Dollhouse* imagines a world where a secret, nefarious international business/medical conglomerate (the Rossum Corporation) has found a way to wipe a person's identity, and replace it with the memories, personalities and talents of other people. Big business, and good business, as the wealthy and unscrupulous can then rent out these 'dolls' to be whatever they need–assassins, dead wives, prostitutes. The 'dolls' (who have 'volunteered' to join the Dollhouse for a five year stint, with the promise of huge monetary payout at the end and bad memories expunged) are imprinted with different personalities for their various assignments, and then wiped clean at the end, drifting listlessly about in the subterranean stronghold of the Dollhouse, reduced to a childlike *tabula rasa* state.[521]

Whilst Lamb suggest dolls are only female and Meaney wrongly avers that season one overlooks the criminality inherent in that framework (consent is not

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[520]Lamb "Whedonesque Women: One Man's Quest for Positive Gender Representations" 108

[521]Jake Meaney, "'Dollhouse: The Complete Second Season' 'May Be Too Good for This World." (*PopMatters*. (3 Dec. 2010). Web. < http://www.popmatters.com/review/134038-dollhouse-the-complete-second-season/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)

always an enthusiastic yes), both men touch on two common themes: vendibility and theatricality.

Whedon's, Meaney's and Lamb's descriptions allow us to glimpse how *Dollhouse* is fertile ground for analysis and what makes *Dollhouse* problematic to encapsulate in the traditional blurb: a television serial set in a "Dollhouse" filled with dolls (termed "Actives" in the script) whose default persona is a blank slate and whose names are the letters of the NATO alphabet (e.g., Alpha, Echo, November, Sierra, Victor, and Whisky). Add to this surreality the thorny issues of identity, consent, compellment, rape, mind-wiping, human-trafficking, and an apocalypse or two, and you can see what makes *Dollhouse* so fascinating and so hard to explain in the usual three line summary. *Dollhouse*'s innovative exploration of identity helps to elucidate the difficult relationship between *Dollhouse* and its publics: the Whedon faithful, the average FOX viewer, the television critic, and the studio.

With Whedon's contentious, to say the least, relationship with FOX, people were surprised that Whedon would choose to partner with FOX for another television series.[522] Whedon's work was not always universally beloved by critics (e.g. *Firefly*) or fandom, but *Dollhouse* was particularly problematic.[523]

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[522]See for instance Mike Russell "The CulturePulp Q&A: Joss Whedon"(2005). [*Joss Whedon: Conversations*. Eds. David Lavery and Cynthia Burkhead. *Television Conversation Series*. (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2011. 107-128. Print.)] and Knowledge@Wharton. Joss Whedon's Plan to Monetize Internet Content (Watch Out, Hollywood)."[*Joss Whedon: Conversations*. Eds. David Lavery and Cynthia Burkhead. *Television Conversation Series*. (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2011.175-183. Print.)].

[523]The opening paragraph of Scott Roger's Joss Whedon's *Dollhouse* and Joss Whedon's Dollhouse." (*Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* [JFA] 22.2 (2011): 153–70. Print.) has good summary of the show's more popular detractors, including Robert Bianco (*USA Today*).

Perhaps by the time *Dollhouse* debuted (on February 13, 2009), people had come to have expectations about what Whedon's writing meant, and *Dollhouse* appeared to defy those preconceived ideas.

The level of invective, though, leveled at the show, particularly Eliza Dushku's acting ability, seems surprising in its viciousness, as if the critics felt themselves personally affronted by *Dollhouse*. Nancy Franklin, for instance, fulminates, "The problem with playing someone whose default setting is tabula rasa is pretty obvious, and the primary qualification that Dushku brings to the part is that she graduated with honors from the Royal Academy of Cleavage."[524] While he raves about *Dollhouse*'s second season, Jake Meaney was less glowing in his response to season one:

> Most of the 13 episode run of season one is composed of stand-alone episodes where Dushku basically gets to play dress up and try to act her way through various different personalities, all of whom end up devolving into pretty much the same character that Dushku always plays (tough talking, shoulder swaying townie gal).[525]

The terms he uses are less offensive and misogynist in their denigration: Meaney is, thankfully, less concerned with Dushku's breasts. Nevertheless, Meaney seems to support Franklin's assessment of Dushku's acting abilities.

Suffice it to say, Dushku advances a drastically different reading of the relationship between *Dollhouse* and her talents: "Dushku said the show is a metaphor for her own life, where people are constantly expecting her to be

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[524]Nancy Franklin, "Whedon's World: A New Show from the Creator of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*." (*The New Yorker*. (2 Mar. 2009). Web. <http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2009/03/02/whedons-world > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[525]Meaney "'Dollhouse: The Complete Second Season' May Be Too Good for This World"

different people in different situations. It's also a metaphor for objectification."[526] Dushku explains:

> Yes, and that's art imitating life. That is the core of the show, and that is the core of me. It's all about being in different scenarios and all these different skins and all these different personalities, but figuring out who my authentic self is and who I am and what memories we have versus the memories that are imprinted on us every day in our lives. When all that's wiped away, who are we at our core? So it's definitely a true parallel with myself and this character.[527]

With language like Franklin's, the objectification leveled up from metaphorical to literal status. Of course, Dushku's asservations about the *Dollhouse* as "a metaphor for objectification" find intriguing correlatives that cut across academic and popular cultural critical terrains.

In addition to interrogating identity and self-creation, *Dollhouse* offers a "thorough metacritique of the entertainment industry."[528] Whedon utilizes *Dollhouse* to lodge a "complaint about the entertainment industry's tendency to produce media filled with sex, glamour, and beauty at the expense of the thoughtful, intellectually stimulating art that might otherwise by produced if artists were not forced to compromise their art by the very institutions they

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[526]Furthermore, "Playing Echo has allowed Dushku to 'play and jump around in between these characters, every week and sometimes multiple times in one show.' She says she has an 'appetite' to experience different emotions, and Josh[*sic*] has given her 'the ability to show different colors.' Her favorite characters, so far, have included a blind cult member (who's sent inside a cult with cameras in her retinas.) And a 'prissy' 50-year-old woman who's put into Dushku's body" [Charlie Jane Anders, "Dollhouse Is Stretching Eliza Dushku's Acting Ability" (*io9*. (11 Feb. 2009). Web. < http://io9.com/5150881/dollhouse-is-stretching-eliza-dushkus-acting-ability > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[527]Maria Elena Fernandez, "Countdown to 'Dollhouse': Eliza Dushku Puts her Faith in Joss Whedon." Show Tracker. (*Los Angeles Times*. (2 Feb. 2009). Web. <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/showtracker/2009/02/countdown-to--1.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[528]Roger "Joss Whedon's *Dollhouse* and Joss Whedon's Dollhouse" 153

rely on for distribution."[529] Continuing with the theatre-theme, Tami Anderson suggests, "If life's a stage and we're merely players, the Dolls are actors waiting for their lines and their character notes, hanging out in the green room, ready to be filled with words written by other people that they will have to act out according to the script."[530]

Similarly, in an early review of the series, Emily Nussbaum notes:[531]

> But perhaps the strangest thing about *Dollhouse* is the way in which it seems to reflect Whedon's anxieties about TV itself. Echo is as much like an actress as she is like a prostitute, a beautiful drone who behaves the way wealthy men think a woman should act. Whedon has always written about feminism, but as he's progressed through *Angel*, *Firefly*, and *Dollhouse*, another theme has emerged: the question of how to live within a system that co-opts any attempt at rebellion.[532]

Consequently, like Caroline/Echo's own multifaceted and traffickable selves, *Dollhouse* can be viewed as almost a postmodernist conversational exchange between how performers, writers, and directors, such as Joss Whedon and Eliza Dushku, (re-/de-)construct identities and how the characters themselves react to or rebel against these (mis)constructions. In the end, like a new historicist dance, Whedon and Topher Brink (the character who programs the dolls in the

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[529]Roger "Joss Whedon's *Dollhouse* and Joss Whedon's Dollhouse" 153

[530]Anderson "Whose Story is This, Anyway? 162 [Tami Anderson, "Whose Story is This, Anyway?" (*Inside Joss'* Dollhouse*: From Alpha to Rossum*. Ed. Jane Espenson. Smart Pop Series. Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, 2010. 160-173. Print.)] Like Scott Roger, Anderson engages in a lively interplay between dollhouse and *Dollhouse*.

[531]Emily Nussbaum, "Split Personality: Joss Whedon Attempts to Play It Safe *and* Weird with *Dollhouse*." (*New York*. (16 Feb. 2009):59-60. Print.)

[532]Nussbaum "Split Personality: Joss Whedon Attempts to Play It Safe *and* Weird with *Dollhouse*" 60

Dollhouse) or Dushku and Caroline/Echo endeavor to (re)create feminist selves out of the renegotiation of bespoke cultural fashions.

"Man on the Street," *Dollhouse*'s sixth episode of season one, provides a potent and illuminative illustration for our purposes.[533] Joss Whedon, Eliza Dushku, and Tamoh Pennikett (Paul Ballard) heavily sold the story throughout their promotional interviews that "Man on the Street" was the one to watch. It is true that viewers knew that like *Firefly*, Fox requested Joss Whedon reshoot his pilot episode, but that alteration does not necessarily lead to the idea that the first five episodes are skip-worthy, since other television shows have had to do pilot reshoots or change their storylines to suit the studio, the fandom, or even the showrunners and makers of the television series itself.

Discussing why Whedon's rhetorical choice might have been an unwise, Daniel Fienberg reveals a larger problem with the show, "While the show gets a ratings boost from DVR viewership and while last week's audience took a surprise bump, 'Dollhouse' had been regularly losing viewers from a premiere

[533]"Man on the Street." Dollhouse *Season One* (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. David Straiton (20 Mar. 2009) 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.). For a very useful recap/review, see Chris Farnsworth, "Recap 'Dollhouse-Man on the Street'."(Monkeys as Critics. *HitFix*. (21 Mar. 2009). Web. < http://www.hitfix.com/blogs/monkeys-as-critics/posts/recap-dollhouse-man-on-the-street > 16 Jan. 2015.). Like all the reviews examined for this dissertation, Farnsworth explores the repercussion of selling the script of "Man on The Street" being that one Episode you can't miss. Other intriguing examples of popular cultural critical commentary may be found here: Robin Pierson, "Episode 6-Man on the Street." (*TvCritic.org*. (28 Mar. 2012). Web. <http://www.thetvcritic.org/reviews/dramas/dollhouse/season-61/man-on-the-street/ > 16 Jan. 2015.); Michelle Graham, "TV Review: Dollhouse-Man on the Street." (*Film School Rejects*. (23 Mar. 2009). Web. < http://filmschoolrejects.com/tv/tv-review-dollhouse-man-on-the-street.php > 16 Jan. 2015.); John Kenneth Muir, "TV Review: Dollhouse: 'Man on the Street'." (*John Kenneth Muir's Reflections on Cult Movies and Classic TV*. (22 Mar 2009). Web. <http://reflectionsonfilmandtelevision.blogspot.com/2009/03/tv-review-dollhouse-man-on-street.html > 16 Jan. 2015); and Jennifer Thomas, "'Dollhouse' review: Now We've Got Intrigue in 'Man on the Street'." (*Entertaining Ideas A View from the Couch: TV reviews and news* ((21 Mar. 2009). Web. <http://blogs.pioneerlocal.com/entertainment/2009/03/dollhouse_review_now_weve_got.html> 16 Jan. 2015.).

audience that was already below FOX's hopes and expectations."[534] After Fienberg broaches the potential negative consequences of Whedon's hard-selling "Man on the Street," Whedon responds:

> You know, there may have been a negative side to it because we may have said, 'The first five episodes are crap,' which I don't believe. . . . But I do believe, and there's also the negativity of somebody saying, 'Well, now he's blaming the network for the other episodes.' Like, no, no, no, no, we did our best to try and figure out how to put the show over with a new paradigm under the gun while we were in production or occasionally out of production. And then what happened with 'Man on the Street,' was really, it just came to me as a concept really quickly. I pitched it to the network and for the first time, there was a real simpatico. They went, 'Oh, yes, we get that,' and it was a very simple thing.[535]

Before we unpack what Whedon says and what makes "Man on The Street" so bloody special, it might help for the uninitiated to get a glimpse of the episode in question.

The following exchange from "Man on the Street" provides a perfect illustration of the *Dollhouse*'s operations and insight into why Whedon thought the show finally got its act together. Dogged FBI Agent Paul Ballard (Tamoh Pennikett) has spent the previous five episodes trying to track down Eliza Dushku's Caroline (Dollhouse Active code name Echo) and rescue her from whatever hell she finds herself in. In his pursuit, he has faced professional ridicule and personal danger as the Dollhouse has set its sights on stopping him, one way or the other. Finally, he comes face to face with Caroline and a

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[534]Whedon's answers are interesting to examine in full. [Daniel Fienberg, "Joss Whedon Reminds You to Watch This Friday's 'Dollhouse'." (*HitFix*. (19 Mar. 2009). Web. <http://www.hitfix.com/articles/2009-3-19-joss-whedon-reminds-you-to-watch-this-friday-s-dollhouse/ > 16 Jan. 2015.)]

[535]Fienberg "Joss Whedon Reminds You to Watch this Friday's 'Dollhouse'"

few hard truths. The Caroline he finds is not the missing college girl whom he has seen in the picture and video. Instead, he encounters her on an assignation for the Dollhouse with Joel Mynor (Patton Oswalt).

Because this story is by Joss Whedon, Paul Ballard does not save her from the monsters. Instead, he sits down and has a fairly civil (given the circumstances) chat with Mynor:

> **Joel Mynor:** She [his dead wife] never got to see this house. So, every year on this date I pretend she does. I get to see that look on her face, and I get to show her our extraordinary home.
> **Paul Ballard:** And then you sleep with her.
> **Joel Mynor:** Well, it *is* a fantasy.
> **Paul Ballard:** I'm sorry for your loss, Mr. Mynor. But it doesn't make you anything other than a predator.
> **Joel Mynor:** Well, I'm sure I'm in serious need of some moral spankitude, but guess who's not qualified to be my Rabbi?

Fans of Whedon's typical prose style can see why "Man on the Street" could be something he would advise seeing. The moral questions that "Man on the Street" delves into are deep and dark and twisty, but are clothed in the typical Whedon wit. Mynor's equivocations might be self-saving, but *Dollhouse* demonstrates he has a point, even if not in the manner that Mynor suggests. Echo might not be a self-rescuing princess at this point in her story, but she demonstrates a complicated sense of agency. For instance, doll-state Echo chooses to go back and complete her "assignment" (i.e., she willingly chooses to have sex with Mynor): a situation that differentiates her from two (Sierra and Mellie) of three other women the story focuses on, particularly Sierra (Dichen Lachman) who is shown being repeatedly raped by her handler. Likewise, Mynor's argument that Ballard prefers Caroline, his mythic, idealized woman to

the real available girl is perfectly subverted in the most sinister Whedonesque fashion.

You see Mellie/November (Miracle Laurie), Ballard's girl-next-door fantasy is just that; she was custom built by the Dollhouse and designed to keep tabs on him. Helas for Ballard, he has not yet gotten that memo. Ballard chooses Mellie's true virtues over the fictive pleasures of Caroline's body. Rather than a celebration of renouncing patriarchal constructs, Paul Ballard has become, based upon his estimation of Mynor, a rapist and a victim, since the Dollhouse hijacked his moral compass and transformed him into an abuser. Thus, despite choosing the person rather than the subject position to abuse her and exploit her, Ballard's sexual dalliance with Mellie enmeshes him in the system he despises.

As he is getting smacked by some fairly heavy plot points, his charming girlfriend is getting thwacked about by plot anvils in her own right. Mimicking our own voyeuristic viewing of the events on our television screen, we see Adelle Dewitt (Olivia Williams), head of the LA Dollhouse and femme fort in her own right, watching Ballard and calling shots. Through her devices, the audience has two interesting revelations: Adelle Dewitt has a heart and Mellie is not only the girl next door. Though we are not exposed to her true nature, Adelle Dewitt phones in a phrase that activates Mellie.[536] Mellie (or "November" to use her Dollhouse name) proceeds to defeat her attacker (the evil guy who

[536]Mellie's code-phrase is "There are three flowers in a vase. The third flower is green." Because we are watching a Whedon show, the sleeper-agent-spell has horrible consequences once it resurfaces in "The Hollow Men."

was raping Sierra and who the higher-ups were going to allow to escape unscathed). When it looks as if he is very close to raping and murdering her, she flips into assassin mode and kills with ease and then switches back off (or on) to Mellie. "Man on the Street," thus, embeds Echo and Mellie's sensational tales of white slavery in the midst of another woman's pain and another woman's power—all of which will figure in our topography and teleplay of the chapter.[537]

Ballard receives another shock when he once more confronts Echo. This particular version of Echo beats Ballard to a bloody pulp and then informs him that she has been hacked. What follows is a fairly massive combination of exposition, plot-twists, and philosophical-thought-fodder:

> **Paul Ballard:** Where is it?
> **Echo:** You can't know that. You're going about this the wrong way.
> **Paul Ballard:** I have to take down the Dollhouse!
> **Echo**:There are over 20 Dollhouses... in cities around the world. They have ties to every major political power on the planet. You cannot possibly stop them alone.
> **Paul Ballard:** You're gonna help me?
> **Echo:** The person that sent this message is.
> **Paul Ballard:** Why?

[537]For a critical analysis, see Alan Sepinwall's review of the episode [Alan Sepinwall, "Dollhouse, 'Man on the Street': Here's Where the Strings Come In." (*What's Alan Watching?*. (20 Mar. 2009). Web. < http://sepinwall.blogspot.com/2009/03/dollhouse-man-on-street-heres-where.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)]: "It more strongly acknowledged what a bad place this is. Outside of the plausibility issues, the biggest complaint the show has gotten is that the people who run the Dollhouse are monsters, but that the show doesn't always treat them as such. Even outside of Echo's comments to Ballard, there were frequent nods to the skeeviness of the enterprise. We discover Sierra is being raped by her handler, an abuse that's only possible because of what the Dollhouse has done to her. Joel Mynor gives this eloquent speech about how much it means to him to have a doll like Echo help him live out the perfect moment he never got to have with his wife, and Ballard immediately punctures his balloon by replying in disgust, 'And then you sleep with her.' While a few of the documentary interviews feature people who would love to hire the Dollhouse (or work for it), there's more than enough disgust coming from the rest, and from other parts of the episode, to make it clear that the show itself doesn't view the Dollhouse as some kind of cool fantasy'."

> **Echo:** The Dollhouse deals in fantasy. That is their business. But that is not their purpose.
> **Paul Ballard:** What is?
> **Echo:** We need you to find out. We'll contact you again, if possible with this same body. But you have to let the Dollhouse win. Make them back off. You have to trust me.[538]

Hacked Echo asks a fascinating question: What is the Dollhouse's mission? Its mission-less statement is the crux of the problem.

The Dollhouse, like the inhabitants that occupy its walls, can be anything. In her sales pitch to a client in the show's second episode, Adelle Dewitt proclaims:

> In their resting state, our actives are as innocent and vulnerable as children. We call it the 'Tabula Rasa.' The blank slate. Now imagine the imprint process filling it, creating a new personality. A friend, a lover, a confidant in a sea of enemies. Your heart's desire made flesh. And when the engagement has been completed, all memory of you and your time together will be wiped clean.[539]

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[538]Compare hacked Echo's conversation in "Man on the Street" with hacked Mellie's conversation in "A Spy in the House of Love."[Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (10 Apr. 2009).20th Century Fox Television, 2009. DVD.)]: **Mellie:** I'm sorry we had to deliver the news to you like this, in this body. The Dollhouse has likely discovered that we've been placing messages in their imprints and this is the only way we could get the message to you.
Paul Ballard: They did this to you.
Mellie: They did this long before you met me. They've been using this body to spy on you for months. The only reason Mellie exists is because of you.
Paul Ballard: Aren't I special.
Mellie: The Dollhouse deals in fantasy, but that is not their purpose. Investigate their purpose. We will find other ways to contact you.
Paul Ballard: Who? Who sent you?
Mellie: I'm not imprinted with information you're not supposed to have.
Paul Ballard: Tell me who!
Mellie: Remember, you can't tell her. You must maintain the illusion.
Paul Ballard: Wait!
Mellie: [Changes back] Paul, what's wrong?
Paul Ballard: Nothing.
Mellie: Then why aren't you kissing me?

[539]"The Target." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Steven S. DeKnight. Dir. Steven S. DeKnight. (29 Feb. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2009. DVD.)

Adelle Dewitt explains clearly and succinctly what purchasing dolls buys you, the consumer. Of course, the warm fuzzy feelings that could arise from such a lovely, quasi-Hallmark card depiction of the Dollhouse is undermined doubly in the episode: a) by having Echo nearly murdered by a serial killer who loves to murder women and who bought Echo to slay her and b) the show's revelation about its other problem with slaying and not the good Buffy-kind.

> **Boyd** (Harry Lennix):[*Looking down on Actives doing tai ji]* Look at them. Just a bunch of helpless children. Did the ones Alpha slaughtered even put up a fight?
> **Topher** (Franz Katz)**:** They wouldn't know how. Not without an imprint.
> **Boyd:** Why not default them with ninja skills or whatever?
> **Topher:** We tried that once.
> **Boyd:** And?
> **Topher:** Blood. Screaming. Dying.
> **Boyd:** Alpha.[540]

Alpha (Alan Tudyk), as his name suggests, was the first Doll. A sane person would think that a prisoner who likes to murder people might be a horrible choice for a test subject, but not Rossum. As can be seen from the dialog above, it resulted in a "Blood. Screaming. Dying."

Moreover, from internal information doled out throughout the series, it seems that once Rossum was a force for pure good. Its mind-tech was meant to help cure cancer or do something amazing. Now, even the evil genius behind Rossum (Boyd), cosplaying as the moral force for good, avers, "We're pimps and

[540]"The Target." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Steven S. DeKnight. Dir. Steven S. DeKnight. (29 Feb. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2009. DVD.)

killers, but in a philanthropic way."[541] Of course, Rossum's evil intentions are not a truth universally acknowledged. After Paul Ballard finally enters the Dollhouse (in a completely non-heroick moment), he chides, "So this is it. This is where you steal their souls."[542] To which Topher replies, "Yeah, and then we put 'em in a glass jar with our fireflies. Why is there a tall, morally judgmental man in my imprint room besides him? (Topher indicates Boyd)." Snarkcasam aside, it is often hard to detangle what the Dollhouse's mission is.

More importantly, we learn that our Dollhouse (the LA one) appears to be the paradise on earth of all Dollhouses in the Rossum empire. It would seem hard to think of Adelle Dewitt as the Jane Austen or perhaps even better, the Joss Whedon of Dollhouse deities. As she laments to Boyd, "It feels like ages ago that we actually weighed a request against an active's chance at survival. Let alone well-being." He replies, "We've always put them at risk. We just don't lie to ourselves about it now."[543]

From all the depictions of the Dollhouse, we return back to "Man on The Street." Intercut amongst the scenes we have discussed are "Man on the Street" interviews with normal people talking about the "Dollhouse," and the episode ends with an academic noting:

> Forget morality, imagine it's true, alright? Imagine this technology being used. Now imagine it being used on you. Everything you

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[541]"A Spy in the House of Love." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (10 Apr. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2009. DVD.)

[542]"Omega." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Tim Minear. Dir. Tim Minear. (8 May. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2009. DVD.)

[543] "Meet Jane Doe." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. Dwight Little. (11 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD).

> believe, gone. Everyone you love, strangers, maybe enemies. Every part of you that makes you more than a walking cluster of neurons dissolved-at someone else's whim. If that technology exists, it'll be used, it'll be abused, it'll be global. And we will be over. As a species, we will cease to matter. I don't know, maybe we should.

While the speaker does not give us the clearest vision of Dollhouse's mission, the academic foretells the future.

If *Dollhouse* is not your typical Whedon show, its reads like all those other stories prevailing across the multihued nineteenth-discourses of slavery that gripped nineteenth-century reading publics and then weaponizes them like some sort of James Bond-villain evil-smallpox-scheme. Of course, what segregates the Dollhouse or the *Dollhouse* from the snares besetting poor girls and slave women is the tech possessed. If in our previous chapter on *Battlestar Galactica*, we had a notion of hearts and minds and the battle for them waged by Harriet Beecher Stowe, then the Dollhouse provides us a hell where Rossum could obtain Stowe or Caroline, our own student radical, and make her work for them. "Epitaph One" shows us the bleakest dystopia within the Whedonverse, which given that Joss Whedon is not known as the Jane Austen of happy ending says a great deal about the level of hell that exists on earth. At the world's end, everyone, who is not working for Rossum, is either a doll or a rebel. True to form, Whedon's women and men end up saving that world, but at what cost? "Man on the Street" foreshadows that hell and the ideas it entertains.

For our chapter, we focus first on Adelle Dewitt and Topher Brink, respectively the head of the La Dollhouse and its programmer, and the show's transformation of them from the enforcers of the system to its overthrowers.

Providing her insight into her character's moral calculus, Olivia Williams contends: "Adele is always justifying herself. It's a slight case of methinks-the-lady-doth-protest-too-much. She says [the Dollhouse] is for the good of mankind, it's a charitable service, giving people what they need is a public service. And then there's the terrible sort of pro bono work she tries to pick up."[544] As the story progresses, Adelle and Topher are forced to question their own self-valuations. Their shared journey from implementers of the system to co-warriors against said-system forms one of the more powerful and fascinating parts of *Dollhouse*. While we see both Adelle and Topher struggle with some self-doubt in the first season, particularly in the unaired "Epitaph One," the series second, and final, season finale highlights the mental breakdown and moral breakthroughs of both Adelle and Topher.

However, the true friendship blossoms between Adelle and Topher Grace. Adelle's valuation of Topher's lack of empathy provides an interesting counterpart to their conversation in "Belle Chose."[545] After Adelle questioned his certainty, Topher maintained that he was "[c]ertain enough that I have serious ethical problems trying to wake him up."[546] Boyd, who plays the role

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[544]Denise Martin, "Countdown to the *Dollhouse*: The Madam Speaks." Show Tracker. (*Los Angeles Times*. (4 Feb. 2009). Web. <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/showtracker/2009/02/countdown-to--3.html> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[545]"Belle Chose." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Tim Minear. Dir. David Solomon. (9 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[546]Topher presents Adelle with two brain scans, starting with his own. Describing himself, "This is a brain. A healthy brain. Frankly an . . . overly smart brain . . . it's my brain." He then remarks on the other brain, which belongs to Terry Karrens, "See these dark areas? How they extend all the way out to here? That's because Terry Karrens doesn't use that part of his brain. And that'd be where you find stored such things as empathy, compassion . . . an aversion to disemboweling puppies. Basically, this is what some of your more famous serial killers' brains

along with Paul Ballard of the show's consciousness, sarcastically remarks, "Topher has ethical problems. *Topher.*" To which Topher replies, "Heh. Way to land it."[547] Boyd and Topher can laugh about Topher's sudden crisis of actually having a conscious, yet Topher, and Adelle's, journey to empathy, knowledge, and quasi-Abolitionist sentiments proves as tragic as it does humorous.

Next, we delve more deeply into Sierra/Priya's tragic tale of woe and wrong-done. Sierra stood for all things great and good that Rossum was capable of achieving, or so Adelle Dewitt and Topher Brink believed. While the Gothick Tale of Terror that forms Sierra's backstory is only exposed in the second season ("Belonging"), we see some measure of the horrifying series of unfortunate events that befell her in "Man on the Street." From our glimpse at her personal hell in the Dollhouse, we already can see how Sierra embodies the evils that inhabit the Dollhouse. She most clearly resembles the sensation fictions about slavery that permeated both the abolitionist discourse and the broader movement to abolish the sex trade on both sides of the Atlantic within the nineteenth century. Likewise, for all *Dollhouse*'s insistence that Echo/Caroline is special, Sierra/Priya and Victor, her beloved, share the same ability to maintain a sense of an identity that exists outside of their dollstate. They may not remember their past lives, but both Actives know that they love one another by choice and in contravention of the system. All-powerful love

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look like" ["Belle Chose." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Tim Minear. Dir. David Solomon. (9 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)].

[547]"Belle Chose." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Tim Minear. Dir. David Solomon. (9 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

sounds like the sort of sentimental plot that escaped from *Once Upon A Time*'s fairytale world and broke into the Westrosian confines of Whedon's day spa cum madhouse of despair. Indeed, Victor's love of Sierra is what causes him to be initially suspected of being her attacker.

From Sierra we move to the Katniss Everdeen of our revolution, Caroline Farrell/Echo. Caroline was much more successful at breaking into the Dollhouse than Ballard. It turns out she was able to go undercover and break into the company's headquarters in Tucson. With the help of Bennet Halverson (Summer Glau), Caroline was nearly successful in blowing up the labs. Though the viewer later learns that Caroline was attempting to save Bennet from the repercussions of turning terrorist, Bennet Halverson believes that Caroline abandoned her and left her to die ("The Left Hand"; "Getting Closer"). *Dollhouse* consistently depicts Caroline's activism as somewhere between a noble pursuit and terrorism. Her initial encounter with Rossum arose from radical animal rights activities wherein she and her then boyfriend broke into a university lab, funded by Rossum, and attempted both to document the abuses and free the animals. After her boyfriend is ruthlessly slaughtered in cold blood, Caroline makes it her life's mission to bring down Rossum. Once Echo finally encounters the 'real' her, she critiques Caroline's moral choices even as Echo defends Caroline's existence. Echo and her selves (47 downloaded into her all once by Alpha) and Echo and Caroline, her "true self," spar over right and wrong. Once Caroline-in-another-body is murdered by Alpha (double murdered if you count

the fate of the body's previous owner), Caroline is forced to retrieve her imprint disk.

Through her previous activism, Caroline/Echo had some idea of what Rossum was engaged in. Caroline/Echo's terroristic or heroic (depending upon whom you ask) crusade against Rossum resulted in her commitment to the LA Dollhouse, but she made an informed decision based on her knowledge to sign her life away for five years. "Echoes," the episode following "Man on The Street" provides us some much needed backstory on Caroline. Always a rabble-rouser, Caroline's involvement with an animal rights group takes a bloody turn. Once her boyfriend is killed by Rossum, she makes it her life's mission to take them down. Her admittance into the Dollhouse goes like this:

> **Adelle Dewitt:** My offer is this: your life for your life. I get five years, you get the rest. You'll be free.
> **Caroline:** Is that you talking or the Rossum Corporation? Why me? Why did you pick me?
> **Adelle Dewitt:** Caroline, you picked us. This is a good thing, Caroline.
> **Caroline:** I know what I saw. What started this.[548]

Caroline represented a thorn in Rossum's side.

Rossum might have thought that mind-wiping Caroline would transform her into an asset, but her rebellion persisted even her personality left her body. More intriguingly, her knowledge of Rossum becomes important in order to overthrow Rossum and avert the end-of-the-world:

> **Adelle Dewitt:** Caroline Farrell left quite a trail of unhappiness in her wake, and not a few bodies.
> **Echo:** Are you saying she's evil?

[548]"Echoes." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Elizabeth Craft & Sarah Fain. Dir. James Contner. (27 Mar. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

> **Adelle Dewitt:** Worse. An idealist. I shouldn't be at all surprised if it turned out her wedge had got up and walked out on its own.[549]

Echo's relationship to Caroline, her body's original inhabitant, proves particularly complicated and renders her fraught relationship with Paul Ballard even more fraught. Echo/Caroline and Paul's partnership upholds and upends notions of Romantic fictions. Finally, our remaining two sections examine what the cost of revolution entails? What actually happy ending can occur at the end of our story? Relocating to Storybrooke (*Once Upon a Time)* sadly is not an option for our characters.[550] Consequently, we interrogate the notions of what selves can be created after the horrors that they have endured throughout their captivity in and liberation from the Dollhouse.

Act I: Conscious Does Makes Cowards of Us All?[551]

Adelle Dewitt has no delusions about the types of individuals who work at the Dollhouse, even if she wants to cling to the idea that the work they do is neither vicious nor morally bankrupt. She asserts to Topher, "The cold reality is that everyone here was chosen because their morals have been compromised in some way"[552] More harshly, she avers, "Everyone, except you. You, Topher, were

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[549]"Getting Closer." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Tim Minear. Dir. Tim Minear. (8 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[550]Though their writers (Andrew Chambliss and Jane Espenson) may move from one world to another (both relocated from Joss's *Dollhouse* to Kitsis and Horowitz's *Once Upon a Time*), the denizens of the *Dollhouse* can escape their bodies, but never their fates.

[551]William Shakespeare *Hamlet* III.i.83

[552]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

chosen because you had no morals. You have always thought of people as playthings. This is not a judgment. You've always taken very good care of your toys, but you're simply going to have to let this one go."[553]

On the surface, Adelle Dewitt seems the personification of all that is English villainy: icy, aloof, uncaring, and motivated by equal parts scientific investigation and capitalism. Responding to Olivia Williams's question about Adelle Dewitt's background (particularly if she sees herself as a brothel madam), Whedon exclaimed, "No! No, your character was head of a huge multinational medical company that researched neural diseases."[554] Whedon's vociferous clarifications help us to see how Dewitt and Topher Brink, the programmer can repeatedly justify their work to themselves and to others, as missions of mercy.

At the beginning for Dewitt and Brink, Rossum operates in a world of pure science. The dolls might as well be Cylons as human beings. The show's not always deft interplay between Victorian Gothic and the science fiction dystopias of *Battlestar Galactica* or *Blade Runner* help to provide an interesting variegation to the text as well as adding to the explanation of why *Dollhouse* was seen by some within the critical and fan communities as a complete and utter disappointment coming from Joss Whedon.

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[553]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[554]Denise Martin, "Countdown to the *Dollhouse*: The Madam Speaks." (Show Tracker. *Los Angeles Times*. (4 Feb. 2009). Web. <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/showtracker/2009/02/countdown-to--3.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

Other than the idea of brain-remapping itself, one of the show's more science-fiction heavy elements is the Attic. Throughout season one, the Attic is the threat used against disobedient dolls. While the terminology makes it seem like something more out of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* or Charlotte Perkins Gillman's *The Yellow Wallpaper*, the Attic is so much more. It combines the nineteenth-century elements of gothic hell with those of Lana and Andy Wachowski's *Matrix* and *Cloud Atlas*. You see the Attic is like Soylent Green. It is people. *Dollhouse* commits to the brain is a computer metaphor wholeheartedly by transforming the Attic's brain storage into one massive computing machine as if the Babbage/Lovelace computing machine met the Turing test by being made out of actual human intelligence. To amp up the Gothic horror, the brain power arises out of terror.[555] Those in the attic are forced to relieve a hell of their own creation until it kills them:

> **Boyd:** What do we know about the Attic?
> **Topher:** No one comes back, Boyd.
> **Boyd:** But why? What do they do to them in there?
> **Topher:** I don't know: experimenting, torture. They're testing the limits of the human mind. The brain is kept in a fear induced adrenaline fueled overdrive state like a problem you can't solve. Either the nightmare lasts forever or . . .
> **Boyd:** Or it doesn't last at all.[556]

While we had previously seen Adelle send someone to the Attic beforehand, "The Attic" shows us an entirely different side of Adelle. *Dollhouse* has shown us how far Adelle Dewitt will go to protect her house from all threats, even

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[555]"The Attic." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen & Jed Whedon. Dir. John Cassaday. (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[556]"The Attic." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen & Jed Whedon. Dir. John Cassaday. (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

those who work for Rossum.[557] Likewise, she consistently demonstrates her own sense of justice.[558] Thus, her conspiracy to support Echo's accessing the knowledge needed to destroy Rossum is at once shocking and sensible and completely in keeping with her placement within a Whedonesque universe. Dewitt handed over Topher's technological breakthrough to retake her house from her bosses in an attempt to save her Dolls from suffering torture and death.

In season two, Adelle loses control of her house to Mr Harding (Keith Carradine), the embodiment of evil, who is a sort of corporate Simon Legree and wants to sell off the stock down-South (in his case Dubai rather than New Orleans). Comparing Adelle with Harding, we see how much Adelle functions as the benevolent slave mistress more generally seen in something like *The Planter's Northern Bride* or like the good hearted madam so often featured in Westerns, rather than the cold, calculated, and oh-so-British woman of science. Once her power and control over her house is stripped from her, her identity becomes as permeable and as damaged as the products she sells. She moves from competent business woman to failing-down-drunkard to someone who betrays Topher, her closest thing to a friend, and turns over the dire-tech, which will mind-wipe anyone. While she initially seems blasé about her actions,

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[557]"The Attic." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. John Cassaday. (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[558]**Topher:** I don't buckle. Occassionally, I swashbuckle.
DeWitt: Yes, you're quite the pirate hero. Swinging in and dismembering Nolan Kinnard. If you try and keep secrets from the corporation, you may have every expectation of being chopped into pieces yourself. How do you imagine that would feel?["The Attic." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen & Jed Whedon. Dir. John Cassaday. (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)]

feeling as if she sacrificed Topher's designs to the lesser evil, the events of Epitaph One alter her perception. Even before then, Adelle Dewitt becomes torn between how to achieve some goodness in such a morally corrupting environment.

As the end of the world approaches, Topher Brink and Adelle Dewitt contemplate their role in its demise:

> **Topher:** I did all of this. I'm the one who brings about the thought-pocalypse.
> **Adelle Dewitt:** Thought-pocalypse?
> **Topher:** Is brain-pocalypse better? I figure, if I'm responsible for the end of the world, I get to name it.
> **Adelle Dewitt:** I gave the plans to Harding, I'm just as culpable.
> **Topher:** Thanks Adelle. You handed someone a piece of paper. I invented it. Which means I have to destroy it.[559]

Adelle Dewitt and Topher Brink are both correct and undeniably false in their estimations of the parts they played, particularly in their failure to see how their virtue became as problematized as their vice. When we look at Sierra's story, we will see more of Adelle and Topher battle for good.

Within the world most of us occupy, borrowing something from the office might consist of thievery of paper-clips and pens. The Dollhouse, of course, has the same sort of office problems, but extended to its most dystopian degree. In addition to the atrocities perpetrated against Sierra by her handler, we have Topher's more benign employment of the dolls as personal aides (e.g., making Victor into another Topher). Adelle Dewitt, on the other hand, is revealed to be using Victor for more carnal purposes. Under her alias

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[559]"The Hollow Men." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas, Tara Butters, and Tracy Bellomo. Dir. Terrence O'Hara. (15 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

"Miss Lonelyhearts," she remakes Victor into Roger, an Englishman who knows the truth of her job. While Topher wants Sierra to be a genderless buddy to play football around the office and pal around, Adelle Dewitt wants someone to whom she can reveal herself and to whom she can tell the truth.[560]

Arguably, one of *Dollhouse*'s strengths lies in its ability to create multifaceted characters and to blur the lines between virtue and vice. Consequently, Boyd is transformed from symbol of moral authority to the head of Rossum and hence, the true face of *Dollhouse*'s evil. Adelle Dewitt and Topher Brink, on the other hand, hold themselves responsible for bringing about the end of the world. Nevertheless, they might more rightly be considered its saviors. Indeed, Andrew Zimmerman Jones in "The Redemption of Topher Brink" and Jonathan Mason "Like a Boss" make compelling arguments that the one true hero(ine) of *Dollhouse* is either Topher Brink or Adelle Dewitt.[561] *Dollhouse* (series and corporation) trafficks in the fluidity of identity and the potential for any body to be anything or anyone; the man who

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[560]Scott Tobias, "*Dollhouse*: 'A Spy in the House of Love'." (*The A.V. Club*. (10 Apr. 2009). Web. <http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/dollhouse-a-spy-in-the-house-of-love-26523 > 16 Jan. 2015.) Tobias argues: "Victor: Wow. This was the big revelation tonight, and it was a thing of beauty: A total gobsmack of a surprise (for me, anyway, since I didn't see it coming at all) and one that added tremendous depth to a character. The character is question is Adele, who has been using Victor's 'Lonelyhearts' guise as a plaything for at least nine or ten sessions, both to salve her loneliness (she is a high-powered executive with no time for romance, after all) and give her a taste of real intimacy. Since Victor is just going to be wiped anyway, Adele can lay bare all her secrets and trust that he won't take them any further than the bedroom. And since we witness her doing just that, we get a chance to see how conflicted she is about what she does for a living. As she tells Victor, she was once someone who helped create replacement organs out of stem cells; now she's the chief philanthropic pimp and killer."

[561]Andrew Zimmerman Jones, "The Redemption of Topher Brink." [*Inside Joss'* Dollhouse*: From Alpha to Rossum*. Ed. Jane Espenson. Smart Pop Series. (Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, 2010. 78-92. Print.)] Jonathan Mason, "Like a Boss." [*Inside Joss'* Dollhouse*: From Alpha to Rossum*. Ed. Jane Espenson. Smart Pop Series. (Dallas, TX: BenBella Books, 2010. 95-103. Print.)]

(re)programs personalities and the woman who facilitates these transformations refashion themselves from the villains of the piece to something more ". . . the fundamental ickiness of the Dollhouse itself and the complicated people who operate it and are offered up for hire . . . the tragic insidiousness of a place where everyone is a victim of some kind or another."[562]

In his review of "Belonging," Scott Tobias explicates:

> With a little prodding from Echo, who picks up on the subtly disturbed paintings Sierra produces when she's at rest, Topher figures out what happens. And you know what? It shocks him to the core. As I've written time and again in late Season One and early Season Two, Topher has evolved from irritating gadfly to maybe the MVP of the series, and that dramatic improvement has dovetailed with his transformation from smug, amoral, know-it-all science whiz to a tortured (yet still mordantly witty) genius who has finally grown a conscience. His scenes with Adelle (Olivia Williams, who has been brilliant from the start), after they realize what really happened to Sierra, underline just how little control even the people in charge of day-to-day operations ultimately exert over the place. It's amoral power brokers like Keith Carradine's character who really run the show—not to mention extravagantly wealthy sleazebags like Nolan, who get what they want.[563]

Throughout the series, Caroline/Echo is sold as heroine presumptive of the *Dollhouse*. Caroline/Echo might be special, but Sierra/Priya is as important to sparking Adelle Dewitt and Topher Brink's reinventions. When Adelle and Topher realize what *Dollhouse* has inflicted on Sierra/Priya, it becomes harder for them to believe in the benevolence.

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[562] Scott Tobias, "*Dollhouse*: 'Belonging'." (*A.V. Club*. (23 Oct. 2009). Web. <http://www.avclub.com/tvclub/dollhouse-belonging-34520 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[563]Tobias "*Dollhouse*: 'Belonging'"

Act II: I Love Him So Much More Than I Hate You[564]

Like a figure out of abolitionist literature, Sierra embodies a sympathy exchange object and the spectacle of her suffering spurs others to action. Only after "Belonging" can we properly interrupt the affective connection made between Echo's awakening and witnessing Priya's tears and abject horror.[565] During their initial glance-exchange, Priya looks directly at Echo, and Echo deciphers that something is rotten in the state of the Dollhouse. Unlike Echo, the viewers are unable to deconstruct what Echo reads in Priya. All we understand from the pilot is that Echo does not live up to her NATO-name.

Sierra, or Priya Tsetsang (Dichen Lachman) serves as Caroline/Echo's foil, the embodiment of all the evils of which the Dollhouse is capable of inflicting, and her co-equal catalyst for change. In "Belonging," the audience along with Topher and Adelle learn what actually brought Sierra to the *Dollhouse*. The truth and its aftermath help to shatter Topher.[566]

It is revealed, in "Belonging," that Sierra had been Priya, a free-spirited artist, who resisted the advances of Nolan Kinnard (Vincent Ventresca), one of the major players and financial stockholders in the *Dollhouse*. To retaliate, he has her drugged, hurled into a mental institution (hard to miss the shades of the nineteenth-century Gothic novel), and finally committed to the *Dollhouse*,

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[564]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[565]"Ghost." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (13 Feb. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2009. DVD.)

[566]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

where he requests her repeatedly.[567] Sierra is not only raped repetitively by the man she resisted, but every single outing she goes is a violation of her civil liberties and of her body and mind. She is literally and figuratively enslaved and transformed from free spirit to saleable madwoman in an attic.

Though it would not seem possible for Sierra to endure a more disturbing or hellacious fate, we are already aware from "Man on the Street" that her handler has been subjecting her to repeated rapes while she was in her dollstate. As can be seen from the short summary of her violations, Sierra bears the brunt of the moral wrongs and the violence inherent in the system.

Were Sierra nothing more than a prop for affective sentiments or sensational fictions, then Whedon might be guilty of some narrative heinousness rivaling the *Dollhouse*'s own horrors. Sierra might be le nouveau Clarissa and illustrative of the wrongs of women, but she is equally allowed the ability to get her own justice and to resist the system. Her rebellion, unlike Caroline/Echo's, seems straight out of *Once Upon a Time* or another fractured fairytale. She falls in love with Victor, a fellow doll who returns her affection. Intriguingly, Victor had already broke programming and became enamored of Priya upon meeting her when he was employed as bait (an art historian who loved Priya's art) by Nolan Kinnard.[568] Victor's love for Sierra caused him to

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[567]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[568]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

initially be suspected of raping Sierra, but at the same time, the investigation in his "man reaction" were what uncovered Sierra's rapes at her handler's hands.

Speaking to Dr. Nolan Kinnard after learning how he enslaved Priya, Adelle DeWitt coolly and calmly states, "I would no sooner allow you near one of our other Actives as I would a mad dog near a child. . . . You're a rapist scumbag just one tick short of a murderer. I've forgotten, do you take sugar with your tea?"[569] However, once Adelle aims to prevent Nolan from owning Sierra as his permanent willing-sex-slave, she runs into some difficulties. Although Adelle ought not to be shocked that Rossum would consider selling its products to one of is VIP clientele, Dewitt still believes that there is some sort of moral silver lining, until she is smacked down by Matthew Harding.[570] He informs her, "Do you really want to go to Rossum with this? And accuse one of their most valued assets of being a kidnapper and rapist." She replies, "That is what he is! And if we do this, what does that make us?" He answers, "What we are already." Dewitt refrains from ceding to his logic, "We're not slave merchants, Mr. Harding. I won't do this. However she got here, she's here. In my house, and therefore in my care!" [571] Dewitt learns, however, that her house is not under command. Harding's disempowerment of Dewitt anticipates what

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[569]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[570]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[571]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

happens to her later in the series and forces Topher Brink to subvert the system.

Once Topher Brink discovers that Sierra was not one of the bright spots of his career at Rossum, he became more proactive about helping her.[572] When verbal resistance to Adelle proved unworkable, he sent a Priya fully aware of what had been done to her in Sierra's place. Priya verbally confronts Kinnard.[573] After he tries to rape her again, she stabs him to death. "Belonging" unsettlingly ends with Topher and Boyd working on disposing of Kinnard's body (including a shot of Topher covered in blood like a horror movie victim). Perhaps even more disturbing, Priya willingly returns to the Dollhouse for two equally important reasons: she cannot live with what she has done and she loves Victor:[574]

> **Priya:** That's him. What's his name?
> **Topher:** Victor.
> **Priya:** I love him. Is that real?
> **Topher:** Yes. Yes, it's real. He loves you back.[575]

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[572]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[573]**Sierra:** Do you want me wide eyed and demure? Or stupid? Did you want me to be a mute? [Angrily] Which is it Nolan? Which fantasy did you want to keep forever?
Nolan Kinnard: Priya?
Sierra: You just couldn't take 'no' for an answer. ["Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)]

[574]**Sierra:** This secret we have, can you keep it?
Topher Brink: I can keep it. But I don't know if I can live with it.
Sierra: I know I can't. But I don't have to. [Sits back and prepares for a treatment] ["Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[575]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

On one hand, Topher Brink demonstrates his rebellion against the system that he had previously wholeheartedly supported through assisting Priya to achieve some payback; on the other hand, the literal blood-splattered-blowback from his actions helps undermine Topher's sanity.[576]

Priya, as well, is rewarded by getting some measure of justice for what has happened to her and with a chance at true love. Yet, like Topher, she bears the psychological scars of what she had endured. Once she becomes actually confined to "The Attic," Sierra suffers horrifying living nightmares of embracing a living Victor who transforms into a zombiefied Kinnard.[577] After Victor's life in endangered once he is finally "freed"[578] from the Dollhouse, Topher replaces Priya in her own body with all the memories she wanted erased after "Belonging."[579] While Echo's abilities are what defeat the actual menaces to Victor (or Anthony, his 'real' name), his love for Priya/Sierra is what saves him. Echo aims to free them both, but of course, the Dollhouse has other ideas. [580]

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[576]"Belonging." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen and Jed Whedon. Dir. Jonathan Frakes. (23 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[577] During their time in the attic, Victor was haunted by his service in Iraq, and Echo by her inability to save Victor and Sierra ["The Attic." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen & Jed Whedon. Dir. John Cassaday. (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)].

[578] Like Hotel California, you never really leave the Dollhouse. Victor was already haunted by memories of the Dollhouse—he slept in the bathtub in his hotel, since it reminded him of the sleeping pods. Rossum's super-secret and even more villainous military wing kidnapped him, implanted with hive mind technology, and attempted to transform him into a super soldier ["Stop-Loss." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)].

[579]"Stop-Loss." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[580]"Stop-Loss." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Andrew Chambliss. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá (18 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

Within *Dollhouse,* the concept of vengeance or working outside of the usual channels of justice is, thus, is upheld and destabilized. Likewise, it would seem that the chance of achieving true love in the *Dollhouse* is as likely as finding happiness in Westeros. Sierra and Victor's romance sets them apart at the same time it links them with Caroline/Echo as special. Indeed, it appears that Sierra's and Victor's capacity for mutual affection allows them to overcome the *Dollhouse*'s programming, even if they are not capable of performing the same feats of self-innovation Echo masters.

Act III: I Try to be My Best[581]

In Douglas McGrath's cinematic adaptation of *Emma* (1996), Mr. Knightley confides to Emma, mid marriage proposal, "Maybe it is our imperfections which make us so perfect for one another."[582] Although residents neither of Highbury in particular nor Jane Austen's universe in general, Echo/Caroline and Paul Ballard seem as destined for each other as if they had encountered one another at the Netherfield Ball (a la Darcy and Elizabeth Bennett). Ballard and Echo's exhibit the Austenesque equivalence of sharing similar traits: Persistence and the possession of the same trait of girl-saving.

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[581]"I try to be my best" represents one of Echo's (Eliza Dukshu)'s most oft-repeated mantras and represents an almost Manchurian-candidate level of brain conditioning by Rossum(although "Did I Fall Asleep?" "For A little While" is the actual mantra for brainwashing). Of all the examples, I'm partial to this exchange from Vows because it involves Echo acting normal:
Echo: I try to be my best.
Saunders: Good for you. You're done. Go be your best.
Echo: No one is their best in here ["Vows." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (25 Sep. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)].

[582]*Emma*. Wri. Jane Austen (novel) and Douglas McGrath (screenplay). Dir. Douglas McGrath. (Miramax, 1996. DVD.)

Ballard and Caroline are both guided by the self-sacrificing, often self-deluded, belief in saving the girl and the world. Whedon refashions the fairy tale prince into Paul Ballard's FBI agent and questions Ballard's save-the-girl mentality. Consequently, Echo/Caroline operates both as Ballard's damsel in distress and co-savior. At the same time, Mellie is the girl he actually saves (or at least initially he does so) while Victor/ Sierra are the ones to enjoy the fractured fairytale's fabled happily-ever-after.

Reading the criticism leveled at the show, Ballard's cluelessness and propensity to get played are frequently mentioned. Even though he embodies what would be more commonly seen as heroic, noble virtues, he seems more like a different sort of anti-hero. Indeed, Whedon's reinvention of heroick masculinity seems more in line with *Once Upon a Time*'s similar genre-questions efforts. Paul Ballard aims to do the right thing in a dark, sinister world. Yet, Paul Ballard is no storybook prince. His placement within the *Dollhouse* undermines his "save-the-girl" mentality.

For Paul Ballard, Caroline represents a missing girl and more importantly, his link to the *Dollhouse*. Like Caroline, the Dollhouse proves a vexed place for Paul Ballard. His pursuit of Caroline and the Dollhouse ruins his career with the FBI and makes him an outcast who seems mentally ill. The Dollhouse, as would any 'good' evil organization, sets out to either undermine or kill Ballard. Dewitt has a source, Victor in disguise, lead Paul astray with ideas about the Dollhouse. At the same time, a mole within the Dollhouse was hacking the

doll's programming to get messages to Paul.[583] The Dollhouse, likewise, takes the trouble of programming one of its dolls as a sympathetic next-door neighbor with whom Paul forms a romantic attachment. He only discovers that she is not an actual 'normal' person when her programming in compromised.

Though he tries to cease their sexual relationship, he is compelled to continue both by Mellie's programming, which makes her suicidal if she does not please him, and by the threats to his own life.[584] Paul Ballard's shower scene post-sexual liaison has disturbing reverberations with other cinematic or television depictions of women who have been raped. More darkly, Paul employs subterfuge intermixed with honor when he breaks up with Mellie and then follows her to the bridge from which she aims to hurl herself back to the Dollhouse.

Mellie serves another purpose then entangling Paul Ballard in the system. She challenges his obsession with Caroline. Intriguingly, once Ballard finally breaks into the *Dollhouse* to rescue Caroline, the woman whom he actually saves is Mellie.[585] His terms for joining the Dollhouse are freeing Mellie from her contract. Moreover, once she gets pulled back into Rossum's orbit, kidnapped,

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[583]The who was never revealed, but it is presumed to be Laurence Dominic, the chief of security (Reed Diamond), NSA-double-agent and villain turned hero.

[584]Mellie's backstory is tragic. Her actual name is Madeline Costley. She tells Ballard what drove her to the Dollhouse, "I had a daughter. She died." Paul Ballard, "I'm sorry." Mellie explains, "She had a cold; then it wasn't a cold. It was cancer . . . terminal. And my world fell apart. Within 6 months she was gone, and I was alone completely unable to function." ["Instinct." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas and Tara Butters. Dir. Marita Grabiak. (2 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)]

[585]"Omega." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Tim Minear. Dir. Tim Minear. (8 May. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

and re-enslaved, he still attempts to save her. Unfortunately, Ballard's attempts at saving Mellie go horribly awry.

The re-emergence of Mellie and Rossum's reenslavement of her further complicates Echo and Ballard's relationship. Ballard, understandably, feels both affection toward and responsibility for Mellie. In "The Hollow Men," Mellie finally sees herself as an Active and Ballard seems willing to love her in full being, even if only with a pure and devoted friendship. Yet, Boyd Langdon is able to turn Adelle Dewitt's good deed against her; he replays Adelle's message, the one that resulted in Sierra's rapist's death, and reactivates Mellie's trigger. Mellie, through her love of Paul, resists only long enough to commit suicide, spraying Ballard with her blood and brains.[586]

While Boyd appears to love Echo like a daughter, Ballard attempts to train her to wield her selves and their knowledge. In her single minded pursuit, Caroline resembles Paul Ballard. Ballard, however, wavers between seeing Echo as the placeholder for Caroline and a composite individual in her own right. Though Ballard works with Echo to help control accessing her other personalities, it seems that he is incapable of loving her as she (or shes) loves him. His uncertainly mirrors Echo's own. Once she becomes multitudes (at the end of "Omega"), Echo veers from seeing herself as a single entity (Echo) to unreal. She tells Ballard, "I remember everything. Sometimes I'm someone else and then I come back, but I still feel them. All of them. I've been many people. I can hear them, sometimes suddenly. I'm all of them, but none of them is me.

[586]"The Hollow Men." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas, Tara Butters, and Tracy Bellomo. Dir. Terrence O'Hara. (15 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

Do you know who's real?"[587] Ballard tells her, "Caroline." She replies, "I want to find her. I want to find all of them. Real them. They can be found. We are lost, but we are not gone."[588] Intriguingly, Echo embraces the e pluribus unum approach to her own identity, but it is the **feeling** that so disconcerts Echo.[589] Echo's power derives from her ability to adapt her words to suit the situation and to access all her prior performances, or rather "imprints," even if her actual self has been ripped from its proper place and replaced with a veritable bookcase and closet worth of vendible selves and (re)workable scripts.

Ballard informs her, "I know you want to help me bring down the Dollhouse. Maybe it's too much, I can do this on my own. I promise I'll get you out. I'll get all of you out."[590] Aiming to be helpful, Ballard suggests, "If you want, I'll tell Topher what's going on with you, and he can fix it. He'll come up with a way to wipe you and you won't remember a thing. You won't have to feel sad anymore."[591] Echo refuses, "Feeling nothing would be worse. That would be

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[587] "Vows." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (25 Sep. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[588] "Vows." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (25 Sep. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[589]**Paul Ballard**: I know you remember everything.
Echo: Not remember, **feel**. I was married. I felt love, and pain and fear. It's not pretend to me. They made me love my little boy. And then they took him away. They made it **so** real, every time they make it **so real**. Why do they do that? ["Instinct." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas and Tara Butters. Dir. Marita Grabiak. (2 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)]

[590]"Instinct." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas and Tara Butters. Dir. Marita Grabiak. (2 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[591]"Instinct." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas and Tara Butters. Dir. Marita Grabiak. (2 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

like before . . . asleep. And I'm awake now. I don't want to go back to sleep."[592] At the same time, Echo begins to rebel against Ballard seeing her as something than other a complete individual: "But that idea that Caroline might not be . . . I've been saving this body for her. But I'm not her."[593] Ballard endeavors to persuade to her, "You don't know that. You've resisted the wipes from the start. You tracked down my cell, you couldn't remember my name. You knew I would help you. Keep you from DeWitt. DeWitt was Caroline's enemy, not Echo's. Maybe it was Caroline picking up those shells." Echo persists, "I'm **not** her! My name is Echo."[594] Even after Caroline joins the party in Echo's mind (or minds), Echo continues to view Caroline as a piece of her personality, but not her representative self.

Once Alpha renders Ballard brain dead as punishment for loving Echo, Ballard becomes the monster he fears, an individual with Active architecture. To make matters worse, Topher was forced to repurpose Ballard's love for Echo, or rather its series of connections within his brain, into the new Ballard. Love, thus, proves nearly as treacherous as *Game of Thrones*. Indeed, Ballard's happy ending is achieved post-mortem, when the imprint of his personality is

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[592]"Instinct." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas and Tara Butters. Dir. Marita Grabiak. (2 Oct. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[593]"Meet Jane Doe." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. Dwight Little. (11 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[594]**Paul Ballard:** The Dollhouse made you fall in love over and over, you told me that.
Echo: They also made me aggressively sexual, and phenomenally creative in bed.
Paul Ballard: [sighs] Now that's just cruel.
Echo: Also sociopathic, inexperienced, blind and at least 7 times gay. There's a lot of noise from the chorus girls, but they're not me. There is a me. [Gently touching Ballard's cheek] This is me" ["Meet Jane Doe." Dollhouse *Season Two* (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. Dwight Little. (11 Dec. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)].

downloaded into Echo. While they are indeed one-flesh, it is hard to view the everlasting bond as something that Shakespeare would have written sonnets about.

Act IV: O What a Mind is Here Overthrown; or Selves Saved and Damned[595]

As we have glimpsed, Whedon's interrogates salvation and what makes a self savable. How do we count up the cost in bodies, bloodshed, and brains-shattered and splattered? What moral calculus should we bring to bear? By "The Hollow Men," we have seen all our deeply cherished assumptions queried and then shattered.[596] Rather than the bastion of moral authority, Boyd Langdon is the head of Rossum, who infiltrated his own organization for some technobabble reasons involving Caroline's bodily fluids and their ability to vaccinate against mind-wiping.[597] Topher Brink and Adelle Dewitt are leading the resistance movement and seek redemption from their prior wrongs. Viewers who missed the never-aired "Epitaph One," available on the *Dollhouse Season 1* DVD, would think from "The Hollow Men" that Joss Whedon finally went for an almost Disney happy ending. You could actually believe that Rossum has been all blowed up, the day was saved, and the apocalypse averted. Those who had

[595]Ophelia, "Oh, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown!" (William Shakespeare *Hamlet* III.i.150)

[596]"The Hollow Men." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas, Tara Butters, and Tracy Bellomo. Dir. Terrence O'Hara. (15 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[597]**Boyd Langton:** We like to keep the medical records of everyone who crosses our path, especially the interesting ones. Caroline you are **definitely** interesting, at least on a microscopic level" ["The Hollow Men." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Michele Fazekas, Tara Butters, and Tracy Bellomo. Dir. Terrence O'Hara. (15 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)].

seen "Epitaph One" knew the opposite was true. Befitting *Dollhouse*'s darker material, Whedon presents one of his most dystopic visions.

Although we do not see the means by which he was captured, Topher Brink was forced to endure torture, including having people shot in front of him, until he submitted and remade the device for Rossum that allowed everyone to be mindwiped. [598] Consequently, Topher Brink was unable to escape from bringing about the end of the world as he knew it and causing it to descend into chaos where his technology was weaponized and delivered on a global scale.[599] Anything and everything that could be done wrong with the technology was. For instance, we glimpse Echo shooting bodies containing Rossum's leader's personality. Echo's care that those bodies once had owners has long been destroyed.

Despite sounding like he is incapable of telling a hawk from a handsaw, Topher Brink manages to come up with a plan to save the world, in between babbling like a maddened Ophelia.[600] Topher Brink is transformed into

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[598]"Epitaph One." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon (story); Jed Whedon and Maurissa Tancharoen (teleplay). Dir. David Solomon. (unaired; available only on DVD) 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.); "Epitaph Two: Return." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (29 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[599]"Epitaph One." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon (story); Jed Whedon and Maurissa Tancharoen (teleplay). Dir. David Solomon. (unaired; available only on DVD) 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.); "Epitaph Two: Return." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (29 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[600]"Epitaph One." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon (story); Jed Whedon and Maurissa Tancharoen (teleplay). Dir. David Solomon. (unaired; available only on DVD) 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.); "Epitaph Two: Return." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (29 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

Dollhouse's own mad(wo)man in the attic, but he manages to hold on to threads of his former self enough to devise a plan. He explains to Echo, "I'm so close, so close to solving both problems. They would have no idea."[601] She replies, "Close to what? Wiping everyone?" He answers, "The opposite. A reflection like an echo. Put everything back the way they were. Minds back the way they were . . . I can bring back the world."[602] The conversation is filled with echoes, literal and figurative. What Topher overlooks though is the vast difference between the echo of something and the actual thing. A reverberation is not the thing itself. Equally, we have already seen what happens to people, like Mellie/November, who attempt to go back to inhabiting their own bodies and living their own lives. Moreover, Topher knows that his world-saving requires his life. After the attempt to destroy Rossum failed, Adelle had been looking after Topher with an almost maternal care. Thus, she is not enthused about losing him in the least:

> **Adelle DeWitt**: Explosion?
> **Topher**: It does the work for you.
> **Adelle DeWitt**: You said it could only be activated manually. You're not coming back.
> **Topher:** Small price to pay . . . I didn't want to cause any more pain.
> **Adelle De Witt**: You don't have to do it, you know? At least not alone.

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[601]"Epitaph Two: Return." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (29 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

[602]"Epitaph Two: Return." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (29 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

> **Topher:** I do. I'll fix what we did to their heads. You fix what we did to the rest of the world. Your job's **way** harder.[603]

Pause to think about the journey that both of them have been on throughout *Dollhouse*'s two short seasons. Topher Brink becomes both the man who inadvertently destroyed the world and the one who chose to save it.

Intriguingly, *Dollhouse* devotes both "Epitaphs" to the apocalyptic aftermath of Dollhouse tech operating in the real world, but we get only the merest hint of what occurs once Topher sacrifices himself to "bring back the world." Adelle Dewitt, Alpha (another villain turned savior), Priya, Victor, and Echo all choose to retain their own memories. More interestingly, it is the Los Angeles Dollhouse that functions as their safe house. Concealing themselves in their former prison inverts its previous purpose. Where once it deprived people of their individuality, it allows Echo, Sierra (Priya), Victor(Anthony), and Adelle to keep their memories and remain who they have become.

Given what we have already experienced, we have scant hope that the replacing bodies with their rightful owners will result in a brave new world. The tech is still out there; people are still capable of abusing it, and even if Rossum is subsequently eradicated, the scars still remain. There has been an incalculable genocide. The entire foundation and structure of society, not to mention the brain itself, has been tampered with. What sort of happy ending can be achieved? How can someone, let alone all of humanity, come back from that level of annihilation? It is all well and good to wake up from a nightmare,

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[603]"Epitaph Two: Return." Dollhouse *Season Two*. (Wri. Maurissa Tancharoen, Jed Whedon, and Andrew Chambliss. Dir. David Solomon. (29 Jan. 2010). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.)

but how do you step back into your life when it is probable that at least some, if not all, of your loved ones were lost in the total world war that raged while you were "asleep for a little while"?

Act V: The Play's the Thing, or Epitaph Three[604]

Given that part of the impetus behind *Dollhouse* was Dukshu's complicated identity as an actress, the multifaceted interplay between actress and role, creator and role, and the Dolls and their makers seems like a wise place to end our chapter. Dukshu reminisces, "We were talking about me and my life and career and how in the 17 years I've been in this business, being pulled into so many directions. Someone sort of wants you to be a different person every day."[605] The idea of social and cultural programming has, of course, become embedded in the literary-critical-scholarly discourse.

My readers are as liable to need to be seventeen different people in one day as Dukshu. If you think about it, we, as professors or teachers, are as much actors as those who play us on television, cinema, and the stage. We may find our subjects deathly dull, but we sell a story to our audience, even if it is only correct comma rules to the first years in our introductory composition courses. Similarly, writing dissertations is like working at Dollhouses. No, we are not

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[604]William Shakespeare *Hamlet* II.ii.605.

[605] Dukshu continues, "And then we were talking about the Internet and how much control we have, and yet it seems everyone is so out of control. So 13 episodes in, we've just run the gamut of putting these different personalities into my character, Echo, and other characters. The show is a study of human conditions and social, moral, conscience issues that to me are very interesting" [Maria Elena Fernandez, "Countdown to 'Dollhouse': Eliza Dushku Puts her Faith in Joss Whedon." (Show Tracker. *Los Angeles Times*. (2 Feb. 2009). Web. <http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/showtracker/2009/02/countdown-to--1.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

mind-wiped victims of human–trafficking.[606] Rather, our writing roleplays, and we role-play through our writing. We aim to uphold the cultural and professional scripts necessitated by the genre as well as utilize it as a means of self-creation. Like Echo, we aim to integrate the multiple voices into one cohesive whole and wield the power to change something-whether it be the world as we know it or the views people hold about television and feminism. Turning back to the *Dollhouse*, we can see how something other than the potential to misuse technology and bring about a thought-apocalypse.

Of the multiple potential examples wherein actors discuss their craft, Ben Whishaw, whom we will see in our next chapter, advances a construct that illuminates the *Dollhouse*. Whishaw ruminates:

> I love the element of acting that's dressing up–yes. That's where it all stems from I think-the child's dressing up box—it's playing. I love how wearing someone else's clothes can make you feel different, move differently, even think differently. I'm always clear in my head that the character I'm playing is very distinct from me and at the same time so much of you ends up leaking into the character. It's an odd business.[607]

Although Ben Whishaw is an actual actor and not a Doll created by Rossum, his imagery is striking compared to what we saw and heard throughout *Dollhouse*.

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[606] We do have a fairly heinous record on sexual assaults and a prevalent rape culture, so that is certainly Dollhouse-ian. Given the federal investigation, we might even have our own Paul Ballard. Setting that aside, I operate under the assumption that whatever disagreements naturally arise from the subject position of graduate student, I am here by choice and the people around me are not running a slavery ring, even if we are living in the historic heart of the Confederacy.

[607] James Wright, "Ben Whishaw: Playing Q in 'Skyfall' was a bit like doing Shakespeare."(*The Independent* (28 Nov. 2012). Web. < http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/tv/features/ben-whishaw-playing-q-in-skyfall-was-a-bit-like-doing-shakespeare-8364146.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

If you changed some of the details, he would sound almost exactly like Echo talking about herselves.

At the same time, the pleasure Whishaw takes in his profession is evident and resembles what Tahmoh Penikett, Miracle Laurie, Olivia Williams, Dichen Lachman, and Eliza Dukshu talking about working on *Dollhouse*. For instance, Olivia Williams was persuaded after a phone call with Joss to move from England wholly to play Adelle Dewitt.[608] In the "Madam Speaks," Olivia Williams revealed: "The more surreal and bizarre it got the more fun it was to act." She continues, "You've got me in a vulnerable moment because it's been a very happy set and we just wrapped. The camera guys and the ADs and hair and makeup, everyone just really pulled together to make a great atmosphere where the drama can fly. There's been very good chemistry between everybody."[609]

While it ought to go without saying, Williams, Whishaw and Dukshu, or any of the other actors and actress striding *Dollhouse*'s boards, are not occupying the same powerless position as Caroline or the other dolls. Whedon more concisely limned his vision when Topher Brink, quoting Hamlet (II.ii.249-250), informs Boyd Landon that "there is nothing either good or bad but thinking makes it so."[610] The potential of the mind to be made, remade,

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[608]Martin "Countdown to the *Dollhouse*: The Madam Speaks"

[609]Martin "Countdown to the *Dollhouse*: The Madam Speaks"

[610]"Ghost." Dollhouse *Season One*. (Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (13 Feb. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2009. DVD.)

unmade, and finally maddened haunts its halls. In the famed "To Be or Not to Be" soliloquy, Hamlet avows:

> Thus conscience does make cowards of us all;
> And thus the native hue of resolution
> Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,
> And enterprises of great pith and moment
> With this regard their currents turn awry,
> And lose the name of action.[611]

For all of *Dollhouse*'s adhesion to a Hamletesque worldview, Whedon suggests that gaining a conscious spurs us on to action and empowers us to fight those ills and battle the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune.

At the same time, the body count at the end of *Dollhouse* rivals that of *Hamlet*, and Shakespeare's Denmark looks as likely to flourish once Fortinbras comes on the scene as does the world once everyone has retrieved to their body. The lone glimpse of a fairytale ending resides, as it has throughout the series, in the romantic relationship between Victor and Sierra and their son. Sierra was already a survivor who had endured lifetimes of abuse at the hands of Nolan Kinnaird and Rossum. If she can make it through that hell, then its aftermath should be a paradise on Earth, particularly since she has domestic pleasures to help her. Echo's romance is much more sinisterly hopeful. Her true love Paul Ballard will always be a part of her as will her body's original owner. Topher's heroic self-sacrifice might be worth something after all, even if *Dollhouse* has not given us any belief that all of this will not happen again. In its equal parts despair and joy, *Dollhouse*'s mixed ending reflects the similar uncertainty that occurred at the end of *Battlestar Galactica*.

[611] William Shakespeare *Hamlet* III.i.83-86

EPISODE EIGHT: "HEROES OR VILLAINS, WE'RE ALL SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN"[612] OR FREDDIE LYON FIGHTS FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, JOURNALISM, AND BEL ROWLEY IN *THE HOUR*

Raphael Cilenti: Miss Rowley, it's good to see you again. You know I watch you ladies primping and preening. And I often ask myself. What's it for? Because underneath all that lipstick and perfume, flesh and bone, you women are all the same: showgirls and whores.[613]

Teaser: There's Value in an Important Person Like You. A Famous Face[614]

After her glowing introduction in our opening chapter, Romola Garai's Bel Rowley would be the natural star of our final chapter by all the laws of Chekov and the Muses. A woman, like Bel Rowley, using only her intellect to fight her way through a man's world always makes for a fascinating heroine. This honor falls to another pen. Instead, "Heroes or Villains, We're All Somewhere In Between" upholds the ideals outlined in our "Pilot," and touched on throughout the proceeding chapters, that "feminist" applies equally to men as well as women. This chapter, consequently, forefronts Frederick Lyon's struggles with normative notions of masculinity. Frederick (Freddie) Lyon (Ben Whishaw) proves as passionate as Bel Rowley, but more unpredictable. Though smoother and more refined in the second season, season one Freddie Lyon is all nervous-

[612]The quotation is from "Episode Two." [The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)].

[613]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[614]"Episode Three." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Nicole Taylor. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

energy. He seems to have a habit of being fired from every news position not for lack of talent, but from a crusading desire to tell the truth to power.

On the surface, Frederick Lyon's figuration of masculine identity offers no new contributions to the discourse, since geeky male journalists are a frequent trope in television, graphic novels, and cinema. Yet, unlike Peter Parker or Clark Kent, Frederick Lyon has no superheroic alter-ego. Nevertheless, Lyon pursues the truth and fights for justice with the same fearlessness and self-sacrifice of Kent, Parker, and other nerdy-newsmen by day, cape-wearing superheroes by night.

Set in late 1950s London, *The Hour* opens with the creation of "The Hour," a television news program similar to "Panorama" and "Tonight" and offers a behind the scenes look at "The Hour" and its newswomen's and newsmen's struggle to tell the truth as well as report the news.[615] *The Hour*, thus, serves as both the show we are watching on BBC America (or on the BBC if we were British) and the faux-news-program that *The Hour* depicts.[616] Like *The Hour*, "The Hour" has its share of female talent behind its scenes. Bel Rowley,

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[615]Abi Morgan explains, "The inspirations for it, although ours is a very different show, were 'Panorama' and 'Tonight,' which were the first format shows that evolved [from] newsreels. I think the equivalent [in the U.S.] would be '60 Minutes.' They were inspirational as a starting point, but I think our show is much more theatrical. It has a different spin on it" [Rick Porter, "'The Hour': Creator Abi Morgan on 1950s London, 'Broadcast News' and More." (*Zap2it*. (27 Aug. 2011). Web. <http://www.zap2it.com/blogs/the_hour_creator_abi_morgan_on_1950s_london_broadcast_news_and_more-2011-08 > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[616]To make matters easier to follow, I will consistently use *The Hour* when I mean the show created by Abi Morgan and starring Ben Whishaw, Anna Chancellor, Romola Garai, but "The Hour" to represent the fictive show, dreamed up by Freddie and Bel, produced by Bel Rowley, and with Hector as anchor (for season one). However, since italics are not always available for online journalists, most of the quotations that come from online sources use 'The Hour' to stand for both the show created by Abi Morgan as well as the fictive news-program.

our fictive heroine and producer of "The Hour," was based on actual BBC newswomen who, like Rowley, worked as producers.[617]

Reviewing *The Hour*, Jace Lacob provides a valuable analysis of season one's cast as well as a useful summary of the main characters that will be valuable for readers who have not seen the series. Lacob avers, "In its first season, the show conflated the troika's romantic and professional struggles with the Suez Canal crisis, communist double agents, dead socialites, and hidden Westminster agendas at the BBC."[618] Lacob proclaims, "Garai's performance is exhilarating, particularly seeing her go toe-to-toe with [Dominic] West [playing Hector Madden]; the screen crackles with intensity every time they look at one another."[619] Likewise, Lacob asserts, "Whishaw is the show's

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[617]Abi Morgan states, "The reveal for me was there were these inspirational women who were heading up news teams. I couldn't quite get my head around that. It was also a time where the expectation was once you're married, you probably won't work. You'll look after your children. But I found a cluster of female producers at the time in the BBC—that was an incredible thing. Although predominantly [women] were working in the typing pools or in areas of research, they were also leading great news teams" (Porter "'The Hour': Creator Abi Morgan on 1950s London").

[618]Jace Lacob, "Ben Whishaw Takes On Bond in 'Skyfall' and 'Newsroom' in 'The Hour'." (*The Daily Beast*. (28 Nov. 2012). Web. < http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/11/28/ben-whishaw-takes-on-bond-in-skyfall-and-newsroom-in-the-hour.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[619] Jace Lacob, "Stylish Love Triangles, Newsroom Politics, and Murder: An Advance Review of BBC America's Period Drama *The Hour*." (*Televisionary*. (17 Aug. 2011). Web. <http://www.televisionaryblog.com/2011/08/stylish-love-triangles-newsroom.html > 16 Jan. 2015.) Jace Lacob brilliantly and engagingly expresses much of what I want to say. Lacob's splendid critical work on *The Hour* allows me to write a chapter talking about Freddie's journey knowing that the bases have been covered. Here are more important words: "*The Hour* could have unfolded with a standard romantic arc, as Freddie pines for Bel, Bel is drawn to Hector, and Hector cheats on his cold wife Marnie, but that's not what *The Hour* is about. Set against the backdrop of 1956's Suez Canal Crisis, this is a super-charged political plot as well, one with clear parallels to our own times: violence and revolution in the Middle East, rising concerns about Communist powers, phone-tapping and surveillance, and overt paranoia and tension. [paragraph break in original] Just as the fictional *Hour* of the title seizes upon the crisis in Egypt to make a name for itself (and cast off the shackles of Parliament's barbaric 14-day policy of journalism silence) and take a stand on an issue, so too does *The Hour* itself, exploring class,

moral center, a man determined to see the truth, no matter the personal cost; he's equally strong and frail at times, pining away for a woman who clearly doesn't love him, yet is empowered by the weight of his convictions."[620] Similarly, "The supporting cast is equally as game: Anna Chancellor is fantastic as the hard-drinking Lix Storm; Anton Lesser provides gravitas as BBC executive Clarence Fendley; Julian Rhind-Tutt is appropriately oily as Eden's adviser Angus McCain; Oona Chaplin radiates haughty froideur as Hector's well-heeled wife Marnie; Lisa Greenwood's Sissy is adorably out of her depth; and Vanessa Kirby infuses socialite Ruth Elms with a brittle, damaged quality that's heartbreaking to behold."[621] While our opening chapter allowed us to see more of Chancellor and Garai, Lacob's limnings provide us with a sound grounding in what makes Whishaw's Frederick Lyon special.

Due to its surprise cancelation after the show had already wrapped, the second season ended up being *The Hour*'s final season. Our triumvirate of Whishaw, West, and Garai continued into the second season, but the dynamic shifted mightily: "The capable producer Bel Rowley is still in charge, but her right-hand man and best friend, crusading reporter Freddie Lyon, has been traveling—in part to work through his crush on Bel—and he returns from his

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nationalism, and identity through the prism of this historical event and the small moments that define a time period: a weekend visit to a country estate, a cup of tea in the canteen."

[620] Lacob "Stylish Love Triangles, Newsroom Politics, and Murder: An Advance Review of BBC America's Period Drama *The Hour*"

[621] Lacob "Stylish Love Triangles, Newsroom Politics, and Murder: An Advance Review of BBC America's Period Drama *The Hour*"

long trip a changed man."[622] What's more, "if the constant nightclubbing and philandering of her distracted star anchor, Hector Madden, wasn't enough of a problem, Bel also has to contend with an enigmatic new boss, Randall Brown (Peter Capaldi)."[623] Furthermore, "[A]s was the case with the first season of this handsome, smartly calibrated drama, there's a ripped-from-the-headlines quality to the central stories that give them a contemporary edge. Season 2 of 'The Hour' was written and shot well before the BBC's current troubles erupted, but the parallels are hard to ignore." [624] Finally, "In the new season of "The Hour," Hector's growing celebrity allows him all sorts of naughty opportunities involving nightclubs, alcohol and showgirls—trouble that he enthusiastically embraces until his gilded life runs into serious difficulties."[625] Madden's troubles form an intriguing counterpart to the threats of career ruin that were leveled against both Rowley and Madden in season one.

Although adultery was the means by which the powers that be (e.g., Angus McCain) aimed to silence Rowley in season one, it is certainly an enticing twist that the men are those who suffer for their follies and libidinous behavior the most in season two. Madden's scandal is, of course, the most prominent because of its effects on our team. Commander Laurence Sterne's (Peter Sullivan) abuse of Kiki Delaine entangles his former best friend Hector and ends

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[622] Maureen Ryan, "'The Hour' Season 2: More Fame, More Money, More Problems." (*Huffington Post*. (26 Nov. 2012). Web. < http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/11/26/the-hour-season-2_n_2167311.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[623]Ryan "'The Hour' Season 2: More Fame, More Money, More Problems"

[624]Ryan "'The Hour' Season 2: More Fame, More Money, More Problems"

[625]Ryan "'The Hour' Season 2: More Fame, More Money, More Problems"

up destroying not only Sterne's career (he kills himself in the final episode of season two), but also many other powerful men who partook of the women Cilenti (Vincent Riotta) had on offer. If Cilenti avers that all women are "Showgirls and Whores," then the view of masculinity he trades in cannot be said to be a credit to the sex. Even Ben Whishaw's Frederick Lyon ends up ensnared—not through vice, but by means of his attempts to support Rowley's fact-finding mission and, subsequently, to save the girl, Kiki Delaine, from Cilenti's clutches and certain murder.

The Hour and *Dollhouse* are both shows that were canceled after two seasons; *Dollhouse* was able to craft an ending that brought something resembling closure to the storylines whereas *The Hour*'s cancelation was a shock and ended on a cliffhanger: Freddie Lyon's pummeled, bloody, gory body dumped unceremoniously on the BBC's front lawn. As Ben Whishaw lamented, "We all felt we were coming back together again to finish off the story. So it was a blow to be honest. It's really frustrating because you invest in a character and you think you're going to get the next bit of their story. I loved doing [the show] so much and I loved that character."[626] *The Hour* generated a healthy amount of print spilled, but its viewing numbers on BBC Two in the UK were not high enough to compel BBC to renew the show for a third season.[627]

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[626] Morgan Jeffery, "Ben Whishaw Disappointed by 'The Hour' Axe: 'It was a Shock'." (*Digital Spy.* (13 Mar. 2013). Web. <http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/tv/s177/the-hour/news/a465302/ben-whishaw-disappointed-by-the-hour-axe-it-was-a-shock.html#~oHz9go2lza3y5j#ixzz351IYwmkg> 16 Jan. 2015.)

[627]For an intriguing analysis of the BBC's decision, see Robin Parker and Boyd Hilton, "Does the BBC Undervalue Quality programming?" (*The Observer*. (28 Sep. 2013). Web.

Whishaw was not alone in missing *The Hour*. The show has and continues to have a passionate fanbase on social media, particular tumblr, drawn both to Whishaw and to Freddie and Bel's relationship. Fans in England and around the world responded to the cancelation by starting a petition to bring the show back (Alice Stamataki)[628] and by staging a protest, complete with vintage *The Hour* cosplay, in front of BBC headquarters in London.[629] Likewise, *Radio Times* included *The Hour* in its year-end poll (December 2014) of series that readers could vote to bring back.[630] Not surprisingly, fandom's attempts to revive *The Hour* met with some vitriolic backlash, particularly from critics who believed television criticism was the province only of 'legitimate' critics: ". . . *The Hour* [is] beloved of Twitter, but [it] quite rightly died on [its] backside . . . *The Hour*

<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/sep/28/debate-quality-programming-the-hour > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[628]Alice Stamataki, "Please Commission a Third Series of The Hour!" (Dec. 2012). (*Change.org* Web. < https://www.change.org/p/the-bbc-please-commission-a-third-series-of-the-hour-savethehour > 16 Jan. 2015.) See also, Morgan Jeffery, "'The Hour' Fans Petition BBC to Revive Axed Series." (*Digital Spy*. (13 Feb.2013). Web. < http://www.digitalspy.co.uk/tv/s177/the-hour/news/a458607/the-hour-fans-petition-bbc-to-revive-axed-series.html#~oHySo3xWugfEse > 16 Jan. 2015.) and "'The Hour' Axed By BBC Two: Twitter Reactions To The End Of Dominic West, Romola Garai And Ben Whishaw's Retro BBC Adventures." (*The Huffington Post UK*. (12 Feb. 2013). Web. < http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2013/02/12/the-hour-axed-by-bbc-two-_n_2669795.html > 16 Jan. 2015.).

[629]Media Monkey, "BBC Faces Polite Protests as *The Hour*'s Time Runs Out." (*The Guardian*. (28 May. 2013) Web. <http://www.theguardian.com/media/mediamonkeyblog/2013/may/28/bbc-the-hour > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[630]Susanna Lazarus, "From Utopia to The Hour: Vote for the Cancelled series You'd Like to Bring Back." (*Radio Times*. (27 Dec. 2014). Web. < http://www.radiotimes.com/news/2014-12-27/from-utopia-to-the-hour-vote-for-the-cancelled-series-youd-like-to-bring-back> 16 Jan. 2015.)

after two pointless second series. There were campaigns (on Twitter, of course) to save [it], but, as it turned out, so what?"[631]

Intriguingly, *The Hour*'s viewing numbers were more substantial in America, even with its play on BBC America, a channel that is not always included with basic cable. Likewise, the American press tended to be more positive in its reactions to *The Hour* whereas the British critics tended to be snippy at best.[632] From all the particularly intriguing American critical responses (e.g., Maureen Ryan), we choose three (Tim Goodman, Alan Sepinwall, and Jace Lacob) to provide a solid idea of the critical conversation surrounding the show within the American popular-cultural-critical press. Of these three, Jace Lacob can be said to be the guiding star of this chapter. While it is true that the ideas contained were not inspired by Lacob's prose, the critical work performed by Lacob as well as the others discussed in our chapter's pages,

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[631]Alison Graham, "TV Critics are the Influential Ones, not Twitter Users." (*RadioTimes*. (20 Jun. 2014). Web. < http://www.radiotimes.com/news/2014-06-20/tv-critics-are-the-influential-ones-not-twitter-users > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[632]Mary McNamara, "Television Review: BBC's 'The Hour' is Time Well Spent." (*The Los Angeles Times*. (28 Nov. 2012). Web. < http://articles.latimes.com/2012/nov/28/entertainment/la-et-st-the-hour-20121128 > 16 Jan. 2015.) McNamara observes, "In Britain, reviews of the show, which revolves around the creation of an envelope-pushing television news magazine called 'The Hour' in 1950s London, groused about the slow pace, the outlandish spy intrigue and its occasional preachiness. In the U.S., the reaction was more of a collective swoon; the mood, the costumes, the writing, the cast (and of course those accents!) were so intoxicating that even an increasingly absurd plot proved only a minor distraction." As snarky as McNamara sounds at the end, the rest of her review is full of praise. Her fault-finding sounds like a love letter compared to British television critics snide, biting take on the show. Here's a sampling: "It's such an infuriating drama, a chilly and remote thing that is in love with its own reflection. The Hour (Tonight on BBC2) is a vain woman, standing in front of the mirror, preening. The first series was a yawn that audiences by and large decided they could live without. The second is a yawn that audiences by and large have already decided, judging by early viewing figures, they can live without. Why is it here? Why does The Hour exist?" [Alison Graham, "BBC2's The Hour Wears Me Out . . ." (*Radio Times*. (5 Dec. 2012). Web. <http://www.radiotimes.com/news/2012-12-05/bbc2s-the-hour-wears-me-out > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

empowered me to devote myself to explicating Whishaw at the expense of the show as a whole.

Reviewing the show's second season for *The Hollywood Reporter,* Tim Goodman raves, ". . . Garai, West, Whishaw, Chancellor and Capaldi are never less than tremendous. Morgan's writing again stands out but perhaps never better than when she writes for Bel and Lix, two pioneering women who are complicated and fascinating."[633] Moreover, Goodman contends, "The series regains its elegance, magnetism and well-paced story in season two. It's probably too easy to say this is the show that HBO should have instead of *The Newsroom,* and certainly one that gets at journalism and journalists and their conflicts in a way that *Newsroom* does not (hint: more direct evidence via character, less preaching)."[634] He continues, "That it's set in the late '50s in England adds a fresh coat of glamour and newness, sure, but the writing and acting are not only top notch, they make you wish Morgan would get a deal stateside to make something this compelling for us."[635]

Tim Goodman reworks *The Newsroom/The Hour* comparison in fresh ways. Alan Sepinwall, also, utilizes the oft-reoccurring *Mad Men-The Hour* comparison to *The Hour*'s advantage: "While 'The Hour' doesn't seem to fetishize its period details in the same way 'Mad Men' does, it's no less effective at recreating the look and feel of that bygone era. And where 'Mad Men' takes

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[633]Tim Goodman, "The Hour: TV Review." (*The Hollywood Reporter*. (28 Nov 2012) Web. <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/review/hour-tv-review-395343 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[634]Goodman "The Hour: TV Review"

[635]Goodman "The Hour: TV Review"

place at a time when America is ascendant, 'The Hour' begins just as England is about to take a mighty tumble."[636] Consequently, "So even as the news program begins to click and Bel gets to show that a woman can more than handle this job, there's also a tremendous sense of loss-along with a question of whether what's about to be lost (the U.K.'s standing and influence) is worth more than what's being gained (social progress)."[637] Sepinwall and Goodman each focus on probing how *The Hour*'s vision of the past differs from its American counterparts.

Lacob, as well, situates *The Hour* in relation to the current American alternate fare. He notes, "In the numerous comparisons between *The Hour* and *Mad Men*, Bel is typically compared to Elisabeth Moss' Peggy Olsen, but the two—apart from their intelligence, drive, and the desire to shatter the glass ceiling and define themselves outside of societal constructs of the period—aren't all that similar."[638] He continues, "Bel has a thing for married men, and seemingly for tormenting the lovelorn Freddie." Lacob explains, "The two exist in a semi-platonic state, Bel chafing against Freddie's insistence on calling her

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[636] Alan Sepinwall, "Review: BBC America's 'The Hour' Heads Back to the '50s in Style." (What's Alan Watching?: Inside Television with Alan Sepinwall. *Hitfix* . (16 Aug. 2011). Web. <http://www.hitfix.com/blogs/whats-alan-watching/posts/review-bbc-americas-the-hour-heads-back-to-the-50s-in-style#3Roi7quJKEyf2fft.99 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[637]Alan Sepinwall, "Review: BBC America's 'The Hour' Heads Back to the '50s in Style"

[638]Lacob "Stylish Love Triangles, Newsroom Politics, and Murder: An Advance Review of BBC America's Period Drama *The Hour*"

'Moneypenny'. . . though there are all sorts of mixed signals, even as Bel finds herself drawn to the unhappily married Hector in no uncertain terms."[639]

Like Goodman and Sepinwall, Lacob broadens his analysis to examine how *The Hour* engages equally with its fictive time period and contemporary England, "In other words: it's not a good time to be a British journalist, with the world watching and waiting. In a quite prescient move, creator Abi Morgan's intoxicating and atmospheric British drama, *The Hour*, harkens back to the journalist-heroes of such films as *All The Presidents' Men* and *Broadcast News*."[640] Stating a point that underlines what Abi Morgan wished to convey with *The Hour*, Lacob avows:

> It's interesting to think back to a time when journalists-as-heroes was quite de rigueur. After all, we're meant to be truth-seekers, to shine a harsh light on corruption and wrong-doing, to punish the mendacious and expose injustice, tyranny, and falsehood. The pursuit of truth is the hero's prerequisite in way: a call to arms, a purpose of being. Who better then to embody that than the hard-working journalists of 1956, amid an era of paranoia and the end of the Empire?[641]

Lacob encapsulates what precisely makes Freddie Lyon and Bel Rowley heroick characters. They are as much about bringing truth and justice as our other heroines and heroes whom we have seen throughout our dissertation.

As Sepinwall and Lacob illustrate, *The Hour* frequently is compared to *Mad Men* (2007-2015), Matthew Weiner's acclaimed AMC television series, and

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[639] Lacob "Stylish Love Triangles, Newsroom Politics, and Murder: An Advance Review of BBC America's Period Drama *The Hour*"

[640] Lacob "Stylish Love Triangles, Newsroom Politics, and Murder: An Advance Review of BBC America's Period Drama *The Hour*"

[641]Lacob "Stylish Love Triangles, Newsroom Politics, and Murder: An Advance Review of BBC America's Period Drama *The Hour*"

James L Brook's award-winning movie *Broadcast News* (1987) within the popular critical-cultural discourse.[642] *The Hour*, like *Mad Men*, exists in another time (late 1950s London) of immense cultural upheaval, and the triangle among Rowley, Madden, and Lyon does bear a resemblance to *Broadcast News*. Yet, Bel Rowley is no Peggy Olson (Elizabeth Moss) or Jane Craig (Holly Hunter). The BBC might have chosen Bel Rowley as to be a producer because they thought "a woman would be easier to steer."[643] The BBC's belief proved erroneous as Rowley proved resistant to toeing the company line.

Despite the underlying plot point, the BBC itself never seems to treat Rowley with anything other than the same level of respect that it accords to men in similar positions. Peggy Olson and Bel Rowley suffer from being women in male-dominated fields. *Mad Men* highlights the trauma Peggy Olson and Joan Harris (Christina Hendricks) endure on a daily basis. *The Hour*, however, demonstrates the double-standard operating within British society without making Rowley pay its price to the same harrowing degree as Olson and Harris.

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[642] See for instance, Margaret Lyons, "*The Hour* Trailer: Dominic West and a Fifties British Journalism Love Triangle." (*Vulture*. (6 Jul. 2011). Web. <http://www.vulture.com/2011/07/the_hour_trailer_dominic_west.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[643]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.) Unlike American television with its archetypal "writers room," British television still tends to be more creator-centric. Hence, Abi Morgan wrote all but two episodes of the series she created. Like many UK television series, *The Hour* has no titles in the traditional sense. Instead, each episode is numbered, which makes things quite difficult in differentiating from season one and season two. Morgan won an Emmy in 2013 for "Outstanding Writing for a Miniseries, Movie, or Dramatic Special." She had been nominated for the same award in 2012. The Emmy love reflects the more positive press that *The Hour* garnered in America versus England, though it was nominated for two Broadcasting Press Guild Awards in 2012 (Best Drama and Writing). *The Hour* was also nominated and won the *Le Reflet d'Or* (from Geneva Cinéma Tout Ecran) in 2011 for Best International Television Series. Morgan has fared better awardswise with her other work (e.g., *Iron Lady*) as have her cast and crew (e.g., Ben Whishaw won the 2013 Best Actor Tele-BAFTA for his portrayal of Richard II in *The Hollow Crown*).

If, within the first season, Bel Rowley's career is endangered, for instance, by her affair with Hector Madden, then Madden's career is equally threatened by the selfsame affair with Rowley within season one and finally nearly destroyed in season two due to his womanizing.[644] Similarly, when Rowley is menaced by Rapahel Cilenti in season two, she shares the fate with anyone who dares go up against him; unlike Freddie Lyon or Rose-Marie Ramirez, Bel Rowley's terror is confined to threats and origami birds rather than murder (e.g., Rose-Marie Ramirez) or attempted murder (Freddie Lyon).[645] *The Hour* illustrates the class, gender, and sexual inequalities besetting 1950s Britain and offers hope, through Bel Rowley, Freddie Lyon, and "The Hour," that these things can be combatted, if not overcome.

In contrast to Aaron Sorkin's MacKenzie McHale (Emily Mortimer) or James Brook's Jane Craig, Bel Rowley manages to be outstanding at her job while not spending every other second sobbing in the corner, eating her hair, or otherwise exemplifying every infuriating cliché of working women within popular culture. The world in which she lives might doubt whether or not Bel Rowley can be an outstanding producer, but *The Hour* never wavers in endorsing Rowley's prowess. Anyone who is asinine enough to question Rowley's journalist bona fides is shown to be a fool. Rowley seems entirely more than capable, particularly in season one, of having a successful social life

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[644] "Episode Five." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (16 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[645]"Episode Three." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri.Nicole Taylor. Dir. Catherine Morsehead. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

and career. If we were going for gender-blind casting of the stereotype of the "smart girl who is a mess in her life but a savant in her job," then Freddie Lyon is surely more representative than Bel Rowley. Indeed, the lone time Rowley comes close to the typical "neurotic" woman cliché is in the fifth episode of the second season when her source (Rosa Maria Ramírez played by Hannah John-Kamen) is murdered for talking to her.[646] Understandably shaken, Bel Rowley feels personally responsible for the poor girl's brutal demise, but by the end of the episode, Rowley recommits, with Freddie Lyon's pep-talking and encouragement, to following through with the story.

Rowley's and Lyon's romantic friendship proves central to *The Hour*. Season one features a more platonic friendship with Lyon playing the supportive best friend whilst Rowley plays the field, commences an adulterous relationship (like her sisters in power Laura Roslin and Alicia Florrick) with Hector Madden, one in a long line of married men with whom she has had 'relationships.' Once Frederick returns in season two with Camille (Lizzie Brocheré), his plot contrivance French wife, Bel Rowley has a dose of her own medicine and starts to realize she might reciprocate Lyon's affection. Rowley does have her own plot contrivance relationship with Bill (Tom Burke), the head of "Uncovered," the rival ITV news program, but at least her relationship with Bill gives us some crucial backstory (via exposition) of how Rowley got into the news business. Camille, however, cannot compete with Frederick Lyon's love for

[646]Ramirez is murdered in "Episode Four." [The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD)]. Her body is discovered in "Episode Five."[The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)].

either Bel Rowley or "The Hour," so after two episodes of bliss and one episode of fighting, she flees for the suburbs, leaving Freddie free for Rowley.

What makes Bel and Freddie's relationship unique and differentiates it from a genderbent *His Girl Friday* can be seen in one of the rare Big Romantic Moments that *The Hour* ever does. Near the end of "Episode Five" (Season Two), Freddie is rushing off with Hector to stake out El Paradis, a seedy Soho nightclub that Bel Rowley had been investigating.[647] Bel is still shaken from the ramifications (the death of her witness) of her investigation and worried about Freddie getting himself killed, so she decides to go for the guy and not for the story. Freddie reaches for her and puts his hand on her arm-gently as if to stop her from going:

> I miss you. [soundtrack comes up] I miss you more. I, um, I wrote you two letters [note Whishaw's hand gestures almost like sign language-taping on his outstretched palm] one from San Diego (tap) one from New York (tap) [Bel breathes: Freddie] and I said just get on a plane just get on a plane and come and I said [Freddie looking down]. And you . . . you didn't write back . . . and I told myself of course because you love news more [head shakes] that doing this would always be more important than *any man* [pulling himself together], so I will see you tonight at El Paradis because this is what we do.[648]

Although it flirts with a hint of self-pitying remorse ("I wrote you two letters"), Lyon's speech to Rowley is as much about their shared passion for the Story as his love for her. Likewise, Lyon is right. Rowley loves the story. Freddie's talk is

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[647]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[648]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

what she needed to hear and precipitates her to ditch the guy to join Hector, Freddie, and Marnie to stakeout the big lead.

Though Freddie's "story" drives season one, Rowley's occupies center-stage in season two. According to Whishaw, "Initially Freddie's much more involved in solving the story of the Soho criminal underworld because Bel is so driven to uncover it. It's only later on in the series when he really hits his stride and then he really delves into the darkest areas and puts himself in a lot of physical danger."[649] Again, "He's sort of driven by Bel. [She] has an almost kind of feminist concern with the girls who work at the Soho clubs, so she's really driving the story at first and Freddie kind of is joining her story, so he's sort of working more in collaboration with her."[650] Thus, while season one was more about Rowley (and Madden) supporting Lyon's delving into the truth of the conspiracy behind the murder of Lady Ruth Elms, his childhood friend, and "who or what is Brightstone," season two revolves around El Paradis. Both interrogate women's agency in postwar British society as well as issues of masculinity, homosexuality, and heroism.

While Freddie loves Bel deeply (and unrequitedly for all of season one), Lyon and Rowley behave like best friends who tell each other everything. He might not be pleased with her dates, but his displeasure could more properly arise from her fondness for other women's husbands. It is true that the first

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[649]"Ben Whishaw Plays Freddie Lyon." (*BBC Media Centre*. (n.d). Web. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/mediapacks/thehour/ben-whishaw.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[650]Daniel Sperling, "Ben Whishaw: 'The Hour is Darker, more Shocking than ever Before'." (*Digital Spy.* (9 Nov. 2012). Web. < http://www.digitalspy.com/british-tv/s177/the-hour/interviews/a430912/ben-whishaw-the-hour-is-darker-more-shocking-than-ever-before.html#~oEy0QLfnPd0r9X > 16 Jan. 2015.)

season allows us to see Lyon operating more as a journalist uncovering stories while Rowley tries to keep the ship afloat, support Lyon, and succeed at producing a successful news program. Season two, however, allows us to see Rowley at the top of her game and demonstrate what Lyon brings to their partnership: "Freddie, whom she encourages toward adulthood as he pushes her toward independence, is an abrasive genius journalist sick of the puffery that is his daily bread—'We are the nightly dose of reassurance that everything's all right in the world,' he complains."[651]

The Hour subjects Lyon to the subject positions more commonly occupied by women. Within season one, Bel Rowley has an active social life whereas Frederick Lyon takes care of his aging, addled father and plays the role of supportive best friend. Romola Garai wears form-fitting outfits, but it is Ben Whishaw's Freddie Lyon whose body is displayed and whose beauty is put in question.[652] It is Frederick Lyon who inhabits the damsel in distress role in season one wherein he runs from the man who is trying to kill him. It is Fredrick Lyon who we see nearly murdered, in excruciating detail, in the show's series finale.

Lyon's brutalized and bloody body, dumped on the BBC's front law, serves as the final image of *The Hour*. The horrifying image provides a telling

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[651]Robert Lloyd, "Television Review: The Hour." (*The Los Angeles Time*. (17 Aug. 2011). Web. <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/aug/17/entertainment/la-et-the-hour-20110817 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[652]There is an intriguing analysis of the costumes in *The Hour* that examines how the sartorial choices made reflect the character's values. ["Costume Design and 'The Hour': Bel Rowley and Freddie Lyon." (*Hello, Tailor: Costume Design and Narrative in film &TV*. (3 Dec. 2012). Web. <http://hellotailor.blogspot.com/2012/12/costume-design-and-hour-bel-rowley-and.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

counterpart to the show's first image, Freddie Lyon talking to himself in a mirror, practicing his pitch for "The Hour." Lyon's form represents the show's alpha and omega. The show's fascination with Frederick Lyon's face runs throughout *The Hour*. The *Hour* sets up a binary of masculine beauty wherein Hector Madden gets a job as "the face of The Hour" while Frederick Lyon sits on the sidelines for the first season because his is not pretty enough and his manner is not charming enough to anchor "The Hour." When Lyon asks Bel Rowley, "Why didn't you hire me?," she replies (only partially in jest), "Because you're too damn ugly."[653] "The Hour," fictive-news-program, insists that Freddie Lyon lacks a face for television at the same time *The Hour*, actual television series, trades in its actor's beauty. At the same time, *The Hour* interrogates the value of a pretty face. Hector Madden, in season two, finds that his looks and charm do not always bring about the results that he has become accustomed too: "Word from my source is that they needed a face for the scandal, and Mr. Madden's was the perfect fit."[654]

Equally beloved by tumblr, twitter, and social media, Whishaw is often fetishized in a manner more suitable to a drunken frosh at a frat party. One of the surreal things about reading the popular cultural conversation surrounding Ben Whishaw is its obsession with Whishaw's face and form. The copy written

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[653]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (26 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[654]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

about his hair alone sounds like some sort of pitch written by Don Draper or a love letter written by a besotted highschooler:

> Pedants quibbled over the authenticity of Abi Morgan's *The Hour*, BBC Two's drama about the birth of current affairs television in the Fifties, but one thing the production got so right was Ben Whishaw's hair. Whishaw played Freddie Lyon, a trouble-making journalist who was a spit for the young Charles Wheeler, the corporation's great, feisty former Washington correspondent whose hair piled in layers on top of his forehead, adding intimidating inches to a slight man's height. Freddie Lyon's hair was a similarly magnificent confection: an epic in Bakelite black, a Brylcreemed token of the ego that powered the integrity.[655]

Billen's fascination with Ben Whishaw's hair, above quoted, flows throughout the "Patron Saint of Introverts" at the same time the article notes how much Whishaw does not enjoy the spotlight. Although no doubt quite attractive, Whishaw's hair seems a rather odd choice to mesmerize so many journalists. But it does.

Throughout the articles spanning Whishaw's from career from being the youngest ever Hamlet at age 23 (Trever Nunn's 2004 production at the Old Vic) through to *The Hour*, Whishaw's hair and body fascinate journalists. For instance, it was Ben Whishaw's hair rather than Whishaw himself that sparked this breathy sentence: "Ben Whishaw was one of the many names announced with the cast of 'Spectre,' marking the second time he'll play Q in a James Bond movie. But let's rephrase that: Ben Whishaw's hair has joined the cast of 'Spectre,' marking yet another instance that we've envied the actor's beautiful

[655]Andrew Billen, "Patron Saint of the Introverts: Conversation At 32, He has done Shakespeare, Keats, BBC Drama and Bond—but Ben Whishaw is Still Poster Boy for the Shy. He Tells Andrew Billen about Fans, Hair Cuts and Taking the West End Stage with Dame Judi." (*The Times*. (16 Mar. 2013):44. Print.)

mane."[656] Rather than discussing *Spectre* or speculating on what role Whishaw's Q will play within the new Bond film, Matthew Jacobs concentrates instead on pictures of Whishaw with gushy taglines about his hair. Jacobs's article seems more like a tumblr post, rather than a piece of serious showbiz journalism. Other than thinking "What would Freddie Lyon say?," it is hard to be shocked when the tone and content are so often repeated within the Whishaw discourse.

It is true that Whishaw does not tend to be as chatty as some thespians (e.g., Tom Hiddleston or Benedict Cumberbatch), but the choices inherent in writing what looks like copy for a Pantene ad are more than a little off-putting, particularly in light of feminist theories' attacks on the selfsame behavior directed towards women. The ink spilled on Whishaw resembles the same sort of abuses that Romala Garai, his costar in *The Hour*, raged against, as we saw in our opening chapter. Of course, I would never castigate anyone, fangirl or journalist for taking aesthetic pleasure in Ben Whishaw, Romola Garai, or any other actor or actress. At the same time, the gaze cast upon Whishaw in general and Lyon in particular seems more in keeping with the treatment meted out to women, and I cannot celebrate that sort of equality.

The Hour's alignment of Hector Madden as object of trade proves equally intriguing. Though Raphael Cilenti might see only women as Showgirls and Whores, *The Hour* wants to test that theory. Madden's salability is as damaging to him as Lyon's toxic lack of conventional masculinity. More importantly,

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[656]Matthew Jacobs, "Proof Ben Whishaw Has Some Of The Best Hair In Hollywood."(*Huffington Post*. (4 Dec. 2014). Web. < http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/12/04/ben-whishaw-best-hair-moments_n_6269066.html?ncid=tweetlnkushpmg00000067 > 16 Jan. 2015.)

neither Lyon nor Madden completely uphold their stereotyped positions. Madden is more than just a pretty face who used his wife's connections to works his way up the ladder. Frederick Lyon is not a love-sick loser who patiently stays at home waiting for Bel Rowley to love him. Besides, by the second (and final) season, Freddie Lyon is the co-anchor for "The Hour," and Hector Madden is in danger of becoming nothing more than a celebrity scandal.

During the season one finale, Hector Madden and Freddie Lyon have an intriguing chat in the men's restroom. As in the rest of the series, the mise-en-scène is striking and worthy of a chapter dedicated to explicating its beautiful and thought provoking array. In this scene, the employment of mirrors and reflections and the framing within the mirrors as well as within the various fields inside the screen counterpoint the discussion about what makes a man heroic. Hector is busy shaving and getting ready to present while Freddie nervously awaits interviewing Lord Elms, Ruth's father.[657] After commiserating over Rowley breaking up with Madden, Freddie asks Hector, "Do you think I'm a weak person, Hector?"[658] Hector confusedly replies, "What?," and Freddie continues, "I've never been to war. I've never fought for anything."[659] Seen in reflection and seemingly looking Freddie in the eye via the mirror, Hector

[657]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[658]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[659]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

replies, "You fight every day, Freddie. Weak's not the word I'd use. My father always said a hero is a man who's too afraid to run away."[660]

The conversation demonstrates both the growth within their relationship and the show's interrogation of manliness.[661] The definition of hero advanced by Hector is a thought-provoking, particularly delivered by a man like Hector whom we find out during *The Hour*'s second season is traumatized by what he did and witnessed fighting in World War II. It is equally complicated by Hector's choosing to bottle the interview to save his career. His decision empowers Freddie to ask the questions and get to the truth, but it demonstrates a self-servingness that Hector the War Hero would not do. Speaking about his character's arc, West states:

> In the first season, I always felt he was of the pre-war or the immediately post-war ruling class or establishment, and he's now hanging with people who didn't fight the war and who are trying to create something new. I always thought what was cool about him was that he was trying to straddle the two worlds and was not too fazed by the modern world . . . Hector's having to deal with this change where [war veterans] who risked their lives and risked their friends' lives are having to deal with a world where people are going, 'Fuck you, we don't care.'[662]

West's Madden must deal with the trauma arising after what he saw during the war itself. Arguably, his journey in season two involves coming to terms with his post-war life (even if it has been more than ten years since he saw action)

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[660]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[661] See for instance Freddie and Hector's conversation that provides a glimpse into both of their backstories in "Episode Two." [The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (26 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)].

[662]Ryan "'The Hour' Season 2: More Fame, More Money, More Problems"

and those of other men his age, particularly Laurence Sterne, who saved his life during the war.

Our chapter begins with a closer look at Freddie's and Hector's news careers. From there, we examine Freddie's drive to get the story at any cost. Then, we turn to his romance with Bel Rowley and their shared love for Truth, "The Hour," and each other. Next, we look at Freddie's near murder and the show's depiction of heroism.

Act I: Your Face is Your Future[663]

Although Hector and Freddie do not get along in the beginning of the series, they begin to develop a grudging respect after Freddie helps Hector prep for a big interview. Hector wonders, "How do you know exactly the right questions to ask?" Freddie replies, "Because I'm not afraid of the answer."[664] While Hector Madden never quite learns to be as fearless as Freddie, he does at least have the makings of a journalist, or so thinks the head of news for "The Hour." Yet, Madden's follies seem to bring about his downfall by the end of season two: "Hector is a brilliant journalist, and his stock has just crashed."[665] In an interview with Freddie, Lord Elms posits "Do we live under a democracy

[663]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[664]"Episode Two" The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (26 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[665]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

or only under the illusion of one?"[666] Lord Elms's question seems to represent the underlying theme that knits both seasons together. "The Hour" operates under a government that seems like it has all the corruption and dirty-dealings more along the lines of Shonda Rimes's *Scandal*-plagued Washington D.C., rather than staid, realistic 1950s England. *The Hour* details the difficulties of trying to present a news program when the government controls what may be said on television while seemingly allowing tabloids and other newspapers more free speech rights. Rowley laments, "The last 24 hours have been an exercise in how to air a news program that is taking place in less than *2 hours* when one can't discuss, analyze, or debate the news."[667] Rowley, Lyon, and their team of intrepid reporters find a way around the limitations.

Reviewing the second season, Maureen Ryan notes, "And even though Hector is a far different man than Savile—the 'Hour' host is led astray by his complacency and his zest for living, not by predatory tendencies—there's no doubt that the intersection of celebrity, institutional blindness and crime depicted in 'The Hour' is more timely than ever."[668] Morgan, in the same article, observes, "In the last year the press has been so vilified—'journalist' has become a dirty word. . . .I still think there are those journalists who are brilliant

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[666]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (26 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[667]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD)

[668]Ryan "'The Hour' Season 2: More Fame, More Money, More Problems"

and who are still fighting to be seen and heard and hold on to their dignity in a profession which has been kicked in the nuts, really."[669]

The Hector and Freddie relationship creates an equally fascinating binary within *The Hour*; it could be reduced to beauty versus brains and sober versus popular journalism. However, though *The Hour* privileges "serious journalism" over celebrity culture, it does so as a means of transforming journalists into heroes and heroines rather than attacking the minds and mentalities of those who consume celebrity culture.

What a difference a season makes. Season one Freddie Lyon is not seen as suitable anchor-material whereas season two Freddie's reinstatement to "The Hour" as co-host was written into the contract by Randall Brown, the new head of news.[670] Even though Rowley desperately wanted Freddie back, she was chagrined to find out that Freddie had been rehired without her approval. Randall Brown enlightens Hector Madden about Freddie's place, "Freddie Lyon might not have your presentation skills or your charm, but he can be relied upon to deliver an unquestionably good story. That is what is required now."[671] Whereas Freddie Lyon's desirability previously arose from his potential to be recruited by covert Russian agents as a "Brightstone," those qualities which got him fired at the end of season one are precisely what attracted Randall Brown

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[669]Ryan "'The Hour' Season 2: More Fame, More Money, More Problems"

[670]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[671]"Episode One." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

to him. Bel Rowley has heroickally managed to keep "The Hour" running smoothly, but Freddie Lyon provides the "tic" and gives "The Hour" its edge.[672]

Still, *The Hour* insists that Freddie is somehow less than memorable in comparison to Hector's showmanship. Freddie inquires of Lix Storm reading a newspaper's review of "The Hour," "Does it mention me anywhere?"[673] She responds, "No, but Mr. Brooks from *The Chronicle* is very much in love with Hector's hair."[674] It is hard not to see that comment as Morgan's poking fun at the Whishaw-hair obsession, but even taking it on its own, the obsession with Hector's face-value is as stunning as it is toxic. Although Kiki Delaine confides to Freddie in their initial off-the-record conversation that he is "better looking off camera," Freddie has to succeed on courage, pluck, and brains. Freddie aims to calm down Hector who declares "Now this is the story. Now I'm the story."[675] Freddie patiently explains, "Because sadly there is no dirt. Because you have a past that's ripe to be exploited. Because despite the fact that I've been sitting next to you every week on screen my face is oddly unmemorable whereas yours is . . . This is a cover-up. Someone knows we're on to them."[676] Lyon, consequently, explicates their vexed pairing ("my face is oddly unmemorable")

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[672]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[673]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[674]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[675]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD)

[676]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD)

and utilizes that information to draw the correct conclusion that Hector is being used to attack "The Hour" preemptively.

Freddie's brilliant leap of logic aside, it certainly seems laughable to think of Whishaw's face as unmemorable given the ardent response from fandom and press alike. The supposition is at once a fallacy within *The Hour*'s worlds and born up by the adoration meted out to Hector at the expense of Freddie. Cutting back to the opening scene of *The Hour* and Freddie Lyon practicing his pitch before the mirror, we glimpse what he wants the news to be: "The newsreels are dead. We've bored the public for too long. Give me this opportunity and I'll prove it." He sardonically informs his colleagues in the newsreels: "Thank you gentleman and Alice for another fascinating evening. May you go home once again happy in the knowledge that we have delivered the important news of the day with the same brisk banality as a debutante coming out in Mayfair."[677] You can see why Freddie was so irksome to his colleagues and how he provoked all his previous positions into firing him.

At the same time, Bel Rowley explains to Hector, in the pilot episode, what makes Freddie's vision so special, "He's infuriating and outspoken but he sees the extraordinary in the ordinary. I truly believe we need him. I need him to make this programme the best it can be." She continues:

> The world that Freddie sees. When you're with Freddie you suddenly see the world as he sees it, in all its extraordinary detail. He spots folded corners that the rest of us don't even notice and he just can't resist peeling them back. A train crash. A labour strike and somewhere you will find Freddie, away from the other

[677]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

> journalists, talking to the last person that seems to matter and *yet that's the story that matters most to ordinary people* [italics mine]. He finds them.[678]

For Rowley, Lyon's journalist talents are as much about his originality ("talking to the last person that seems to matter") as his ability to connect to the average viewer ("the story that matters most to ordinary people").

The Hour and "The Hour" trade in the manner in which news becomes personal as well as political. Season one was powered by the connections between Freddie and Ruth Elms and between Ruth Elm's murder and the larger government conspiracy, a secret plan to assassinate Nasser that went rogue and become tangled in the KGB, leading to Ruth's and her lover's murders. As previously noted, season two foregrounds the intersection between celebrity and the news.

With Freddie gone, Hector Madden has spent his time alternating between misbehaving and gaining fame. As Bel Rowley informs a furious Madden, "You've been late every day for the last six months, smelling cheap. Mr. Brown is insistent. You're splitting apart at the seams, Hector."[679] She warns him, "If I see one more picture of you splashed across a tabloid, unless it's for picking up the Nobel prize or journalist of the year, you are out. . . . How can we be the face of serious news when you are pressed up against so much mink and cigar

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[678]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[679]"Episode One." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (14 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

smoke, you look as if you are in a harem."[680] Hector smirks, "The word is popular." Rowley replies "For What? It's certainly not for presenting the news" and then Hector Madden reveals that ITV's "Uncovered" wants him.[681] Intriguingly, ITV versus "The Hour" plays out as a battle for Hector's soul. If Randall Brown is hard on Hector, it is because he thinks Hector is more than just a pretty face. Hector's stock, however, is tied less to his ability to break a good story and more to his "popularity": "A sign of celebrity is that his name is often worth more than his services."[682]

Hector's career at ITV would consist of six-months of news-anchoring and then a lifetime of shilling Brylcreem and fronting entertainment programs. Though surprisingly, Hector begins to consider himself as a "serious" journalist, he acts in a shockingly self-sacrificing manner and signs with ITV as a means of supporting Marnie's new-found fame as a host of a cooking show, "Name that Dinner Guest" and further his wife's career aspirations.[683] More fascinatingly, Hector twines his reasoning as a means of personal redemption for his harlotry and inability to provide Marnie with a child.[684] Jumping ship to ITV will allow Marnie's career to flourish because the Maddens will be seen as a

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[680] "Episode One." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (14 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[681] "Episode One." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (14 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[682]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[683]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[684]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012) BBC, 2013. DVD.)

winning-pair. Unlike Peter Florrick's treatment of Alicia, Hector Madden shows that he might be something other than a powerful man who is unable to retain control of his nether regions. It is true that like Peter Florrick, Hector Madden's serial adultery proves ruinous to his marriage and to those around him. Yet, like Alicia Florrick, Marie Madden was inspired to join the workforce and become her own woman as a result of his philandering.

Kiki Delaine and Marnie Madden finally encounter one another in the woman's loo at El Paradis when Marnie accompanies Hector and Freddie on their stakeout. She coolly addresses Kiki, "Why did you accuse my husband? Because I'll give you a little tip. Success is the best revenge. It really is. You shouldn't waste yourself on anything else. You're too pretty."[685] Like her husband's conversation about heroism with Freddie, the staging makes excellent use of the mirrors and utilizes the fracturing of the glass to reflect the relationship between the two women. Unlike her prior confrontation with Bel Rowley, Marnie Madden reveals Maddie's own personal growth.[686] She does not castigate Kiki for her adulterous relationship with Hector or for Kiki's lies about Hector's mistreatment, but rather gives her a somewhat feminist pep-talk and

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[685] "Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC,2013. DVD.)

[686]Likewise, it illustrates how far Marnie has come. The last time we saw her encounter a former liaison of Hector, it went much differently. Marnie maintained the same calm demeanor, but she met with Bel to give her the "back off my husband, bitch" speech ["Episode Five." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (16 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)]. It works on Rowley because Bel tells Hector to go back to his wife: "So what are you saying? Do you want me to stay on as your mistress? It's heaps of fun having a mistress. It's heaps of fun being a mistress. It's just what every marriage needs. Well, I've done it once too often. I don't want to be a mistress anymore. I'm certainly not waiting to be anyone's wife. [comes around the table to Hector] You need a wife ["Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)].

tells Kiki to be successful at her career. Marnie could have utilized the brief meeting in the women's loo to call Kiki a "stupid whore," to use Kiki's own self-definition, but instead, Marnie treats her like similarly aspirational woman who wants to her gain independence from patriarchal domination.[687]

Of course, Hector still manages to crush his wife's career when his scandal becomes her story. To her credit, Marnie smacks her ITV bosses with their own blatant hypocrisy and strolls out with the self-confident empowerment of the 50s housewife version of Alicia Florrick. When questioned about Hector's front-page scandal, the ITV bosses patronizingly blame Marnie and seek to strip her of her job, though tell she will only be off air for a few weeks.[688] Season one Marnie Madden would not have been pleased, but she might have acquiesced more graciously. Season two Marnie, however, employs the sexist double-standard to her advantage: "What one should love about me is the fact that I am a strong and capable woman, perfectly capable of handling this storm in a teacup."[689] Once they insist that she be penalized for Hector's misdeeds, Marnie refuses to back down and outs them for their appearances at El Paradis: "I see. What do you tell your wives when they ask you why you are

[687]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[688]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[689]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

home so late?"[690] After calling out her bosses on their blatant hypocrisy, she breaks up with her boyfriend and strides out with a self-possession and concealed, cool fury that would make Alicia Florrick, Danerys Stormborn, or Laura Roslin proud. Abi Morgan and *The Hour* never once degrade Marnie's aspirations or the show that she leads. "Name that Dinner Guest" makes Marnie a household name in her own right, and *The Hour* seems to admire Marnie refashioning herself in her own image.

Hector continues his advances to become a decent husband and a better individual by responding to his wife's news that she is pregnant by calling her "clever" and enfolding her in his arms.[691] He well knows that Marnie has allowed herself to become romantically entangled with her married producer and formed an adulterous partnership of her own that resulted in her pregnancy.[692] Before she divulged her big secret, Hector had already informed her that she no longer needed to stay in the marriage. Consequently, Hector and Marnie appear to be the lone couple to seem set for a happily ever after romance. Also, since ITV no longer wants him because he is now toxic, Madden looks set to transform himself from valuably commodity to serious journalist.

It should not go overlooked that Madden manages to ask Kiki Delaine the pointed questions in a manner that would make Freddie Lyon proud. Lyon once

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[690]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[691]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[692]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012) BBC, 2013. DVD.)

needled Hector, "I used to think getting under your skin was a form of sport. Now I think of it as a moral duty."[693] As we will see in the next section, Freddie takes his moral duties seriously.

Returning to the earlier issues of Freddie's desirability, Lacob avers:

> But whereas Q seems to care little, *The Hour*'s Freddie suffers from caring too much, investing too deeply. A slight becomes a battle cry; rumors of corruption prompt a crusade to be waged. But he never feels like a wet blanket, as Freddie exerts a powerful pull not only over Garai's Bel, but also over the audience as well. There is something inherently fascinating about watching Whishaw on screen, whether he's enacting an argument about truth in journalism or surveying the newsroom.[694]

Whishaw's allure, therefore, allows for him to make Freddie's journalistic crusades so appealing to the viewer. Freddie Lyon might be abashed and shocked to think of his alternate self's capability to captivate, he would certainly be pleased to know that he makes the truth engaging.

Act II: We're Just the Ghosts in Their Lives[695]

Answering the question "Do you admire Freddie as a character?," Whishaw admits that "Yes, I think he's a hugely inspiring character, certainly to play, because he's not frightened of saying what he thinks and what he feels, and if anything he's gotten more committed to doing that."[696] Whishaw

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[693]"Episode Four." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[694]Lacob "Ben Whishaw Takes On Bond in 'Skyfall' and 'Newsroom' in 'The Hour'"

[695]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[696] "Ben Whishaw plays Freddie Lyons." *BBC Media Center* (n.d). Web. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/mediacentre/mediapacks/thehour/ben-whishaw.html. > 16 Jan. 2015.)

applauds Freddie's character further: "He's really forthright and not frightened of where honesty will lead him. He'll suffer the consequences of his words and his actions."[697] Whishaw's love for this character parallels that of Abi Morgan for the character. In his interview with Abi Morgan, Lacob encapsulates Lyon thusly, "Whishaw's Freddie represents a paragon of the form, engaging in a desperate quest for the truth, even as he puts his own life at risk while the bodies pile up around him."[698] Lacob's praise sets up Morgan's own lauding of her hero, "Freddie is the journeyman for the piece . . . and what you discover is, as the drama unfolds, just how personal this thriller is to Freddie himself."[699]

In the online promotional material for *The Hour,* The BBC's anonymous interview enquires of Ben Whishaw, "Although Freddie often disappeared off investigating stories and putting himself at risk—is there more of that to come this series?"[700] To which Whishaw responds, "Initially Freddie's much more involved in solving the story of the Soho criminal underworld because Bel is so driven to uncover it. It's only later on in the series when he really hits his stride

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In addition to being anonymous, the website manages to include a rather unfortunate typo and misnames its own hero, calling him Freddie Lyons, rather than Freddie Lyon.

[697]"Ben Whishaw plays Freddie Lyons" *BBC Media Center*

[698]Jace Lacob, "BBC Captures a 'Mad Men' Moment." (*The Daily Beast*. (16 Aug. 2011). Web. <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/08/16/the-hour-creator-abi-morgan-on-spies-journalists-and-margaret-thatcher.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[699]Lacob "BBC Captures a 'Mad Men' Moment"

[700]"Ben Whishaw plays Freddie Lyons" *BBC Media Center*

and then he really delves into the darkest areas and puts himself in a lot of physical danger."[701]

When Freddie informs Lord Elms (Tim Pigott-Smith),"It all comes back to Ruth. That's why M1-6 killed her," Lord Elms sadly echoes, "It all comes back to Ruthie."[702] Her murder becomes the thread that ties the disparate stories of season one together. Ruth's unanswered letters have their haunting counterpart in those Freddie wrote to Bel Rowley, which she left unanswered as did Freddie. Had she not encountered Freddie on assignment to cover her engagement party, it is debatable whether or not she would have been able to compel Freddie to investigate what befell first Peter Darrall (Jamie Kirby) and then Ruth herself. As a result, Freddie uncovers hidden secrets about himself as well as the government and has his first brush with death.

Freddie's drive to find out the truth puts him in mortal danger. Though he learns only later that Clarence is the reason for the surveillance, Freddie Lyon finds himself tailed by government agents; the phones are bugged at "The Hour"'s offices, and Thomas Kish (Burn Gorman), the government agent who assassinated Darrell and Ruth Elms comes to work at "The Hour" under the cover of a translator for Lix Storm. Kish utilizes his position to spy on Freddie. Once he determines Freddie is dangerously close to uncovering the truth, he makes his move in the office canteen.

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[701]"Ben Whishaw plays Freddie Lyons" *BBC Media Center*

[702]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

After Kish catches Freddie in a compromising position (Freddie has just finished rifling through Kish's raincoat), Freddie still want to get answers to the questions plaguing him about Ruth's death. Kish resists. Finally, Freddie volunteers, "I could help you."[703] Kish coldly tells Lyon:

> You can't help me. You are an amateur, Mr. Lyon. You know nothing about me, and I know everything about you. I know that you live with your father. That you go to the launderette on Wednesdays. You have no luck with girls; you work too much. and now you know too much. You're in the middle of a dangerous world, and you've somehow convinced yourself that you're immune. You're not. [Kish sets his cup down] We can do this one of two ways: You can stop playing games with me and tell me everything that you know [long dramatic pause. Freddie very, very quietly "Or . . ."][704]

Rather than answering Freddie's "Or," Kish launches at Freddie.

Therein begins the sort of horror-movie chase that tends to be reserved for fun-loving blond girls in the movies that Whedon watched and hated. Lyons attempts to escape. He first hides in the men's bathroom, pleading "You don't have to do this, Mr. Kish." Kish knocks down the stall door and starts attacking Lyon before Lyon once more breaks free and runs to the staircase where their final fight occurs. [705]

Freddie, in a move that seems to define his particular brand of fighting, talks back to Kish, even while Kish is attempt to throttle him. Freddie endeavors to get Kish to confess using a well-placed Oscar Wilde quotation

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[703] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

[704] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

[705] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

about confession giving absolution that he says his mother always used on him and always worked.[706] Somehow, even though Kish has already utilized his training in lethal methods to dispatch of Darrell and Ruth, Freddie gets the upper hand and yells at Kish still trying to get the truth out of him: "I don't want to die in the bloody office . . . revert to Brightstone . . . What is Brightstone?"[707] Kish says, "Who? The question is who."[708] And then Kish hurls himself over the stairs to his death.[709] Freddie Lyon surviving a fight with Kish and not getting knifed or elsewise seriously injured could be the most Whedonesque aspect of *The Hour*, even more than the two shows shared world-saving and endangered blond girls.

The Hour delineates what makes Freddie Lyon the sort of man a girl like Ruth would turn to. As can be seen from the above-mentioned action scene, it is not Freddie Lyon's Black Widow or Buffylike prowess with fists and weapons. Instead, it is Lyon's stubborn, almost suicidal determination to get to the Truth whatever the cost to his own life and limb. It is Bel Rowley who so aptly elucidates to Freddie what makes Lyon such a heroick figure. After he rings her worried and upset about why Ruth even went to him in the first place, Bel tells him, "Because you care more about the truth than your own safety. Because if I

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[706] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

[707] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

[708] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

[709] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

were scared for my life, I would run to you and trust that you know the answer. Because there's no one else like you, Freddie."[710]

Before she contacts Freddie, Ruth's parents endeavored to save her from the "trouble" into which they believe she has fallen. Unaware of her "Brightstone status" and the degree her infatuation with Peter Darrell has led her (she was a willing accomplice for Darrell's spy-mission in Egypt), Lord and Lady Elms thought their daughter's difficult to be merely her out-of-wedlock pregnancy that occurred from her passion for Darrell. As abortion certainly would not be an option and unmarried motherhood would cause Ruth to be a pariah, a speedy cover-marriage was the only solution they could see to help rescue Ruth. Their choice of groom draws on the underlying theme of homosexuality with *The Hour*, since actor Adam Le Ray (Adam Scott) went along with the sham to conceal his own problematic identity: "If I married her, no one would know what I am."[711] Adam and Ruth's marriage was facilitated by the slimy government spin-doctor Angus McCain. Freddie's investigations are helped along by both Bel Rowley and more intriguingly, Hector Madden, who believe that Freddie is "on to something with Ruth Elms."[712] Only by attending the weekend in the country at Marnie's parents' country home does Freddie

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[710]"Episode Four." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (9 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.) The staging of the scene is more interesting on screen. Bel's talking to Freddie on the phone wearing Hector's shirt and abandons Hector in her bed to talk with Freddie. The phone-conversation is shot with the sort of romantic direction that would more be commonly used for two women gossip about a boyfriend or a couple exchanging romantic sentiments.

[711]"Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

[712]"Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

learn Adam Le Ray's secret. Since it seems to be quite likely that Angus fobbed off his ex-lover on Ruth, it makes Ruth's predicament that much more depressing even if she survived.[713]

While Freddie's pursuit for truth is equal parts heedless and honorable, his behavior to her Ruth's grieving parents can be only seen as heartless. Arranged marriage may not seem like the salvation or guidance to extend to a wayward, troubled daughter, Lord and Lady Elm's social position and life experience could provide them with no other alternative, and Morgan takes pains to provide us with a viewpoint external to Freddie's that the Elms tried their best, even if they good intentions were not enough to keep their beloved daughter from harm. Freddie fails to see Lord and Lady Elms as anything other than the cold, cruel parents who refused to help their daughter in her time of need and continue their grievous misdeeds even after her murder.

Ceaselessly calling her parents and coming by their country house cannot be said to treat her parents with any consideration or kindness for the loss of their only child. Yet, Freddie's stalking, for lack of a better word, does get results. Lord Elms appears to be more willing to speak to Freddie whereas her mother appears to be incased in her grief and loss. Lord Elm's charitably overlooks Freddie's infractions to provide him with the information that

[713]Moreover, Angus and Adam's sexuality seems to be an open secret if we can judge by Hector's remarks to Freddie ["Episode Three." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (2 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)]. Nice girls playing beards for gay men is nothing new, especially given *The Hour*'s care to show how constraining and dangerous 1950s England is for gay men, and we see Angus's own brush with blackmail as a result of his proclivities in season two; like Hector, Angus is blackmailed by one of Cilenti's sirens, but rather than a showgirl, Angus's particular poison is a rent boy. Indeed, his assignation occurs in the same scene and space as Hector's with Kiki. Angus's situation forms a major sub-plot of season two, which ties together quite nicely with the hints that we had glimpsed throughout season one.

Freddie so desires. First, with Bel Rowley's aid, Freddie interviews Lord Elms at the Westminster.[714] When Lord Elms reveals too much, Bel Rowley is informed by her bosses to tell Freddie that his film "blew," which she does.[715] Then, she allows Freddie to bring Lord Elms on "The Hour." Bringing on Lord Elms for a live interview is an action that Bel informs Freddie is "really putting her neck on the line."[716]

During *The Hour*'s season one finale, Freddie Lyon (Ben Whishaw) looks directly at the camera and addresses the audience of "The Hour," fictional news-program:

> Ladies and Gentlemen, if we cannot debate that which troubles our society, more importantly troubles our government, then we cannot in all honesty call ourselves a democracy. If we cannot question our leaders as they embark on what has been called an illegal, military action, an action publically opposed by the United States . . . then we are not a free.[717]

While the powers that be at the BBC are able to shut down and silence Freddie Lyon mid-speech, *The Hour* still continues to unveil what the government is trying to keep concealed (e.g., KGB agent hidden in plain sight). More importantly, Freddie's fiery declaration results in the entire studio breaking out into rousing applause and treating him like a hero of free-speech.

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[714]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (26 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[715]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (26 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[716]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

[717]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

Freddie solves the mystery of Ruth Elm's murder. We hear in the opening episode that Clarence is imprisoned for his role supporting the KGB, though he had nothing to do with any of the murders.[718] Freddie is hence, like Buffy and Ruth Elms, a chosen one. Being a Brightstone seems to be a dubious honor and one that *The Hour* forgets in its second season as well as Ruth's death. The six episodes per season format does not lend itself to too much follow-through after season one's revelations. Instead, we have Bel Rowley taking over as the obsessed one. We do not see what sparked her interest in her "little Soho story," but one can assume that the intersection of crime and violence against women might have caused her to get intrigued.

Reminiscent of Freddie's murder-mystery wall in his bedroom, Bel Rowley has the board in her office covered with crime photos and clippings dedicated to her cause du jour. Where season one focuses on Bel Rowley's role as Producer, we finally got to appreciate her talents as a journalist in season two. She had obviously done her own legwork to track down leads on the story. Moreover, even once she has prevailed on Freddie to get interested, she is still compelled to track down the leads and investigate the story. When Freddie tells her in the first of his two big romantic speeches in season two, "Cut you to your core you'll find news running through your spine," we have actually seen

[718]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (23 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

enough that we need not take his word on it.[719] Likewise, Bel Rowley becomes the one whose life is endangered.

Bel Rowley first comes to talk with Cilenti once Hector has been accused of beating Kiki Delaine.[720] Bel bravely confronts him and cross-examines him. He makes veiled threats and generally refrains from giving her any information. She will not back down: "A man who folds his own napkins and you don't keep track of your own investments."[721] Equally, Rowley's intel-gathering expedition serves as the first glimpse of what will become two crucial plot-points: an origami bird and Miss Ramirez, who gives Bel some very useful information.[722]

Once Miss Ramirez comes in to speak with Bel because she is worried about Kiki, Bel Rowley returns home to find a most intriguing threat: an origami bird on her living room table.[723] Cilenti's men or Cilenti himself have broken in to Rowley's apartment and left her the bird as a warning. Rowley is, of course, shaken and runs off to Freddie. He is out tailing Kiki, but she has a rather civilized conversation with Camille and then talks with Freddie about what they

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[719]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[720]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[721]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[722]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[723]"Episode Three." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri.Nicole Taylor. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

discovered.[724] After Bel contacts Miss Ramirez to press her for intel, they both encounter an origami bird.[725] Bel becomes understandably worried for her source's safety.

At first, Freddie supports Bel, but he is initially exploring fascism, namely the young men who have been hassling Dr. Sey Ola (Adetomiwa Edun), Sisi's boyfriend and Freddie's tenant.[726] Freddie only comes to harm and what appears to be certain death when he aims to get the information they need to put Bel's story on "The Hour." Bel Rowley's Soho story interacts with Freddie's when El Paradis's henchman are conveniently the same two men who attacked Camille with soot and intimidated the tenants in Freddie's area into leaving in order to house both Cilenti's "sirens" and the immigrating Jamaicans that he can exploit and overcharge because no one else wants "coloured" neighbors.

Bel, of course, feels responsible for Miss Ramirez's death. Additionally, given Freddie's love of the story and ability to provoke violent responses, Rowley is understandably worried. [727] Bel tells Freddie:

> You are charging towards a loaded gun and you think can miraculously dodge the bullet. Well you can't. Not this time. You couldn't before. You left for 10 months. You only came back because Randall flattered your vanity and so you could show off your new wife. Another well laid plan [Freddie: Thank you] You just

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[724] "Episode Three." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri.Nicole Taylor. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[725] "Episode Four." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[726] "Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[727] "Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC,2013. DVD.)

> run through life scrapping past injury. Nothing touches you. You pretend it does, but it doesn't. Not really. I want you to feel like I feel. Like I've killed someone, and I'll never be able to look them in the eye and say I'm sorry. In the past… in the past you would have felt guilty.[728]

Freddie refuses to feel guilty but instead determines to go to Lawrence Sterne and rattle him.[729]

After a very unveiled threat to spill Sterne's dirty secrets, Freddie claims, "Everyone loves a hero, Mr. Sterne, but the person who loves him most, I tend to find, is the hero himself. Why else would he polish his buttons so shiny?"[730] Commander Stern rejoins, "You know we're all polishing buttons, Mr. Lyon else why would you be pursuing this story with such fervor? Talk of my ambition when all I can see is your own."[731] Sterne is indeed correct: Freddie is ambitious, but he wants the advancement of truth and justice, rather than individual vainglory. Freddie's fervor, as in season one, brings him into dangerous contact with Cilenti. The horror of his predicament is much clearer than in season one, since we have already witnessed the violence threatened and inflicted against anyone who stands in Cilenti's way. Moreover, there is a power struggle within Cilenti's organization between Cilenti and Pike, the thug who ordered the attack

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[728]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[729]The personal interview with Sterne is Freddie's second attempt at justice-getting. Upon discovering that Commander Sterns was Kiki's secret lover and the person responsible for her attack and subsequent Hector-blaming, Frederick Lyon convinces Hector to grill Sterne live on-air about the Soho vice problems ["Episode Three." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Nicole Taylor. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)].

[730]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[731]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

against Camille (soot thrown in her face by Trevor).[732] Consequently, the expanded interactions between the villains and Freddie make things more dangerous for Freddie, since the muscle is none too fond of Mr. Lyon's views or his actions in supporting a peaceable inter-racial society. In addition to the racist harassment of Lyon's tenant, we have seen the brutality meted out against Miss Ramirez, who was strangled by Pike on Cilenti's orders, as well as those images on Bel's board detailed the "random acts of violence" and "violence as means of social control."[733] The story, by the season's end, becomes a "sex scandal to cover up a nuclear scandal."[734] But for Bel, it started out with the images of the women: crime scene photos, newspaper clippings, and the "art photos" in which Cilenti and his goons trade.

While Ruth Elms did her level best to provide information to Freddie before her death, the audience as well as Freddie and Bel come to know Miss Ramirez in more depth as a person. We get an idea of her identity as something other than victim of trafficking and murder. Moreover, she becomes the key to taking down the whole operation. The images she provides to Bel as well as her posthumous gift to Kiki Delaine ("your face is your future") empower both

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[732]Camille's attack occurs in "Episode Two." [The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)] and the power struggle becomes much clearer after the raid when Cilenti's been arrested in "Episode Six." [The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012) BBC,2013. DVD.)].

[733]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[734]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

Rosa-Marie and Kiki to wreak retributive wrath on their abusers.[735] For both sets of women wronged (Ruthie and Cilenti's "sirens"), there is a sense of journalism bringing the abuses perpetrated against them to light and the criminals to some sense of justice. Of course, Ruthie's actual murderer killed himself, and Freddie refrained from subjoining treason by revealing all that Ruthie knew on "The Hour." Yet, Kiki Delaine's revelations were live and uncut. Hector is able to cross-examine her and bring out all the dark and sinister dealings that Cilenti and his partners were trying to keep hidden.[736]

While Hector is interviewing Kiki, Freddie Lyon risks life and limb in his attempt to keep Cilenti away from Kiki. It very nearly costs him his life because perhaps unexpectedly, Kiki Delaine holds back telling them that Cilenti has Mr. Lyon until the viewer believes Freddie to be at death's door.[737] Bel knows that something is wrong ("There's something she's not telling"), even before Kiki reveals that Cilenti's men have Freddie.[738]

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[735] "Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[736] "Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[737] "Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[738] "Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

Act III: You'll Never Have a Face for Television Now[739]

Freddie's forays into El Paradis had already succeeded in antagonizing Cilenti: "A word for you and your friends at 'The Hour.' Drink my champagne, eat my oysters, but don't think that you won't pay."[740] Freddie, Marnie, Hector, and Bel stake-out El Paradis to discover what precisely "Castle Corp" is.[741] Once Commander Sterne's raids El Paradis, provoked no doubt by Freddie's prodding, Freddie heads into danger, dodging police and fleeing patrons to get the paperwork to substantiate their story.[742] Cilenti catches Freddie grabbing the documents, and things start looking not-so-good for Freddie before he is saved by Sterne arresting Cilenti for Miss Ramirez's murder.[743]

Freddie's fortunes turn once he volunteers to go after Kiki to bring her on the show. Without Miss Delaine, "The Hour" exposé would lack any substantiation. Of course, Cilenti's has gotten out on bail, putting Kiki's life in danger.[744] After Cilenti's goons track down Kiki and Freddie at the Curzon cinema, Freddie bravely volunteers to "keep them occupied" while Kiki goes on

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[739]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[740]"Episode Three." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Nicole Taylor. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[741] "Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[742] "Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[743] "Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*.(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[744]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

"The Hour."[745] What follows is a brutal scene reminiscent of the torture scenes inflicted on someone like James Bond or Jack Bauer. Freddie Lyon demonstrates the sort of gutsy courage associated more with a strappy heroine. He does not kick ass; instead, he sasses. Despite his non-traditional response, *The Hour* never undersells his bravery or his heroism. He does try to make a run for it, but is caught and beaten with pulverizing force that has Cilenti dripping in his blood.[746]

The artistry and color palette seems straight out of a 70s Mafia movie, more *Godfather* than *Mad Men*. Ben Whishaw's voice and body progressively demonstrate the effect of the violence.[747] Midway through the savage beatings, Whishaw's voice conveys the degree to which his body has been brutalized by becoming barely a whisper. While Pike and Trevor were roughing up Freddie, it is Cilenti who inflicts the most damage. Lyon's sass serves to get under Cilenti's skin. Cilenti enters, and Freddie seems defiant, yet still noticeably injured. The viewer sees a close-up on Freddie's face, and he is already bloody and visibly in pain when he tells Cilenti:

> They hate you. The businessmen and the ministers the clientele you worked so hard to lure in. they despise you. [off camera—steady midshot on Cilenti] the way you fawn, the way you seduce them, the way you rob them [back to Freddie in midshot] the way you still naïvely think [Freddie stirs in chair—conveys the trauma] that you'll fit in. [Freddie turns to glance at the television while

[745]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[746]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[747]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

> Cilenti says 'Answer me. Where is she?'] You'll never fit in, made money and you didn't even go to the right schools. In the new world order—money [sharp intake of breath] money is king. [748]

Cilenti launches himself at Freddie and we cut to Freddie's terrified face as Cilenti tells him: "You're the one trying to fit in. You're the performer, Mr Lyon. [There is an upshot that gives the impression of Freddie's POV as Cilenti towers over him]. You don't know where she is." We cut back to Freddie's terrified face and then to "The Hour." It cuts back to Cilenti decking Freddie, saying "You'll never have face for Television now."[749] The camera's "vison" progressively worsens after Cilenti starts wailing on Freddie; the shot quality becomes blurry as if seen through Freddie's eyes. Then, the audience sees intercuts between "The Hour" and Hector's praise of Freddie Lyon and his fearless pursuit of the story. [750]

Seeing Kiki on "The Hour" and Freddie trying to make another run for it turns Cilenti into fists of fury. [751] Now Freddie is slumped on the floor and dripping in blood that covers his eyes. He seems on the verge of passing out and whispers: "Corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth

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[748]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[749]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[750]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[751]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

is aggregated in a few hands, and the Republic is destroyed."[752] Freddie breaks down sobbing and feeling powerless. He susurrates, through clenched teeth, "Abe Lincoln. Abe Lincoln said that." Cilenti not paying attention mutters, "What did you say?" Freddie barely audible and still sobbing, "Money [cut to flashback of Bel and Freddie kissing], money," and then non-diegetic cracking sounds where the camera pulls back, and we witness Freddie beaten to a pulp.[753] The next thing the viewer witnesses is Cilenti wearing Freddie's blood and pulling up his suspenders as he strolls back into the club. [754] It appears the police did not arrive on time as the last shot of the series is Freddie Lyon's macerated body lying on the lawn of BBC's Lime Grove studios and hearing him groaning "Moneypenny."[755]

As can be seen from our small examination of the scene, it approaches the level of torture porn. Morgan chooses to dedicate over twenty minutes (or one-third) of the episode to presenting Freddie's thrashing, interspersed with Kiki's interview on "The Hour." Her authorial choice serves to heighten the

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[752]Full quote: "I see in the near future a crisis approaching that unnerves me and causes me to tremble for the safety of my country. As a result of the war, corporations have been enthroned and an era of corruption in high places will follow, and the money power of the country will endeavor to prolong its reign by working upon the prejudices of the people until all wealth is aggregated in a few hands, and the Republic is destroyed. I feel at this moment more anxiety for the safety of my country than ever before, even in the midst of war" Abraham Lincoln in a letter written to William Elkin. It has been doubted whether or not Lincoln actually was responsible for the words See "Lincoln's Prophecy."[*Snopes*. ((n.d.) Web. <http://www.snopes.com/quotes/lincoln.asp > 16 Jan. 2015.)].

[753] "Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[754] "Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[755] "Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

tension, since we see Bel's increasingly become frantic about what's actually happening to Freddie.[756] It might, arguably, have been more effective to have not seen so much of the brutality and savagery inflicted upon Freddie's body. If we had briefer cuts with Cilenti's interrogating Freddie, cut to Cilenti walking about splattered with Blood, and then retain the final shot of Freddie, the episode might have been more powerful because it would have allowed the viewer to imagine for herself what was going on with Freddie.

Since Abi Morgan is writing for the BBC and not *24*, *Homeland*, or *Criminal Minds*, we must inquire what motivated her to dwell so lovingly and so long on Freddie's torture scene. What she does accomplish is to intensify our sympathetic identification with Freddie's predicament, including an attempt to literally see through his eyes and to attempt a cinematic free and direct discourse into Lyon's mind. Likewise, the scene proved surprisingly popular with the Whishaw fandom.

Seemingly within hours of the scene's first airing on British airwaves, screencaps and gifs flooded tumblr. Even years later, it is not an unlikely occurrence to see Whishaw's brutalized body on the "Ben Whishaw" tumblr tag.[757] An interrogation of the fetishization of Whishaw's tortured and tormented body could spawn a chapter of its own, but suffice it to say, the only Whishaw discourse that rivals blood-soaked Whishaw is naked Whishaw

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[756]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[757]The most popular gory images on the "Ben Whishaw" tag tend to be the suicide scene from *Cloud Atlas*, the murder from *Richard II*, and the vicious beating in *The Hour*. To be fair, non-bloody Fredrick Lyon, particularly Lyon and Rowley, is also popular.

(especially the shower scene in *Criminal Justice*) and slashy Whishaw (e.g., 00q fanfiction). One charitably assumes, however, that Morgan, like Sam Mendes (*Skyfall*-featured in our conclusion*)* was not motivated by an attempt to draw on a subset of Whishaw fandom.

If we take Morgan at her word and think of *The Hour* as her encomium to heroic journalism, we might come to a conclusion to our query why she lingered over the violence perpetrated against Lyon. Freddie Lyon has, to borrow Bel Rowley's words, been "headed at a loaded gun" for much of the time we have seen him. He was fortunate to escape Kish with his life intact, but he cannot keep poking hives and beating down doors without getting some sort of retribution. Previously, it was directed against his career, but Cilenti, as we have seen, seems particularly aggrieved at Lyon.

Equally, though he may not be a fan of Bel Rowley, I cannot imagine either Cilenti or his goons manhandling her in that manner. He was content to leave his threats as origami birds, rather than harsh words or fists. When it comes to Rowley, Cilenti or his men choose the subtle means of veiled threats, whether from some sort of chivalry or knowledge that she is the sort of woman who would be missed. Bel Rowley loves to rile as much as Freddie Lyon, but Freddie Lyon is the one who shares physical violence along with Miss Ramirez and Kiki Delaine. When Angus McCain comes in to aid "The Hour," he remarks,

"Sometimes the best place to hide is in fame's spotlight."[758] Freddie Lyon lacks that protection, even before Cilenti attempts to destroy his face.

One wonders what would have happened had Hector volunteered to bring in Kiki, rather than Freddie. Would Hector's army training allow him to fend off the blows with more acumen then Freddie? During the attack, Freddie Lyon does his best to hold off Cilenti and to resist. Snarky commentary, Abraham Lincoln quoting, and sobbing might not be tactics that one imagines as a constituting a fighting style. Moreover, Bel Rowley filters throughout Freddie Lyon's wounded brain. When Freddie calls out "money," Cilenti hears only the words, rather than Freddie's ardor for Bel.

Evaluating the aftermath of what befell Freddie is impossible and the realm of fanfiction, since BBC canceled the series and left it on the cliffhanger. Had Abi Morgan not divulged that Freddie was not dead, the viewer would have no other reason to think that he was not mortally wounded.[759] The gender dynamics are certainly intriguing. Focusing on the specifics does uphold Freddie's heroick nature. In his own fashion, he saves the damsel in distress and empowers her to set her cause aright to the unsatisfied. The ferocity braved by Freddie may not be the same heroism demonstrated by Buffy the Vampire Slayer or Jon Snow, but it equally showcases Freddie's powers of

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[758]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[759]Soraya Roberts, "*The Hour* Creator Abi Morgan on What Might Have Happened in Season Three." (*Vulture*. (6 Mar. 2013). Web. < http://www.vulture.com/2013/02/hour-creator-on-what-might-have-been.html > 16 Jan. 2015.)

endurance, fortitude, and perseverance in the face of adversity in order to let the truth be told.

Act IV: We Wouldn't Want To Be Anywhere Else. With Anyone Else[760]

Before his run-in with Cilenti, the greatest danger to Freddie seemed to come from Camille, his wife, and her fiery nature. She grows irate when he heads out to follow the story and bring the fascist who threw soot at her onto "The Hour."[761] She starts swearing him in French and screams, "You don't love me. You love your stupid *Hour*."[762] Camille hurls everything in her reach directly at Freddie's head. He says, dodging the crockery, "You keep telling me to stand taller. What's taller than this?"[763] It is a credit to the acting that Camille registers as anything other than a distraction from Bel and Freddie finally hooking up.[764] Although there are certainly other stories that could have used some breathing room, the Camille-Freddie romance receives the most short-shrift from the condensed storytelling. While Freddie appears to love her and does not treat

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[760]"Episode Four." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (9 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.)

[761]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[762]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[763]"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[764]When Freddie tells that Bel that does not miss Camille, it is only due to Whishaw's natural charisma and charm that he manages to make the viewer not think of Freddie as a cad who ditches his wife for Bel. Rather, he seems someone who got distracted and enjoys aspects of Camille's personality, but realized Camille's desires would actually not mesh with his role as a newsman. Of course, all of this is speculation, since Camille only pops in at episode four to chat with Bel and give her seal of approval for Bel to get Freddie, like she was handing over the sublet to an apartment.

her like the consolation prize, the packed plot does not provide much space to see them functioning as a unit before they are broken apart. She seems capable of ably supporting Freddie's El Paradis reconnaissance mission and gets important information: the girls are foreign. However, the plot does not seem to have enough space to sketch her out.

More intriguingly, Camille could represent an alternative means of world-saving to Freddie and Bel. Her mien comes across less as "French" (unless running about in one's underwear and a shirt scream parisienne) and more burgeoning 60s radical. Her short hair-cut and her sartorial choices, along with her accent, distinguish her from Bel and the other women whom we have seen previously. She often seems mad about Freddie for loving "The Hour." Had Freddie not worked with Bel, she might be less irate at him for what he does.

The nail in their coffin comes from a tired Freddie coming home after failing to appreciate his wife's friends colonizing their living room to blare jazz and make flyers protesting the nuclear arms race. The fight is so painful because it represents one of the most realistic aspects of their relationship. He is understandably quite cross to come home after his long day to all those strangers in his house, and she is jealous of his time with Bel and infuriated about how he treats her friends.[765] What starts out as airing the lingering problems in their whirlwind romance becomes something greater.

> **Camille:** Well at least they're doing something, trying to do something. . . .Freddie, don't you care? Don't you know there's craziness going on in the world, missiles creating more missiles-

[765]"Episode Four." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

> ours to be pointed at the Soviets. Theirs to be pointed back at us. On and on it will go, Freddie. Every day. Horrible, Horrible News.
> **Freddie:** What do you think I do all day, but try to make sense of those horrible stories?
> **Camille:** Well, this is how we do it. This is how to effect change. Same as you telling your story, except we don't have to wear a suit.
> **Freddie:** This suits pays the bills. . . .Why do you think I work all night very late, trying to deliver the most truthful perspective I can?
> **Camille:** To be with her. [766]

One assumes that the only thing that caused Freddie to react as he did to Camille as the lateness of the hour and the fissures starting to appear in their relationship, rather than her running around and trying to be a heroick woman in her own right.

Though underlying is the idea that Camille thinks Freddie only really wants to be at "The Hour" to be with Bel, their argument reveals the larger gulf between their world views. Whereas Freddie spent season one being the outsider who rebels with a cause against society and the establishment, Camille views him as a support of the status quo, his suit symbolizing the manner in which he upholds normative roles and views. In some senses, she might be right.

Even though from all information available, they appear to be the same age, Freddie's revolutionary script seems as if comes from an older time compared to Camille's hipster friends. Freddie seems driven to work within the system to overthrow the system, which aligns him with our prior heroines and heroes, such as Alicia Florrick, Laura Roslin, Jon Snow, William Adama. Camille,

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[766]"Episode Four." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

on the other hand, represents Freddie's flirtation with the American beatnik movement and alternative modes of formatting change. While Camille seems like a glimpse of the shape of things to come, Bill seems to be more conventional. The counterpointing is highlighted by the jump cut from Camille and Freddie's argument to Bill and Bel.

Bill and Bel are discussing the news. She is revealing how she got into the business.[767] She argues that the "simple act of telling someone's story" is the means of changing the world, and Bill wants her to stop talking about work. Bill insists that Bel cannot work forever because she will marry and give up her job.[768] Like Camille's and Freddie's fight, Bel and Bill's more civil, even romantic, discussion allows for a less anvil-filled cue to tell us how "meant to be" Freddie and Bel. Bel's beau Bill has the advantage over Camille because he has another plot-line.[769] Bel's romantic relationship demonstrates that Bel is not sitting home sobbing every evening since she cannot have Freddie. Correlatively, Bel's "penchant for married men," as Hector so wittily puts it, means that Freddie's married status would not prevent her from waiting for a divorce before she chooses him.

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[767] Bel's backstory has shades of Peggy Olson (*Mad Men*). Bel started as a secretary; she was a hellacious typist, but her boss supported her and allowed her to pursue news stories ["Episode Four." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)].

[768]"Episode Four." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[769]Camille's plot is wholly-centered on Freddie, but Bill's importance arises as much from his work rivalry and attempts to poach Hector as from his romantic relationship with Bel.

According to Freddie Lyon, he tells Bel that "we keep fighting about you. She says all I care about is the story. The story and you."[770] Camille is, of course right. The idea is echoed when Bel finally gets thwacked by the falling anvils and ditches Bill for Freddie's stake-out at El Paradis. Before she leaves, she responds to Bill's bitter "There's more to life than chasing history" by emphatically telling him, "No there isn't. The truth is something you don't have to lie about."[771] It is that line which shows how much she and Freddie belong together in "one true pairing" sense. They both love the news and the story.

Sadly, when Camille absconds, it is not with Bill, since plot contrivance significant others should really unite. Instead, Bill sticks around long enough to show up and insult Bel Rowley at her workplace. In a scene whose blocking is more reminiscent of a sitcom, Bel's beaux pop their heads out of their individual doors once Bill bitterly insults Bel and storms off: "This is impossible. You are Impossible. . . .Is it Mr. Lyon? You might tell him—and I know this from bitter experience, there's only ever room for one newsman in a relationship."[772] However, without Bill's glowery "You are impossible," Camille's

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[770]"Episode Four." The Hour *Series Two.* (Wri. George Kay. Dir. Catherine Morshead. (5 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[771]"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two.*(Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[772]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two.* (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir.Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

covert Freddie-Bel shipping, and Hector's overt Bel-Freddie shipping, Bel and Freddie's big romantic moment would be absent from the series finale.[773]

If *The Hour* did not end with a nearly-dead Freddie Lyon, then its almost fanfiction turn would seem like the sort of Hollywood ending reminiscent of a Cukor movie:

> **Freddie**: You are **not** impossible. Impossible is just what hasn't been done. It's not impossible when it's possible.
> **Bel:** We need to talk. We haven't. . .
> **Freddie:** Haven't what?
> **Bel:** We haven't [she fidgets and trails off] about us
> **Freddie:** No, we don't. We need to stop talking. We talk too much. Instead, we have to do something. [Freddie goes for the Big.Romantic. Kiss] I am tired of not being possible. It is possible. You are possible. You are possible with me.[774]

Had *The Hour* ended on this scene, Bel and Freddie finally declaring their love and sharing the "True Love's Kiss" scene would be reminiscent of a Disney movie. Rather than rousing romance, the repeated plot-point of Freddie's two unanswered letters is the only romantic-resolution the viewer is presented. As the episode draws to a close, we see the letters in Bel's desk, watch her open another letter, and hear Bel's voice-over reading the note she wrote, but never sent, declaring her love for Freddie and admitting that she was not as brave as he was.

Like Laura Roslin and William Adama or Team Charming, Bel and Freddie have managed to figure out a way to save the world before bedtime while still

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[773]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

[774]"Episode Six." The Hour *Series Two*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (13 Dec. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.)

having a romantic relationship. Intriguingly, Romola Garai has expressed sentiments in interviews suggesting she might not be thrilled about the turn of events. When asked "how would Garai have liked her character's storyline to be tied up given the chance?," Romola Garai seemed distinctly anti-Romance.[775] She countered, "I guess the love story has to be resolved in some way. All I ever wanted for her character was for her to just take over the whole station and fulfil my own fantasy of her becoming completely liberated and happy on her own. But there would be a lot of pressure for her to have her love story."[776] Of course, Garai deserves the right to her own opinions, but one wonders what scripts she might be reading. Bill might expect her to give up her career and stay at home to be the new mommy to his orphaned daughter, Janey. Outside of his querulous remarks in the pilot, Freddie has never seemed like the type to force Bel Rowley to do anything that would prevent her from being the best producer and journalist since Dorothy Thompson or Nellie Bly. One of the refreshing things about their romance and what differentiates them from other fictive pairings, such as *His Girl Friday*, is that it compels the viewer to see journalism as the most attractive thing since Laura Roslin running the Colonial Government.

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[775]Susanna Lazarus, "Romola Garai: 'There's Absolutely No Chance *The Hour* One-Off Special is Going to Happen'." (*Radio Times*. (29 Nov. 2013). Web. <http://www.radiotimes.com/news/2013-11-29/romola-garai-theres-absolutely-no-chance-the-hour-one-off-special-is-going-to-happen > 16 Jan. 2015.)

[776]Lazarus "Romola Garai: 'There's Absolutely No Chance *The Hour* One-Off Special is Going to Happen'

It is not only Romola Garai who offers compelling, but potentially disconcerting opinions about Bel and Freddie's romance. Abi Morgan's own views do contain a hint of something problematic. She elucidates:

> The suspension of the kiss is always the thing that's most exciting. I played with that *not* happening, but because we had reached that peak in series one—*Was he ever going to express his feelings for her*?—I kind of thought I had to do it in series two. I think it was also about making Freddie into more of a man in series two. I loved the idea that he traveled and he had been to America and he had been exposed to a whole new cultural, social world. He grew up, and part of that was that he needed to take the reins and kiss her. There was quite a lot of thought given to that kiss.[777]

Again, like Romola Garai, one wonders what show Morgan was actually crafting or thinking about, since the one that aired does not substantiate those ideas.

Yes, Freddie Lyon "rearranged himself a little . . . a lot," to use his own words, but the notion that he needed to get more manly to kiss Bel sounds like Morgan was channeling that worst form of normative 50's literature, like an advice column in a more conservative woman's weekly. Freddie's marriage to Camille might have nudged Bel in the direction that Freddie had options other than swooning away for her to love him, but even season one Freddie was not waiting by his phone and praying every night for Bel to love him.

Act V: But May I Say One More thing.You Haven't Seen My Best Yet[778]

Discussing the series, Jace Lacob affirms, "T*he Hour* also beautifully captured journalistic impulses: the importance of the truth at any cost, the

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[777]Roberts "*The Hour* Creator Abi Morgan on What Might Have Happened in Season Three"

[778]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

need to be unbiased, and to remain objective, honest, and trustworthy."[779] He maintains, "In an era of the Petraeus scandal, at the center of which lies a journalist who failed to heed those directives, *The Hour* is both a memento and a call to arms, one that's far more successful in its handling of the newsroom than, well, Aaron Sorkin's *The Newsroom*."[780] Ignoring *The Newsroom* comparison, Lacob encapsulates what makes *The Hour* special. Even as it presents a panegyric to journalism, it refuses to sugarcoat the costs associated with what it means to be a good journalist. Though Freddie Lyon appears to pay the heaviest price, Abi Morgan does not pull punches for the rest of the team.

By choosing Freddie Lyon to be the epitome of heroic journalist, *The Hour* refashions its take on masculine heroism. Arguably, Hector Madden would be more commonly the start of not only "The Hour," but also *The Hour*. Madden's boozing and philandering are the things that compromise his career and integrity, rather the adorable little quirks that make him such a winning newsman. *The Hour* might not be proving the flame to go with the pitchforks and the tar, but it equally refuses to see the masculinity that Hector Madden embodies as anything other than vexed and potentially toxic to Madden and the women around him. He might have brought it on himself, but if we pursue that logic, then so did Kiki Delaine, Ruth Elms, and Rosa Maria Ramirez through their failure to uphold normative notions of femininity. It might be amusing,

[779]Lacob "Ben Whishaw Takes On Bond in 'Skyfall' and 'Newsroom' in 'The Hour'"

[780]Lacob "Ben Whishaw Takes On Bond in 'Skyfall' and 'Newsroom' in 'The Hour'"

though, to think of Hector Madden as a feminist revision of "whore who had it coming."

At the same time, Freddie Lyon's fate suggests that being as chaste as ice and as pure as snow will not allow you to escape calumny. Conventional masculinity might be problematic, but possessing a less normative manliness does not result in a path of primroses. As we have said, Whishaw might not be an Adonis whose beauty results in all women and thinking men swooning away and hurling themselves at him. Nevertheless, he has his legions of fans and even fronted the advertising campaign of a major Italian fashion house (Prada 2013).[781] So, both Lyon and his real-world alter-ego, Whishaw, are not unrepresentative of a certain sort of male-attractiveness. Nonetheless, within Lyon's world, *The Hour* makes it clear that it is as much Lyon's class status along with lacking all the perks attending being a member of the upper-class (e.g., going to the right schools and meeting the right people) as his failure to possess matinee idol good lucks that make him an outsider.

What differentiates Lyon from the archetypal "geek guy" is his refreshing lack of misogyny. He never treats Bel Rowley as a prize to be won or a reward for good behavior. In the pilot, she tells him that "Some nice girl needs to rescue you."[782] His response "There's only ever been you. And you're not that

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[781] Having glimpsed some of the advertisement in question, Whishaw looks fashionably thin, but like most models, it is hard to not want to give him a hug and a cookie and some more comfortable looking clothes.

[782]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

nice" speaks volumes as does Bel's initial advice.[783] Freddie Lyon is the atypical one who needs to be saved by a girl. Granted, by "rescuing," Bel Rowley is less implying that Freddie Lyon occupies the subject position of kitten stuck up in a tree somewhere, but rather, this mythic woman can work the sort of magic done by normative notions of gender on regular men. Of course, the lone time Freddie Lyon could use some saving, Bel Rowley is unable to come to his aid, and Kiki Delaine tells the truth about who has him too late. Moreover, one assumes he would have willingly thrown himself into harm's way to protect anyone who was threatened, not just beautiful blondes. Freddie Lyon might not have a cape and glasses to go with her heroick identity, but he certainly has earned his inclusion in our heroick pantheon.

[783]"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. (Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.)

SEASON FINALE: SAVING THE WORLD BEFORE BEDTIME AND WRITING A PAPER WITH A LOT OF SOUL

Irina Dereveko: So, Sydney, how's school?
Sydney Bristow: I'm writing my dissertation. . . . supposedly.[784]

Teaser: How Are We Fallen, Fallen by Mistaken Rules![785]

Screenwriter Jon Spaihts (*Prometheus*, *Passengers*, and *The Mummy*) tweeted: "One virtue of heroines: we don't expect them to punch their way out of problems. They have to think, negotiate & maneuver."[786] Given the nature of this dissertation, Spaihts's definition of a heroine would seem more than fortuitous, until one looks closer. It is true that his heroine is certainly heroick. At the same time, she fails to uphold certain key elements of our concept. As we have seen throughout history, fiction, and the contemporary television landscape, women can fight and men can think. Most importantly, the idealized heroine sets up an interesting gender dynamic wherein Buffy the Vampire Slayer is not a heroine, but Mr. Darcy (*Pride and Prejudice)* is. After all, Mr. Darcy does not punch his way out of Pemberley, but has to think and negotiate

[784]"Passage: Part 2." Alias *Season Two*. (Wri. Crystal Nix Hines. Dir. Ken Olin. (8 Dec. 2002) Bad Robot, 2003. DVD.)

[785]The quotation is from line 50, and the second part of its heroic couple also seems fitting "And Education's, more than Nature's fools" Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea, "The Introduction." [*The Poems of Anne, Countess of Winchilsea*. (1713). (Ed. Myra Reynolds. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1903.)]. Anne Finch's poem was analyzed by Virginia Woolf in *A Room of One's Own* (101-105) where she simultaneously lauds Finch's poetic talent and laments what societal restrictions did to embitter Finch's mind and hence her verse.

[786]Jon Spaihts (jonspaihts), "One virtue of heroines: we don't expect them to punch their way out of problems. They have to think, negotiate & maneuver." 19 Feb. 2014, 1:55 p.m. Tweet. [https://twitter.com/jonspaihts/status/436212392922337280]

with Mr. Wickham. Likewise, vampires really are more interested in blood and violence than listening to reason, hence Buffy's need to slay them to save humanity. Spaihts obviously intends his heroine to be a superior creature to an hero, but his version upholds an untenable gendered binary that has held back women and men for centuries.

Of all the ideas and Woolfian streams of consciousness that arose from contemplating Spaihts's encomium heroineium, two seemed more fruitful for expanding the dissertation's ideas: Rebecca West and Q (specifically Sam Mendes's *Skyfall* version). While West and Q come closer to embodying a Spaihtsian definition of heroinehood, each vexes the categorization in ways that help lay out groundwork for our final chapter. Rebecca West, whom we have seen previously, possesses a pen-prowess and a deliciously dexterous handling of the pen as a means for eviscerating her enemies that endears her to the dissertator. It is true that West participated in the physical protests and actions with Pankhurst's Suffragettes.[787] Rather than her war-efforts on behalf of the women's right to vote, the actions gain her entry into our print-world through violence of words. Q, on the other hand, is the brains in a world of James Bond's brawn. Though all Qs share the same plot-function, we borrow *Skyfall*'s version, specifically Q's conversation with James Bond in front of Turner's *The*

[787]All pages numbers and quotations are from the well-researched and engaging anthology by Jane Marcus, *The Young Rebecca: Writings of Rebecca West 1911-1917.* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1982.Print). Marcus discusses West's participation in Suffragette work on pages 94-95. For instance, "Rebecca West was struck in the throat by a hysterical policeman with a quivering Adam's apple, pelted with herrings when she spoke to the striking dock workers, for not being a mother." Comma errors belong to Marcus.

Fighting Temeraira tugged to her last berth to be broken up, 1838.[788] Q's (Ben Whishaw) and Bond's (Daniel Craig) conversation sitting on a bench at the National Gallery of Art in London reflects *Skyfall*'s deconstruction of Bond's tropes, including highlighting how imperfect Daniel Craig's James Bond might be for the role he currently performs.[789]

There is one rather surprising thing that our heroine Rebecca West shares in common with Sydney Bristow as well as some other powerful women of verse (e.g., Anne Brontë): an Alias. Rebecca West, heroine, originated in an Ibsen play, *Rosmersholm* (1886). Although Rebecca West's own entry into covert ops arose from her choice to tread the boards, her choice of aliases is quite striking. Born Cicily Isabel Fairfield, she chose a stage career at the age of 17 after studying at the Academy of Dramatic Arts in Edinburgh, Scotland.[790] Acting for genteel young ladies living during the turn of the century was quite as shocking as writing was for the Brontë sisters. Yet, whereas Charlotte Brontë chose the gender neutral Currer Bell for her *nome de plume*, Miss Cicily Fairfield renamed herself after the rebellious heroine of Henrik Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, a role that she had one been engaged to play upon the stage.[791] Cicily Fairfield followed a

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[788]*Skyfall.* (Perf. Ben Whishaw. Wri. John Logan, Robert Wade, and Neal Purvis. Dir. Sam Mendes. Albert R. Broccoli's Eon Productions,2012. Film.)

[789]*Skyfall*, similarly, seems to be the lone Bond film that has the audacity to address the shocking notion that Bond-girls are not all sex kittens. Choosing to reveal that Bérénice Marlohe's Severine was a victim of human trafficking and then watching her murdered in a sadistic contest between men by the man (Javier Bardem's Silva) who 'saved' her from the life does as feminist job as one can expect from a Bond film.

[790]Marcus *The Young Rebecca* 4

[791]Marcus *The Young Rebecca* 4-5

seemingly common path of English women of letters from the stage to the page (e.g., Elizabeth Inchbald, Susanna Rowson, or writer to actress, Anna Cora Mowatt). After she committed to journalism, Fairfield chose to assume Rebecca West as her *nome de guerre (*or *nome de plume* if you want to take the traditionalist approach). Unlike Ibsen's heroine who hurls herself in a mill-pond, our Rebecca West managed to raise more hell and commit less suicide.

We have already glimpsed her humorous delineation of what a feminist is in our third chapter; now we look at two other examples of her famed vicious wit. West was once praised by a friend as "one of the sturdiest and most gallant wielders of the battle-axe it has ever been my luck to see."[792] Granted, West upholds Spaihts's definition of ideal heroinehood because the bodies she drops with battle-axe are metaphoric, rather than literal. Yet, the violence of her prose mirrors Woolf's own firebrand calls for actions in *Three Guineas.*[793]

Within her writing, West tactically, if not tacitly, targeted militant masculinity to cosplay as a suffragette or at least a female brigand. Her hyperbole undermined the bombastic rhetoric that suggested that girls could get away with violence wholly because of the privileges accorded to their feminine gender. West's readership would well know the costs in blood, bodies,

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[792]Marcus *The Young Rebecca* 90

[793]*Suffragette* (2015) written by Abi Morgan and directed by Sarah Gavron, is the first feature film in England to focus on the woman's suffrage struggle. If you've been paying attention, Abi Morgan is the creator, writer, and showrunner of *The Hour.* Romola Garai and Ben Whishaw also star. The film made history for being the first non-news program to film in the Houses of Parliament (14 April 2014).

and pounds endured by suffragettes and suffragists who battled to procure the women of Great Britain the right to vote.[794]

In "Men, Mind and Morals," a book review she wrote for *The Freewoman* (25 April 1912), West savagely and lucidly dissects E. Belfort Bax's *Problems of Men, Mind, and Morals.*[795] West maintained that "the other great plank in his platform is a startling theory that 'women at present constitute an almost boundlessly privileged section of the community'."[796] According to Bax, "A woman may, in the present day, do practically what she likes without fear of anything happening to her beyond a nominal punishment," but West vehemently disagrees, "Now this is not true, as Mr. Bax knows."[797] In answer to Bax's warped ideas about the privilege accorded to womanhood, West rejoins:

> I publicly challenge him to prove the sincerity of that statement: to go forth in the disguise of a woman, smash a jeweler's plate-glass window and abstract a diamond necklace, assault a policeman, set fire to the National Liberal Club and assassinate Sir Edward Carson. If he believes his own statement he will do it fearlessly. And I will pay the forty-shilling fine he pretends will be his 'nominal punishment.' He need have no fear of the wry face of the feminist: I

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[794]West describes protestors getting brutalized during a protest at Lloyd George's speech, "Think of a mob of screaming, shrieking men, convulsed with liberalism, throwing themselves on singlehanded women, beating them with sticks and stones, tearing out their hair in handfuls, and stripping them down to the waist! Think of them dragging the bleeding bodies of their captives towards the village pump, pitching them over hedges, and trying unsuccessfully to dip them in the river!(98) [Rebecca West, "An Orgy of Disorder and Cruelty: The Beginnings of Sex-Antagonism."(*The Young Rebecca.* Ed. Jane Marcus. Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press, 1982. 97-101. Print.)]

[795] Rebecca West, "Men, Mind and Morals." (*The Young Rebecca*. Ed. Jane Marcus. Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press,1982. 35-38. Print.)

[796]West *The Young Rebecca* 36

[797]West *The Young Rebecca* 36

> will pay it gladly, *for this brief saturnalia would open a new and thrilling field of activity for women* [italics mine].[798]

Surprisingly, West's call to action did not get her arrested like another Emmeline Pankhurst.

Rebecca West had previously deconstructed the faulty logics that women were a protected class capable of perpetuating violence without punishment. Again, West utilizes a book review to foment feminist change in "Woman Adrift."[799] West writes:

> Now, consider the appalling results of the recognition of this principle, if all we brazen hussies who are suffragettes and feminists became converted to Mr. Owen's belief that every women [*sic*] ought to throw up her economic independence, and get some man to keep her! Think of us rushing about, trying with all that vitality we are at present misdirecting in clawing policemen and wrecking the home to attract men whom we knew did not value goodness in a woman! We *will* paint the town red. And it will be Mr. Owen's fault.[800]

Who would have thought that feminism and suffragette action would be the perfect way to catch a husband? West utilizes her journalism to do violence to normative notions of gender. West despises husband-hunting butterflies as much as she loathes men, like Bax and Owen, who advocate for constrictive roles of gender.

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[798]West *The Young Rebecca* 36

[799]Rebecca West, "Women Adrift." *The Young Rebecca.* Ed. Jane Marcus. (Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press,1982. 28-31. Print.)

[800]West *The Young Rebecca* 29-30

Let's turn briefly to our other, somewhat ironic, epitome of Spaihtsian heroines: Whishaw's nerd-chic Q[801] meeting Daniel Craig's physically-damaged, emotionally-traumatized, and alive-again James Bond at the National Gallery in London.[802] The scene in the film was so popular that it launched a thousand ships, or at least made people write fanfiction about Bond and Q, and converted legions of women (and men) into Whishaw-fans. In prior Bond films, Q and Bond's discussion would be a battle of competitive versions of masculinity; yet within *Skyfall,* their conversation illustrates their different styles of manliness while still suggesting that Bond has a use: Mendes and *Skyfall*'s script underline Bond's role when Q presents Bond with a gun that only Bond can fire, so Bond can literally pull the trigger. Q informs Bond, "I hazard I can do more damage on my laptop, sitting in my pajamas, before my first cup of Earl Grey tea, than

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[801]The costuming choices in the scene—Whishaw's Q in a parka and rumpled-looking suit and Craig's Bond looking dapper as ever—are fascinating and analysis worthy. While a cursory search will provide numerous gif and image examples, "Clipping the New Quartermaster" [Bill Desowitz, "Clipping the New Quartermaster." (*Immersed in Movies*. (22 Oct. 2012). Web. <http://billdesowitz.com/clipping-the-new-quartermaster/> 16 Jan. 2015.)] provides a nice picture and a charming talk about the scene.

[802] For our purposes, here is the important part of their exchange:
Q: It always makes me feel a bit melancholy. Grand old war ship. being ignominiously haunted away to scrap . . . The inevitability of time, don't you think? What do you see?
James Bond: A bloody big ship. Excuse me.
Q: 007. I'm your new Quartermaster.
James Bond: You must be joking.
Q: Why, because I'm not wearing a lab coat?
James Bond: Because you still have spots.
Q: My complexion is hardly relevant.
James Bond: Your competence is.
Q: Age is no guarantee of efficiency.
James Bond: And youth is no guarantee of innovation.
Q: Well, I'll hazard I can do more damage on my laptop sitting in my pajamas before my first cup of Earl Grey than you can do in a year in the field.
James Bond: Oh, so why do you need me?
Q: Every now and then a trigger has to be pulled.
James Bond: Or not pulled. It's hard to know which in your pajamas. Q.
Q: 007. [*Skyfall*. (Perf. Ben Whishaw. Wri. John Logan, Robert Wade, and Neal Purvis. Dir. Sam Mendes. Albert R. Broccoli's Eon Productions,2012. Film.)]

you can do in a year in the field."[803] Tea-drinking, pajama-wearing, laptop-wielding world savers unite!

If only such an ability was all I needed to join the CIA or MI-6, I would be more than set. To borrow West's words, "this brief saturnalia would open a new and thrilling field of activity for women," and Goddess knows, doctoral students in literature could use the job prospects—Colin Firth keeps stealing all the openings—and the governess trade is not what it used to be. Sadly, I think it might require a tad bit more than that. It does, however, make Q a very nice hero(ine) who uses his tech skills and computer savvy, rather than his ability to crack heads, to defeat evil. Thankfully, exploding pens are so yesterday, or else claiming Q for a place in our heroick pantheon would be even more fraught with dangers than it already is. Q's necessity as Quartermaster for our purposes is two-fold: a) he illustrates that men are capable of thinking quite as well as women, and b) he sets up our up-coming inclusion of Sydney Bristow quite nicely.

By this time, I can imagine, you dear reader, have compiled your own set of characters and shows to construct your own Room or rather dissertation. If so, I say what Jane Espenson did, "Write!," or "Make your own fun!" Conversely, you might be incorrigible enough to persist in the belief that television and feminism do not belong together. So long as you leave me my pen, I will follow Woolf's guidelines about the treatment of Angels, since Woolf only resorted to violent actions once the Angel made as if to guide her pen. As for myself, it

[803] *Skyfall.* (Perf. Ben Whishaw. Wri. John Logan, Robert Wade, and Neal Purvis. Dir. Sam Mendes. Albert R. Broccoli's Eon Productions,2012. Film.)

would of course be utterly thrilling for me if I could leverage *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* into a three-picture deal (directed by Kenneth Branagh, Gillian Armstrong, or Jane Campion) or even better a procedural series on CBS. Instead, we have another important question to ask: "do we know why we are writing?" Dissertations are a requirement to graduate with a doctorate and their purpose is to make an original contribution to the field. But why I am writing? Virginia Woolf wrote for the money and the power that money brought her. Joss Whedon wrote because he was irate at horror movies. And me? What drives me to do this?

Any good season finale has its share of plot twists and pyrotechnics. We may be sadly lacking the budget that powers Michael Bay flicks or *Game of Thrones* episodes, but what we lack in funds, we make up for in ideas, and Virginia Woolf provided an apt instructress for what revolutionary materials three guineas will buy. Season or series finales, like a concluding chapter, must work to provide an actual plot for the episode as well as tying up loose ends, such as defeating the Big Bad, and set up what will drive the next season. Virginia Woolf puts things a bit more clearly: ". . . I understand the first duty of a lecturer—to hand you after an hour's discourse a nugget of pure truth to wrap up between the pages of your notebooks and keep on the mantelpiece forever."[804]

Woolf, additionally, proclaims:

> I is only a convenient term for somebody who has no real being. Lies will flow from my lips, but there may perhaps be some truth

[804]Woolf *A Room of One's Own* 4

> mixed up with them; if for you to seek out this truth and to decide whether any part of it is worth keeping. If not, you will of course throw the whole of it into the wastepaper basket and forget all about it.[805]

While I do not mean to be as intentionally mendacious as Woolf, I intend to borrow a page from her playbook. Consequently, if Jon Spaihts, Rebecca West, and Q have not clued you in, the final chapter, then, involves self-fashioning. The choice of who we are and how we make ourselves defines many of the women and the men who have appeared on our stage so far. As an echo (or Echo) of our opening chapter, the conclusion offers four final pictures to decorate the wall in the Room of our Own.

We begin, fittingly perhaps, with another world-saving, dissertation writing doctoral student: Sydney Bristow (Jennifer Garner), the heroine of J.J. Abrams's *Alias*, a hugely influential series on ABC (2001-2006). Although Abrams had sometimes cited his wife as his inspiration behind Sydney Bristow, J.J. Abrams more often describes *Alias* as rooted in wanting to see another of his television heroines, Felicity (played by Keri Russell in *Felicity*), dressed up as a spy.[806] Though it does contain elements of science fiction, *Alias* primarily concentrates on the tension that arises from Bristow's life as a double agent working with her father and attempting to bring down the espionage "cell" SD-6, the very people that she thought she was fighting against. For the first two seasons, Bristow juggles defeating evil and completing her doctorate in

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[805]Woolf *A Room of One's Own* 5-6

[806]Abrams's wish was eventually fulfilled when Keri Russell debuted as a Russian secret agent on FX's *The Americans* (2012), which would be a fascinating analysis of textual interplay (a la Colin Firth and Darcy) for another dissertation.

American Literature at UCLA (University of California at Los Angeles). From the perspective of a doctoral student, it is somewhat heartening to know that Sydney Bristow experiences the same paper-writing problems and other issues that commonly preoccupy the average non-Action Heroine graduate school student.[807]

Academia as gateway to the spy-life is not absent from popular-cultural depictions of the Trade (e.g., Hector mentions he was approached at university in *The Hour)*, but J.J. Abrams and his creative staff's entwinement within *Alias* sets the show apart. After all, one cannot imagine James Bond or Jason Bourne becoming superspies due to scholastic disillusionment, family drama, and/or personal unpopularity. Sydney Bristow, thus, is equally an everywoman and the type of superheroine who would hurl Spaihts's delineation of what makes a woman an heroine through a plate-glass wall. Like Buffy the Vampire Slayer, Sydney Bristow thinks, speaks, and is more than capable of slaughtering armies and averting apocalypses.

Granted Sydney Bristow's choice to become a full-time double agent (SD-6 is evil, and Bristow switched sides to fight with the good guys) radically differs

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[807]Out of context, this example from "Time will Tell" sounds disconcertingly like many a conversation that has befallen all of us. Equally, it reveals the origin story behind a portion of our chapter's title: **Professor:** This is unacceptable. You've missed classes--
Sydney: I know, but when I—
Professor: . . . Turned in papers late. . .
Sydney: Yeah, listen, my job—
Professor: Sydney, enough about your job. This has only been getting worse since we spoke about this last. Now, if you want to be a banker, be a banker.
Sydney: I understand, and look, this probably isn't the best written analysis of Fitzgerald you've ever read, but come on. This is not a D paper.
Professor: There's no spirit in this paper, no soul. Now, you fix it by Friday, or I'll have to re-evaluate your placement in this program ["Time Will Tell." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. Jeff Pinker. Dir. Perry Lang. (2 Dec. 2001). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)].

from what most of us would do if we left graduate school for a life on the outside. Likewise, Sydney Bristow's reasoning behind wishing to drop out of graduate school might be notably disparate from what propels those who choose to leave the program: "I've gone from thinking that my mother was a literature Professor to finding out that she was KGB."[808] Moreover, as Sydney tells her father and fellow double-agent, Jack Bristow:

> Last week, I was ready to leave SD-6, but maybe I was focused on the wrong place. I think maybe I only went to grad school because Mom did. She was a teacher, so I always thought that was something I wanted to do. But now that I know it was just her cover, and that it didn't mean anything to her . . . I'm thinking I should just drop it.[809]

Virginia Woolf declares, in *A Room of One's Own*, "For we think back through our mothers if we are women." *Alias* demonstrates Woolf's truism in subtle and striking ways. Sydney Bristow embodies both her mother's and father's revolution and redemption.

Yet, as much as I love Sydney Bristow, when it came to choose an "Alias" at my graduate program, my choice was clear—well clear, to me; students are still rather confused—Laura Bristow (AKA Irina Derevko played by Lena Olin). It was perfect—and so deliciously Brontë. Like Acton Bell, I even got to my initials: LB and a subtle shout-out to my true identity (we do have Lena in common after all). Granted, I was no way near as all in as Irina Derevko (on so many levels), but I must say, having an alias based on *Alias* did add a certain

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[808]"The Coup." Alias *Season One.* (Wri. Alex Kurztman and Roberto Orci. Dir. Tom Wright. (24 Feb. 2002). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

[809]"The Coup." Alias *Season One.* (Wri. Alex Kurztman and Roberto Orci. Dir. Tom Wright.(24 Feb. 2002). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

flare to my doctoral program experience. Moreover, it provides a concrete example of why this matters. Mythos matters. Cosplaying an empowering women, even if it is just in a name, allows one to shout back at the master narrative that suggests my clothing choices (i.e., our shirt from the opening chapter) means I have somehow managed to set back the course of feminism a few hundred years. Unlike Charlotte Lennox's *Female Quixote* or poor murdered and tortured Emma Bovary, I watched this television, I read these novels, and whatever infractions I may have committed, you can blame Buffy, but not in the way Lennox or Flaubert intended.[810] I would, however, like to think that Austen, Whedon, and Woolf would not be displeased. I read novels; I watch television; I am dangerous, and let me show you why.

From unconventional women doctors, we turn to The Doctor. You simply cannot have a dissertation of this nature without at least a nod to The Doctor (*Doctor Who)*. Many of us would love a TARDIS, especially if it came with our dissertations as a reward for all our hard work.[811] For our paper's purposes, we pair The Doctor with Rory Gilmore (Alexis Bledel). If we are going to use stakes, we need to talk about the demons we kill and the cost it takes. In their disparate fashions and occupying radically different terrains and genres, The

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[810]*Madame Bovary* really is the most atrocious novel. As acts of torture porn go, it would give Marquis de Sade pause between glee and horror. After all, Emma Bovary is the heroine of a novel who is brutalized—her suicide scene is particularly graphic and feels more like the writer force-feeding her poison to punish her for existing—for reading novels really lacks logic and excels in savagery. Thankfully, M.E Braddon's *The Doctor's Wife* (1864) performs a Whedonesque reformation and refutation of the plot.

[811]TARDIS stands for Time and Relative Dimension in Space. It looks like a Blue Police phone box. See the BBC One's *Doctor Who* official page all about the TARDIS ["The TARDIS." *BBC One Doctor Who*. ((2015). Web. < http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006q2x0/profiles/tardis> 16 Jan. 2015.)]

Doctor and Rory Gilmore prove as invaluable as Bristow *mère et fille.* Thankfully, my actual body-count is closer to Rebecca West's or Jennifer Garner's than Laura's and Sydney Bristow's. How then to answer the last question, the most dreadful of all academic questions: so what? What difference do I make? What difference does book-reading and television-viewing make to the world? I can claim that I can wear my rue with a difference and that my dissertation can be said to make a unique contribution to the field: there are not a wealth of dissertations on the shelves cosplaying as television shows. If that were all, then I can count the day as saved. Yet, the television and the literature we have spent our hours with demand something more of a reckoning to wipe out the red from our account books.

Though I lack Daenerys's dragons or the ability to wield the sword like Arya or Brianne of Tarth, her Westrosian sister heroines, I can still be a "girl getting her power story" along similar lines as Alicia Florrick becoming an amazing lawyer or Laura Roslin's path to presidential power. Concordantly, more traditional action heroines, like Sydney Bristow (*Alias)*, Buffy in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, and Caroline/Echo in *Dollhouse* reflect the difficulty inherent in upholding and upending gendered binaries as much as do the fraught refigurations of masculine identities performed by William Adama (*Battlestar Galactica)* and Frederick Lyon (*The Hour*).

As we learned in our opening chapters, Buffy the Vampire Slayer might have a job description that insists in her inherent singularity ("one girl in all the world standing against the forces of darkness") at the same time it trades in her

"just a girl" status. Like Sydney Bristow (or even Laura Bristow), Caroline/Echo, Snow White/Mary Margaret Blanchard, Buffy's identities are numerous and her world contains multitudes of women who can be her as well as girls who are fighting her wars, slaying vampires and fighting the Big Bads, throughout the Whedonverse with all the pain and none of the name recognition that comes with being the "slayer." Thus we now come to the final question, "What makes a woman, or man, heriock?" Of course, this dissertation is not meant to be a compendium, a television version of Sarah Josepha Hale's *Women Record* (1854). We make no claim the women studied are the lone heroick figures in their text or that television is a vast wasteland and these shows are the sole points of light in an otherwise misogyny-infested darkness.

Act I: I Can Be Anyone I Want To Be

"I can be anyone I want to be" or so proclaims one of *Alias*'s promotional posters. The tagline is located under a picture of Jennifer Garner as Sydney Bristow. The picture chosen eschews the more costume heavy versions of Sydney Bristow. Instead, the image more closely resembles Jennifer Garner herself in a publicity shot for a magazine interview. The slogan "I can be anybody I want" works perfectly as both a description of Garner, who as an actress can be whomever she wants, and the character, who can assume any Alias. As catchy a slogan as it is, those who watch *Alias* know that Sydney Bristow's life-choices are as curtailed as those of the average woman watching Sydney kick-ass and take names on a weekly basis. Yet, Sydney Bristow extends

the hope to those women (and men) who view her that they can "be anyone" as well as the truth that being anyone can be costly to one's own self-worth and self-creation.

Judith Butler or Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin could certainly write a book on Bristow's multivalent personal and professional identities. Sydney Bristow is neither a Bondgirl nor a reboot of the equally awe-inspiring Emma Peel (Diana Rigg in *The Avengers*). Instead, she is the better, bad-arseier Bond saving the world in stiletto steels and maintaining multiple cover-stories and personas to her friends and family: graduate student, banker at Credit Dauphine (a front for SD-6), SD-6 super-spy, CIA double-agent, daughter, friend, and by the end of the series, wife and mother.[812] Oh, and did I mention she is a chosen one? Like our beloved *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, Sydney Bristow is a "Prophecy Girl": "This woman here depicted will possess unseen marks. Signs that she will be the one to bring forth my works. Bind them with fury, a burning anger unless prevented at vulgar cost this woman will render the greatest power unto utter desolation."[813]

Sydney Bristow's feminist DNA might not be as explicit as *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*'s origin story, but she is no less a fraught figure of empowerment. Buffy and Sydney's shared "Chosen One" status unites them as much as their

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[812]To understand what SD-6 or other portions of *Alias*'s complicated show-mythos, there are many useful sites on the interwebs, such as *Alias:The TV Show*. ((n.d.). Web. < http://www.alias-tv.com/index.html > 16 Jan. 2015.).

[813]Rambaldi's prophecy gets some mileage as does the quasi Da Vinci/ Nostradamus/ Mythos-maker of the *Alias* verse. The quotation here comes from the first translation in the aptly named Season One(1.16) episode "The Prophecy." [Alias *Season One*. (Wri. John Eisendrath. Dir. Davis Guggenheim. (10 Mar. 2002). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)].

struggles to maintain a home-life/work balance and to deal with personal problems and uphold friendships. What grounds Abrams's science-fiction heavy (e.g., Milo Rambaldi) spy drama is the equal parts realism that Abrams adds to the mix. When Whedon chose to import *Alias* into the *Dollhouse*, he highlighted Sydney Bristow's transmutable status. Though Whedon does include a mission in *Dollhouse* that seems like direct homage to *Alias*, the more intriguing connection lies in Sydney Bristow herself. She is both Echo trying to crash down the system to bring about revolution and Paul Ballard, except instead of dolls, her life is filled with spies.

The tension between having a "normal life" and saving the world almost always forms a frequent vexed binary within the espionage or Action genre, but the detail Abrams puts into Sydney Bristow's alternalife as a doctoral student is equally salient and remarkable. Her graduate studies in English as well as her graduation ("A Free Agent") form a notable portion of *Alias*'s B-plots within seasons one and two. To best understand *Alias*'s seamless entwinement, there is no better example than the pilot. The opening two scenes of "Truth Be Told," *Alias*'s pilot episode, encapsulate what makes Sydney Bristow special:

> [Dark. Sydney, with red hair and heavy eye make-up, has her head forced under water. We see her eyes bulging, silently screaming underwater. Someone pulls her up. Two armed men throw her on the ground. Sydney coughs, soaked. They walk up to her and yell at her in Chinese. She answers back, still coughing, her head pressed to the ground. She speaks Chinese. They pick her up by her flaming red hair and throw her on a chair. They speak to her in Chinese again. They slap her. They take her arms and handcuff her to the back of the chair. She stares at the door ahead, knowing someone's coming. She breathes heavily, soaking wet.]
> [Cut to the same door . . . but an elderly Professor enters. He looks

> at the crowd of students. Three are left, among them is Sydney. Dressed normally, brown hair. She's quickly writing. The Professor walks down the aisle as the two other students give him their papers. He walks up to Sydney. She's still writing.]
> **Professor:** Sydney. Time's up.
> **Sydney:** Okay, then. [still writing] I'll . . . just . . . finish . . . my little . . . essay. Thank you. [She finishes and gives it to him.][814]

"Truth Be Told" in particular and *Alias* in general could easily have crafted a brilliant, pioneering heroine in Sydney Bristow by trafficking in scenes like the cold-open and subsequent scenes with a brutalized Bristow getting captured, tortured (her teeth are ripped out of her mouth), and then fighting her way out like a frelling awesome Action Heroine: she flips her chair onto her assailant and shoots him up with his own torture drugs. Instead, Abrams and the show's creative staff made the choice to do a graphic match between Sydney (Syd) Bristow tied to a chair awaiting her torturer and a Professor coming in tell Syd that her exam needs to be handed in.

Interestingly enough, it was Bristow's turn to normalcy that brought the world as she knew it crashing down upon her head. It is true that she shared the mistaken belief with her colleagues, particularly her partner Dixon (Carl Lumbly) that she was working for the C.I.A. She was already deceiving her friends by telling them that Credit Dauphine was her actual way-of-life, rather than a cover story. Yet, it is after a truly romantic gesture—Danny, her doctor boyfriend proposes to her and she accepts—that hell is let loose. Before she heads off on her latest mission and sparked by his talk about their future

[814]"Truth Be Told." Alias *Season One* (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. J.J. Abrams. (9 Sep. 2001). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

babies, Sydney decides to tell Danny the truth as she knows it.[815] Like any normal person, he freaks, gets drunk at a dive bar, and leaves a message on their answering machine telling her he is okay with what she is doing. Of course, Danny is like Whedon's blond girl in an alley. He is unaware of the stakes of the game.[816] Thus, Sydney Bristow walks in from her mission to find her boyfriend murdered in their bathtub. When I say her boyfriend's murder was the best part of her day, I think you can understand what a hellacious day she had. To make matters even crazier, all of this action occurs in the ironically named pilot, "Truth Be Told."[817]

Within "Truth Be Told," alone, Sydney's fiancé is murdered by Arvin Sloane; she goes back to school full time, and then SD-6 try to kill her. Jack Bristow, her estranged father, saves her. He tells her that he is part of the SD-6 leadership. He wants her to live, but she's a little upset to learn the truth about her dad. Determined to wreak retributive wrath against SD-6 (while still protecting her father), she completes the rest of an earlier mission (that she was doing when her fiancé was murdered) and strolls into Sloane's office,

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[815]"Truth Be Told." Alias *Season One.* (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. J.J. Abrams. (9 Sep. 2001). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

[816]"Truth Be Told." Alias *Season One.* (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. J.J. Abrams. (9 Sep. 2001). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

[817]"Truth Be Told." Alias *Season One.* (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. J.J. Abrams. (9 Sep. 2001). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

splattered in her own blood and sporting *Run Lola Run* red hair, and blithely tells Sloane that she's taking the week off for midterms.[818]

By the end of the show's first season, Sydney Bristow has discovered that both her parents were spies; her mother was not actually a beloved English professor at UCLA who died in a car accident when Sydney was 6; and her best friend Will (Bradley Cooper) nearly got himself murdered by SD-6 when he used his job as a journalist to uncover what actually happened to Danny.[819] By midway through Alias's second season, her mother, now known by her true name Irina Derevko (Lena Olin) is back in her life; Arvin Sloane set up the murder of Sydney's best friend Francie (Merrin Dungey) and replaced her with

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[818]The scene plays like this(note that the Sydney walking in mirrors her arrival post-fiancé murder, wherein she is engored in Danny's blood. To add to the empowerment, Sinead O'Connor's "No Man's Woman" blares as non-diegetic soundtrack sound while Sydney struts in to the office. Jennifer Garner has a swagger that pulls out the other action heroes (and heroines) to shame. Sydney walks through the building, blood coming from her mouth, flaming red hair, black clothes, device in her arms. She walks by Dixon, who stands up and watches her. Sydney marches into Sloane's office and puts it down on his desk. He moves the sheet away, admires it:
Sydney: I'm back.
Sloane: All right.
Sydney: I'm taking a week off. I've got mid-terms. [She walks out.] ["Truth Be Told." Alias *Season One.* (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. J.J. Abrams. (9 Sep. 2001). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)].

[819]Here's more:
1)Arvin Sloane and Jack Bristow know the truth about Irina Derevko, Sydney's mom, which they keep from Sydney.
2)Sloane realizes Jack and Sydney are double agents. He informs Sydney when he calls to congratulate her for graduating from university. "A Free Agent." Aside from the truly pervy paternal vibes he gives off(Sydney gives him an awesome "reading the riot act speech," the phone call shows how even in spy-land, getting your doctorate is something be celebrate, even by evil ex-bosses.
3)Oh, and in season four, Sydney finds out she has a secret sister (Irinia and Arvin Sloane's daughter). Nadia is also mythical powered.
4) Her mother killed her beloved's father: **Sydney:** *[Talking to Vaughn about her mother]* There's this woman, her personality like a collage I've put together from the photographs, the few memories I have, scraps of stories I've heard, the clothes of hers I've got, her books, and none of it's real. She wasn't that woman at all. She was—she was a horrible person, who killed your father. Vaughn, I just wanted to say that I'm so sorry ["The Box, Part I." Alias *Season One.* (Wri. Jesse Alexander & John Eisendrath. Dir. Jack Bender. (10 Feb. 2002). Bad Robot, 2003. DVD.)].

someone genetically mutated to resemble Francie (still played by Merrin Dungey).[820]

More importantly, we learn along with Sydney Bristow that her father experimented on her.[821] Accompanied by the haunting strains of Joni Mitchell's "River," Sydney Bristow resolutely and tearfully tells her father, "You took away my choices in life. You programmed me to be a spy."[822] In addition to proving why J.J. Abrams would write the worst, most depressing Hallmark Christmas movie ever, the revelation equally provides an ironicizing commentary on our section title and links Bristow's dilemma back to our dissertation's other heroes and heroines. "Programming" really is such an intriguing word choice, since it

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[820]"Phase One." Alias *Season Two* (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. Jack Bender. (26 Jan. 2003). Bad Robot,2003. DVD.)*Alias*'s superbowl episode was a "gamechanger," featuring not only Francie's murder, but also Syd and Vaughn bringing down SD-6 (or so they thought at the time) and getting together as a couple. Equally, it's never clear what color Alison Doran was before she became Francie. Later on in the series, we see Gina Torres's character transformed to resemble Sydney Bristow.

[821]The full, completely heartbreaking conversation is as follows:
Sydney: I have this memory, when I was six years old. My mother had just died in a car accident. I felt so scared. You were never home, so who was going to take care of me? Then I overheard you talking. You were in your study on the phone. You were talking about Christmas, about me. You were taking care of my Christmas presents. Suddenly, I-I felt so safe. You were taking care of me. That memory's a lie. You weren't talking about that at all.
Jack: Sydney.
Sydney: I've seen the footage. Mom's briefings with her KGB handler. She was sent here for one specific purpose, to steal information from you about a project you were developing for the CIA. An operation to train children to be American spies. Project Christmas. Ever since Mom came back, you were afraid she'd figure out what you did to me. You weren't trying to protect me from her, you were trying to protect your secret. So the first opportunity you had, you set her up . . . in Madagascar.
Jack: Sydney, understand something—
Sydney: No, Dad, you understand something. You took away my choices in life. You programmed me to be a spy. I will never forgive you for this. ["The Indicator." Alias *Season Two* [Wri. Jeff Pinker. Dir. Ken Olin. (27 Oct. 2002) Bad Robot, 2003. DVD.]

[822]Though if you watch the episode on DVD, you will notice that Mitchell's "River" is gone, and replaced by a much less apt soundtrack. One can only assume that the cost was so prohibitive that that Abrams and co. only had the funds to secured the Broadcast rights to the song. ["The Indicator." Alias *Season Two* (Wri. Jeff Pinker. Dir. Ken Olin. (27 Oct. 2002). Bad Robot, 2003. DVD.)]

works equally as a television-term ("programming" is how television programs are chosen to air), genetic code (who knows? There might be a spy-gene), psychologically (i.e., brain-washing), and a perfect descriptor of the scripting imposed upon people by the society in which they live. Sydney Bristow might be disparate from the dolls that occupy Whedon's *Dollhouse*, but she shares a similar experience of having her mind written against her will. Yet, like Alicia Florrick, Emma Swan, Laura Roslin, and other women who have been programmed by society and their families to be someone, Sydney Bristow aims to renegotiate the conflicting claims to be herself and to do some good.

Before she discovers her father's actions, Sydney Bristow shares what inspired her to join SD-6. In her testimony before a government panel, Bristow reveals: "The truth is—I didn't love any of the subjects I was studying. My father and I weren't speaking, my mother had died when I was six and the highlight of my social life was my dorm's salad bar. So, I called them."[823] In a disturbing pattern within Bristow's life, "These men led me to believe they were CIA. They were very convincing. *Are* very convincing."[824] It is hard to think that her audience might not be able to sympathize with the depiction of a depressed college-student, even if they cannot see themselves accidently joining an evil organization that pretends to be both a bank (Credit Dauphine is its front company) and a black ops division of the CIA. Sydney Bristow's school

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[823]"Q&A." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. Ken Olin. (17 Mar. 2002). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

[824]"Q&A." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. J.J. Abrams. Dir. Ken Olin. (17 Mar. 2002). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

problems led her to join SD-6. Even if the aftermath is radically different from what most of us face, Sydney Bristow's problems with college were decidedly realistic and mundane. The sheer normalcy and un-spycraft nature of Bristow's initial (or so she believed at the time) induction into spycraft is highlighted through the medium and the selection of images, particularly the use of UCLA as a backdrop.

The school/work/life dichotomy besets many graduate students who try to survive on the stipend, work another job to afford rent, go to classes, and have a social life, including for some marriage and children. While Sydney Bristow does not seem to have fear for funding, she shares the typical graduate student problems on steroids. As in the pilot, *Alias* mines the quasi-sitcom dark comedy that arises when Sydney Bristow spying gets in the way of her paper writing. Saving the world makes it hard to write term papers in a timely manner.

For her professors, Sydney Bristow must seem like the epic slacker we all mock who always has an excuse. Yet, for the audience, it is a wonder she manages to attend her classes or accomplish anything, given what she is up against. Sydney Bristow eventually chooses spying as her full time career rather than academia, but *Alias* still instills a respect for Sydney Bristow graduate student in English as much as Sydney Bristow secret agent and savior of the world on a daily basis.

One final example from the show proves illustrative of *Alias*'s worldview and how Sydney Bristow exemplifies what it means to be a graduate student.

As we have seen, Jack Bristow is not always the most demonstrative of fathers, but in this conversation, he endeavors to be a more normatively good father and help Sydney with her decision about staying in graduate school and finishing her doctoral program or concentrating wholly on the spy-life:[825]

> **Jack:** When you asked me the other day about school, I couldn't help you. I . . . I'm out of practice when it comes to, uh . . . personal matters.
> **Sydney:** Dad, I'm in no rush.
> **Jack:** Believing your mother was a Professor may have influenced you somewhat but the decision to go back to school was yours. And I'd trust that. I think that, uh, if you stick with it . . . you could become the kind of teacher your students will always remember.
> **Sydney:** Thank you.[826]

Jack Bristow tells his daughter what we all want to hear. No, not sorry your mom was a double-agent who was working for the KGB. He talks about the choices Sydney made in life. Given how disempowered she frequently is, choosing to go to graduate school and become a professor of literature is as

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[825]The beginning of their conversation is particularly lovely moment for Sydney and her father. Here is the start of their conversation: **Sydney:** So, why are we at a carousel?
Jack: You always loved this spot. Your mother and I used to bring you here. I had just been transferred to the Los Angeles field office. You were two years old. We'd watch you go around on the carousel and talk about our day, the future. And sometimes, foolishly, my work at the C.I.A. I never imagined that our conversations were being passed along to the KGB. I haven't been back to this park in twenty years.
Sydney: Why did you bring me here now? ["The Coup." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. Alex Kurtzman & Roberto Orci. Dir. Thomas J. Wright. (24 Feb. 2002). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)]

[826]Here's another excellent example from "The Coup.": Sydney comes in to talk with her major professor: **Professor:** Your paper had the unlucky distinction of being the last one I graded.
Sydney: I didn't come here for the paper. I've decided to leave the program and I need your signature to drop the course.
Professor: Why?
Sydney: I've been just wearing myself too thin, trying to finish the program and do my job. And you were so right when you said that work was getting in the way here. But the fact is . . . I'm not sure I want to be a teacher anymore.
Professor: Sydney. . . .you're one of the best students I've ever had. That's it. That's my pep talk. But I urge you, think about it a little more before you make your final decision. [He gives her paper and walks out. She got an A.] ["The Coup." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. Alex Kurtzman & Roberto Orci. Dir. Thomas J. Wright. (24 Feb. 2002) Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)].

pioneering as it would be if I had dropped out of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to join Mossad, MI-6, or the CIA. Jack Bristow understands how hard Sydney fought to continue with graduate school over the vociferous objections of Arvin Sloane, her boss, cum-father-figure and supervillain, which is a reoccurring plot point throughout Sydney's time in graduate school. Consequently, Jack Bristow provides Sydney with validation. She can still change the world, but she can do so through teaching. Only *Alias* could see graduate school as a means of rebelling against the system and as a lifestyle choice that is as worthy as espionage.

Suffice it to say, Sydney Bristow became her mother in a radically different way than she had initially intended: double agent rather than Professor of English Literature. Despite her sadness at learning the truth about her mother, Sydney perseveres. Of course once her mother turns out to be not dead (which happens fairly often on *Alias)*, Sydney and Irina still have a rocky relationship—their first reunion involves Irina shooting her—but they do have a fairly normal mother-daughter talk about graduate school. As quoted at the head of our chapter, Sydney confesses to her mom that she is "supposedly working on my dissertation." Ah, Sydney, look at you just like the rest of us. The rest of us might not be "supposedly working on our dissertation[s]" while hunting for errant suitcase nukes in India with their estranged Spy Mommy and Spy Daddy—the most exciting thing I did with my parents while working on this was cruising with Holland America for the past few summers—but it is somewhat comforting that a girl who can chairflip, arse-kick, and beat her way

out of a situation still has the same #graduateschoolproblems that beset us normal, everyday people in the workaday world.

Act II: I Am Obnoxious to Every Carping Tongue[827]

Before we discuss Laura Bristow's potential backstory, let us return to Irina and Sydney's attempts at mother-daughter bonding. "Passage: Part Two" provides a fascinating insight into the Bristow family dynamics. We learn, for instance, why Irina shot Sydney in Hong Kong;[828] we meet Irina's handler who seems like a smarmy bastard;[829] and the Bristows manage to avert a nuclear apocalypse. In this context, the small exchange between Irina and Sydney speaks volumes. Of course, Irina cannot know how fraught graduate school has been for Sydney, but her attempt at having those sorts of conversations that good parents have with their children serves equally as incongruous and grounding—they are traipsing through a literal minefield while having the

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[827]Anne Bradstreet, "The Prologue." [*The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America; or Several Poems Compiled with Great Variety of Wit and Learning*. (London: Stephen Bowtell at the signe of the Bible in Popes Head Alley, 1650. Print.)] Anne Bradstreet seemed like a perfect choice for Laura Bristow professor of English and Bradstreet's complaint about gender seems to be fitting for Irina Derveko's own unwillingness to wield a needle.

[828]**Irina Derevko**: [Irina's back in her cell] You must have a lot of questions.
Sydney Bristow: Yeah.
Irina Derevko: One thing that should not wait any longer is why I shot you in Taipei. The rebel leader, Gerard Cuvee . . . When you were in Taipei, he was in the next room watching to see if I would betray him or you. Shooting you in the shoulder, giving you time to escape, it was the only way I could think to maintain his trust and keep him from killing both of us ["Passage: Part 2." Alias *Season Two*. (Wri. Crystal Nix Hines. Dir. Ken Olin. (8 Dec. 2002). Bad Robot, 2003 . DVD.)].

[829]**Gerard Cuvee:** Not to brag, but I'm kind of responsible for matchmaking you and Irina. Didn't she tell you? I was a supervisor at the KGB. I was the one who gave her the assignment to go to the US and marry a CIA officer. Now, you weren't the only prospect, of course. But you had the most potential. Ha! I actually thought it would dawn on you that a woman like this would never go for someone like you. Luckily for me, your ego was too big for that ["Passage: Part 2." Alias *Season Two*. (Wri. Crystal Nix Hines. Dir. Ken Olin. (8 Dec. 2002) Bad Robot,2003. DVD.)].

conversation most normal people have over a dinner table or via text message. While the brevity of the conversation is never expanded upon later by Irina swapping stories of her own trial by dissertation, it does provide a nice little moment between mother and daughter.

Whatever the reasons behind Irina's desire to become Laura Bristow, Professor of English, perhaps from an actual love of literature (say *Doctor Zhivago* or Petrarch), *Alias* is mute. Indeed, *Alias* does a stellar job, especially through Lena Olin's nuanced acting, of providing the audience with a vast amount of insight into Sydney's mother: why she spied, how she spied, and her fraught relationship to her family (husband, daughters, and sisters).[830] It remains, however, mum on Irina Derevko talking about her role as Laura Bristow, Professor of English.

Of all the cover stories, English Professor would seem to be a strange choice. Blood and bodies seem to fall fast and heavy in Oxford, or at least always in the *Masterpiece Mystery* versions of Oxford; real-life academia rarely seems to be so beset with the sort of murderous mayhem that would suit someone like Irina. We know Jack bought Irina first editions, and one of

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[830]**Jack:** This is CIA Director Devlin, Deputy Director Tucker, Executive Director Gerstner, and these are Senior Officers Haley, Stafford, and Collum. . . . . knew weeks ago that my file had been pulled, and that you were suspicious of my activities twenty-five years ago regarding the KGB. When I learned that you had scheduled a meeting with Mr. Devlin regarding . . . my history, I knew that it was time. Let me say in advance I'm sorry to make this such a public display, but I felt it was important to do this in front of these people because they already know the truth, and because I didn't think that you would believe me otherwise . . . Those Cyrillic codes you found in those books—yes, they were orders from the KGB, and yes, they were orders to kill. An agent received those orders and carried them out—murdered officers of the CIA, including your father, Mr. Vaughn. All this is true. But Sydney, I was not that agent: your mother was. ["The Confession." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. J.J. Abrams & Daniel Arkin. Dir. Harry Winer. (6 Jan. 2002.) Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)]

Sydney's most prized possessions of Laura's was a first edition *Alice in Wonderland*.[831] We have ample evidence that Laura Bristow's profession mattered to Sydney. And it mattered to me. But what exactly did it matter to Laura Bristow?

Of course, spies need cover stories. Jack Bristow was supposedly working in airplane parts, and Sydney Bristow worked in a bank. Those faux-careers, at least, could provide reasons why Sydney Bristow traveled so much, and Jack Bristow's had the air of being so unprepossessing that it would not draw anyone's attention. Although *Alias* gives us quite a few glimpses of Laura's undercover life, we only hear the most minor of details about what Sydney actually thought her father did or what Sydney erroneously believed was her normal life with her parents but Sydney's childhood was average enough for her to never suspect that her father (or her mother) was a superspy. Thus, the academic landscape might be as fraught and perilous in Sydney Bristow's world as we have seen in the prior section, but it is not as sanguine-soaked as *Inspector Lewis* Oxford, where one always assumes that students should pack flack-jackets and write out their wills before attending an educational space that has a murder rate rivalling the Hellmouth.

Therefore, let us borrow a page from Virginia Woolf's playbook and spend a guinea to imagine the backstory that underlies Irina's choice to script

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[831]**Will** [Reading from a book]: "Laura, all my love, forever and a day. Jack." That's not, like, your dad Jack, is it?
Sydney: Yeah.
Will: Wow. That's uncharacteristically sweet of him.
Sydney: I know. He actually has a heart, which I'm learning little by little ["Time Will Tell." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. Jeff Pinker. Dir. Perry Lang. (2 Dec. 2001) Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)].

her own transformation. Here is what we know. Irina Derevko, like her two sisters Elena (Sônia Braga) and Katya (Isabella Rossellini), translated her love and devotion for Mother Russia into willingly becoming a spy. From the number of women within *Alias*'s worldview, it would seem like espionage was the top career choice for much of Russian womanhood. Sydney believed that her birth was wholly to maintain Irinia's cover and to cement her intelligence-gaining-mission as a love-match.[832] Likewise, we know from Jack's own statements that he was open and honest with Laura Bristow. It was not that she needed to use her wiles on him, but rather pre-betrayal Jack Bristow was a warm and fuzzy guy who was a good husband and did not lie to his wife. While in any other situation, those qualities would render Jack stalwart, admirable, and fairly close to Austen hero status in his familial perfection, in *Alias*, they set you up for getting thrown in prison for treason after your duplicitous KBG wife 'dies.'

Of course, having your heart-ripped out does tend to do strange things to a person. Alicia Florrick gains outer-power to go with her inner strength and grew into Saint Alicia the avenging angel of the law. Jack Bristow erected walls that would make China's seem like those belonging to a dollhouse. In addition to his personality change, we know that Irina Derevko's defection from Laura Bristow's fauxlife had two other important concrete consequences: Jack Bristow was locked up by the government on suspicion of collaborating with his wife in her betrayal of his government and he chose to empower his daughter by giving her "Project Christmas" spy-baby training. At this point, we can imagine Sydney

[832]"Time Will Tell." Alias *Season One*. (Wri. Jeff Pinker. Dir. Perry Lang. (2 Dec. 2001). Bad Robot, 2002. DVD.)

Bristow joining Buffy Summers, Emma Swan, Daenerys Stormborn, Alicia Florrick, Bel Rowley, Elizabeth Bennett, amongst others, fictive heroines with seriously dysfunctional family drama.[833] All very interesting, Moneypenny, but not a bit of it answers our initial question. Or perhaps it does?

Maybe Irina's reasons remain obtuse because it is their outcome that matters. It is how Sydney remakes herself in her mother's image that matters. Thinking back to what Jack Bristow said to his daughter, she can be the sort of person her mother was not. Even if that does not mean that she "bec[a]me the kind of teacher your students will always remember," Sydney managed to learn her mother's as well as her father's lessons.

By the final season of *Alias*, she managed to be not like other mothers.[834] After Irina has magically re-eviled during the show's final season, she warns her daughter (after she has manipulated Sydney and before she helps deliver her granddaughter) that "in time you'll learn. . . .you can't do both."[835] To which her

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[833]I like to think Freddie Lyon would join too, and not only to be with Bel. If *Pride and Prejudice* taught us nothing, we know that Darcy has as much of dysfunctional family as Lizzy does.

[834]My favorite part of the final season is it fascinating depiction of maternity as well as how close it allows Jack and Sydney to get. I deeply, deeply dislike the series finale, which I fondly think of as something that did not happen—I also loathe the *Battlestar Galactica* Series finale for many of the same plot-annoying reasons that I do *Alias*'s. I can believe in complicated Irina, but Lena Olin is too amazing an actress and her chemistry with Jennifer Garner is too off-the-charts to sell the Irinia is newly evil and is out to manipulate and harm her daughter. It would have worked in season two, but the show had done too much to nuance the plot and deepen the relationship between Syd and her parents for it to suddenly go completely univalent.

[835]"Maternal Instincts." Alias *Season Five*. (Wri. Breen Frazier. Dir. Tucker Gates. (19 Apr. 2006). Bad Robot, 2006. DVD.)

daughter responds, in truly fiery Sydney fashion, "Watch me."[836] Sydney Bristow's "Watch me" resonates back to the other working mothers, such as Emma Swan and Alicia Florrick (or Daenerys Targaryen and Laura Roslin if you want to take a broader view of maternity) whom we have seen throughout our dissertation. In their distinct ways, our heroines, even Irina herself, aim to navigate the constrictive normative notions of gender and motherhood that simultaneously disempower both women who abide by the rules and those who flout them.[837] Instead of following her mother's less than sage advice, Sydney Bristow renegotiates and redefines cultural notions of gender and motherhood. *Alias* might provide us with a cautionary tale in Irina Derevko while it lauds Laura Bristow, but with its multifaceted heroine (Sydney) and villain cum heroine cum supervillain (Irina), it dares its viewers to think outside of the box and tells them that they can do both. At last, Sydney Bristow can be anyone she wants to be as can Alicia Florrick and Emma Swan, but she needs to be willing to fight for her rights to identity-creation with as much valor and spirit as she does to defend her world. Echo might be more of an echo of Sydney Bristow than Whedon knew.

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[836] You have to love the writers for putting a utterly fascinating discussion about motherhood and working in a show in an episode entitled "Maternal Instincts." [Alias *Season Five*. (Wri. Breen Frazier. Dir. Tucker Gates. (19 Apr. 2006). Bad Robot, 2006. DVD.)].

[837] It should go without saying that everything I have said about mothers extends to fathers, but since I've prioritized Irina and Sydney over the equally rich and beautiful (especially as the series progresses) Spy-Daddy/Spy-daughter, I stressed the motherhood. Sydney's maternity gives her dad time to shine as a normative father figure, including a sweet (and heart-breaking) scene of her father helping her put together the baby's crib.

Act III: I am Large. I Contain Multitudes[838]

Doctor Who, an English science-fiction program, was designed in its origins to educate children, sort of like *Sesame Street* meets science-fiction meets historical-fiction.[839] Although its complicated gender issues would make it an intriguing subject to expand upon, its inclusion here is twofold: a) it sets up a remarkably useful quotation and b) it provides a companion to the following section. Since the doctor always runs about in his box with a companion (predominantly young women), Rory Gilmore (the heroine of our next section) works in tandem to flesh out and to contextualize the ideas within this section.

In the second season of the rebooted series (the so-called NewWho), the tenth doctor (David Tennant) goes off course and lands with his companion Rose Tyler (Billie Piper), a working-class young woman who grew up in an impoverished section of London (council estates), on the Scottish Moors in 1879. They encounter Queen Victoria and, because this is an episode of *Doctor Who*, Space-Werewolves. In another clever bit of allusion, "Tooth and Claw" takes its name from Alfred Lord Tennyson's *In Memoriam A.H.H* (1850) ("Nature, red in tooth and claw"), a poem the actual Victoria read to comfort her

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[838]Walt Whitman. "Song of Myself." *Leaves of Grass*. ((1855-1892). Web. <http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/song-myself > 16 Jan. 2015.) The specific quotation is from Section 51 line 1326, which was part of the later editions Whitman made to the work—specifically the fourth edition and was finally titled "Song of Myself" in the final, so called "Deathbed" edition (1891-1892).

[839]For insight into the history of *Doctor Who*, BBC America has a fairly comprehensive site "Get to Know the Eleven Doctors." [*BBC America Doctor Who*. ((2015). Web. <http://www.bbcamerica.com/doctor-who/extras/dw50/eleven-doctors/> 16 Jan. 2015.)]. For an engaging look at the series origins, please see David J. Howe, Stephen James Walker, and Mark Stammers, Doctor Who*: The Sixties*. (London: Virgin Publishing, 1992. Print.).

upon Prince Albert's demise. After the Doctor, Rose, Queen Victoria, and the inhabitants of Torchwood (the country estate where the episode takes place) are besieged by the monsters of the week, 10 sprints into action and aims to save the day. In a wonderful rallying cry that provides the perfect motivation for this dissertation, he declaims, "You want weapons? We're in a library. Books! Best weapons in the world. This room's the greatest arsenal we could have. [Starts pulling books from the shelf] Arm yourself!"[840] Books as weapons is not a new idea, but a television show that dares to call a library "the greatest arsenal we can have" is certainly making a fascinating and provocative point.

Concordantly, it is important to remember that television is as text based as books, particularly given the prevalence of the adversarial relationship posited between television and the book. After all, television, like theatre and cinema, arises from a script, the written word informing the production and guiding the actors and others visions that wind up enstaged on screen. Within the shows we have examined for the dissertation, books themselves play a crucial role. Giles, Buffy's watcher, is a *librarian*; the gateway to the Hellmouth, throughout the shows first three seasons, was directly beneath the library.

Buffy, *The Good Wife*, and *Battlestar Galactica* traffick in the importance of the book as weapon in non-traditional ways; none are as direct as *Alias*'s employment of Laura Bristow's books as containers for secret KGB code

[840]"Tooth and Claw." Doctor Who *Season Two*. (Wri. Russell Davies. Dir. Euros Lyn.(22 Apr. 2006). BBC, 2006. DVD.) Since Russell Davies revived *Doctor Who*, "Tooth and Claw" is episode two of season two. He retained the prior numbering system. Nine (Christopher Eccleston) only had one season. Thus, season two is Ten's first season. Also, you really cannot have a dissertation like this one, and not include the doctor. It's against the laws of nature, or at least television.

(including ordering the murder of Vaughn's father). Yet Roslin's Book of Pythia, the law statues that limn Alicia Florrick's working life, and the spells and research that arise from Giles's library all present different ways that books exist as weapons within our series. Adaptation of existing books offers an alternate longstanding approach as we see in *Game of Thrones* and *Once Upon A Time*. One of the main questions within the academic discourse is what actual change comes from reading the text? Obviously, the television series under discussion have provoked more than the writing of this dissertation. If we emulate Shakespeare's Hamlet and *Dollhouse*'s Topher Grace and aver that "there is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so," what then? Should *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* come with a warning label?

If *Kicking Ass is Comfort Food* were a weapon, what sort of weapon would it make? It is true that once it is all printed out and leather-bound, it might be hefty enough to be useful when walking dangerous streets. It might not stop bullets or slay vampires, unless I could refashion it into a shiv. I could potentially employ it as a means of gently persuading individuals that the novels of Maria Edgeworth, Frances Burney, Lydia Maria Child, or Catharine Maria Sedgwick deserve the full *Masterpiece Theater* treatment through deft applications of prose to heads. Perhaps our final companion piece before we reach the thrilling end to our saga will provide us with some much needed insight. If nothing else, it gives a brilliant answer for why you should never mix Melville with alcohol.

Act IV: *La liseuse dangereuse,* or All This She Must Possess[841]

With all the women engaged in more high-stakes matters of life and death, Rory Gilmore (Alexis Bledel) grounds us in the mundane. The book loving heroine of an equally wise and witty mother, Rory Gilmore gives us the expansion that we need.[842] *Gilmore Girls* tells the story of a Lorelai and Rory Gilmore. Lorelai Gilmore (Lauren Graham) defied the expectations of her wealthy, upper-crust New England family, fell pregnant at 16, dropped out of prep-school, and raised Rory on her own. Lorelai Gilmore worked her way up from a maid to the manager of the Independence Inn (oh the name!), and then finally owning her bed and breakfast, The Dragonfly Inn with Sookie St. James (Melissa McCarthy), her best friend and an amazing chef. *Gilmore Girls*'s illustration of Star's Hollow and Hartford, Connecticut resemble the world-building and word pictures of the great writers of the nineteenth-century novel, such as Mary Eleanor Wilkins Freeman, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sarah Orne Jewett, and Elizabeth Stuart Phelps Ward. The timeless values it interrogates coincide with its boundless pop-cultural enthusiasm that embraces everything: "If Elizabeth Barrett Browning were here, she would put her head through a

[841]Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice,* Chapter 8: "All this she must possess," added Darcy, "and to all this she must yet add something more substantial, in the improvement of her mind by extensive reading." The conversation in Chapter 8 works as Austen's deconstruction of the idealized versions of womanhood that were as toxic in her time as the airbrushed models.

[842]For a lovely little article about *Gilmore Girls* and feminism, see Janelle James, "The Hidden Feminism of 'Gilmore Girls'."(*Sweetest Magazine*. (16 Oct. 2014). Web. <http://sweetestmag.com/2014/10/16/gilmore-girls-feminism-2/ > 16 Jan. 2015.).

wall"[843] to "You look like little birds dressed you in the morning"[844] and "My Life with the Banger Sisters,"[845] and those lines come from one character alone.[846] *Gilmore Girls* analysis of class and gender and its love of literary references was what made it perfect for inclusion in the previous versions of my dissertation. Although I must say I am still somewhat disheartened that my chapter analyzing the comparative strategies of *Gilmore Girls* and nineteenth-century fictions' employment of the Revolutionary War stories will always be a few pages in the various versions of the prospectus before the dissertation in your hands, Rory Gilmore's employment of *Moby Dick* for mayhem earns her a place in our final pantheon of heroines.

As "Blame Booze and Melville" illustrates, *Gilmore Girls* proves particularly enriching to nineteenth-century transatlanticists.[847] It is precisely Rory Gilmore's polyphony, her ability to know, understand, and (mis)use

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[843] "Star Crossed Lovers and Other Strangers." Gilmore Girls *Season One*. (Wri. John Stephens and Linda Loiselle Guzik (teleplay) Joan Binder Weiss (story). Dir. Lesli Linka Glatter. (8 Mar. 2001). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2002. DVD.)

[844]My love of *Gilmore* tends to bleed into my speech as well as this dissertation. Sadly, instead of Disney, the compliment ended up being insulting. So you see, children, never try this at home. Here is the actual conversation: **Paris:** [on asking Rory to run for Vice President] Because people think you're nice. You're quiet, you say excuse me, you look like little birds help you get dressed in the morning. People don't fear you.
Rory: Hey, I haven't been dressed by a bird since I was two ["I Can't Get Started." Gilmore Girls *Season Two*. (Wri. Amy Sherman-Palladino and John Stephens. Dir. Amy Sherman-Palladino. (21 May. 2002). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2002. DVD)].

[845]"A Deep Fried Korean Thanksgiving." Gilmore Girls *Season Three*. (Wri. Daniel Palladino. Dir. Kenny Ortega. (26 Nov. 2002). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2003. DVD.)

[846]Paris Gellar is the closest thing that *Gilmore Girls* has to a villain and the embodiment of the "smart girls are mean" stereotype. She starts as Rory Gilmore enemy, becomes her frenemy, and by the end of her *Gilmore Girls*, she and Rory are fast friends and illustrative of different modes of smart, driven womanhood.

[847]"Blame Booze and Melville." Gilmore Girls *Season Five*. (Wri. Amy Sherman-Palladino and Daniel Palladino. Dir. Jamie Babbit. (10 May. 2005). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2005. DVD.)

popular cultures (cinema, television, music, art, and literature) that make her relevant. Well-read women and girls, in the traditional sense, are surprisingly rare on television. More often, geek girl equals science and math: an equation that certainly allows for a redefinition of gender, given the real-life absence of women and girls from math and the sciences. Given the former preeminence of *la liseuese*, *dangereuse* or otherwise, within popular culture, the absence of women and girls who love a good book is striking. Though Rory's dream is to be a journalist like Christiane Amanpour, rather than a secret agent or professor of English, her existence is invaluable, even if howsoever brief in its dissertation inclusion, to discussing television, feminism, and heroick women. Rory Gilmore's heroick nature, therefore, is derived as much from Bel Rowley's journalist exploits as it is from Sydney Bristow's spy-craft.[848] Like Rowley and Lyon, Rory allows for the further enfranchisement of women (and men) into the heroick. Like her fictional cohort in *The Hour*, Rory Gilmore wants to be a journalist. Indeed, it is her disempowering and dispiriting internship that sends her spinning. Rory Gilmore's ability to play by the rules and do whatever is asked of her gets spun on its head and used as a weapon.

After having had a truly hellacious conversation with her mentor (and her boyfriend's father) at her prestigious internship, Rory reacts in a way that is both entirely consistent with her characteristic love of literature and

[848]As the creator of this dissertation, I would like to go on record as saying that I think Bel and Rory would be best friends and I hereby claim the Rowley/Rory analysis for my next season of "Kicking Ass is Comfort Food: Television and Feminism."

disconnected from her heretofore "good girl" persona.[849] Though *Gilmore Girls* makes Mitchum Huntzenberger (Gregg Henry) seem like a schmo for his mis-reading of Rory's worth, she suffers her Austenesque abasement without her usual aplomb, but with a decidedly literary twist.[850] She informs her beaux and son of her Logan Huntzenberger (played by our friend from *The Good Wife*, Matt Czuchry):"You know the beginning of *Moby-Dick*, when the narrator says that when he finds himself growing grim about the mouth and wanted to knock people's hats off, he takes to the sea."[851] He affirms, "Yeah." She replies, "Well I feel like knocking people's hats off."[852] They continue:

> **Logan:** So I guess we got to take to the sea.
> **Rory** [nodding, looks around]:That one looks good.
> **Logan:** Yeah.
> **Rory:** Nice and seaworthy.
> **Logan:** Not ours to take.
> **Rory** [shrugs]:That ever stopped you before? [853]

I like to think Herman Melville, or at least those who have elevated him to literary god status, would be amused by Rory Gilmore's turn to grand-theft

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[849]I know, watchers of *Gilmore,* I know, but I'm eliding the "Say Goodbye to Daisy Miller" episode for purposes of time and argument. It is, of course, representative of what she does when she loses control and her employment of nineteenth-literary classics as weapons of rebellion. Also, like the yacht stealing, the season also has the catacombs in Rome, which is a covert allusion to *Daisy Miller* and all those things good American girls shouldn't do when they're abroad or they'll end up dead.

[850]"Blame Booze and Melville." Gilmore Girls *Season Five*. (Wri. Amy Sherman-Palladino and Daniel Palladino. Dir. Jamie Babbit. (10 May. 2005). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2005. DVD.)

[851]"Blame Booze and Melville." Gilmore Girls *Season Five*. (Wri. Amy Sherman-Palladino and Daniel Palladino. Dir. Jamie Babbit. (10 May. 2005). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2005. DVD.)

[852]"Blame Booze and Melville." Gilmore Girls *Season Five*. (Wri. Amy Sherman-Palladino and Daniel Palladino. Dir. Jamie Babbit. (10 May. 2005). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2005. DVD.)

[853]"Blame Booze and Melville." Gilmore Girls *Season Five*. (Wri. Amy Sherman-Palladino and Daniel Palladino. Dir. Jamie Babbit. (10 May. 2005). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2005. DVD.)

seaworthy vessel. We have all wanted to knock the hats of those who devalued our work and writing and worth, but how few of us have the pluck and determination to translate that disappointment into a felony? At most, you might get a book deal and a healthy sideline as expert witness about what makes Herman Melville a literary god.[854]

Like any good nineteenth-century textual heroine, Rory gets punished. No, she does not end up face down in a pond somewhere (that would be Zenobia in *Blithedale Romance)* or dying of consumption (well, Keats did, so I guess we have gender parity). Instead, she drops out of Yale, fights with the most important woman in her life (her mom), and is only saved from a hefty prison sentence through the intervention of her grandparents.

Rory Gilmore is the closest this dissertation gets to sitcoms, and *Gilmore* tends to be seen more as a dramedy. Other than my personal adoration of *Gilmore*, Rory Gilmore is important for two reasons: books and action. Like the Doctor or Sydney Bristow, Rory wields fiction, or in this instance misuses literature, to remake herself. Her adventure in yacht-stealing serves as the closest that Rory Gilmore comes to action heroine status, and even then, it is not as if the yacht was manned by evil drug runners or Rory was rescuing captive damozels. Now, the question we have before us: is Rory Gilmore heroick? If so, what makes her heroick? Forget feminist for a second. Defining

[854]Well, unless you are Ron Howard and you make a movie starring Ben Whishaw as Herman Melville and adapted from the non-fiction book *In the Heart of the Sea* about the true story behind *Moby Dick*, but that would be another story all together. See, dissertation humor. We spare no pains at our final hour.

feminism, as we well know from all the previous attempts by others throughout our dissertation, can be a dangerous and unsavory business.

Here, take a minute. Scrawl your thoughts along the side of the page. Now, prepare yourself. Give me your best Peggy Olson or Don Draper-style elevator pitch.

Right then, Here is why I would argue that Rory Gilmore is heroick, and no, it is not for her thievery of maritime vessels or feminist retaking of Melville. Rory Gilmore empowers us to expand our environs and enfranchise more heroines into our realm. If Freddie Lyon allowed thinking men into our delineation of the heroic, then Rory Gilmore, like Bel Rowley and Lix Storm, enfolds non-traditional action heroines into those women whom we endorse as kickers of arse.

The path Rory treads comes closer to that of a heroine of Austen novel. She may not limn the "girl getting her power story" in a manner similar to Emma Swan, Daenerys Stormborn, or Buffy Summers. Books and Brains and thinking are her chosen artillery; modes and means of warfare that render her more illustrative of Jon Spaihts's ideal heroine. Similarly, her stakes might seem too UPN teenage drama for our usual slate of heroines. So what? What is wrong with UPN teenage dramas? Any heroine is welcome to our party. The world Rory Gilmore saves might be her own, and she may not do so in the same manner that Echo/Caroline, Sydney Bristow, or even Woolf's defeat of the angel. Instead, Rory Gilmore faces the normal moral and societal dilemmas besetting twenty-first century young women within an environment (Star's Hollow, CT)

that is at once idyllic, quirky, the epitome of Victorian realism, and relatable to young women (and men) worldwide.[855] Like Alicia Florrick, Laura Roslin, Buffy Summers, Sydney Bristow, and Echo, Rory Gilmore embodies progress (she survives adultery without having to hurl herself under a train) and tradition, particularly literary (e.g., "Say Goodbye to Daisy Miller) of young women who make their way in a world and learn lessons that make them better people. And that is why Rory Gilmore and women (and men) like her are the epitome of the final shot of our conclusion. Roll credits.

Act V: This is Mutiny. I Like to Think of It as Graduation[856]

The prevailing fetishizing for girls who slaughter armies above their more quotidian sisters is as problematic as it is poisonous. Sydney Bristow may have averted nuclear annihilation while "supposedly working on her dissertation," but one assumes, given what else *Alias* has shown about Sydney Bristow's experience in graduate school, that even she did indeed have to defend her dissertation, and she did so like the rest of us. Her dissertation defense resembled the more or less evil academic drama that besets all of us who write our dissertations (or theses if we are being very British). Sydney Bristow could not break out her super-secret "Project Christmas baby" spy-skillz to persuade

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[855]It is always striking to me how many young women from all over the world that I meet (or whom I read about) who love *Gilmore Girls*, including my dear friend Klara who watched *Gilmore Girls* with her mother in the Czech Republic.

[856] "Graduation Day: Part 1." Buffy the Vampire *Season Three*.(Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (18 May. 1999). 20th Century Fox Television, 1999. DVD.) It seemed somehow fitting in a dissertation devoted to *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* to end with Buffy's own graduation. The conversation that forms our heading comes when Buffy declares her independence both from her new Watcher (**Wesley:** "This is mutiny) and the Watcher's Council.

her committee to pass her paper and grant her the doctorate from UCLA. She might be able to waterboard and bone-break nefarious henchman into submission, but even she cannot utilize violence to solve her problems or charitably explain to her dissertation director that the reason that chapter was a little later than he (or she) would like it was because she was off hunting suitcase nukes in Kashmir with her parents and averting an apocalypse.

No matter if they be Elizabeth Bennet or Sydney Bristow, all heroines, like their male counterparts, follow a set of immutable laws. Sometimes they kick the "in" off the "evitable" and rewrite their own destinies. Sometimes they get to defy rules and make their own fates simply by getting their skirt five-inches deep in mud on the way to visit a sick sister. In any case, the trick is learning to navigate the system and to engage in some covert ops of your own.

My project, should you choose to accept it, was, is, and will be to enfranchise heroines and heroes and to ensure the television takes its deserved place as heiress to the novel. For far too long, Film and Theatre have tyrannized and their reign deserves to be curtailed. We would not have them cast into the abasement that popular television has too long been esteemed, but we demand an equal share of the estate. If Shakespeare's plays can share the same space as bear-baiting pits and still be seen as the epitome of high-culture, then the noisome debates about "prestige television" being the only television worthy of study deserve to die a bloody and swift demise. Likewise, academic criticism is doomed to defeat and death if it stays locked in up ivory towers and will not let down its hair and escape out into the world. In its current state, it becomes a

self-perpetuating myth. My use of the vernacular, my engagement with popular cultural-critical voices, such as Maureen Ryan, and my admixture of sober fictions, like Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* with *Battlestar Galactica* all combine to render me another Captain Picard: I make it so.

Some girls get dragons; some girls get superpowers; some girls get a weapon (e.g., Witchblade) imbued with the power of their feminist foremothers; some girls survive a cheating slut of a husband and remake themselves into an arse-kicking lawyer; some girls get locked up in an attick and have to fight their way out; some girls get a writing desk and a creaky door that warns them when someone is coming; some girls get five hundred pounds per annum and buy a room of their own; some girls kill Angels; and some girls wield the mighty power of the library books. Do not underestimate our worth. Don't you dare undervalue or undermine our power. We see the plot we were placed in, even when it denigrates our self-worth, and we write and we fight. We listen to our mothers and fathers: Jane Espenson or Jane Austen or Joss Whedon or Ronald D. Moore.

We call ourselves—I name myself—Bel Rowley or Catherine Morland or Buffy Summers or Alicia Florrick or Daenerys Stormborn or Echo or Freddie Lyon or Laura Bristow. Trust me, I'm the Doctor; and while you're at it, "Say Goodbye To Daisy Miller."

It is true that I did not write this dissertation with a weapon that I Buffylike King-Arthured out of a stone, but inheriting my prose-persona from my mothers and fathers disempowers me not in the slightest. I may not be

wielding Rebecca West's pen, but you can be demned sure and certain, that I am using Q's laptop, drinking a nice cup of earl grey tea, sitting in a room of my own, and I am saving the World before Bedtime. Because, Kicking Ass is Comfort Food, no matter how you do it.

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Doctor Who

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"Vows." Dollhouse *Season Two*. Wri. Joss Whedon. Dir. Joss Whedon. (25 Sep. 2009). 20th Century Fox Television, 2010. DVD.

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"Baelor." Game of Thrones *Season One*. Wri. David Benioff & D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (12 Jun. 2012). Home Box Office Television,2011. DVD.

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"The Children." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Alex Graves. (15 Jun. 2014). Home Box Office Television. 2014. DVD.

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"Fire and Blood" Game of Thrones *Season One*. (Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (19 Jun. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.

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"The Kingsroad." Game of Thrones *Season One*. Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Tim Van Patten. (24 Apr. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.

"Kissed by Fire." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. Wri. Bryan Cogman Dir. Alex Graves. (28 Apr. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.

"A Man Without Honor." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (13 May. 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2010. DVD.

"Mhysa." Game of Thrones *Season Three.* Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Nutter. (9 Jun. 2013). Home Box Office Television, 2013. DVD.

"Oathkeeper." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. Wri. Bryan Cogman. Dir. Michelle MacLaren. (27 Apr. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014 . DVD.

"The Old Gods and the New." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. Wri. Vanessa Taylor. Dir. David Nutter. (6 May. 2012). Home Box Office Television, 2012. DVD.

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"Valar Morghulis." Game of Thrones *Season Two*. Wri. David Benioff and D. B. Weiss. Dir. Alan Taylor. (3 Jun. 2012). Home Box Office Television ,2012. DVD.

"Walk of Punishment." Game of Thrones *Season Three*. Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. David Benioff. (14 Apr. 2013). Home Box Office Television,2013. DVD.

"The Watchers on the Wall." Game of Thrones *Season Four*. Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Neil Marshall. (8 Jun. 2014). Home Box Office Television, 2014. DVD.

"Winter is Coming." Game of Thrones *Season One.* Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Tim Van Patten. (17 Apr. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.

"You Win or You Die." Game of Thrones *Season One*. Wri. David Benioff and D.B. Weiss. Dir. Daniel Minahan. (29 May. 2011). Home Box Office Television, 2011. DVD.

Gilmore Girls

"Blame Booze and Melville." Gilmore Girls *Season Five*. Wri Amy Sherman-Palladino and Daniel Palladino. Dir. Jamie Babbit. (10 May. 2005). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2005. DVD.

"A Deep Fried Korean Thanksgiving." Gilmore Girls *Season Three*. Wri. Daniel Palladino. Dir. Kenny Ortega. (26 Nov. 2002). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2003. DVD.

"I Can't Get Started." Gilmore Girls *Season Two*. Wri. Amy Sherman-Palladino and John Stephens . Dir. Amy Sherman-Palladino. (21 May. 2002) Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2002. DVD.

"Star Crossed Lovers and Other Strangers." Gilmore Girls *Season One*. Wri. John Stephens and Linda Loiselle Guzik (teleplay); Joan Binder Weiss (story). Dir. Lesli Linka Glatter. (8 Mar. 2001). Dorothy Parker Drank Here, 2002. DVD.

The Good Wife

"All Tapped Out." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Julia Wolfe and Matthew Montoya. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (20 Apr. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.

"Another Ham Sandwich." The Good Wife *Season Three*. Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Frederick E.O. Toye. (29 Jan. 2012). CBS Productions, 2012. DVD.

"The Art of War." The Good Wife *Season Four*. Wri. Robert King and Michelle King and Ted Humphrey. Dir. Josh Charles. (4 Nov. 2012). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.

"The Bit Bucket." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Ted Humphrey and Robert King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (6 Oct. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.

"Closing Arguments." The Good Wife *Season Two*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Corinne Brinkerhoff (story). Dir. Robert King. (17 May. 2011). CBS, 2011. DVD.

"Death of a Client." The Good Wife *Season Four*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Robert King. (24 Mar. 2013). CBS Productions,2013. DVD.

"The Decision Tree." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (1 Dec. 2013). CBS Productions,2014. DVD.

"Dramatics, Your Honor." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (23 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions,2014. DVD.

"A Few Words." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez .(16 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.

"Foreign Affairs." The Good Wife *Season Two*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Meredith Averill (story). Dir. Frederick E.O. Toye. (12 Apr. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.

"Getting Off." The Good Wife *Season Two*. Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Roxann Dawson (10 May. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.

"Goliath and David." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Luke Schelhaas. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (5 Jan. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.

"Hitting the Fan". The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. James Whitmore, Jr. (27 Oct. 2013) CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.

"In Sickness." The Good Wife *Season Two*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Steve Lichtman (story). Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (3 May. 2011). CBS Productions, 2011. DVD.

"Killer Song." The Good Wife *Season Two*. Wri. Karen Hall Dir. James Whitmore Jr. (29 Mar. 2011). CBS Productions,2011. DVD.

"The Last Call." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King. Dir. Jim McKay. (30 Mar. 2014). CBS Productions,2014. DVD.

"Marthas and Caitlins." The Good Wife *Season Three*. Wri. Ted Humphrey. Dir. Félix Enríquez Alcalá. (23 Oct. 2011). CBS Productions,2012. DVD.

"A Material World." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Craig Turk. Dir. Griffin Dunne. (13 Apr. 2014). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.

"The Next Day." The Good Wife *Season Five*. Wri. Leonard Dick. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (3 Nov. 2013). CBS Productions, 2014. DVD.

"A New Day." The Good Wife *Season Three*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Meredith Averill (story). Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (25 Sept. 2011). CBS Productions,2012. DVD.

"Parenting Made Easy." The Good Wife *Season Three*. Wri. Michelle King and Robert King (teleplay); Courtney Kemp Agboh (story). Dir. Rosemary Rodriguez. (4 Dec. 2011). CBS Productions, 2012. DVD.

"Pilot." The Good Wife *Season One*. Wri. Dir. Robert King and Michelle King. Charles McDougall. (22 Sep. 2009). CBS Productions, 2010. DVD.

"Rape: A Modern Perspective." The Good Wife *Season Four*. Wri. J. C. Nolan. Dir. Brooke Kennedy. (4 Apr. 2013). CBS Productions,2013.DVD.

"The Seven Day Rule." The Good Wife *Season Four*. Wri. Keith Eisner. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (27 Jan. 2013). CBS Productions, 2013. DVD.

"Stripped." The Good Wife *Season One*. Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Charles McDougall. (29 Sept. 2009). CBS Productions,2010. DVD.

"VIP Treatment." The Good Wife *Season Two*. Wri. Robert King and Michelle King. Dir. Michael Zinberg. (26 Oct. 2010). CBS Productions,2011. DVD.

"Wrongful Termination." The Good Wife *Season Two*. Wri. Ted Humphrey. Dir. Phil Abraham. (5 Apr. 2011). CBS Productions,2011. DVD.

The Hour

"Episode Five." The Hour *Series One*. Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (16 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.

"Episode Five." The Hour *Series Two*. Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Jamie Payne. (12 December 2012). BBC,2013. DVD.

"Episode Four." The Hour *Series One*. Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Harry Bradbeer. (9 Aug. 2011). BBC, 2012. DVD.

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"Episode One." The Hour *Series One*. Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Coky Giedroyc. (19 Jul. 2011). BBC, 2011. DVD.

"Episode One." The Hour *Series Two*. Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (28 Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.

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"Episode Two." The Hour *Series Two*. Wri. Abi Morgan. Dir. Sandra Goldbacher. (21. Nov. 2012). BBC, 2013. DVD.

Once Upon A Time

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"Broken." Once Upon a Time *Season Two*. Wri. Edward Kitsis & Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker. (30 Sep. 2012). ABC Studios, 2013. DVD.

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"Desperate Souls" Once Upon a Time *Season One*. Wri. Jane Espenson. Dir. Michael Waxman. (8 Jan. 2012). ABC Studios, 2013. DVD.

"Going Home." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. Wri. Edward Kitsis & Adam Horowitz. Dir. Ralph Hemecker (15 Dec. 2013). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.

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"Kansas." Once Upon a Time *Season Three*. Wri. Andrew Chambliss and Kalinda Vazquez. Dir. Gwyneth Horder-Payton. (4 May. 2014). ABC Studios, 2014. DVD.

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"A Land Without Magic." Once Upon A Time *Season One*. Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Dean White. (13 May. 2012). ABC Studio, 2012. DVD.

"Pilot." Once Upon a Time *Season One*. Wri. Edward Kitsis and Adam Horowitz. Dir. Mark Mylod. (23 Oct. 2011). ABC Studios, 2012. DVD.

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