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**Television Intertextuality After
Buffy: Intertextuality of Casting
and Constitutive Intertextuality**

[1] *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003) in particular, and the film, television, and webcast work of Joss Whedon in general, has had profound influence upon viewers, critics, and creative professionals. While there has been much excellent and in-depth treatment of the texts of Joss Whedon and their conditions of production, this paper seeks to explore several avenues along which *Buffy* (primarily *Buffy*, though other Whedon texts are considered as well) has exerted unique and important impact upon the television medium more broadly, introducing or highlighting certain changes that have been directly or indirectly mimicked by other shows. As such, these avenues also serve as something of an index of Whedon's artistic influence, beyond considerations of viewership numbers, funding, or the like. By close analysis of the *Buffy* (and Whedon) text in close formal comparison with other shows, the persistent intertextual influence of the former is borne out in an unmistakable way.

[2] The avenues of influence flowing from *Buffy* are here analyzed primarily under the rubric of intertextuality, and two novel forms of intertextuality germane to the study of Whedon's influence are proposed. Intertextuality, as expressed by Roland Barthes, Julia Kristeva, and others, refers to the interpenetration and mutual association between texts in terms of signifiers, motifs, or symbols which cross between them. As such, intertextuality creates a larger *intertext* that draws on and draws together 'discrete' texts. Such a move is in no way foreign to scholarship in this area that has analytically embraced the concepts of the "Buffyverse" (which can include the film, the seven TV seasons, the comics, some novels, etc.) and the "Whedonverse" (which is generally understood to mean the sum total of Whedon's collaborative artistic production in all its media and forms, including television, film, comic books, webcast). And, significantly, these concepts are already at least doubly intertextual since they highlight crossovers between media and series, but also draw in the particular term

“Verse” used in *Firefly* (2002) to refer to the world or galaxy of the show (which may have first emerged in fans' intertextual readings in any event). Here I also propose the concepts of *intertextuality of casting* and of *constitutive intertextuality* to enable an analysis of the extended televisual (and indeed multimedia) influence of *Buffy* and the Whedonverse.

[3] Intertextuality of casting refers to the often intentional crossover of actors and actresses between and among different shows, and the way in which bringing along recognizable faces and styles serves to cross-pollinate televisual texts and create a larger televisual intertext. The argument here is not simply that it is pleasurable to chart the careers and trajectories of artists (though it may be!), but that this casting serves in important ways to shape the “Verses” of the artworks at hand and that the conscious choice of such casting offers an artistic tool in creating a televisual text (while the unconscious and conscious association of actors and styles across discrete texts creates a larger field well-recognized by viewers). Also, this crossover and cross-pollination may be particularly pronounced among the Whedon works and a set of other programs that reference them.

[4] Two strong general examples, only one of them rooted in the Whedonverse, serve to demonstrate this concept. First, in the very first episode of the television show *Stargate SG-1* (1997-2007; itself the spinoff from a popular film *Stargate* [1994]), Captain Carter, played by Amanda Tapping, says that “it took us fifteen years and three supercomputers to MacGyver a system for the gate on Earth” (“Children of the Gods,” 1.01). Though readily recognizable in popular culture parlance, this reference is particularly apropos here since Tapping's co-star, playing Colonel Jack O'Neill, is Richard Dean Anderson, who had iconically portrayed MacGyver in the show of the same name (now a movie again as well, via the spoof *MacGruber*).

[5] Second, the Halloween episode of the ABC show *Castle* (2009-2013). *Castle* stars Nathan Fillion, who had appeared in both *Buffy* and *Firefly* (and indeed some viewers have reported that they had trouble accepting Mal in *Firefly* due to their lasting recoil from the evil Caleb in *Buffy*). The Halloween episode featured Fillion dressed up in his costume from *Firefly* (“Vampire Weekend,” 2.06). When asked by his daughter Alexis what he is supposed to be, Rick Castle responds that he is a “space cowboy”

(in reference to the genre-blending western and sci fi aspects of *Firefly*). Alexis responds that "there are no cows in space" (perhaps one might recall River Tam's claim that cows forgot how to be cows in space because they couldn't see the sky in the *Firefly* episode "Safe," 1.5) and also asks her father whether he "didn't dress up in that costume five years ago" (the approximate time frame for *Firefly* in reference to the *Castle* episode). While I don't argue that this phenomenon of intertextuality of casting is unique to the Whedonverse, as the example from *Stargate* shows, it does seem to be used and figured in particular ways around *Buffy* and the Whedon shows, and they provide a strong springboard for considering it.

[6] Constitutive intertextuality refers to a practice in which major structural elements or images of one show, in this case *Buffy*, are built into the dramatic world or discourse of another show. The example of this phenomenon to be taken up here is the program *Eureka*, which contains so many meticulous references to and borrowings from *Buffy* that the latter show can be said to be indispensable to the understanding or interpretation of the former one. Elements of the story line and visual economy of *Buffy* also seem to be mirrored in a more than coincidental way in a number of recent shows. We can see the strong borrowing of stories, images, and even music between television shows. *Buffy* and *Angel* influence shows like *Moonlight* (2007-08), *New Amsterdam* (2008), and *Torchwood* (2006-11), and comparatively analyzing them reveals pointed aspects of this intertextuality.

Intertextuality

[7] Theories of intertextuality arose in literature analysis and criticism. They were initially centered explicitly on written texts (and their relationships to spoken and written language), though they did consider a range of types of writing. In Julia Kristeva, who introduced the term in, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," and in Roland Barthes, who used related terms like *cryptographie* (cryptography, the cryptogram) in his studies of language and text, the focus initially was quite literally on written texts. They were concerned with the relationship of language to writing and skeptical of a certain view of creativity associated with the worship of the solitary genius. While neither downplayed the importance of style in different modes of

writing, both emphasized how the shared codes of language and deep accumulation of associated meanings act to produce a field of relations in which the specific intention of the author is but one among several significations. It is worth considering some important aspects of these initial and pivotal formations of intertextuality in terms of how they relate to our considerations here.

Julia Kristeva

[8] For Kristeva, following methodological and theoretical insights from Bakhtin, a dialogic space is opened up in spatializing the text in terms of two dimensions of relationship, horizontal (subject-addressee) and vertical (text-context). In Bakhtin these axes are *dialogue* and *ambivalence*, but they are not distinguished from one another. Kristeva refers to this coinciding of the axes as a fundamental insight contributed by Bakhtin that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*.”ⁱ The phenomenological concept of intersubjectivity is updated and modified to accommodate the study of the wide and interrelated field of literature, and indeed to refer to a special, if always deflected, form of intersubjectivity that is possible only through literature. Here Kristeva gives voice to a methodological turn, recognizing the coincidence of the two axes, which describes a unique field of inquiry: the active dialogue and interaction *between texts*. As over against the exegesis of the particular intent and creative originality of an individual author, this approach shifts toward looking at the situation of the writer and the reader within language, and to the multiple echoes between texts and genres. Both the writer and the reader inhabit language that they do not create themselves or mark exclusively with their own stamp--as it is a set of codes, changing over time, that they *inherit* and take up as the price of communication and sociality. As Kristeva says, this dialogism replaces the “person-subject of writing” with the “ambivalence of writing” (39).

[9] A few points bear noting. One is that the term ambivalence here does refer to its literal denotation/etymology in terms of two (or more) faces or valences. It is on this basis that she says that poetic language is read as

at least double. Every word can be read in terms of at least two or more meanings or significations, especially when posed in relation or comparison to another text, as "each word (text) is an intersection of words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read" (37). Rather than seeing the word as an individual, discrete, stable unit, she poses it as an open site of relation through which the social and dialogic aspects of language manifest multiple echoes and connections: indeed, these echoes and connections are not just curiosities or incidents of style but, on this view, the crucial aspect of language and communication. In a passage that might well capture Joss Whedon's attention, given his fascination with the *tabula rasa*, Kristeva describes how poetic language is at least double (*one-other* not *signifier-signified*) since "poetic language functions as a *tabular model*, where each 'unit' (this word can no longer be used without quotation marks, since each unit is double) acts as a multi-determined *peak*" (40). What would before have been seen as individual words carefully chosen in the craft of the author to convey a certain meaning are here seen instead as relays to the entire tradition of writing and indeed to the bond which writers and readers share with society more broadly in their use of language.

[10] A last important aspect of Kristeva's approach: while she insists on the dialogic character of language in following Bakhtin, and she describes how texts absorb and modify one another in the polysemic chains of relation between them, she nonetheless does not purely and simply sweep away or relativize the role of the writer's craft. Rather, she describes two differing approaches to writing that serve either to emphasize or to stifle the dialogic nature of language. Again following Bakhtin, she describes a "monological novel," which attempts to stifle the dialogic or Menippian nature of language and a "polyphonic novel," which attempts to absorb and reflect the carnivalesque (the carnival is the ultimate expression of the dialogic form for Bakhtin) (39-40). This distinction, which Bakhtin makes between Tolstoy on the one hand and Rabelais, Swift, and Dostoevsky on the other, is extended by Kristeva to include Joyce, Proust, and Kafka as exemplars of the polyphonic novel. This specific consideration is enough to indicate that the point of Kristeva's theory of intertextuality is not to relativize style and creativity altogether, but to change the ways in which we study and understand them in terms of a different type of writerly craft that is more

dialogical in its conscious absorption of written and spoken traditions (acknowledging that the meaning of the work will be heavily influenced and variable according to these traditions and to the specific purviews brought by different readers).

[11] Such a distinction is very useful here, where we initially face the uncomfortable tension between the “Joss Whedon as unique genius” and “inescapable intertextuality dooming all creativity” poles. On this account of intertextuality, Joss Whedon, as well as his carnival of collaborators, is effective artistically to a large extent because he instantiates a polyphonic and dialogic craft. He would be the first to acknowledge the extensive dialogic fabric of utterances, symbols, and stories that he draws upon. Indeed, since he is what David Lavery calls a “film studies auteur,” this might be the best way of characterizing his approach: unique in terms of his careful study, extensive knowledge, and creative borrowing from a number of other film, TV, literature, and popular culture texts. The same could likely be said of the unique language and dialogue often attributed to Whedon. While there are some distinct Whedon turns of phrase, there are also a number of other phrases that he and his crew have been particularly astute about picking up from gossip and popular culture and placing in scripts (contributing to a notion of intertextuality or open field between the Whedonverse and the “real world”). Even where there are distinct and memorable Whedon turns of phrase, he did not invent these words or phrases *ex nihilo*, but instead drew upon the reservoir of language described by Kristeva that as a writer and speaking subject he inherited (and that he must at some level be bound to as the price of being understood and making art).

Roland Barthes

[12] In Roland Barthes' closely related theorization of intertextuality, many of the same themes are sounded, while he also devotes further attention to developing others with a slightly different emphasis or direction than Kristeva (which would of course be consonant with the underpinnings of both their theories).ii Barthes' notions, too, are originally rooted in the study of literature and written texts, as seen in, for instance, his development of the concept of *l'écriture* (writing) and in his focus on texts and semiology.

Like Kristeva, he wished to emphasize the social and network aspects of language that act severely to constrain the unique genius and individuality of a given author. This view would of course be taken to its best-known point in his *The Death of the Author* of 1967. However, Barthes had already been working with aspects of this theory since well before that. In 1953's *Writing Degree Zero* (*Le degré zero de l'écriture*), he had described how the shared and social aspects of language acted to constrain the author, even as they opened up the possibility for any writing and communication in the first place. Also drawing on the spatialization of axes to describe these phenomena, Barthes writes that:

The horizon of language and the verticality of style therefore outline a nature for the writer, for she chooses neither one nor the other. Language functions as a negativity, the initial limit of the possible, style is a Necessity which ties the humor of the writer to language. There, she finds the familiarity of History, here, that of her own past. Both cases concern a nature, that is to say a familiar gesture, where the energy is only of the operative order, employed here to enumerate, there to transform, but never to judge or to signify a choice.ⁱⁱⁱ

Functioning within the space defined by the axes of language (horizontal) and style (vertical), Barthes emphasizes the importance of writing (*l'écriture*), in which authors are able to make choices of craft that do serve to leave their own imprint within the larger tide of constraint seen in language and style. This, in some ways, would parallel the polyphonic as seen in Bakhtin/Kristeva. While Barthes has sometimes been too enthusiastically associated with his own term "the death of the author," it is important in this respect that he did not proclaim the death of the writer. If anything, Barthes wished to expand the concept of the writer and the writerly beyond the staid confines that had traditionally grown around the notion of the author and the associated cult of individual genius. His point was not that any writer was interchangeable with any other—indeed, this would go against the careful characterization in terms of language, style, and writing. Nor did he mean that craft and art in writing play no role; rather, he wished to shift the emphasis to the kinds of writing (and reading inherent in it) that can be practiced.

[13] Barthes' primary point of departure, one also used and elaborated in both Bakhtin and Kristeva, is that language is a *social* institution which by necessity requires willful subjection to a pre-existing and constantly modifying field. In order to communicate, the subject must accept to some extent the language into which they are "born" (not always literally) and which they wish to use to speak or write. Thus, despite creativity and art, writers do not choose or create their own language, even if they expand it or sound it in their own ways; they must always proceed from a shared background that they inherit. However, this characterization does not doom or relativize all writing. Rather, Barthes recasts writing as a process of intricate *reading*. According to him, each writer performs a reading of the tradition and background of her or his language that shows a particular take on and interpretation of this inheritance—and herein lies the creativity in writing.

[14] Barthes' point, one also consonant with Kristeva and with Whedon, is that the writerly function is one that is in fact carried out as much, or more, by the reader as it is by the "author." Readers bring their own language and style to the text, and they recognize particular references and influences, including ones never intended or foreseen by the author. Therefore, Barthes is more interested in styles of composition that acknowledge and open onto this type of "writerly" activity by the reader, and he is interested in shifting the emphasis of the "meaning" and import of a text into that realm (from that of the definitive and biographical interpretation in terms of an author).

[15] It can be argued that Whedon's style, inasmuch as we abuse the author function in naming it such and subsuming the creative work of a number of collaborators under his name, consists to a significant extent in practicing this type of writerly relation to the text. Although Whedon will sometimes speak in terms of specific and delineated interpretations of his texts, the way in which he builds in layers of references to literature, to filmic works, and to spoken language sets out a field (an intertextual field) in which consumers of his texts will perform their own writerly functions in disentangling them. (Barthes makes a distinction between disentangling and deciphering). Though each viewer may note the reference to "Death of a Salesman" in the *Buffy* episode "Restless" for instance (4.22), the particular

associations, and thus larger text, will differ with each viewer according to the particular context in which the viewer encountered the Arthur Miller play and the particular associations that the viewer has with it. Much of Whedon's art seems to reside in his ability to compose with this type of operation in mind.

Joss Whedon, Television, and Intertextuality

[16] What do these considerations have to do with Joss Whedon and intertextuality? For one thing, though Kristeva and Barthes both started off by developing and elucidating this theory in terms of written texts and especially the novel, it is clear that neither of them intended it to be limited strictly to the written word. Barthes' essay on "The Face of Garbo" indicates that he was already strikingly close to developing a concept like intertextuality of casting.^{iv} His series of essays collected as *Mythologies* also shows that he entertained no clear distinction between the realms of written text, visual symbol, food, and filmic production. Kristeva's interest in the symbolic order would also attest to a theoretical disposition encompassing more than the written text alone.

[17] A few aspects of these theories of intertextuality may be emphasized in terms of our considerations here. The intertext is a condition or methodological field as opposed to a particular interpretation or approach. As such, it is a plane that cuts across all literature and all media, meaning that shared codes and stylistic references can be found between widely heterogeneous texts, regardless of intention of the author. However, beyond this condition and in keeping with it, Kristeva and Barthes both refer to a type of artistic or compositional practice that is built on and open to this multiple determination and plurality of influences. It is this type of practice that they associate with Rabelais, Joyce, and Proust (Barthes said that it was through his writing that Proust was able to make his life into a text) and that here proves useful in analyzing the particular style in and around Whedon.

[18] Whedon is known for his blending or internal conceptual transformation of genres (and indeed genre is a central concern for Bakhtin, and is identified by Kristeva as a key strong aspect of intertextuality (which is an "all-inclusive genre put together as a pavement of citations" [53]), as well as for his meticulous "quoting," either explicitly or implicitly, of myriad

other texts including books, plays, films, TV shows, opera, ballet, and distinctive styles. Similar observations have been made about *The Simpsons* and the films of Quentin Tarantino (Editors' note: See, e.g., Jonathan Gray's *Watching with The Simpsons: Television, Parody, and Intertextuality*). If we may speak of polyphonic television (or film), to parallel the polyphonic novel of Bakhtin and Kristeva, then these would be examples. They also show that Whedon is not the only practitioner of such a compositional style while at the same time indicating important particularities of the ways in which he works.

[19] Another key aspect of these considerations is the tremendous influence of *Buffy*, both in terms of unconscious mimicking of style and direct references in other shows. Just as Whedon's polyphonic compositional style draws upon a vast texture of influences, his work, especially *Buffy* but of course all of his work in varying ways, has become an important textual marker itself. One of the ways in which this effect is manifested is the casting of recognizable *Buffy* actors in other shows in a way that echoes the style or ethos of the Buffyverse. The heavy influence of *Buffy* on later television is also to be found in myriad borrowings of image, story, verbal style, and characterization.

[20] Television provides a particularly polyphonic field for the study of intertextuality. To begin with, TV is predicated on, or at least makes use of, a written script, which places it in the lineage of written textual studies—and indeed a number of TV productions are the adaptations of written stories and novels. Building on that, as an audio-visual medium, TV has an ongoing fascination with spoken usage, slang, style, and discourse. This fascination is not only about the extension of writing styles, but specifically about figuring modes of spoken expression (an aspect readily recognizable to viewers (listeners) of Whedon programs) and fashions of hair, dress, and body type. In addition, as a type of *gesamtkunstwerk*, or “total work of art” like opera before it, television integrates several media or forms of artistic expression together, multiplying the capacity for intertextual reference and interaction. Television has the capacity intertextually to resonate with written texts, verbal styles, music, sound effects, images, costumes, shot styles, etc. Indeed, television has been treated as a particularly vibrant site for considerations about intertextuality.

Intertextuality of Casting

[21] Following the careers of actors and noticing the types of characters and moods they evoke is part of the pleasure and intrigue of television viewing (vastly augmented through IMDB).^v But, doing so also entails an intertextual frame of reference in which different television shows (and indeed other media) are seen to be multiply associated with one another through linkages of actors. Explicit visual or verbal references to other shows combined with an actor link, as in the examples in the introduction, are a strong example of this. It is also the case that, even without being explicitly marked in dialogue, costume, or style, the presence of actors well-known for other roles brings with it notes and flavors of the prior roles that add texture to the new scenario, at least in part. An example of this from the Buffyverse is the casting of John Ritter in the *Buffy* episode "Ted" (2.11), which brings the recognizable ethos of Ritter, from *Three's Company* (1976-84) to *Hooperman* (1987-89), into the Buffy fold. Indeed the episode is frequently referred to by *Buffy* fans as "the John Ritter episode."^{vi}

[22] Although perhaps not the object of a sustained study yet, save the two cardinal works by Richard Dyer *Stars* and *Heavenly Bodies* which focused on the star phenomenon and the star image, the ineluctably intertextual dimensions of casting have been noted by scholars.^{vii} Indeed, in a comparison of the exchange of visual vocabulary and ethos between media, what could be more recognizable than the faces and personae of actors? In John Fiske's study *Television Culture*, he observes early on that, "The actors and actresses who are cast to play . . . roles are real people whose appearance is already encoded by our social codes. But they are equally media people, who exist for the viewer intertextually, and whose meanings are also intertextual. They bring with them not only residues of the meanings of other roles that they have played, but also their meanings from other texts such as fan magazines, showbiz gossip columns, and television criticism."^{viii} This larger intertextual awareness of actors sets up an extended field of relations between productions and between media. Film and television are often cast with an eye toward bringing the allure and star power of an actress or actor to the production, and press and interviews are frequently made part of this process. It is apropos that Fiske points out that actors bring "residues of the meanings of other roles that they have played."

He describes an important way in which the actors and actresses themselves, and therefore the casting, carry important significations in terms of other roles and other shows. Though he is giving voice to a commonplace practice of viewers of media, he also makes a valuable analytical contribution to the theory of intertextuality and the empirical study of such instances of casting crossover.

[23] Keith A. Reader, in a study on the intertextuality of Renoir, also observes in passing that stars are a natural vehicle for intertextuality. In a discussion of Hollywood cinema, he notes that "stardom provides a good starting point. The very concept of a film *star* is an intertextual one, relying as it does on correspondences of similarity and difference from one film to the next, and sometimes too on supposed resemblances between on- and off-screen personae."ix Reader goes on to cite as examples Henry Fonda's usually heroic signification (inverted in *Once Upon a Time in the West*, 1968), and the on- and off-screen "stormy domestic life" of Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor (figured in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, 1966). Though he passes quickly to considering the intertextuality of directors, his observations on intertextuality and actors are useful, highlighting both the linkages between roles and the associations with off-screen personae.

[24] Intertextuality of casting could be more accurately termed as intertextuality of casting and crew(ing). The crossovers of directors, writers, and special effects or costumes artists can be as being as decisive as the sharing of actors. After all, Keith Reader's article about intertextuality with the line about the star is about directors and Renoir. Two quick examples from the Buffyverse illustrate this point clearly. Joss Whedon frequently has said that he particularly wanted to work with John Vulich for the creation of monsters and their costumes and makeup on *Buffy*, due to Vulich's work on films such as *The Lost Boys* (1987) and *Night of the Living Dead* (1990) and other television shows such as *Babylon 5* (1994-98). Jane Espenson was one of the core *Buffy* writers and producers (indeed she wrote some of the show's most moving and important episodes such as "Band Candy," 3.6, "Gingerbread," 3.11, "Earshot," 3.18, "Pangs," 4.8, "Life Serial," 6.5, and "End of Days," 7.21, among others). She was specifically recruited, it seems, to bring an important new influence to *Battlestar Galactica* (2004-10 (including *Caprica*); Espenson joined the show and its "Verse" in 2007, and

Slayage 10.1 [35], Winter 2013

she has since created the show *Warehouse 13* (2009-11), which has a strong intertextual tie with *Eureka* (2006-2011), which in turn has such a tie with *Buffy.x*

[25] These examples point up another salient aspect of the analysis of intertextuality of cast and crew: by cutting across the individual discrete stories of each particular narration (each show's "Verse" and plot), the social circumstances of the production are in part disclosed by taking account of a particular lineup of artists who worked together during a given duration to make a television episode or film. This production framing cuts against the narrative-only accounting for a text exclusively in internal terms, and opens it up to inquire as to who crafted it, how, and when. It gives some index of the creative resources and personalities involved in a given production and how that production might then relate to other projects on which they have worked.

Buffy Actors and Television Intertextuality

[26] *Buffy* is a TV text of such noteworthy characteristics that several of the actors in it figure as examples of diffractive intertextuality of casting that serve, at least in part, to bring along some of the ethos of *Buffy*. *Veronica Mars* (2004-07) is noteworthy for figuring Alyson Hannigan, Charisma Carpenter, and Joss Whedon himself in guest-starring roles. It is also noteworthy that *Veronica Mars* started in the same UPN night and time slot in the Fall of 2003 following *Buffy's* Spring 2003 conclusion, thus potentially drawing in a portion of the audience already accustomed to watching at that time, and eager for a tonic to the loss of *Buffy*. As another show premised around an intelligent teenage heroine from Southern California who regularly deals with worldly problems well beyond the confines of the high school gates (and indeed thorny problems within them), *Veronica Mars* derives a particular intertextual charge from opening onto the Buffyverse in this way. Rob Thomas' homage to *Buffy* in casting also serves to form an important link, or intertext, between the shows—one strengthened by the reported desire of Joss Whedon and the others to appear on *Veronica Mars*. In an interesting further twist to this line of intertextuality of casting, Jason Dohring, who plays Logan Echolls on *Mars*, will go on to become the old vampire Josef Kostan on *Moonlight* (2007-08).xi

[27] Another major point of reference for intertextuality of casting is James Marsters' showing up on the second season of *Torchwood* (2006-11; Marsters was on in 2008). Anecdotal reports from British viewers indicate that the media presentation and popular gossip about this turn were less in terms of "Marsters joining *Torchwood*," and more in terms of "Spike coming to *Torchwood*," indicating that the intertextual link between the shows did not stop at the producers' creative influence, but was quite actively registered by fans and the viewing public as well. Like the instances from *Veronica Mars*, the casting of Marsters is both a formal homage to the Buffyverse and an intertextual technique for bringing part of the flavor and charge of the Buffyverse onto *Torchwood*.

[28] Indeed, one snarky commentator noted that "*Torchwood* are borrowing everyone's favourite demon. Why don't they borrow some of Buffy's humour, plot and characterisation as well?"^{xii} The same critic refers to a "Dead Ringers spoof (which) accused *Torchwood* of having 'the scrapings off the floor of a *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* script meeting.'" While the author of this review clearly prefers *Buffy* to *Torchwood*, even the cutting commentary serves to indicate the depth of the intertextual crossover, both constitutive and casting, between the programs. Other articles and reviews are more neutral or laudatory of *Torchwood*, but virtually all of the reports announcing Marsters' inclusion on *Torchwood* place significant stake in his recognizable cult status as Spike from the Buffyverse.^{xiii} Thus it does not seem too much of a stretch to see this as an important instance of the way in which casting, the presence of like actors, serves to exchange a vocabulary, mood, or ethos between "distinct" shows. Of course one could watch *Torchwood* or *Veronica Mars* with no knowledge of *Buffy* and enjoy the performances, but those who are familiar with *Buffy* bring a comparative text that inflects their perception and experience of the shows.

[29] Nathan Fillion, briefly considered above in the second example, is another informative instance of intertextuality of casting. He acts in *Buffy*, *Firefly* and its film sequel *Serenity* (2005), and *Dr. Horrible's Sing-Along Blog* (2008), three major pillars of the Whedonverse. While actors frequently reappear across the Whedonverse, Fillion appears in three very characteristic roles. Even though he is only in the final season of *Buffy*, in a role that could perhaps be called minor in terms of screen time and story arc, Fillion is

unforgettable as twisted preacher Caleb, who is an agent of The First Evil. The fact that the character is so depraved, and that Fillion's depiction is so effective, gives Caleb a notable place in the Buffyverse. As noted briefly earlier, some viewers were so affected by the sinister portrayal of this character that they had trouble stomaching the character of Captain Malcom Reynolds in *Firefly*. Mal, too, is a unique, fascinating character who is the protagonist of *Firefly* in that the *Serenity* is his ship and he assembled the crew. Although sometimes prone to unsavory behavior, Mal is no Caleb, and, at least by his own reckoning, is an honorable man. The care he gives to his "Crew" demonstrates a deep love and respect for his chosen family, and he lives by an ethical code. The braggadocio Captain Hammer in *Dr. Horrible* is yet a further turn of the screw: a self-important, narcissistic, and ultimately infantile superhero with a sadistic streak (often taken out on Dr. Horrible). Fillion's Hammer is the source of some of the biggest laughs of the series, as well as of the most tragic turns. His foil to Dr. Horrible is central to the narrative delight and pain of the story arc.

[30] *Castle* made strong visual (costume) and dialogue reference to *Firefly*, and, in the same Halloween episode mentioned earlier, Rick Castle comments that it "looks like Buffy's visiting the Big Apple" when they find a murder victim identified as a vampire staked in a cemetery ("Vampire Weekend," 2.6). The occurrence in the same episode of both these references to other shows Fillion had appeared in invokes some of the feel of those shows. This episode both makes explicit the intertextual links between the three shows and serves to make this episode stand out among *Castle* episodes as one particularly inflected by them.

[31] What to make of these pointed aspects of intertextuality from *Castle*? Many of the viewers of the crime drama were no doubt unaware of the references. Nonetheless the references were not so obtrusive or heavy as to require familiarity with the earlier Whedonverse texts. One can watch the *Castle* episode quite enjoyably, and with no sense of "missing something" even if one has never seen *Firefly* or *Buffy*. For those, however, who have seen those Whedon shows, these densely-articulated references create a significant intertext, blending together at least three shows and playing with the diegetic and non-diegetic time frames of them and the "external world" of their production. As noted in the introduction, Castle's original wearing of

the Captain Mal costume was said to have been five years prior to the Halloween episode, the rough time frame of *Firefly*. In addition, we learn that *Buffy* exists as a television show and popular culture referent in *Castle* through the comment in the cemetery. Conversely, it does not seem that *Firefly* exists as a show within the *Castle* universe. Instead the writers and costumers play on the presence of Nathan Fillion himself and draw the referent to the space western into the *Castle* fold through the masquerade of Halloween. That Nathan Fillion playing Castle makes references to two other shows on which he has appeared gives those references the polyphonic character Kristeva refers to, since they simultaneously sound, but with quite different implications, the words of Castle and of Fillion. They can be heard by listeners as Castle speaking about *Buffy* as a reference shared between the "real world" and the *Castle* universe. But the lines can also be heard as Fillion speaking about a show on which he appeared, thus breaking open the narrative of both texts in a direct address to the viewer (listener). Further, the reference to *Firefly* is drawn directly into the *Castle* universe where Molly C. Quinn (playing Castle's daughter Alexis) and Fillion speak to one another *about* the show on which he appeared (without naming it or acknowledging it), thus addressing the audience in a reference outside of the *Castle* universe, while Fillion briefly reprises the role of Malcolm Reynolds, at least in costume.

[32] Anthony Stewart Head is another telling example of intertextuality of casting that bears some evaluation. Like John Ritter, Head came into *Buffy*, where he memorably portrays Buffy's watcher Giles, with significant intertextual cachet in both Britain and the United States from his Nescafé/Taster's Choice commercials, nearly universally remembered by TV viewing audiences of a certain generation. This was not only a major résumé item, but a significant point of reference for many viewers, who responded to the same "made-for-America" Britishness in both the coffee commercials and in Giles (this is not to imply that there is anything "un-authentically British" (an odd category in any event) or the like with Head, merely that in many respects the Giles character incorporates American expectations and stereotypes of Britishness). Once Head moved back to England to be closer to family including young daughters, a fact widely known among *Buffy* fans which proves Fiske's point about the "real lives" of actors being part of the

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intertextual register through which we view them and their roles, he became a frequent and crucial guest star on *Buffy*. However, back in Britain, he has appeared in a number of roles which have a distinct intertextual charge with *Buffy*. Foremost among these perhaps is his guest appearance on *Doctor Who* (2005-2011; Head was on in 2006) when executive produced by Russell T. Davies and Julie Gardner (further indicating the significant constitutive and casting intertextuality overlap between that “Verse” and the Buffyverse). In addition to appearing as the Alien School Headmaster Mr. Finch in the “School Reunion” episode, Head has appeared in webcasts and as narrator for *Doctor Who Confidential* (2005-11; Head narrated 2006-10). More recently, Head has appeared as Prince Arthur's father King Uther Pendragon on the BBC series *Merlin* (2008-12). Both the *Doctor Who* and *Merlin* roles could be said to draw in part on the ethos of adult authority and wisdom (sometimes subject to excess or abuse) also portrayed in Giles. And Head's performances on *Little Britain* (2003-06) are iconic: his portrayal of the Prime Minister (playing with that ethos of adult authority—the keen responsibility of Giles gives way to the irreverent irresponsibility of the Prime Minister) has been extensively commented on and imitated in fan discussions, and it was significant in being the one of the first major roles he took when he returned to Britain after his sojourn in Hollywood.

[33] The examples considered so far are but a slight few from a vast field that could be analyzed. As the theoretical foundations of intertextuality indicate, this is a broad phenomenon that, in its furthest reaches, ties together not only *Buffy* and other shows, but indeed brings together different media and forms in a larger intertext. Fascinating social network models could be produced indicating this complicated web of linkages, with associations and depth of association between shows (nodes) indicated by lines of varying thickness and intensity. Here I have only tried to look at a few instances of the phenomenon, following trajectories through certain shows.

[34] One such vector indicating the type of intertextual field around *Buffy* is the huge range of shows and movies which can be linked to it via the guest appearance of an actor on a single episode. For *Buffy* in particular, these single-guest-actor links encompass the *Twilight* films (2008-11; Gil Birmingham, “Inca Mummy Girl,” 2.4), *Three's Company* and *8 Simple Rules*

(2002-03; John Ritter, "Ted," 2.11), *Roswell* (1999-02; Jason Behr "Lie to Me," 2.7; Behr also significantly crosses over with Sarah Michelle Gellar in the film *The Grudge*, which also stars Clea Duvall who had portrayed invisible-girl Marcie Ross in "Out of Sight, Out of Mind," 1.11), *Prison Break* (2005-09; Wentworth Miller, "Go Fish," 2.20), and *Ugly Betty* (2006-10), *Covert Affairs* (2010-11), and *Jake 2.0* (2003-04) via Christopher Gorham ("I Only Have Eyes for You," 2.19). These associations only reflect some of the more salient ones of Season 2; noting this in some detail across the seven seasons would provide one means of indicating how Buffy has functioned intertextually in relation to other shows and films.

[35] Another vector of intertextuality, or way to organize these inquiries, is in terms of major actor links: the programs or films that *Buffy* crosses over with based on the core stars of the show. As noted before, Anthony Stewart Head links *Buffy* to *Little Britain*, *Merlin*, and *The Invisibles* (2008), for instance. Sarah Michelle Gellar links *Buffy* to the Scooby Doo movies *Scooby Doo* (2002) and *Scooby Doo 2: Monsters Unleashed* (2004), as well as *The Grudge*, *Cruel Intentions* (1999), *All My Children* (1970-2011), and *Swans Crossing* (1992), among others. Alyson Hannigan associates the Buffyverse with *How I Met Your Mother* (2005-11; the show also features Neil Patrick Harris who is, of course, Doctor Horrible, and Cobey Smulders, who stars in the Whedon-directed and -written *Marvel's The Avengers*), the *American Pie* Movies (1999, 2001, 2003, 2012), and *Free Spirit* (1989-90). Nicholas Brendon ties the show to *Psycho Beach Party* (2000), and *Kitchen Confidential* (2005-06). Seth Green provides a vibrant link to the *Austin Powers* movies (1997, 1999, 2002), *The Italian Job* (2003), *Family Guy* (1999-2011), *American Dad* (2005-2011), and of course his acclaimed *Robot Chicken* (2005-2011).

[36] A final example that can be considered by way of transition is a show that does not have any crossover of actors with *Buffy*, but that is noteworthy in terms of intertextuality of casting: *Eureka*. *Eureka* is also a major example of constitutive intertextuality, which will be considered in the next section, but its casting features are unique and important. As a science-fiction show (as one of the main genres it plays upon) *Eureka* invokes a tradition or ethos through the casting of Joe Morton and Matt Frewer, two sci-fi icons. Morton had played both The Brother in *The Brother from Another*

Planet (1984) and Miles Dyson in *Terminator 2* (1991). Frewer played Edison Carter and Max Headroom on *Max Headroom* (1986-88). Casting these two actors brings a recognition and charge that places the show in a sci fi constellation. Further texture is added to this ethos by guest characters: recurring guest star Tamlyn Tomita (playing physicist Kim Anderson) was originally cast as the second in command officer on *Babylon 5* in the pilot episode "The Gathering" (1.1). Some purists no doubt still resent her replacement. In any event, these few examples show the way in which *Eureka* engages intertextuality of casting to draw on a science fiction ethos. That *Eureka* in turn has come to be the referent for such intertextuality is seen in the newer SyFy Channel show *Warehouse 13*—created by Jane Espenson—on which salient *Eureka* guest star Saul Rubinek features as central character Artie Nielson. In addition, Neil Grayston appeared as his *Eureka* character Douglas Fargo on *Warehouse 13*, and Joe Morton (Henry from *Eureka*) and Mark Sheppard (Badger from *Firefly*) appeared as prominent guest stars.xiv

Constitutive Intertextuality

[37] If intertextuality of casting tries to look at the strong symbolic resonances involved in the casting of like actors across shows and media, constitutive intertextuality refers to the prevalent elements of story, image, character, sound, or music that are shared. Television shows of course draw on and figure genres. There are a number of genre conventions that make specific types of productions immediately recognizable to us as, for instance, western, science fiction, drama, police procedural, etc. In addition to that, there are also some shows that have been so iconic, or some themes that have been so frequently drawn upon, that certain images and stories strike a deep chord in television history and with many viewers. Joss Whedon's productions are often analyzed in terms their genre-blending, genre-defying, and genre-conscious articulations. *Buffy* inverts the standard image of the horror movie with the helpless young blond woman. Yet the show makes heavy use of the conventions, images, and stories of horror. In addition, though, *Buffy*, at least for the first three seasons, is part of the vibrant American genre about high school life, alongside *Fast Times at Ridgemont High* (1982), *Beverly Hills: 90210* (1990-2000), *My So-Called Life* (1994-95)

and myriad other shows and movies.^{xv} These genres hardly exhaust the genre play of *Buffy*, which of course also engages fantasy, science fiction, musical, drama and many other codes. *Firefly* is well known for blending western and sci-fi genres, and *Doctor Horrible* mixes superhero/villain stories with the musical and television with blogs, internet distribution, and computer-viewing.

[38] Television is often called a medium of borrowing, where programs appropriate sets, storylines, and popular characterizations from one another in a way that strengthens the genre conventions already mentioned and creates recognizable intertextual streams through the medium. As in literary intertextuality and intertextuality of casting, this seems to entail both unintentional, inescapable crossover as well as intentional, crafted instances in which artists draw upon previous productions to invoke a particular polyphonic register. This distinction may roughly follow that set up by both Barthes and Kristeva to describe different types of writing (polyphonic versus monological). Both axes are germane to the study of intertextuality (in literature or in television). *Buffy* is such a major point of reference that it seems to inspire or entail both types of response. To demonstrate that and to further flesh out the concept of constitutive intertextuality, *Eureka* merits a closer look.

Eureka's Intertextual Setting

[39] *Eureka* might very well be termed a masterpiece of constitutive intertextuality, or at least a major reference point in studying it. I find the show particularly engaging because the concept of the town (an isolated community populated by scientists—and their families, including those named Einstein and Oppenheimer—who work on sensitive projects for the government) is a clear analogue for my hometown of Los Alamos, New Mexico.^{xvi} Thus the show already has a particular kind of intertextual relation to a real-world referent, and to a host of film and TV productions that have considered the Manhattan Project and Los Alamos, or have been shot in the town (*Fat Man and Little Boy* (1989), *Infinity* (1996), *Brothers* (2009; which was shot largely in my grandparents' house), *Repo Man* (1984), *The Atomic City* (1952), *Let Me In* (2009), and *Tiger Eyes* (2012)).^{xvii}

[40] Beyond the clear reference to Los Alamos, however, which allows

the exploration of many of the social and psychological foibles arising from such a concentration of scientific talent and national security work, *Eureka* is crafted from the meticulous re-deployment of recognizable television archetypes and icons. References to *Buffy* and the Buffyverse are so frequent, arising in practically every episode, that *Eureka* can be read as an extended homage to it. In addition, though, the careful portrayal of the unique town and institution in *Eureka* draws on images and conceptual registers from several other iconic television shows. The structuring of the show around a small-town sheriff resonates strongly with *The Andy Griffith Show* (1960-68; complete with uniforms that look almost exactly the same and certain very local problems and responsibilities). The opening credits, focusing in on Sheriff Carter with a folksy, whistling soundtrack, emphasize this discursive link. Carter is the protagonist of *Eureka*, presented as both bungling and brilliant, but ultimately personable. Indeed Carter, who notably lacks the scientific and technical qualifications of many of the other town residents (though he does gain some status for being a former U.S. Marshall), succeeds because of his ability to relate to others (regardless of background or station) and his innate sense of fairness towards all. In the episode "Purple Haze" (1.10), Nathan Stark, speaking of Carter, asks, "Am I supposed to ignore that Mayberry's hitting on my wife?," referring to the town of Mayberry from *The Andy Griffith Show*. Here the dialogue gives voice to the powerful resonance invoked by Carter's uniform and the "aw-shucks" Mayberry feel of *Eureka*.

[41] Presentation of a small town in the Northwest that is not quite normal draws upon images and representations from *Twin Peaks* (1990-91) and *Northern Exposure* (1990-95). This is a town where everyone knows everyone else and their business, yet where secrets abound beneath the surface. The setting in the Northwest is important as a geographical and topographical marker that is crucial to the feel of show (as it is to *Twin Peaks* and *Northern Exposure*): the forest, the mountains, and the weather are important elements of the narrative. *Eureka* and *Twin Peaks* both feature scenes of mystery or pursuit through the forest, which already seems somewhat nefarious due to the undergrowth and mist. Also, like those two shows, *Eureka* is largely a character drama, foregrounding the unique and off-the-beaten path personalities residing in the town. And the focus on

unusual science and the supernatural (or science so extreme it seems like the supernatural), as well as the "monster (or crisis) of the week" structure, places it in relation to *The X Files* (1993-2002; "the truth is out there" could probably serve as slogan for *Eureka* as well). While some may see the conjunction of so many recognizable antecedents in television as a sign of the lack of originality of *Eureka*, or of the laziness of its creators, I see this as in line with the polyphonic and writerly forms of composition treated earlier, lending the show a special place in the considerations of intertextuality. By drawing upon such iconic aspects of television, the creators succeed in evoking a particular set of tones and moods that serves to situate the show at the intersection of a number of television codes and representations.

Eureka and Buffy

[42] Though *Eureka* draws strongly upon *The Andy Griffith Show*, *Twin Peaks*, *Northern Exposure* and *The X Files*, the primary referent would seem to be *Buffy*. While it draws important underlying aspects of the setting and the staging from other shows, *Eureka* seems to play primarily off of *Buffy* in terms of style and sensibility. There are so many explicit references to the Buffyverse that one could practically make a vocation out of trying to disentangle them all: Sheriff Carter's high-tech house (a former bomb shelter reminiscent of Sunnydale's steam tunnels in its setting) is called SARAH (Self-Actuated Residential Automated Habitat) in a clear reference to Sarah Michelle Gellar.^{xviii} SARAH's designer, physicist Douglas Fargo, is a huge fan of *Buffy*, and he comments that he is "just waiting to hear back from Sarah Michelle Gellar's people" to get her to come to Eureka and record the computer voice for the house ("Many Happy Returns," 1.2). Character Larry Haberman speculates that Eureka may be located on a Hellmouth ("God is in the Details," 2.10); and Sheriff Carter blackmails Fargo by threatening to show Fargo's Sarah Michelle Gellar doll to international scientific colleagues ("Right as Raynes," 1.8).

[43] Although perhaps not pursued to the same level, *Eureka* shows an interest in repartee and witty dialogue similar to *Buffy*. In addition, *Eureka* frequently borrows or replays lines of dialogue directly from *Buffy* and other sources. Fargo asks "You do realize I'm standing right here?" ("Family

Reunion," 2.7; an episode written by Jane Espenson), an echo of a line repeated several times in *Buffy* by different characters (Buffy in "Buffy versus Dracula," 5.1, and Willow in "Selfless" 7.5 as well as "Double Meat Palace" 6.12, an episode also written by Espenson). Fargo also says that "sometimes when I'm stressed my subtext comes out as text" ("H.O.U.S.E. Rules," 1.11) in a clear reference to the iconic Giles line in *Buffy* from "Ted" (2.11; the episode guest starring John Ritter). "H.O.U.S.E. Rules" is also significant intertextually because in it we learn that the SARAH house had been originally programmed on top of the WOPR Artificial Intelligence at the center of the movie *Wargames* (1983); when Fargo fears that SARAH has lost control he says that "SARAH has gone HAL on us" in a reference to the deranged AI on the Mars mission of *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968).

[44] *Eureka* also draws upon or echoes storylines from several *Buffy* episodes. The spell gone wrong that turns Xander into a woman magnet in "Bewitched, Bothered, and Bewildered" (2.16) finds its parallel in the peptide that renders Sheriff Carter similarly irresistible to women in "Maneater" (2.11); in both cases the effects are almost lethal, and the "mob scenes" are highly reminiscent of one another. *Eureka's* "Purple Haze" (1.12), and to some extent "E=MC...?" (2.08), echoes *Buffy's* "Band Candy" (3.6) in terms of the motif of mass alteration of the town's mindset, with ensuing consequences of mayhem and near-disaster. And the poignant *Eureka* episode "Once in a Lifetime" (1.12) recalls the equally emotional *Angel* crossover episode "I Will Remember You" (1.8; aired just after the *Buffy* episode "Pangs," 4.8). In each episode one character, Carter or Angel, respectively, is left with the sole memory of an alternate timeline in which they might well have wished to remain, but which they were compelled to undo for the greater good. *Eureka's* "Show Me the Mummy" (3.5) is reminiscent of *Buffy's* "Inca Mummy Girl" (2.4), and "I Do Over" (3.04) recalls "Life Serial" (6.5), as both episodes concern repeating time loops. The muteness (and use of sketch boards) of Sunnydale in "Hush" (4.10) are paralleled in "God is in the Details" (2.10) in *Eureka*.

[45] These instances represent just a smattering of the multiple crossovers and associations between the shows. While each of these episodes draws upon well-established science fiction or fantasy narratives, meaning that the crossovers could be coincidental, from the standpoint of

intertextuality it matters little if they are conscious or unconscious echoes: the viewer is likely to experience them as resonant in any event.

Nonetheless, the echoes, borrowings, and crossovers are likely to be of the polyphonic, explicitly referential type, given the scale of explicit reference to *Buffy*. It is specifically this dynamic of artistically rendered intertextuality in *Eureka* that is significant for our considerations here, and that further opens onto the ways in which *Buffy* has touched on other shows .

Buffy's Influence on Other Shows

[46] While *Eureka* is a signal point for considering constitutive intertextuality in relation to the Buffyverse, there are myriad other tendrils from the Buffyverse that have found their way, consciously or unconsciously, into other shows and media. These influences may be in terms of story, visual images, vocabulary/dialogue, or even music. Among a host of possible connections, we might consider *Moonlight*, *New Amsterdam*, *Torchwood* and *Deadwood* (2004-06). Again, many of these references are undoubtedly intentional, and many likely are not. Taken together, however, they illustrate the ways in which *Buffy* and the Buffyverse operate as intertext, and help to show, perhaps, how it has a noteworthy place in that regard.

[47] *Moonlight*, which aired in 2007-08 on ABC, echoes *Angel* so strongly that there are clear lines of constitutive intertextuality. The premise of the show—a brooding “good” vampire becomes a private detective in Los Angeles—could equally well describe either series. Mick St. John, like *Angel*, is a vampire with a conscience. He is moved by a desire to help people, perhaps in part to amend past wrongs. Both shows make use of film noir genre conventions in depictions of Los Angeles as gritty and sinister. Image and frame analysis between *Angel* and *Moonlight* also demonstrates strong resonances. A recurring scene in *Moonlight*, of Mick St. John standing on the edge of a Los Angeles roof looking out over the lights of the city night, the wind blowing his long coat slightly behind him, is an almost exact visual quotation from *Angel*. In fact, as both shots proceed from the back of the (brooding) individual standing on the roof edge and swivel in a wide arc to come to their fronts and faces, one could easily take one for the other.^{xix}

[48] *New Amsterdam*, an imaginative New York police drama that aired a brief eight episodes in 2008, also seemed to draw on important elements of *Angel*'s story. John Amsterdam is an immortal cop from the old country, in

this case Holland, who has been in New York since it was New Amsterdam. Although he is not a vampire, how is it that John has come by his longevity? The human John, who had come to New Amsterdam from Holland as a settler, was healed and granted eternal youth by a Native American shaman for saving a girl of the tribe. Visually, the *New Amsterdam* scene portraying the ceremony is highly reminiscent of the *Buffy* scenes depicting the Gypsy curse on Angel. Angel and John, as immortals with conscience, are painfully but poignantly aware of the change and passing of those around them over time. They both also display a certain cynicism (noir conventions again) rooted in their age and sense of having seen it all before. While Los Angeles is instrumental to *Angel*, however, *New Amsterdam* is just as clearly a New York show. It draws upon iconic shots of New York locales, such as the site of Times Square, where John returns on the same date each year to take a photograph (starting well before the site is Times Square). Despite this salient difference there seems to be a resonance between the stories and roles of John and Angel, since each of them inhabits and relates to their city in similar way.

[49] *Torchwood*, the British serial, produced by BBC Wales, is already significantly intertextual in the dimensions of being a spin-off from *Doctor Who* (the Captain Jack Harkness character originally emerged there, and the name "Torchwood" is an anagram for "Doctor Who") and in being produced and written by Russell T. Davies. Indeed, Davies has described how the creative genesis of *Torchwood* was for him inspired by *Buffy* and *Angel*, saying, "I'd been watching shows like *Buffy* and *Angel*, and I'd said to [*Torchwood* executive producer] Julie Gardnee—'why don't we make a series like that?'"^{xx} From this insight it would seem that *Torchwood* is already characterized by constitutive intertextuality with reference to *Buffy*, where Davies and Gardner were inspired enough by the settings, stories, and characters of the Buffyverse to want actively to draw upon it for creative mood and material. The combination of overall story arcs and "monster (or alien) of the week" episodes, as well as the attention to dialogue (including both literate/historical references and elements of modern slang) and a frank presentation of sexuality, including same-sex relationships, make *Torchwood* reminiscent of *Buffy*. The fact, too, that the Wales headquarters of the Torchwood Institute is said to lie on a spacetime rift seems a tip of the hat

to *Buffy's* Hellmouth concept, where Sunnydale lies on a point of mystical convergence at an opening to Hell, making it particularly prone to demonic activity.

[50] Comparing *Firefly* to *Deadwood* (a series, like *Buffy*, famous for its language) may be more of a stretch, or the similarity may be more easily subsumed under genre convention rather than direct quoting or influence. Nonetheless, there seems to be a less-than-trivial echoing in music and style of the *Firefly* intro in the *Deadwood* opening credits, and looking at them carefully illustrates a key aspect of intertextuality in terms of thick constructions of genre conventions that serve to establish settings and “universes” for viewers. Though both series’ theme songs rely on conventions like twangy or steel guitar and fiddle to signal western music, and the mood of both shows is in some sense somber and harsh, the music and the setup of the introductory frames bear an interesting resemblance when viewed together.

[51] The *Firefly* intro shows images of each actor as they are introduced, while *Deadwood* does not but shows more general or abstract shots of town life. And *Deadwood's* credits are longer at 1 minute 33 seconds than *Firefly's* 53 seconds. But there are important resonances between the introductory sequences. Both make prominent use of horses, and feature a number of shots of the ground or terrain, indicating a certain earthiness. *Firefly*, as a *sci-fi* Western, contains several images of ships flying and space lacking, of course, in *Deadwood*.

[52] There are echoes of instrumentation in the two shows' opening songs, each using guitar and fiddle. Jennifer Goltz, in Jane Espenson's edited collection *Finding Serenity*, emphasizes the important musical and emotional role of the “*Sad Violin*,” as she names the unaccompanied, slow, slightly out of tune and dirge-like music of the fiddle.^{xxi} This *Sad Violin* is also prominent in the *Deadwood* song by David Schwartz. Christopher Neal, in Rhonda Wilcox and Tanya Cochran's edited volume on *Investigating Firefly and Serenity*, also discusses the characteristic guitar and fiddle composition— noting that this is an instrumentation and type of music that signals life on the periphery, decentralization, and skepticism of authority.^{xxii} He points to both the solitary sounds of the sad violin as well as the happier chords, or double-stops played across two strings simultaneously, that also have an

important emotional resonance: though the solitary violin signals isolation, its tone can evoke happiness and sadness. The *Deadwood* theme too seems to include both the sad and happier, upbeat aspects of the fiddle, and the emotional associations of each are unmistakable in the song.

[53] The *Deadwood* song and "The Ballad of Serenity," by Joss Whedon, both score slide and plucked guitar in addition to the fiddle. In terms of the intertextuality of cast and crew it is significant not only that Whedon composed the song and lyrics, as he did for the musical episode of *Buffy* "Once More With Feeling" (6.7), but also that the song was performed by noted blues musician Sonny Rhodes. The visuals of each opening sequence portray dirty worlds of clapboard architecture and perennial risk, even as they also feature shots of undeniable beauty, especially natural beauty of horses, the forest, desert, and sky.

Conclusion

[54] This article seeks to use the key concept of intertextuality to explore some important aspects of television creation and viewing that are increasingly coming to light as a result of changes in television writing, production, and dissemination (not to mention tie-in with other forms of media). It both draws on the rich interpretive and analytical tradition of the concept of intertextuality and seeks to further elaborate it by describing two types of intertextuality, intertextuality of casting and constitutive intertextuality, particularly relevant to the analysis of recent quality television. Inherent to the concept of intertextuality is some degree of ambiguity in terms of intent or the level at which the dynamic crossover of intertextuality is posed or experienced (e.g., by the "creator" or by the "viewer"). This article, therefore, tries to look at a range of levels of agency and investment, from creators consciously drawing on actors and memes from other shows to viewers assiduously comparing themes, characters, setting, and actors across shows and movies. In keeping with Kristeva's and Barthes' formulations of intertextuality and the writerly, it describes both a compositional style and a practice of viewing, interpreting, and engaging—the compositional style itself based in the practices of viewing.

Intertextuality of casting is the concept proposed here to analyze the particular aspects of resonance and crossover between shows and movies

arising from the presence of the same actors, but the practice of tracking these trajectories and associations is already common practice among media viewers. Intertextuality of casting refers to both an intertextual field around the nodes of the actors and a compositional style that pays heed to and makes use of the inflections to an actor's ethos from prior roles. This concept allows us to evaluate the way in which creators can evoke a setting or a situation by the casting of an actor who will give a recognizable presence and affect; it also highlights the way that actors bring these qualities from one role to another and modify their acting persona through the inflections of successive roles. Although this practice is something which has long been an issue, with viewers tracking classic screen stars across roles and following the careers of favorite stage actors and writers (Socrates supposedly enjoyed seeing Euripedes' tragedies, but shunned ones by Sophocles and Aeschylus, for example), still, the advent of quality television, the massive increase in television production and dissemination across various networks and means of delivery, and the increased availability of media through DVDs, download, streaming, and cable television has brought this issue to the fore.

Constitutive intertextuality is oriented toward analyzing the echoes of setting, story, costume, music, and other factors across different media. Again, it can refer to both the general field of such echoes, the practice of looking for and interpreting them, and a compositional strategy employed by artists to set a scene by calling upon tones, looks, effects, costumes or other factors that have been created or inflected by prior media texts. The main impact of constitutive intertextuality as discussed in this article is in allowing the analysis of crossover and imbrication between different media texts, especially television shows. For instance, as a paradigm example of quality television, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* has exerted impressive influence on other shows and other forms of media production. And *Eureka* is substantially constituted through the artistic borrowing and layering of recognizable memes and references from other shows, foremost among them *Buffy*, to create a unique and original text (indicating that this form of intertextual borrowing is not un-original, or "copying," but gives rise to new possibilities for composition and originality).

Combined, these two concepts of intertextuality of casting and

constitutive intertextuality allow for the treatment of many salient examples from contemporary television (and other media). Although I argue that both are thoroughly in keeping with the robust tradition of intertextuality (as indicated for instance in Barthes' analysis of the face of Garbo and Kristeva's interpretation of the echoing of setting and dialogue), these novel emendations of intertextuality are particularly germane for contemporary television and multi-media. Combining the analysis of casting crossover and the echoes of scene, character, costume, etc., enables an empirically and formally-grounded account of these instances of intertextuality across such texts. Television such as *Buffy* and *Eureka* demonstrate significant aspects of both casting and constitutive intertextuality, and interpreting them and like shows is difficult without some attention to these aspects. These two axes of interpretation focus attention on the rich field of intertextuality as the source of strategies for composition and reception. Whedon's writerly craft is significant in that he identifies as a "fan-boy" and frequently interacted with fans online during the early years of *Buffy*, oftentimes commenting on just this type of resonance and crossover with other science fiction and cultural texts (and Whedon himself draws on a broad intertextual field encompassing classic films, high and low brow television, comic books, novels, nonfiction studies, and the like). Whedon certainly did not invent this craft, nor would he claim to have, as there is an inherently participatory, democratic, and readerly valence to intertextuality that both relies on a community of viewers and serves to downplay the original intent and genius of individual creators. Nonetheless, Whedon and *Buffy* do occupy an important place in relation to the craft of television intertextuality. As Kristeva and Barthes both emphasize, intertextuality does not relativize or sweep away artistic practice into an open-ended play of references and associations. Rather, both argue specifically that awareness of it multiplies possibilities for artistic practice by dramatically expanding the "palette" available to cultural creators and emphasizing the inherently social and relational aspect of artistic production (which is why it refigures the notion of the individual genius and solitary creation). In this sense, Whedon's work is distinctive because he pays such careful heed to a host of other texts as a careful and joyful consumer of media and ideas.

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Notes

¹Julia Kristeva, "Word, Dialogue and Novel," *The Kristeva Reader*, ed. Toril Moi, Columbia University Press, 1986, p. 37; "Bakhtine, le mot, le dialogue et le roman" *Critique*. 239, 1967, 438-65.

²Kristeva and Barthes worked in collaboration with one another, certainly aware of each other's writings, and developing many of the same themes. Both were part of the *Tel Quel* group and contributors to the journal. It is said that Kristeva was a student in Barthes' seminars shortly after moving to Paris from Sophia, and that she wrote an essay in his 1966 École Pratiques des Hautes Études seminar on Bakhtin that would be instrumental in developing the theory of intertextuality (working with concepts like text, *cryptographie*, and *écriture* (writing) that Barthes had been developing since the fifties).

³Roland Barthes, *Le degré zero de l'écriture*, Seuil, 1953, p. 23. My thanks to Christina Harlow for discussion about the translation and the import of Barthes for this study. My thanks also to Christopher Danta and the English, Media, and Performing Arts faculty of the University of New South Wales for hosting a reading and discussion of this paper in their Seminar Series; thanks to Simon Lumsden, Chris Mayes. And thanks especially to Ananya Mukherjea for crucial observations and discussion on each aspect of the interpretation here.

⁴Roland Barthes, "Le visage de Garbo," *Mythologies*, Seuil 1957.

⁵More than just this, the Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com) enables the meticulous, and on demand, tracking of the careers and trajectories of artists. Much of this research (and future work in this vein) relies on it as a valuable scholarly resource.

⁶The personage of John Ritter is further a multi-determined intertextual peak in that he was the son of famous country music and film star Tex Ritter.

⁷Dyer's studies are pivotal for the study of stars and the star phenomenon/image. He explicitly underscores that these are intertextually-formed entities, constituted through different media. Yet his focus was primarily on the star image gathered in these myriad representations rather than on the relations and transformations of these media in the crossover of stars. He observes astutely that, "The star's presence in a film is a promise of a certain kind of thing that you would see if you went to see the film," but he also makes the analytical distinction that, "Part of the manufacture of the star image takes place in the films the star makes, with all the personnel involved in that, but one can think of the films as a second stage" (Dyer,

Heavenly Bodies, p. 5, see full citation below in this endnote). Although these are closely related inquiries, the foci are different. This article is in some sense the converse, looking at the intertextual effects within and across different television shows, film, and media including the trajectories of actors and crew. The star concept is integral here, as a recognizable personality and ethos that gains meaning by gathering a number of different roles and personae. Intertextuality of cast and crew is the extension or pluralization of the star concept, looking at how various programs and media are shaped by intricate crossovers of persons and their media images (and where many directors, producers, writers, makeup artists, etc., have star image just as the phenomenon is described by Dyer). Constitutive intertextuality might in some sense refer to the star image surrounding entire shows, or important visual images, dialogue, stories and the like. It concerns the wholesale opening of one show or program to the ethos, image, and character of another one (or many).

Dyer's two cardinal books are: Richard Dyer, *Stars*, British Film Institute, 2008; and Richard Dyer, *Heavenly Bodies: Film Stars and Society*, Routledge, 1994.

⁸John Fiske, *Television Culture*, Routledge, 2003, pp. 8-9.

⁹Keith A. Reader, "Literature/Cinema/Television: Intertextuality in Jean Renoir's *Le Testament du docteur Cordelier*," in Michael Worton and Judith Still, eds., *Intertextuality: Theories and Practice*, Manchester U Press, 1990, p. 176.

¹⁰*Warehouse 13* is set within the same universe as *Eureka*. The shows contain mutual references to one another and some crossover of storyline. Characters have crossed over both ways, as when Fargo visited the Warehouse and Claudia visited Eureka. Although she did not stick with the show, early creative work on the show by Espenson and Rockne O'Bannon, who created *Farscape*, is a good indication of intertextuality of crew.

¹¹My thanks to Ananya Mukherjea for pointing out this interesting line of association between the Buffyverse and *Moonlight*.

¹²Guardian, "James Marsters - *Torchwood* TV Series - Guardian.co.uk Review," 22 June 2007, <http://www.whedon.info/James-Marsters-Torchwood->

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¹³Significantly, the character of Spike has already been treated as an important vehicle for intertextuality, in Milly Williams, "Spike, Sex, and Subtext: Intertextual Portrayals of the Sympathetic Vampire on Cult Television," *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 8, 3, 2005, 289-311.

¹⁴*Warehouse 13* also has a significant crossover with *Battlestar Galactica*, with Michael Hogan also guest starring—and of course Jane Espenson was a producer and writer on *Battlestar*.

¹⁵On this topic see Roz Kaveney's perceptive and informative *Teen Dreams: Reading Teen Film and Television from Heathers to Veronica Mars*, I. B. Tauris, 2006.

¹⁶The relationship between Los Alamos and *Buffy* is considered in Jeffrey Bussolini, "Los Alamos is the Hellmouth," *Slayage: The Online International Journal of Buffy Studies*, 5.2, 18, 2005.

¹⁷It also bears noting that the laboratory institution in *Eureka* is called Global Dynamics, which would seem to be analogous to major defense contractor General Dynamics.

¹⁸The Eureka steam tunnels also bear a strong resemblance to the network of steam tunnels underneath downtown Los Alamos.

¹⁹This impression is especially reinforced by viewing the clips side by side. At a conference of television scholars where the clips were shown, many were initially convinced that the *Moonlight* shot was one from *Angel*.

²⁰Ben Rawson-Jones, "Davies: *Buffy*, *Angel* inspired *Torchwood*," *Digital Spy*, October 17, 2006, <http://www.digitalspy.com/cult/news/a38295/davies-buffy-angel-inspired-torchwood.html>, retrieved 12 June, 2010.

²¹Jennifer Goltz, "Listening to *Firefly*," in Jane Espenson ed., *Finding Serenity: Anti-heroes, Shepherds and Space Cowboys in Joss Whedon's Firefly*, Benbella, 2004, 209-15. Although Goltz says that she doesn't analyze the introductory ballad, and opines that it may not hold the same effect in the storytelling as the leitmotifs and sound images she examines, she does primarily emphasize the role of the theme she calls '*Serenity*': "The main musical signature of the show—which I'll call *Serenity*—recalls the theme song" (210).

²²Christopher Neal, "Marching Out of Step: Music and Otherness in the

Firefly/Serenity Saga,” in Rhonda V. Wilcox and Tanya R. Cochran eds., *Investigating Firefly and Serenity: Science Fiction on the Frontier*, I. B. Tauris, 2008. pp. 191-98.