

The Pennsylvania State University

The Graduate School

Communication Arts & Sciences

POSTFEMINIST DETECTIVES:

TELEVISION GENRES, GENDERS, AND CRIMES

A Dissertation in

Communication Arts & Sciences

by

Sarah J. Kornfield

© 2012 Sarah J. Kornfield

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2012

The dissertation of Sarah J. Kornfield was reviewed and approved* by the following:

Rosa Eberly
Associate Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences
Associate Professor of English
Dissertation Advisor
Chair of Committee

Stephen Browne
Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences

Matt McAllister
Professor of Communications and Communication Arts and Sciences
Assistant Graduate Program Chair

Lorraine Dowler
Associate Professor of Geography
Associate Professor of Women's Studies

Kirt Wilson
Associate Professor of Communication Arts and Sciences
Director of Graduate Studies

*Signatures are on file in the Graduate School

ABSTRACT**POSTFEMINIST DETECTIVES:
TELEVISION GENRES, GENDERS, AND CRIMES**

U.S. television has seen a recent proliferation of yet another crime drama iteration: *Bones* (2005 -), *Fringe* (2008 -), *The Mentalist* (2008 -), and *Castle* (2009 -) all partner together a man and woman – one of whom is not a law enforcement officer, and focus on the romantic tensions between the partners from the pilot episodes. Together, these series mark a significant change in the crime genre. As Andrew Marlowe – the creator and executive producer for *Castle* – remarked, these series have taken a familiar genre and “blow[n] it up.” To achieve this twist on the standard crime genre, these series have attempted a “gender reversal,” creating female detectives who are strong, independent scientist-types and partnering them with male detectives who are intuitive, sensitive, and domesticated.

Drawing on rhetorical, media, and feminist theories, this dissertation is a close analysis of how these four popular prime-time programs are revising the crime genre. Essentially, I argue that by foregrounding these “gender reversed” characters, the TV industry has mixed the crime genre with the genre of romantic comedy, creating series that maintain the procedural format at the episode level but sew episodes together into story-arcs and running plotlines using the algorithms of romantic comedy. However, in order to merge these disparate narrative formats, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* draw on postfeminist motifs to suture these crime and romantic comedy genres together. In so doing, these programs portray both the seed and fruit of patriarchy under the guise of equality.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	vi
LIST OF TABLES	vii
PREFACE	viii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	x
Chapter 1 Introduction: Generic Television.....	1
Genre in Rhetorical and TV Studies	8
Postfeminist Detectives	19
Organization and Scope of Dissertation Project	26
Chapter 2 Equal Partners? Co-Ed Detective Agencies on TV	28
Fixed Plots.....	31
Pipes, Badges, Capes, and Lock-Picks: Crime Narratives in U.S. History	34
Romantic Detectives	39
Getting Smart with Agent 99	41
Steeling the Corner Office.....	50
Alien-ating Women	58
Reviewing the Case.....	64
Chapter 3 Studies in Scarlet	67
Overview of <i>Bones</i> , <i>Fringe</i> , <i>The Mentalist</i> , and <i>Castle</i>	72
The Skeleton of <i>Bones</i>	73
<i>Fringe</i> Benefits.....	78
<i>A Mental Leap</i>	83
Storming the <i>Castle</i>	86
Investigating Gender: Dangerous Characteristics	92
Scientific Women and Intuitive Men	93
Moral and Legal Codes	97
Emotions and Relationships	99
Feminizing the Feminine	102
Conclusion: Scientific Damsels	110
Chapter 4 It's a Man's World After All	112
A Contradiction in Terms	114
Parental Work-a-Holics.....	116
Monogamous but Promiscuous	124
Masculine Hierarchies.....	135
Insulting Friendships	141
An Education in Masculinity.....	146

Role-Modeling Masculinity	149
Impossible Men.....	161
Chapter 5 Mixing Genres and Fixing Genders	164
Policing Procedurals	166
The Personal is Procedural.....	177
Interlocking Systems	178
Overlapping Plots and Romances	197
Deducing Femininity.....	204
Romancing the Precinct	219
Chapter 6 Conclusion: Once Upon a Crime.....	222
Case Closed.....	226
Rhetoric, Genre Theory, and Feminist Media Studies	233
You're Asking Me to Support Your Delusion?	241
References.....	244

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Interlocking relationship between episode's plots, story-arcs, and characters' personal lives.	179
Figure 2: Overview of <i>Bones</i>	181
Figure 3: Overview of <i>Fringe</i>	188
Figure 4: Overview of <i>The Mentalist</i>	191
Figure 5: Overview of <i>Castle</i>	195
Figure 6: Overlap between episodes' plots, story-arcs and the characters' personal lives.	198
Figure 7: Overlap between episodes' plots, story-arcs, and personal lives on <i>Bones</i> , <i>Fringe</i> , <i>The Mentalist</i> , and <i>Castle</i>	198

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Detective characteristics within crime dramas.	39
Table 2: Key detective characteristics on <i>Bones</i> , <i>Fringe</i> , <i>The Mentalist</i> , and <i>Castle</i>	69
Table 3: Programming schedule for <i>Bones</i> , <i>Fringe</i> , <i>The Mentalist</i> , and <i>Castle</i>	74
Table 4: Masculine hierarchies.	137

PREFACE

In 2006, I watched my first episode of a TV crime drama. Until then, I had staunchly insisted that I did not enjoy watching the crime dramas, since these programs were visually gruesome and entirely episodic. However, the urge for escapism drove me to channel surfing one evening, and I paused to watch a snatch of witty banter between two attractive characters on TNT. The romantically charged conversation gave way to a crime scene investigation, a man-hunt, the interrogation of skeletal remains, more sexually charged repartee, and finally the murder was solved and a villain was arrested. Then, as the credits played, TNT ran a brief promo, announcing that another episode of *Bones* was next. Surprised to find that I was watching re-runs of a crime program, and more surprised to have enjoyed it, I happily watched the next episode, and when TNT went on to play a different program during the next hour, I got my computer, pulled up the Fox network website, and streamed the four most recent episodes of *Bones*.

Captivated, I bought the first two seasons on DVD, watched the new episodes religiously, and recommended the program to friends, family, and occasional acquaintances. I enjoyed the dynamic between the lead characters, Temperance Brennan and FBI Special Agent Seeley Booth, the academic setting Brennan was engaged in, and the strength of her personality. I was horrified by the program's choice to portray Brennan as emotionally stunted, socially awkward, and relationally inept.

Then, Fox began to air *Fringe*, CBS premiered *The Mentalist*, and ABC ran *Castle*. I watched these new crime series with growing apprehension as the programs copied *Bones*' format, characters, plot devices, and motifs.

I preface *Postfeminist Detectives* with this narration because it touches on the central themes of this research, namely: genre, gender, and crimes. These programs portray dangerous characters who commit heinous crimes. However, they are also dangerous programs because they portray characters who claim to act equitably while enacting the crimes of patriarchy. I began researching and writing this dissertation as a way of suggesting that these programs contain both the seed and fruit of patriarchy, that TV genres function rhetorically in our society, and that TV rhetoric has material consequences.

Working toward this goal, *Postfeminist Detectives* is situated at the intersection of rhetorical studies, television studies, and women's studies, and I draw on the diverse scholarship from these fields to provide a holistic account of these four programs, their genre of crime programming, TV viewership, and their implications within our society. Essentially, I argue that the TV industry has sewn together the genres of crime dramas and romantic comedies by foregrounding "reversed" gender roles, which creates a genre that rhetorically promotes postfeminist ideologies. To substantiate this claim, *Postfeminist Detectives* works closely with these four programs, analyzing their generic form, their gendered character portrayals, their historic and generic predecessors, the affordances of their production and reception, and their function in society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee,
One clover, and a bee.
And reverie.
The reverie alone will do,
If bees are few.

Emily Dickinson

Writing requires more than prairies: clovers and bees do not suffice. But reverie is still a necessary component – perhaps even more so. In the process of writing this dissertation, I have accrued several debts of gratitude, mostly to those who, in part, supplied the reverie.

To my advisor, Rosa Eberly, thank you for working with me, for thinking with me, for helping me shape my career, for encouraging me, and for reverie.

To my committee, Stephen Browne, Matt McAllister, and Lorraine Dowler, thank you for thinking with me, for teaching me, for reading for me, for supporting me, and for reverie.

To my parents, Bill and Jennie Kornfield, thank you for dreaming with me, for believing in me, for supporting me, for listening to me, for sending care-packages, and for reverie.

To my sister, Claire Kornfield, thank you for watching with me, for keeping me grounded, for vacationing with me, for understanding me, and for reverie.

To my mentors, thank you for being role-models, for continuing to care, for blazing the path as this strange combination of humans, scholars, writers, and teachers, and for reverie.

To my friends, thank you for being here, for supporting me, for sharing yourselves with me, for caring for me, and for reverie.

Thank you all, for reverie ... and the ensuing revelry.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Generic Television

How can I take a genre they're familiar with and blow it up?
Andrew Marlowe

On March 9, 2009, ABC premiered the pilot episode of *Castle*. The episode opens to a scene of the macabre: a corpse laid out and covered in rose petals, with sunflowers over her eyes as a voice-over asks, “What is it about a hardboiled detective, a femme fatale, and the cold steel of a gun that keeps our bedside lamps burning into the wee hours of the morning?” (Marlowe & Bowman, 2009a). The scene shifts to the speaker, an attractive publishing agent at a book signing party who is introducing an acclaimed crime novel author, Richard Castle. Although Castle is enjoying the party, rakishly signing women’s chests and donning a pair of sunglasses despite the shadowy interior of the cocktail lounge, he protests to his publisher and later his fifteen-year-old daughter – who is in the corner doing homework – that he is bored with the crime genre and similarly bored with these types of parties. Suffering from ennui, Castle has killed off Derrick Storm, the protagonist of his popular crime series and he grumbles to his daughter:

Life should be an adventure. You want to know why I killed Derrick? There were no more surprises. I knew exactly what was going to happen every moment of every scene. It’s like these parties. They become so predictable: “I’m your biggest fan,” “Where do you get your ideas?” ... Just once, I’d like someone to come up to me and say something new. (Marlowe & Bowman, 2009a)

Right on cue, a woman walks up to him, flashes her badge, and states, “Mr. Castle? Detective Kate Beckett. NYPD. We need to ask you a few questions about a murder that took place earlier tonight” (Marlowe & Bowman, 2009a).

As the episode unfolds, viewers learn that the flower bedecked corpse was killed in a fashion exactly like a character in one of Castle’s novels and Detective Kate Beckett asks for Castle’s assistance in the case as together they dig through his more disturbing fan-mail and eventually unravel the clues to this elaborate murder. In the episode’s final scene, Castle weasels his way into the precinct, calling in a favor from the mayor of New York City, and becomes Beckett’s partner so that he can study her as inspiration for his new crime series, which focuses on a “tough but savvy female detective” (Marlowe & Bowman, 2009a).

Castle’s pilot episode self-referentially introduces important themes regarding the crime genre. First, the protagonist complains of genre fatigue – Castle is bored with the familiarity of his crime series. Then, Kate Beckett arrives, providing the perfect solution to Castle’s boredom and he reinvents his approach to the crime genre, providing a twist on his usual narratives by featuring a different type of protagonist. Just as the character, Castle, searches for a “new” take on the crime genre, the series, *Castle*, also attempts a “new” twist on the familiar TV genre of crime dramas: partnering together a man and woman, one of whom is not a law enforcement officer, and focusing on romance even in the pilot episode, this series marks a significant change in the crime genre. Commenting on this generic shift, *Castle*’s creator and executive producer, Andrew Marlowe remarked that he had taken a familiar genre and “blow[n] it up” (Ng, 2011). Ironically, however, *Castle* is the fourth concurrent prime-time broadcast series to partner together a male and

female detective, only one of whom works for a law enforcement agency, and to develop a strong focus on romantic tensions between the career partners. *Castle* joined FOX's series *Bones* (2005 -) and *Fringe* (2008 -), and CBS's *The Mentalist* (2008 -) in this new generic twist.

Television genres change as new series tweak existing patterns. For example, in 1981, *Cagney & Lacey* debuted on the CBS network, adding a new twist to the classic crime genre: unlike the popular series *Starsky & Hutch* (1975-1979) and *Chips* (1977-1983), *Cagney & Lacey* engaged a "feminist consciousness" by portraying two women as the central characters and "buddy cops" who solved crimes together (D'Acci, 1994). In 1993, *The X-Files* continued this trend of "feminist consciousness," as it too tested the boundaries of crime dramas, this time by partnering a man and woman together and turning "buddy cops" into a slow-moving romance while adding science-fiction into the classic procedural format (Badley, 2000). *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*'s recent proliferation, however, marks a significant shift as together they popularize a new crime drama iteration. This new iteration is dependent upon what the series themselves and popular TV reviews regard as a "gender reversal" since these narratives feature female detectives who are strong, independent scientist-types and partner them with male detectives who are intuitive, sensitive, and domesticated (Mitchell, 2006).

Drawing on rhetorical, media, and feminist theories, this dissertation is a close analysis of how these four popular prime-time programs are revising the crime genre. Essentially, I argue that by foregrounding these "gender reversed" characters, the TV industry has mixed the crime genre with the genre of romantic comedy, creating series that maintain the procedural format at the episode level but sew episodes together into

story-arcs and running plotlines using the algorithms of romantic comedy. However, in order to merge these disparate narrative formats, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* draw on postfeminist motifs to suture these crime and romantic comedy genres together. Within feminist media scholarship, “postfeminism” broadly refers to the current cultural trend that assumes gender equality and therefore dismisses feminism as a political movement that is no longer necessary (Dow, 1996; McRobbie, 2009).

Through a critical analysis of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, I argue that these series perform a sleight-of-hand, reproducing patriarchy in the name of equality. In selecting *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, I have chosen programs that exemplify the problematic nature of using postfeminist motifs to combine genres in our current television landscape. Both individually and collectively, these series reify patriarchy even as they position female characters as scientific and partner together men and women in “equitable” relationships. These four series have debuted on major broadcast networks (FOX, ABC, and CBS) and risen to popularity between 2005 and 2009. Moreover, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* all utilize the same narrative structure, making the same “twists” on the familiar crime genre as they build romantic tension between the detective partners. Finally, these four series position one detective outside the law enforcement agency, creating an unlikely pairing of a “standard-issue model” partnered to a “sleuth-with-something-extra” (McNamara, 2009). For example, *Bones* partners an academic forensic anthropologist with an FBI agent and *Castle*, as seen above, partners a fiction novelist with a NYPD homicide detective.

This research joins communication scholarship in genre theory, rhetorical studies, media studies, and feminist studies, as I work to reinvigorate rhetorical genre studies

through a feminist critical analysis of TV entertainment. This dissertation makes three important contributions to communication scholarship. First, this dissertation is embedded in rhetorical genre studies and seeks to reconceptualize genre as a theoretical and critical concept within rhetorical studies. By focusing on television entertainment – instead of political speech-acts – this research conceptualizes genres as they are culturally produced. Essentially, my focus is on the nexus of industry production, textual form, and reception practices as the creators, the text, and the viewers all enact a *rhetoric of genre*. That is, society engages in genre-rhetoric in a rather common sense and mundane manner as individuals differentiate between genres by drawing on cultural knowledge. As discussed at length below, rhetoricians have conceptualized genre in a variety of ways, striving to produce genre theories that productively enable critics to better analyze texts. This dissertation joins in this effort, furthering rhetorical genre studies by focusing on entertainment television and arguing that genres are best understood as cultural productions. Furthermore, I present sewing metaphors as an alternative to the jargon of “hybridity,” which invokes a limiting biological metaphor in rhetorical genre studies, and posit that genre mixing often fulfills aesthetic exigencies in addition or even instead of more traditionally conceptualized situational exigencies.

Second, this dissertation adds to communication scholarship by placing the diverse areas of rhetorical, media, and gender studies in direct conversation. Drawing on all three of these aspects of communication scholarship to holistically assess the role that gender plays in these four series’ generic innovations, I have worked to augment the conceptualization of TV entertainment and genres within rhetorical studies. Additionally, this research works to make rhetorical theory and criticism more applicable to feminist

media scholars. To this end, this dissertation is methodologically attentive and I have combined approaches common to media studies and rhetorical studies. For example, in keeping with media studies, I have selected texts based on industry-related distinctions (all four series air on broadcast TV during prime time) and broadened my texts to include the entirety of the genre iterations – which includes over four-hundred episodes of TV programming. However, in keeping with rhetorical studies, I work closely with the texts, focusing on the dialogue, scenes, characters, settings, and narrative forms of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. Throughout this research, my concern is with the text: what these programs are and how they function in society.

This dissertation's third major contribution relates directly to these four television programs and the ways in which our society conceptualizes them. Here, I argue that these series have merely brushed a postfeminist glaze over patriarchal narratives. Essentially, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* feature “pre-feminist ideals” as “post-feminist freedoms” (Gill & Herdieckerhoff, 2006). In 2011, the average U.S. citizen watched thirty-four hours of TV each week (Stelter, 2011), and during the 2010-2011 season, *The Mentalist* averaged over 15 million viewers per episode, while *Bones* and *Castle* had over 11 million viewers on average, and *Fringe* – which airs on Friday nights – had almost 6 million viewers per episode (Gorman, 2011). These series are not inconsequential. Rather, they target audiences, are popularly received, fair well in TV's ratings system, sell advertising time, and millions of U.S. citizens tune in each week to watch these programs. They are enjoyable, fun, comforting, and genuinely entertaining. They are also touted as progressive crime series that portray gender equality through their “co-ed” detective partnerships and “gender reversals” (McDaniel, 2005; Mitchell, 2006;

Willow, 2005). In analyzing *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, I bring the theoretical and critical apparatuses of both rhetorical and media studies to bear upon these popular television programs. In so doing, I argue that even these series which are heralded for their gender equality reproduce patriarchy in a smoke-and-mirrors game.

Finally, this dissertation joins and contributes to a very specific scholarly conversation focused on the development, production, textual features, implications and influences of crime genre TV programming. Crime drama scholarship traces the history of the genre back through pulp fiction (Inciardi & Dee, 1987), considers the affordances of this genre (Riggs, 1996), investigates the gendered portrayals through feminist critical analyses (Scharrer 2001; Nunn & Biressi 2003; Malin, 2010), evaluates the racial depictions (Gates, 2004), explores the simultaneous discourse of objectivity and scientific investigation (Sydney-Smith, 2007), and examines the spectacle of the body as portrayed on television (Jermyn, 2007; Panse, 2007; Dean-Ruzicka, 2009). As such, this dissertation is located in a scholarly conversation that has already traced the history of the crime genre and outlined its generic form (Harriss, 2008). My research extends this scholarship by putting it in conversation with genre theories, critical methodologies, and assessing the changes in generic forms as *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* use postfeminist motifs to sew together the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy.

To better contextualize how these contributions further communication scholarship, I will first discuss the principle ways in which genres are conceptualized within communication scholarship. Next, this chapter will discuss the central tenets of postfeminism as discussed within feminist media scholarship. Finally, this chapter will

provide an overview of this dissertation, including a preview of the chapters' organization.

Genre in Rhetorical and TV Studies

Genres, in theory, criticism, and practice, are old: most genre scholars trace the origins of genre studies at least back to Aristotle's differentiations between forensic, deliberative, and epideictic speeches and comedic, tragic, and epic art (Edgerton & Rose, 2005; Fischer, 1980; Jamieson & Campbell, 1982; Miller, 1984; Mittell, 2004; Neale, 2001). Within rhetorical theory, genres are typically conceived of as generalized categories (Fischer, 1980) which name a group of texts that share a dynamic "fusion of elements" such as style, substance, form, and situation (Jamieson & Campbell, 1982, p. 146). This broad definition is largely dependent on the theories and criticism of Edwin Black and Lloyd Bitzer.

Black's landmark monograph, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (1965), explicitly sanctioned a generic approach to criticism as he critiqued the then dominant neo-Aristotelian mode of rhetorical criticism. Arguing that there are modes of discourse characterized by different rhetorical strategies, Black advocated that critics closely study rhetorical speech-acts, paying particular attention to form and locating "clusters" or genres of discourse based on recurrent situations and forms (Campbell & Jamieson, 1975, p. 14). Bitzer's detailed analysis of the situational components of rhetorical action furthered genre theory by providing a vocabulary that "permits critics to compare and contrast rhetorical situations," thereby thinking generically about not just the text, but the

text's context (Campbell & Jamieson, 1975, p. 14). Bitzer argued that rhetoric is always a fitting response to a rhetorical situation, which is comprised of an exigence, an audience, and constraints (Bitzer, 1968). Since, theoretically, "comparable situations prompt comparable responses" (Campbell & Jamieson, 1975, p. 15), genre studies within rhetorical criticism has often lingered over the nature of the situation, and – as discussed below – has repeatedly looked to the concept of a rhetorical situation to ground genre theory.

Genre is regularly and conveniently defined through its etymologically link to genus as a "class" or "group" of things (Campbell, 2009, p. 258; Downey, 1993, p. 42; Fischer, 1980, p. 291; Harrell & Linkugel, 1978, p. 263; Murphy, 2003, p. 608;). Yet this easy definition often leads to a "taxonomical fascination" as critics "treat the classification of discourse as an end in itself" (Hart, 1986, p. 292). In this currently much reviled mode of criticism, genres become categories of comparison, but the critique ends with assigning a text to a particular genre, distinguishing between genres, or noting the relationships among genres and subgenres. It is towards this taxonomic end that Harrell and Linkugel's essay, "On Rhetorical Genre: An Organizing Perspective" (1978), created a classification system, generating genres of genre criticism and Fischer (1980) created a catalogue of genre studies by organizing political genre analyses into five different genres of criticism.

This taxonomic fascination seems to do little critical work. Instead of helping both critics and our broader society make sense of a text's form, style, function, and effect, this taxonomic impetus instead slices our world into smaller and smaller slivers, attaching a label to each slice – regardless of whether the label is as common-sensical as

“inaugurals” (Harrell & Linkugel, 1978) or as obscure as “ontological detective narratives” (Bellon, 1999). Yet this taxonomic impetus is strong, in part because the urge to classify discourse by groups seems like a natural extension of a mode of criticism that rests on “comparison and contrast” as critics “perceive similarities and differences” while “identifying forms, strategies, and arguments” (Benoit, 2000; Campbell, 2009, p. 258). Genre theorists, however, tend to reject the taxonomic fascination, arguing that “criticism is not a contest to discover the best niche” (Campbell, 2009, p. 259). As theorists reject the taxonomic urge and its cookie-cutter applications, genre criticism has been re-theorized within rhetorical studies as a mode of criticism which is useful in understanding how a “particular discourse unfolds and appeals” or put more simply, “how it functions” (Campbell, 2009, p. 259).

Yet as genre theorists such as Campbell, Jamieson, and Miller purposefully steered away from taxonomic considerations of genre, they troubled the definition of genre. In using genre criticism to understand how a text functions in society instead of using genre criticism to place a text into an organizational schema of other texts, they veered away from definitionally associating “genre” with “class” and “groupings.” This opened a continuing debate of what a genre actually is (Fischer, 1980). Jamieson and Campbell (1982) bulkily defined genre as a “dynamic fusion of substantive, stylistic, and situational elements and as constellations that are strategic responses to the demands of the situation and the purposes of the rhetor” (p. 146). Building on Jamieson and Campbell’s definition, Miller (1984) further added that a genre is more than a “formal entity” centered on form or substance (p. 153). Continuing, Miller stipulated that a genre

should be understood as a “pragmatic, fully rhetorical ... point of connection between intention and effect” and as an aspect of “social action” (1984, p. 153).

In turning away from a text’s form – its combination of style and substance – as the basis for generic distinctions since this type of criticism often led to taxonomic endeavors, genre studies turned to situational elements. The connection here is theoretically sound: if the interesting thing about a genre is its social action or function in our culture (i.e. what it *does*), then critics should look to its situation, interrogating what it was intended to do or – and here Bitzer’s terminology comes into play – what exigence the genre is meeting. Increasingly, then, genre theory ties directly to situational considerations. For example, Darsey states that in order to understand McCarthy’s use of the genre of the fantastic, it is necessary to focus on the exigence, which he broadly locates as the cultural elements of the 1950s that made “the rhetoric of the fantastic so fitting” and “made Americas so susceptible” to it (1995, p. 67).

By considering the situational elements, especially exigence, genre critics have engaged in biological terminology, using the metaphor of hybridity to describe texts that seem to combine forms of two or more genres (Ekdom Vande Berg, 1989; Harriss, 2008; Jamieson & Campbell, 1982; Kelley-Romano, 2008; Miller & Van Riper, 2011; Morris, 2011; Murphy, 2003; Picart, 2004; Rose, 2003). The idea here is that the exigence or broader situation has at least two competing needs and therefore invokes or produces a “hybrid” text that attempts to meet both needs by mixing generic forms. Unfortunately, this biological metaphor bears a taxonomic soul: a “hybrid” is the “descendant” of two different “species.” As critics use the language of hybridity, we fall back into the

taxonomic considerations of purity, ancestry, familial relations, species and genus configurations, evolution, and nature.

Just as the biological metaphor grinds its way towards taxonomy, the situational approach to genre theory can also generate taxonomic criticism, and – therefore – has its detractors. Essentially, these critiques suggest that tying a genre to its situational elements – especially its exigence – is too reductionist and, therefore, ignores other important components of the genre and the text. For example, Benoit (2000) suggested that genre critics have merely traded in a taxonomic fascination for a situational obsession, stating that the lineage of Black, Bitzer, Campbell and Jamieson has left rhetorical genre theory with the assumption that the situation – regardless of other factors – is the “force responsible for discourse production” (p. 179). Benoit rightly critiques the situational obsession that has developed out of Campbell, Jamieson, and Miller’s theoretical work. Not that Campbell, Jamieson, or Miller’s generic criticism or theory is reductionist or obsessed with the rhetorical situation, but rather, as Gunn and Frenz argue (2008), their theories are simplified when applied in genre criticism, which results in a situational obsession. Benoit further suggests that the focus on situational elements simply adds a secondary layer onto the taxonomic fascination. That is, instead of categorizing by form, critics now categorize by situations.

Unfortunately, Benoit’s solution is less than satisfactory. Benoit simply adds Burke’s concept of “pentadic ratios” to the theoretical structure of Black, Bitzer, Campbell, Jamieson, and Miller. As such, Benoit suggests that instead of looking only to situational elements (exigence, audience, and constraints) as the genesis of rhetorical action, critics should also look to the interplay of purpose-act, scene-act, agent-act, and

agency-act (2000, p. 182). What makes this a less than ideal answer to the situational obsession and its version of taxonomy is that these four ratios are largely situational. Granted, this depends on one's definitions; but loosely speaking, the purpose of an act is closely related to the exigence since – as broadly understood – the purpose of a speech-act is to meet an exigence. Similarly, the relationship between the agent and the act can be conceptualized as a careful consideration of constraints, since our own histories, personalities, experiences, bodies, and perspectives constrain us as rhetors. As such, rather than steering genre theory away from situational elements, Benoit seemingly calls for much more thorough and systematic situational genre criticism.

Gunn and Frentz (2008) also decry the situational obsession, suggesting that generic criticisms that devolve into formulaic critiques and/or “useless taxonomies” are to blame for the “sadly underused methods of generic criticism” (p. 215-216). Returning to Campbell and Jamieson (1982) and Miller's (1984) accounts of genre theory as concerned with social action, Gunn and Frentz attempt to avoid the pitfalls of situation-based and taxonomic definitions by stipulating that genres concern “the recognition of patterns that inhere, not in a given text, but in the minds of a given public or audience” (2008, p. 216). As such, Gunn and Frentz locate genres as largely residing in the minds of audience members, stating that “genre refers fundamentally to *mental events* in relation to some object or token of repetition, like a text” (p. 216, italics added). As alluring as this definition is, it is rather lacking in concrete applications for genre-based rhetorical criticism.

The vast majority of generic criticism focuses on political speech-acts (Bradford, 2006; Campbell, 1995; Campbell & Jamieson, 1978; Darsey, 1995; Downey, 1993;

Jamieson, 1975; Jamieson & Campbell, 1982; Miller 1984; Murphy, 2003; Ware & Linkugel, 1973). Since genre theory is largely developed in rhetorical studies out of grounded, critical analyses, rhetoric's genre theory is shaped by its case-studies of political speeches. Therefore, to expand rhetorical studies' approach to genre theory, I have chosen entertainment television programs as my texts. In so doing, I am also engaging in media studies' conceptualizations of genre and generic criticism. By engaging in television scholars' considerations of genre and in focusing on the entertainment texts *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, I am working towards a conceptualization of genre that continues Campbell, Jamieson, Miller, Gunn, and Frenzt's focus on social action and the cultural function of genres without resorting to situation-based definitions or Gunn and Frenzt's indistinct "mental events."

Just as rhetoricians trace genre theory back to Aristotle's writings, television studies has historically understood genre in relation to Aristotle's notion of mimesis, that art itself is an imitation of life. Classifying all art forms as mimesis leads to focusing "primarily on the artworks themselves ... examining them for the types of articulation and the kinds of actions they reveal," thereby making generic distinctions (such as comedy, tragedy, and epic) between art forms (Edgerton & Rose, 2005, p. 2). As articulated in this theoretical perspective, genre is useful mainly as a way to differentiate between texts, and we can see media studies – much like some iterations of genre theory within rhetorical studies – conceptualizing genres as a system of categorization.

By analyzing the generic forms of TV texts, we can categorize TV programs by recurring formulaic patterns, creating distinctions between TV programming as Rose did in *TV Genres* (1985), where he distinguished among:

Police series, detective shows, Westerns, medical melodramas, science fiction and fantasy TV, situation comedies, soap operas, American made for TV movies, docudramas, news, documentaries, sports telecasting, game shows, variety shows, talk shows, children's programming, educational and cultural programming, religious programming, and television commercials. (Edgerton & Rose, 2005, p. 4)

Within media studies – as with rhetorical studies – generic criticism continues to operate, to some extent, in a differentiating or taxonomic capacity. However, when considering television entertainment, the process of categorization becomes quickly frustrated by the increasingly complicated difficulty in identifying “where the text should stop” (Hartley, 1984, p. 120). That is, in television the genre categorization may change depending on the unit of analysis. Different units of analysis – an episode, the series, the network's schedule, or the flow of programming – can render different generic categorizations.

Therefore, by thinking less textually and more contextually, television theorists have reconceptualized genre, largely abandoning the concept of genre as static categorical distinctions. Rather, critical-cultural theorists suggest that genre is a process that draws on a “broader system of signification” based on the interrelations of “creative, technological, industrial, institutional, and reception-related practices” (Edgerton & Rose, 2005, p. 7). The move from considering genre textually to contextually hinges on the distinction between “conceiving genre as a textual *category* and treating it like a textual *component*” (Mittell, 2004, p. 7). Essentially, genres can function to divide texts into different categories, but genre is not solely inherent to the text.

Here, we can see similarities between the development of genre theory in recent rhetorical and media studies. Both rhetoric and media studies have moved away from taxonomic uses of generic analysis. Both rhetoric and media studies have focused

beyond the text: rhetoric moved to a consideration of situational elements and media studies moved to a simultaneous consideration of the industry production, textual elements, and reception practices. And both rhetoric and media studies recognize that genres inhere – at least in part – in the audience’s uptake, reception, use, and function for a genre. But while rhetorical studies left this with Gunn and Frenzt’s indistinct “mental event,” media studies has continued to toy with relationships among a genre’s situations, rhetors, production, texts, forms, audiences, and functions.

Genres are not neutral: there is a politics in naming and in the popularity of different generic forms (Newcomb, 2004). Yet genres are routine and common-place, and in studying genres critics focus on the “regularities in rhetorical life” (Murphey, 2003, p. 608). Media scholars are quick to point out that TV genres are deeply influenced by economic interests as networks seek to produce cheap programming with a wide audience appeal and clear advertising connections (Gitlin, 1979; Neale 2001; Newcomb, 2004; Rose, 2003; Turner, 2001). Because of the close connection between entertainment industries and cultural practices, both rhetorical scholars (Gunn & Frenzt, 2008) and media scholars (Gitlin, 1979; Newcomb, 2004; Rose, 2003) have suggested that it is illuminating to “trace the transformations in a genre” (Gitlin, 1979, p. 258), since genre changes are indicative of broader cultural changes.

Thinking in broad genre categories such as “hip-hop” and “romantic comedies,” Gunn and Frenzt suggested that wherever cultural industries and commercialization are involved, we should expect rigid, ossified, and formulaic genre conventions with “little innovation” (2008, p. 216). Television scholars, however, who are more closely attuned to the practices of production and focus more narrowly on particular types of genres have

suggested that the genre landscape is undergoing distinct changes as television programming develops in relation to changing political economies, technology, and viewership habits (Andrejevic, 2009; Chamberlain, 2010; Lotz, 2007; McAllister, 2010). For example, as cable networks proliferate, television programming has become branded as the broadcast and cable networks increasingly compete for niche audiences. As each network attempts to brand itself through its logo, tagline, and program recognition, thereby “intensifying the connection between a channel and its target audience,” television genres can function as part of a network’s brand (Edgerton & Nicholas, 2005, p. 252). As such, some networks have become synonymous with their primary genre. For example, the Disney Channel equates to children’s shows, the Discovery Channel to educational programming, and ESPN to sports telecasting.

Understanding this industrial change as networks brand themselves by invoking genres (such as “children’s shows”) and the intense demand for “new” content as hundreds of channels air new episodes each day, Newcomb has suggested that “almost all conventional aspects of genre have become open to experimentation” (2004, p. 425). Here, TV scholars suggest that, given the changing industrial and reception practices (as viewers have more choices and more technologies through which to access “TV” content), genres are radically changing, blurring, mixing, and re-combining. Rhetorical scholars tied this type of genre mixing in speeches to mixed or complex situations and invoked a biological metaphor by using the term “hybrid” to describe these mixtures. Media scholars also occasionally use the vocabulary of hybridity, but are increasingly veering away from this term because of its metaphoric baggage (Edgerton & Nichols, 2004; Mittell, 2004). The biological metaphor carries with it ideas of taxonomic purity

and a sense of “natural” mutation or evolution that suggests TV shows are breeding of their own accord: as if *Bonanza* and *Star Trek* got together and *Firefly* was the outcome.

In an attempt to side-step this metaphor, Edgerton & Nicholas (2005) prefer Gitlin’s term “recombinant” because it focuses the attention on the production end – revealing the scientist who combines DNA strands in petri-dishes. While “recombinant” does keep the production end in focus, it maintains the metaphoric allusions to biology, science, DNA, and cloning. Leery of these lingering metaphors, Mittell (2004) prefers the phrase “mixed genres,” which does not have the metaphoric power of either hybridity or recombinant but also does not carry their baggage. Throughout this dissertation, I present sewing metaphors as an alternative to the jargon of hybridity. Garments can be constructed from a variety of fabrics and can be stitched together, taken apart again, recombined, embroidered, hemmed, patched, and dyed. Sewing metaphors also imply a seamstress, thereby keeping the production and authorial elements in mind. Additionally, while the biological metaphor with its connections to recombinant DNA entails rather advanced technologies, sewing metaphors are open to a wide range of technologies, from hand-stitching to automated mass production. This enables sewing metaphors to better represent the types of media that genres inhabit over the centuries.

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* repurpose elements of the crime genre and the genre of romantic comedy, using postfeminist motifs as the thread that combines these two disparate narrative forms. These series are popular television programs and serve as dynamic entry points into a consideration of rhetoric, genre, gender, and television. Through this analysis, I work to reinvigorate genre studies within rhetorical scholarship by focusing on entertainment television, drawing on media genre theories,

and arguing that genres are best understood as cultural productions. This approach works to move rhetorical genre studies beyond issues of taxonomy by studying how the different elements of production practices, the text itself, and audience activities all engage in the rhetoric of genre. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* sew together the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy by using postfeminist motifs. In so doing, these four popular series draw upon the familiar stock of characters, scenes, and relationships that appear throughout U.S. entertainment as popular culture maintains the (patriarchal) status quo while making sense of feminist movements through postfeminist rhetoric.

Postfeminist Detectives

Postfeminism is a troubled term. It sounds almost celebratory: as if our culture has incorporated feminist ideologies and we are now entering an era that no longer needs feminism. However, most media scholars use the term “postfeminist” in a negative sense. That is, pointing to media depictions that portray a world where feminism is no longer necessary, scholars such as Angela McRobbie (2009) and Bonnie Dow (1996, 2006) suggest that these postfeminist portrayals are simply a “new kind of anti-feminist sentiment” where elements of feminism are “converted into a much more individualistic discourse” and then displayed in the media as a “kind of substitute for feminism” (McRobbie, 2009, p. 1). Yet even within academic discourse, “postfeminist” has a variety of meanings as scholars disagree on its origins, function, and effects. For example: Phoca and Wright (1999) trace the term back to French feminist theories of the

1960s, while Braithwaite (2002) conflates postfeminism with third-wave feminism, grounding it firmly in the 1990s.

Moreover, scholars such as Projansky (2001) and Gill (2007) have categorized different types, iterations and elements of postfeminist discourse. For example, Projansky (2001) differentiates between postfeminist discourses that situate men as manly yet nurturing and postfeminist discourses that focus on celebrating women's sexual pleasure in heterosexual contexts. Others, such as Stéphanie Genz (2009), have affirmed postfeminist discourse, arguing that postfeminist media texts are positive because they successfully portray a new type of femininity. Finally, scholars such as Susan Douglas (2010) have abandoned the term, arguing that "postfeminism" is too confusing of a word, and using the phrase "enlightened sexism" instead to describe the media's portrayals of femininity since the 1990s.

To support their nuanced definitions, these scholars usually cite examples from popular culture, focusing on television and film characters such as Ally McBeal, Bridget Jones, Buffy, Xena, Lara Croft, Carrie Bradshaw, and the women of *Desperate Housewives* and *Grey's Anatomy* (Dow, 1996, 2006; Douglas, 2010; Gill, 2007; Genz, 2009; Hill, 2010; Inness, 1999; McRobbie, 2009; Southard, 2008). Despite the ambiguity surrounding the term "postfeminism" and its various, often contradictory uses, postfeminism is theorized as a media construct that functions in response to second-wave feminism. Within this literature, which I will discuss below, postfeminism is generally considered to have four key elements within U.S. media culture: 1) postfeminism suggests feminism is dead; 2) postfeminism is linked to consumerism; 3) postfeminism

collapses the boundaries between entertainment and real life; and 4) postfeminist narratives feature career stories but focus on relational drama.

Generally, feminist media scholars agree that postfeminism is a pervasive, cultural sentiment that insists feminism is over. Essentially, postfeminist entertainment portrays a world where equality is the status quo. For example, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* each focus on a workplace, situating women in positions of power that real-world women rarely experience (Douglas, 2010) and without acknowledging that feminism has been instrumental in providing these limited opportunities. While many TV comedies reinvent feminism, selectively defining it as “shrill, bellicose, and parsimonious,” thereby inventing a social memory of feminism as unwelcome and “implicitly censorious” (Tasker & Negra, 2007, p. 1, 3), these crime programs ignore feminism altogether. Instead of caricaturing feminism and then demonstrating that the U.S. no longer needs these unpleasant voices, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* simply pretend feminism does not exist. Creating a fictional world, they construct representations of U.S. culture where sexism has never occurred and women have equal opportunities: in two of the four series, women are the directors for the crime unit, and in three of the four series, women are the law enforcement officers while the men have other primary careers as an author, fake psychic, or jack-of-all-trades on *Castle*, *The Mentalist*, and *Fringe*, respectively. Essentially, postfeminism is the simultaneous pronouncement of equality and disparagement or avoidance of the political entity (feminism) that works to achieve this equality. Here, postfeminism simply asserts equality without reference to lived experience, forcing feminism to assume a past-tense status: feminism *worked* to achieve equality.

Essentially, postfeminism suggests that equality is simply common sense – a *de facto* right that women have already achieved. As such, postfeminist representations in the U.S. are often intertwined with nationalistic discourse. Postfeminism, within popular culture, represents the U.S. as so modern and egalitarian that it does not need feminism anymore; whereas other (Middle Eastern) countries need the U.S. to intervene and free their women (McRobbie, 2009, p. 1; Scott, 2007). Hence, postfeminism is understood as a “more complex relationship between culture, politics, and feminism” than the traditional forms of backlash (Tasker & Negra, 2007, p. 1).

Second, postfeminism is understood as inherently linked to consumerism. Postfeminism “works to commodify feminism via the figure of woman as empowered consumer” (Tasker & Negra, 2007, p. 2). Within a postfeminist culture, women seeking empowerment do not look for sisterhood, assert their rights, or complain about sexist behavior. Rather, women seeking empowerment buy the right clothes, purchase breast implants, or carry designer handbags. Essentially, postfeminism is a return to the “problem without a name,” not because women have not heard of patriarchy, but because our culture suggests that feminism was entirely successful, as evidenced by women’s consumer status. Even as fashion shows proliferate on network and cable programming (Lotz, 2006, p. 62), clothing functions as a marker of power in these crime series. While the women on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* do not spend their time shopping or discussing their shopping plans and purchases (unlike earlier postfeminist series such as *Sex in the City* and tween versions of postfeminist television such as *Hannah Montana*, *Gilmore Girls*, and *Kim Possible*), their power-suits are proof of their empowerment. Here, women’s access to the marketplace becomes not only the means of empowerment,

but also the proof of empowerment. In losing feminism to an endless cycle of consumption, postfeminism has created “new forms of female confinement,” substituting the shopping mall for the home (McRobbie, 2009, p. 122).

Third, postfeminism collapses the distance between popular culture and real women. Postfeminism claims that the women portrayed on TV are just like real women. This was clearly illustrated on the cover of the June 29, 1998 issue of *Time* magazine, which pictured Susan B. Anthony, Betty Friedan, Gloria Steinem, and Ally McBeal as the four faces of feminism. This cover of *Time* magazine clearly linked postfeminism to the conflation of fiction and reality with the headline, “Is Feminism Dead?” Postfeminist discourse “moves between ‘real’ women and fictional women ... without considering any differences between them” (Projansky, 2001, p. 89). This is problematic because the postfeminist representations of women in popular culture erase the complexity of women’s lived experiences.

Finally, postfeminist entertainment features career-oriented stories but focuses on relational drama (Lotz, 2006, p. 147). At each level of narrative development – the series as a whole, the story arcs, and the individual episodes – these programs focus on relational drama. For example, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* each feature a running romance between the partners that structures the series as a whole, while the story arcs involve mysteries about family members, and the episodes are fueled by disputes between friends and significant others. Moreover, *Bones* and *Castle* rely on the same relationally driven narrative to structure their primary story arc in the first three seasons: on both *Bones* and *Castle* the female detectives’ mothers have died, and the series construct multi-seasoned story-arcs in which the detectives piece together clues

revealing that their mothers were murdered and then track down the villains. By focusing on domestic, familial, and relational drama, postfeminist entertainment constructs fictional worlds where the political is rearticulated as personal.

Here, we see an overlap between postfeminism and neoliberalism (Vavrus, 2002) as these crime series reframe significant political issues as private concerns. For example, in the eighth episode of *The Mentalist*'s first season (Woodruff & Beesley, 2008), the storyline revolves around an impoverished woman, Patrice Madigan, who is murdered along with a known drug dealer. The woman's baby survives, and Patrick Jane, the lead male detective (and previously fake-psychic), reluctantly surrenders the baby to social services, fearing the baby will not be treated well in foster care. As the plotline develops, Patrice Madigan is suspected of drug abuse, adultery, and extortion. However, the episode's conclusion reveals that she was an innocent victim: Patrice Madigan was the illegitimate daughter of Detective Dale Blakely who hid his affair from his middle-class family, which resulted in his former lover raising Patrice alone in poverty, a cycle she repeats with her own infant – Detective Dale Blakely's granddaughter. Moreover, in an unexpected twist, Patrice was inadvertently killed by her half-brother, rookie Officer Sam Blakely, who then attempted to cover up his crime. This narrative touches on the systemic social issues of poverty, abandonment, drug abuse, infidelity, police cover-ups, and foster-care. However, without addressing any of these issues, the episode has a touching closing sequence as Patrick Jane brings the orphaned infant to Detective Dale Blakely's house, so that the infant can be raised by her grandfather and his wife – a woman who is grieving over her own son's incarceration (he illegally killed Patrice and the drug dealer) and the shock of her husband's previous

infidelity. Sweeping these social issues under the proverbial rug, *The Mentalist* focuses on relational drama, transforming these political problems into private concerns.

These crime series, which feature a man and woman as unlikely but established career partners, clearly participate in these postfeminist textual elements. That is, the content of these programs asserts that feminism is no longer relevant, models a consumerist ideology, collapses the distance between fictional narratives and lived experiences, and reframes career stories to focus on relational drama. This dissertation suggests that *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* go beyond the occasional incorporation of postfeminist themes. Rather, these four series have integrated postfeminist themes to the extent that they become recurring textual features that function to stitch together the genres of crime dramas and romantic comedies.

In selecting *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* for analysis, I have necessarily limited the scope of this project: many other TV programs (such as *Glee*) mix generic forms, and other crime series currently popular on broadcast TV (such as *CSI*, *NCIS*, and *Law & Order*) incorporate postfeminist themes. The crime genre is highly regulated and fairly stable. Crime programming – such as police and procedural shows – follows strict formats that constrain both the narrative structure and the visual styles (Robards, 1985). Crime programming is typically set in urban landscapes, generally features a murder in each episode, focuses on morally good characters, and invariably demonstrates that good triumphs over evil, closing each episode on the conservative note that “crime does not pay” (Norden, 1985, p. 51). I have selected these *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* because they systematically utilize postfeminist themes to combine the crime genre with romantic comedy.

Organization and Scope of Dissertation Project

Organized into six chapters, this dissertation builds on the work of genre theorists in both rhetorical and media studies as well as the critical work of feminist media scholars. This first chapter has laid the groundwork by narrating the current scholarly conversations and theories of genre studies in the fields of both rhetorical and media studies. This chapter has also provided an overview of ways in which feminist media critics have defined, described, and conceptualized postfeminism. Finally, this chapter has established my case study and central claim that *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* use postfeminist motifs to weave together the genres of crime dramas and romantic comedies.

Since television is based in a repetitive logic, in which the industry thrives by replicating content, the partnerships on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* owe much to earlier incarnations and generic predecessors. Therefore, the second chapter historically traces the trajectory of detective partners on U.S. television, focusing on the 1960s to 2000 and the integration of crime dramas and romantic comedies into a fused genre.

The third and fourth chapters focus specifically on the gendered representations of the female and male detectives, respectively. These chapters work very closely with the television programs, carefully analyzing the dialogue, scene sequences, overarching plotlines, and their representation and reception in popular culture as evidenced through TV reviews in national news sources (such as *The New York Times* and the film/TV-industry magazine *Variety*). These chapters carefully assess how postfeminist influences

have affected the detectives' characters and how these changes to the detectives' characteristics affect the traditional plot structure of these crime dramas.

The fifth chapter then focuses explicitly on an examination of the overarching plot structures that unfold in story-arcs and the characters' development throughout these series. Essentially, this chapter considers how postfeminist motifs have constrained and shaped the characters and plotlines by combining the genres of crime and romantic comedy.

The sixth and final chapter concludes this dissertation by exploring the theoretical implications of this criticism, discussing how postfeminism participates in *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* and assessing the rhetorical nature of television genres, how TV genres change, and how they function in society.

Chapter 2

Equal Partners? Co-Ed Detective Agencies on TV

Television is inherently a repetitive medium (Kompare, 2010). Essentially, the television industry makes a profit by selling audiences to advertisers. The major networks (ABC, NBC, CBS, and FOX) and non-subscription cable channels (such as USA, FX, and TNT) want to air programming that will draw a mass audience but that is not too expensive to produce. Since new drama series are expensive, for example, the production of the pilot episode of *Lost* cost approximately \$12 million (Mittell, 2010, p. 259), the networks and cable channels rely on a system of repetition and reproduction.

This system of repetition has broad implications for television programming. At the scheduling level, this logic of repetition affects daytime programming, which relies heavily on reruns as networks broadcast previously successful series that are now in syndication (Kompare, 2009). At the level of episode formats, this logic of repetition affects the nature or structure of talk-shows, game-shows, variety-shows, and reality-shows. These types of programming operate according to formats that are easily replicated from one episode to the next and from season to season (Moran, 2009). For example, each episode of *Wheel of Fortune* looks exactly like all of the other episodes.

Dominating the television industry, this model of repetition and replication permeates even the new programming. Some series simply remake previous storylines; for example, the CW's *Nikita* (2010 -) is a reinvention of the Canadian series, *La Femme Nikita*, itself a remake of the French film, *Nikita*. In other instances, a successful narrative will generate spinoffs that replicate its format and televisual style (Caldwell,

1995). For example, CBS airs *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, and its two spinoff series: *CSI: Miami* and *CSI: NY*.

A clear system of reproduction is at work at the level of advertisements, program scheduling, program formats, and storylines for new programming. However, this logic of replication operates in an even more fundamental sense. As discussed in the introductory chapter, the television industry operates generically: the production (the creators, writers, and directors) and reception (the viewers) depend on a logic of genres (Mittell, 2004). Genres have textual conventions, or generic elements, and for a series to be part of a genre, it must conform to those textual conventions. Yet genres operate culturally as a society engages in the rhetoric of genre in a common sense manner. Drawing on cultural knowledge, individuals engage in the rhetoric of genre as they differentiate between homely genres (Miller, 1984) such as instruction manuals, cover letters, and emails as well as the genres of entertainment and political speech-acts. In focusing on crime dramas, I have selected a cultural genre: the crime genre can be subdivided into subgenres based on textual elements (Creeber, 2008; Pribram, 2011; Rose, 1985), but in adhering to the common sense, culturally normative use of the rhetoric of the crime genre, this analysis focuses on the ways in which *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* participate in crime drama programming. The variations within the crime genre contextualize these *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, providing a wide variety of options for re-combination as these series search for familiar themes and yet innovative material.

When *Bones* debuted in 2005, the FOX network trusted that this program would be both new and familiar. By combining the standard episode structure of crime dramas

with the characters, roles, and story-arcs of romantic comedy, *Bones* simultaneously affiliated with the crime genre and offered a new adaptation of this standard genre. After it had proven itself with strong ratings in its third season, FOX introduced another series with the same format, character roles, and themes, but tied this series, *Fringe*, to the science-fiction genre by adding a parallel universe and technology that is literally “out of this world.” Then, the other major networks developed programs in this renewed crime genre: CBS launched *The Mentalist* and ABC introduced *Castle*. All four programs are crime dramas with ensemble casts, that center on an unusual detective partnership where a man and a woman are career partners, but one of them is not employed by a law enforcement agency. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are, essentially, generic copies of each other.

The generic mixing and adaptations that *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* portray are not unusual; genres are not static. Rather, genres change over time and “some artistic texts are a mixture (or hybrid) of a number of different genres” (Creeber, 2008, p. 1). It is this tension between repetition and innovation that makes a historical study of television texts particularly relevant. While television relies on a logic of repetition, the industry constantly generates new content. As such, a historical perspective allows us to analyze how television adapts to its broader cultural contexts, simultaneously replicating and innovating current repetitive structures. This is particularly relevant since television operates as a public forum, meaning that national conversations are aired through entertainment narratives and news coverage (Newcomb & Hirsch, 1983). Through analyzing television texts, scholars can get an “accurate model” of the relevant

political/cultural conversations within the U.S., thereby tracking the history of U.S. social discussions (Newcomb & Hirsch, 1983, p. 50).

To better understand the generic conventions that *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* draw upon, replicate, parody, and deviate from, this chapter traces the historical development of the crime genre within U.S. entertainment. Broadly speaking, crime stories and detective characters have been popular since the 19th century, when Edgar Allen Poe and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's novels rose to prominence. This chapter will first outline the standard plot indigenous to the crime genre and then provide a brief overview of the genre iterations within U.S. popular culture, delineating the generic norms of crime dramas. Finally, this chapter will provide a more expansive and detailed analysis of historic representations of "co-ed" detective partnerships on popular U.S. television. Specifically, this chapter will focus on the gendered representations of detective partnerships on *Get Smart*, *Remington Steele*, and *The X-Files*, since these three popular series paired a man and woman together, developing a romance between career partners. As such, these older series are important cultural texts that *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* draw upon as they sew the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy together.

Fixed Plots

Narratives that participate in a genre share a recurring design: their narrative structures, styles, subject matters, and audience responses are similar (Butler, 2006). Although genres routinely operate outside of the text (they are generated through

exigencies, refined through production practices, utilized by audiences, and shape and constrain subject material), the text itself is an important site of generic action. Crime dramas follow a formulaic, multi-step narrative structure that predetermines each episode. Harriss (2008) has identified this narrative structure using a Proppian analysis (Propp, 1968, 1984), which reduces a narrative to its plot structure by “converting the actions and images exhibited on the screen into a manageable set of descriptive sentences (motifs) that are then generalized into a broad set of actions (functions)” (Harriss, 2008, p. 45). The idea here is that this reductionist analysis can reveal the underlying syntax or grammar of a genre.

Through his analysis, Harriss (2008) suggests that programs that participate in the crime genre adhere to the following procedure:

1. A crime or mystery occurs
 - a. This often occurs off-screen and/or is not visualized during the episode.
2. A crime or mystery is discovered
3. Investigation begins
 - a. Detectives receive the case and usually some background information.
 - b. Detectives change locations and begin investigation.
4. Investigation phases
 - a. Detectives find partial answers or false-answers, and physically search and interrogate informers/misinformers/experts.
 - b. Detectives discuss the case.
 - c. Detectives identify villain/false-villain.
 - d. Detectives apprehend and interrogate villain/false-villain.
 - e. Villain/false-villain provides information/misinformation.
5. Case is solved
 - a. Detectives discuss case and reach conclusion, identifying the villain. In some instances, this can be a false revelation and steps four and five repeat.
6. Villain apprehended
7. Resolution
 - a. Detectives discuss the case.

By outlining the syntax of the crime genre, Harriss focuses on the necessary textual elements or essential components of crime dramas. This allows him to “cut through” the mutable elements, side plots, character idiosyncrasies, and televisual style of crime genre programming (Harriss, 2008, p. 58). *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* certainly adhere to this sequencing or plot structure, clearly engaging in the crime genre.

However, it is precisely the “unnecessary” components (those that do not affect the coherence of the plot) that make these series generically innovative. Specifically, these series’ recurring design extends past the episodic plot sequence, affecting the characters, gender portrayals, running themes, cumulative plotlines, televisual style, and dialogue.

Crime programming generally follows the plot structure outlined above, and yet each new narrative within this genre attempts add some “fresh” element, making the story new again. For example, series often add elements from other genres or from their contemporary media scene: perhaps relocating the narrative to an urban or rural setting, or adding a second detective, or a comedic tone, or idiosyncratic personalities, or experimenting with visual styles. Yet even these “new” elements become generic as subsequent crime programming borrows from previous series. It is this tension between repetition and innovation that makes a historical study of television texts particularly relevant to this dissertation’s consideration how *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* use postfeminist motifs to sew together the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy. These four current series draw upon, replicate, parody, and deviate from generic conventions – both plot related and extraneous to the plot. Therefore, in tracing the developments and popular iterations of the crime genre within U.S. entertainment and specifically focusing in this chapter on the gendered partnerships in *Get Smart*,

Remington Steele, and *The X-Files*, I parse through the generic contexts that frame *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*.

Pipes, Badges, Capes, and Lock-Picks: Crime Narratives in U.S. History

The crime genre has a long history that encompasses a number of mediums and even more variations. That is, the crime genre has a variety of incarnations: the crime-fighting detective might be a cultured man of science, a frontier lawman, an armchair detective, a virtuous cop, a superhero, a tough FBI agent, a nice old lady, or a hardboiled private-eye. Regardless, these narratives generally follow the same procedure, maintaining the generic form even as they carve out different approaches to the standard crime story through the detective's idiosyncrasies and/or the nature of the setting – i.e. different environments feature different types of crimes, criminals, and detectives.

However, these different iterations are part of the context for the “co-ed” detective partners on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. Both producers and audiences are familiar with these different versions of the crime genre and therefore approach these TV series through their conceptualizations of these earlier genre iterations. The argument here is not that the version of the crime genre portrayed in *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* is a direct descendant or generic offspring of earlier versions of the genre. Rather, these genre iterations co-exist, becoming reference points that contextualize new narratives. That is, we understand *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* by putting them in conversation with other iterations of crime programming.

Crime-fighting heroes populate U.S. entertainment as these stories center around the tension between crime and law enforcement. These narratives dominated dime novels in the late 1800s as publishers like Beadle and Adams and Street & Smith published thousands of crime narratives. These dime novels predominantly portrayed two different types of detectives: the Western lawman and the urban super-sleuth (Inciardi & Dee, 1987). The Western stories focused on supposedly “true” stories and “documented” the exploits of frontier lawmen such as James Butler “Wild Bill” Hickok (Ingraham, 1884; Buel, 1880). These narratives glamorized the frontier, creating a version of the crime genre in which the hero was a male lawman who championed justice by shooting first.¹ In the urban setting, these dime novels portrayed scientific detectives who caught villains by following minute clues. These urban detectives closely mimicked the scientific model – surveying data, establishing and then testing hypotheses before revealing the results of their experiment and trapping the villain. Moreover, these urban detectives utilized scientific discourse throughout their narratives, eschewing guesswork and violence (Inciardi & Dee, 1987).

As dime novels gave way to pulp fiction magazines during the Depression, the popular detective narratives changed as well. The pulp detectives were largely private investigators who worked in seedy offices in large cities and distrusted the police and local politicians (Goulart, 1972). These jaded private-eyes boozed and womanized their way through each storyline, cutting corners that police are not allowed to and taking cases even though the clients could not pay. These were hardboiled detectives who worked outside the law, nursed their vices, and maintained a tough-guy persona despite

¹ These frontier stories are still popular and, notably, Wild Bill has a recent film adaptation (Hill, 1995).

having a soft spot for damsels in distress. These storylines constantly pitted the detective against the street-cop and patrol-man, invariably demonstrating that private detectives were smarter than the police, a fact the detective never failed to revel in (Inciardi & Dee, 1987). As pulp fiction magazines began to niche-market, focusing explicitly on class and gender, these detective narratives were predominantly sold to working-class males. For example, the magazine *Black Mask* was subtitled “The He-Man’s Magazine” (Smith, 2000) linking this lawless, hardboiled detective to masculinity in U.S. culture (Malin, 2010).

Pulp fiction also portrayed secret identity detectives, such as *The Shadow* and *The Whisperer*. These detectives were the opposite of the seedy hardboiled men who populated run-down offices and drank themselves into a stupor every night. Rather, these detectives were hard-working, upper-class men by day and crime-fighting vigilantes by night (Inciardi & Dee, 1987). These secret-identity detectives disappeared in the late 1940s, but they paved the way for comic book superheroes.

The superhero comics, such as *Superman* and *Batman*, largely portray city police as entirely incapable of dealing with crime. The police in these narratives are incompetent, dirty, or simply powerless against the onslaught of crime. Hence, these superheroes take to the streets exercising brain and brawn to curb crime while keeping their identities secret. Like the frontier detectives, these superheroes are unquestionably good but have difficulty maintaining romantic relationships. Like the private-eyes in pulp fiction, they work outside the legal system.

As pulp fiction magazines petered out in the later 1940s, broadcast radio began to air crime programming. Radio borrowed from earlier media, using both “characters and

story lines” that had been popular in literature, dime novels, pulp fiction, and comic books (Inciardi & Dee, 1987). This reinvigorated the vein of scientific detectives as series such as *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1939-1947) and *Ellery Queen* (1938-1948) presented detached, professional investigators. These were broadcast alongside “true crime stories” such as *G-Men* (1936) that glamorized FBI work in a documentary style. The pulp fiction and comic book heroes – such as *The Shadow* (1930-1935, 1937-1954) – also aired on radio programs. Even the Western lawmen reappeared on radio in series such as *Gunsmoke* (1952-1961) and *Tales of the Texas Rangers* (1950-1952).

As televisions became more popular and accessible in the 1950s and early 1960s, these crime dramas had a new life – yet again – in TV broadcast. By the late 1960s, police dramas “dominated primetime viewing” (Inciardi & Dee, 1987), and series began to re-combine elements to create fresh programming. To differentiate themselves, crime narratives created eccentric or idiosyncratic detectives. For example, *McCloud* (1970-1977) combined the Western and urban crime genre motifs by transplanting a lawman and his horse into New York City. Some of these TV series also used science-fiction or fantasy elements to differentiate their program: for example, *Knight Rider* (1982-1986) featured a talking car. Alternatively, crime programs such as *Starsky and Hutch* (1975-1979) and *Chips* (1977-1983) featured buddy-cop motifs – making crime-fighting a two-man enterprise. This focus on partnerships added a more relational and humorous focus to these crime series. In 1981, *Cagney & Lacey* further twisted this generic innovation by featuring two women as the buddy-cops (D’Acci, 1994). Through these idiosyncratic detectives, TV crime programs featured rebellious or eccentric detectives and yet imbued

them with the authority and morality of the glamorized FBI agent or superhero (Rovin, 1977).

As this brief discussion of the crime genre suggests, this generic form has several iterations. While these variations can be parsed out, creating subgenres such as the detective genre, police series, and justice narratives (Creeber, 2008; Pribram, 2011; Rose, 1985), these series all adhere to the same narrative structure where a crime is committed and the investigators pursue leads, chase villains, interrogate witnesses, and arrest the perpetrators. Rather than dividing these series into subgenres, differentiating them based on textual elements into separate, incomparable genres, by recognizing all of these variations as part of the crime genre, I focus on the ways in which these alternate versions co-exist and provide contexts for each other. For example, the urban private-eye is familiar because he² follows the same procedures as the Western lawman or the police squad and yet has a fresh approach to this genre through his idiosyncratic vices and ability to work outside of the law.

Together these various approaches to the crime genre highlight six central tensions or areas of comparison where these narratives play off each other within the crime genre. First, detectives can either be part of a law enforcement agency, or can work for a private agency. Second, detectives can function scientifically or can follow their intuitions and act impulsively. Third, detectives can be either morally upstanding characters, or vice-ridden individuals who work in moral grey-areas, believing that the ends justify the means. Fourth, detectives can either follow the legal procedures or can

² I use the masculine pronoun here specifically because the generically familiar private-eye is a male character. A hardboiled female private detective would be a generic innovation, a further twist on the familiar pattern.

work outside of the authorities' mandates, operating beyond legal codes. Fifth, detectives can be emotionally aware or emotionally stunted. And sixth, detectives can be capable of developing and maintaining domestic ties and meaningful relationships or can struggle to develop intimate relationships. See Table 1 for an overview of these six characteristics.

Table 1: Detective Characteristics within Crime Dramas

Detective Characteristics		
Law Enforcement Agent	-----	Private Detective
Scientific Approach	-----	Intuitive Approach
Morally Upright	-----	Morally Loose
Legally Constrained	-----	Legally Unconstrained
Emotionally Unaware	-----	Emotionally Aware
Relationally Incapable	-----	Relationally Capable

Romantic Detectives

While the broad range of crime narratives clearly provides part of the context for *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, their specific pairing of “co-ed” detectives creates a more immediate context in U.S. television. Essentially, these are not the first male and female detectives to be partnered together on U.S. television and by tracing the development of how “co-ed” detectives are historically portrayed we can recognize the trajectory or more specific contexts that influence these four programs. To ground this historical consideration, I have selected three programs: *Get Smart* (1965-70), *Remington Steele* (1982-87), and *The X-Files* (1993-2002). These series all participate in the crime genre and (like *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*) partner together career men and women.

Together, these series span approximately thirty-five years, from the debut of *Get Smart* in 1965 until the series finale of *The X-Files* in 2002. I have selected these three series for their popularity, representative nature, and continued cultural significance in the U.S. To thoroughly consider these three series, I have necessarily omitted other series from consideration. For example, *Moonlighting* (1985-89) aired contemporaneously with *Remington Steele* and also featured “co-ed” detectives. However, I have selected *Remington Steele*, because its original fans were loyal and numerous enough to convince the network to produce a final fifth season instead of cancelling the series without a conclusion – as *Moonlighting* was canceled in its fourth season – and because *Remington Steele* has fared better in syndication and alternate viewership avenues (for example, *Remington Steele* is accessible on Hulu.com while *Moonlighting* is not). Moreover, a recent episode of *Castle* (Francis & Terlesky, 2011) repeatedly referenced *Remington Steele*, paying homage to this series (Holloway, 2011).

Get Smart, *Remington Steele*, and *The X-Files* share significant textual elements as they partner together a career man and woman and draw on the conventions of the crime genre. However, they also demonstrate the breadth of possibilities within this genre. For example: *Get Smart* is a thirty-minute comedy program that spoofs elements of the spy genre while *The X-Files* mixes science-fiction into the crime genre. Moreover, just as *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* draw on each other and their generic predecessors, *Get Smart*, *Remington Steele*, and *The X-Files* draw upon their own media contexts.

In analyzing these three programs, I trace the presence of “co-ed” detective partnerships across U.S. television. Specifically, I argue that these three series

demonstrate the trajectory of generic mixing that has paved the way for the fusion of crime drama and romantic comedy in *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. These historic examples of “co-ed” detective agencies exemplify the struggle in television to maintain generic conventions while engaging with current cultural issues and approaching standard plot and character motifs with a fresh, new angle. Gender becomes a salient factor in these programs as they culturally engage with issues of women’s rights within their own political and social contexts: woman’s liberation began mobilizing in the 1960s while *Get Smart* was airing, second-wave feminism was in full swing during *Remington Steele*, and “postfeminism” became popular in the 1990s, during *The X-Files*.

Getting Smart with Agent 99

Barbara Feldon’s early career included fashion modeling, yogurt advertisements, and then her role as the “Tiger Girl” in Revlon’s Top Brass hair cream television commercials. As “Tiger Girl,” Barbara Feldon growled seductively while lounging on a tiger-skin rug and purred, “I want a word with all you tigers... Oh, you men know which ones you are. Grrrrrrr. I like you. But I don’t like lions, you know, men with wild, dry manes” (Tolchin, 1965). Seemingly intended, and certainly interpreted as a parody of sex-based advertising (Tolchin, 1965), this commercial’s spoofy quality invited audiences to laugh at purposely caricatured television conventions.

After seeing both her physique and talent for parodic acting in the Tiger Girl commercial, *Get Smart*’s creators Mel Brooks and Buck Henry “wrote the part of 99 for Barbara [Feldon]” where she worked opposite Don Adams who starred as the titular

character, Maxwell Smart (McCrohan, 1988, p. 62). *Get Smart* invokes several television conventions, as it spoofs spy narratives such as *James Bond*, relies on repetitive jokes as a source of comedy, mimics classic crime narrative forms, and stages a conventional, if inexplicable romance. Focusing on an incompetent agent, *Get Smart* is a clear parody of cold-war narratives as it frames Smart as hopelessly and impossibly idiotic and yet endearing in his “inspired inefficiency” (McCrohan, 1988, p. 14). Smart’s incompetence is overtly communicated to audiences through his agency number, 86. Throughout the series, Smart identifies himself as Agent 86, others refer to him as Agent 86, he lives in apartment number 86, and he wears a bathrobe embroidered with an 86. However, his number was drawn “from the lexicon of bartenders and bouncers” where the term is used to suggest that a patron is incompetent and must be cut-off and/or removed from the bar (McCrohan, 1988, p. 14).

Over the course of five seasons, Smart and Agent 99 – who has no name – consistently work together, date, and eventually get married and have children. When it first aired in 1965, *Get Smart* raised NBC’s ratings and was quickly recognized as one of the top ten new series, along with programming such as *Bonanza* and *Gilligan’s Island* (Adams, 1965). *Get Smart* was part of NBC’s repetitive programming as it followed in the pattern of NBC’s successful series, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.* (1964-68) and outmatched its sibling series, *I Spy*, which NBC launched contemporaneously. Moreover, *Get Smart* has a pattern of recurrence in U.S. popular culture: *Get Smart* was adapted as a film, *The Nude Bomb* in 1980, recreated as a made-for-TV movie, *Get Smart, Again!* in 1989, reproduced as a short-lived TV series on FOX in 1995, and

finally remade as a blockbuster film in 2008 with a new cast, starring Steve Carell and Anne Hathaway.

Airing in 1965, *Get Smart* participates in the mid-sixties cultural upheaval of women's liberation. Premiering two years after Betty Friedan published the *Feminine Mystique*, *Get Smart* entered a social milieu of growing feminist consciousness (Freedman, 2002). In part, U.S. culture began to make sense of women's liberation rhetoric by incorporating and representing women's liberation discourse on television. As such, Barbara Feldon's character, Agent 99, is touted as a "pre-feminist" character since she was smart, active, and continued working as a spy even after having children (Lisanti & Paul, 2002, p. 127).

Agent 99 was an unusual character. *Get Smart* shared many characteristics with NBC's two other crime/spy parodies, *The Man from U.N.C.L.E* and *I Spy*, but both of those series paired two male agents together, making Agent 99's presence as a female agent innovative (Miller, 2008, p. 25). Feldon recognized her character's singularity, stating, "A lot of women have said 99 was a role model for them. Because she was smart and always got the right answer. And that was one of the first roles on television that showed women that way" (Feldon, quoted in Lisanti & Paul, 2002, p. 127). As such, Agent 99's gender is often manipulated in *Get Smart* as the text simultaneously emphasizes her femininity while consistently portraying her as a competent and successful spy. However, Agent 99's gender is not the only gender *Get Smart* manipulates. Maxwell Smart's masculinity is also under the microscope in *Get Smart* as this series toys with gender roles in the crucible of women's liberation and cold-war rhetoric.

Smart and Agent 99 meet for the first time during a mission in the pilot episode (Brooks, Henry, & Morris, 1965). This episode establishes the themes and lays the groundwork for their relationship. At the beginning of the episode, Smart is briefed on an important mission to recover a stolen laser device, the Inthermo. During this briefing, the Chief of Control positions Smart as the lead agent, asking him what gadgets or personnel Smart wants for assistance with this case. Smart selects a number of unusual gadgets, such as a locker key, and then asks that Agent K13 be assigned to this case as well. Agent K13 is an innocuous looking dog named Fang. The Chief then sends Smart and Fang out on their mission, telling them to expect further instructions from Agent 99. Although Smart and Agent 99 work together in nearly every case, they are not officially partners. The pilot could have opened with the Chief assigning the case to both Smart and Agent 99, or with Smart requesting that Agent 99 be his partner. Instead, Smart is positioned as the lead agent, and he chooses the dog, Fang, as his partner while Agent 99 is situated as a secondary agent.

Throughout the series, Smart and Agent 99 work together as partners on nearly every case, yet Smart is the lead agent even though later episodes demonstrate the Chief's lack of respect for Smart's cognitive abilities. Smart, however, is supremely confident in his abilities and takes every opportunity to speak well of himself – generating significant humor as he continually fails and yet remains indomitably confident. In contrast to Smart, very little is expected of Agent 99. That is, the narrative constructs situations where the mission is entrusted to Smart and where he assumes his own competence. In contrast, the mission is rarely Agent 99's responsibility and she rarely expresses confidence in her own abilities. As such, her capacity to solve the episode's dilemma is

unexpected within the narrative world of *Get Smart* and yet becomes the audience's assumption. Agent 99 routinely salvages the mission surprising the Chief, Smart, herself, and the villains, but not the audience who has come to expect her "unexpected" quick-thinking.

For example, in the pilot episode (Brooks, Henry, & Morris, 1965), the Chief gives Smart the pass-code "New York Mets win double header" instructing him to wait for Agent 99 to contact him with that code. However, "New York Mets Win Double Header" is the newspaper headline that day, and when a small child reads it aloud in the train station Smart is waiting in, he erroneously assumes that the child is Agent 99, causing a fair bit of hilarity. Agent 99 then salvages the situation by using the pass-code and adding that the score was "99 to 86," repeating herself until Smart recognizes the importance of those numbers.

Their meeting is significant since it not only establishes the cognitive differences between Smart and Agent 99 but also establishes the romantic themes that characterize their relationship. When they meet in the pilot episode (Brooks, Henry, & Morris, 1965), the camera is focused on Smart while we hear Agent 99 speaking in a sultry voice reminiscent of her "Tiger Girl" persona before the camera shifts to her. When the camera does focus on her, it starts with her shoes and pans its way up her hourglass figure. This classic male-gaze camera-work lingers sensuously on Barbara Feldon's body, and yet, also like the Tiger Girl commercial, this scene is a parody because Agent 99 is wearing a male chauffeur's uniform complete with boots and her hair is tucked up under a cap. While the camera-work implies and viewers instantly recognize that Agent 99 is female, Smart does not. It is not until later in the episode, when Agent 99 removes her cap to

straighten her hair that Smart realizes and exclaims, “Well you’re a girl!” Invoking a sense of compulsive heterosexuality, both Smart and Agent 99 lean in for a kiss after his exclamation: Smart’s automatic reaction to discovering that the person sitting next to him is female is to kiss her. And yet, here too there is sense of playfulness or parody as *Get Smart* pokes fun at the conventions of television romance. Like its contemporary series, *Bewitched* and *I Dream of Jeannie*, *Get Smart* features an implausible romance.

However, these romances maintain television conventions, and the audiences, familiar with these conventions, anticipate and enjoy the romance, fully expecting from the moment the camera pans up Agent 99’s body that she will, indeed, get Smart.

Smart and Agent 99’s unofficial partnership is marked by romance while the narrative structure is designed to play Smart and Agent 99’s characters off of each other. Smart is routinely and hilariously idiotic while Agent 99 is supremely competent by comparison. Yet the narrative continues to place Smart in positions of authority and Agent 99 happily supports him. Remarking on her character’s role, Feldon stated that Agent 99 became “cheekier” as the series progressed (Feldon, quoted in Lisanti & Paul, 2002, p. 127). Feldon’s role certainly becomes more obviously indulgent of Smart and her own screen time and centrality to the narrative increases throughout the series. In the later seasons “Feldon more than held her own against Adams’ superlative clowning” and Feldon’s work was recognized with two Emmy nominations in 1968 and 1969 (Lisanti & Paul, 2002, p. 126).

As discussed previously, crime programming has often hinged around issues of how scientific and/or intuitive the detectives are, how emotionally open or aware they are, and their ability to relate with and engage in familial relationships. These themes run

throughout *Get Smart*, where both Smart and Agent 99 are portrayed as emotionally competent, capable of forming and maintaining familial relationships, and intuitive detectives. Both Smart and Agent 99 recognize that they are in love with each other, often acting jealously when one of them flirts with a villain while undercover. After their marriage they are a committed and happy couple, and good parents. They both interact with extended family members throughout the series, and treat the Chief of Control like a father figure – and the Chief often comments that he worries about sending them out on missions because he thinks of them as his children. Finally, they both follow their hunches and work intuitively as they track down rogue spies and enemy agents. In addition to this basic approach to the detective profile, Agent 99 is clearly the brains in the operation. In almost every episode, she fixes the equipment, asks the important questions during interrogations, and solves the mystery. Agent 99 is a logical, rational, competent detective and her abilities stand in direct contrast to Smart's incompetency.

Through Agent 99's character, *Get Smart* uses its parodic form to incorporate themes of women's liberation. For example, the producers cast Barbara Feldon because she was attractive, but they dress her in men's clothing during important romantic moments: Agent 99 wears a male uniform when she meets Smart (Brooks, Henry, & Morris, 1965) and is cross-dressed, complete with moustache, when Smart proposes to her (Sultan et al., 1968). Moreover, after their marriage, Agent 99 spends an episode punching Smart whenever he attempts to touch her (Marmer & Sandrich, 1968). This episode directly addresses Agent 99's difficulty maintaining the double burden of a career and housekeeping, and she punches Smart "accidentally" as an automatic response from her self-defense training, believing that an enemy agent is sneaking up behind her

instead of her husband trying to hug or kiss her. Here, we see *Get Smart*'s consciousness of the women's liberation movement, and the series' attempt to design Agent 99 as a simultaneously competent, independent woman, successful spy, and a sexually desirable female.

In contrast to Agent 99's complicated character, *Get Smart* plays Smart's character almost entirely for laughs. Beyond his basic characteristics as an emotionally available and intuitive detective, Smart is a fool. Yet Smart, because he is male, is undeniably the lead agent. Positioned as a foppish patriarch, gender is at the heart of Smart's character: his masculinity, particularly his physique and intelligence, becomes the basis of recurring comedy routines. As such, *Get Smart* clearly parodies masculine authority. For example, Agent 99 regularly asks an important question or proposes a plan of action, to which Smart claims his masculine prerogative to lead the investigation by saying, "If you don't mind, 99, I'd like to handle this myself," but then he repeats Agent 99's line verbatim, re-asking the question or re-proposing the solution, while Agent 99 dramatically rolls her eyes in the background.

Similarly, Smart firmly believes he is attractive and often assumes compliments to Agent 99 are meant for him. However, in the episode, "One of our Olives is Missing" (Oppenheimer, 1967), he is faced directly with a woman, Annie, who emphatically insists that she does not find him attractive. Smart, however, must convince Annie that he is a spy, bringing his masculinity, particularly his physique and sexuality, under interrogation:

Smart: I happen to be a secret agent.

Annie: *[hysterical laughing]* You're kidding!

Smart: What's so hard to believe about that?

Annie: Well face it. You ain't no Sean Connery. You know, all handsome and confident – well just take a look in the mirror, puddin'.

Smart: Yes, well I happen to be very proud of this disguise.

Annie: Disguise?

Smart: Actually, I'm a powerfully built, handsome, blonde giant, with sun-bronzed skin, wide-set eyes, and a dimple in my chin!

Annie: Let me see!

Smart: Well ... that would take hours.

Smart inverts her insult, turning it into a compliment of his supreme disguise and costuming skills. Notably, Annie eventually believes that Smart can transform into a significantly taller, more muscular and attractive man, and attempts to seduce him. Moreover, the episode concludes with Annie and Agent 99, under the influence of a love-potion, proclaiming their love for Smart. This type of comedy undergirds *Get Smart*. The program consistently laughs at Smart's foibles, incompetency, and unattractiveness, and then concludes the episodes by relying on its generic form as comedic spoof. *Get Smart* replicates what it mocks, thereby ending each episode with an implausible affirmation of Smart's masculinity.

In this series, Smart and Agent 99 are unofficially career partners and become official romantic partners. Their relationship is a running theme and source of comedy throughout the series, but it does not drive the plot. Essentially, one could replace Agent 99 with a male character and nearly all of the episodes' cases would remain unchanged. Yet their partnership, with its clearly parodied (and yet reinforced) gender roles has become a mainstay of U.S. popular culture, remaining unchanged in the 2008 film remake. This comedic version of crime programming positions two detectives with the same basic characteristics: unlike Sherlock Holmes neither Smart nor Agent 99 works

scientifically, unlike seedy private investigators both Smart and Agent 99 follow moral and legal norms, can form emotional attachments, and unlike the Western lawmen and superheroes both Smart and Agent 99 can maintain untroubled familial relationships. *Get Smart* features intuitive, emotionally accessible, family-oriented detectives who blithely fight crime in this comedic adaptation of the crime genre.

Steeling the Corner Office

Remington Steele aired on NBC from 1982 to 1987, and centers on a private detective agency, pairing together a man and woman as career detectives. This series is the story of a career-woman, Laura Holt (portrayed by Stephanie Zimbalist), who invents a male superior, Remington Steele, because her clients are uneasy with a woman running her own private investigation agency. Her agency runs smoothly until an art-thief (portrayed by Pierce Brosnan) realizes that Remington Steele does not exist, and assumes his false identity. Inverting the namelessness of Agent 99 in *Get Smart*, the art-thief has no name and is only referred to as Remington Steele in this series. Yet he, like Maxwell Smart, is the titular character. Moreover, Steele functions eponymously in every episode title. For example, in the first season, episodes five, seven, and eleven are respectively titled, “Thou shalt not Steele,” “Etched in Steele,” and “Steeling the Show.”³

Remington Steele follows in *Get Smart*’s footsteps, mixing the crime genre with romantic themes and conventions. As an hour-long program, *Remington Steele* veered away from *Get Smart*’s spoofy quality, instead imitating the narrative structure of the

³ The heading of this section, *Steeling the Corner Office*, follows this trend.

then popular ABC series, *Hart to Hart*. However, unlike *Hart to Hart* where Jennifer Hart was a married amateur detective who worked with her husband, Laura Holt is a professional detective who runs her own agency.

Just as *Get Smart* used parody and comedy to navigate the gendered tensions of women's liberation rhetoric in the 1960s, *Remington Steele* maintains a "textual playfulness" to navigate the cultural difficulties as the U.S. struggled between second-wave feminism and a masculinist backlash in the 1980s (Wilcox, 2005, p. 208). While other NBC detective programs, such as *Magnum, P.I.*, were instructing their male leads to "get more masculine" and "boost their macho output," *Remington Steele* instead presented a strong female lead character matched by an emotional and intuitive male character (Faludi, 1991, p. 144).

While *Get Smart* winkingly suggested that Agent 99 was the brains behind the operation, *Remington Steele* openly celebrates Laura Holt as a brilliant and professional detective. Consistently portrayed throughout the series as a "logical person" (Wilcox, 2005, p. 208), Holt opens each episode of the first season with a long voiceover that emphasizes her competency and the sexist social structure she works within:

Try this for a deep dark secret. The great detective Remington Steele – he doesn't exist! I invented him. Follow: I always loved excitement. So I studied, and apprenticed, and put my name on an office. But absolutely nobody knocked down my door. A female private investigator seemed so ... feminine. So I invented a superior, a decidedly masculine superior. Suddenly there were cases around the block – it was working like a charm! Until the day he walked in. With his blue eyes and mysterious past, and before I knew it, he assumed Remington Steele's identity! Now I do the work and he takes the bows. It's a dangerous way to live, but as long as people buy it, I can get the job done. We never mix business with pleasure – well almost never. I don't even know he real name! (Gleason & Butler, 1982)

As this voiceover repetitively establishes, Holt is a career-woman who is discriminated against on the basis of her sex. In the pilot episode, “License to Steele” (Gleason & Butler, 1982), the series establishes that Holt runs a successful detective agency. Recognizing the sexist structures permeating her culture, Holt developed an innovative coping strategy – creating a fake male superior so that clients feel a man is in charge, while she runs every aspect of the detective agency and works the cases. Her two assistants, James Read and Bernice Foxe, know that Remington Steele does not exist, that his corner office is empty, and that Holt is the boss. When the nameless character played by Pierce Brosnan blackmails his way into the agency, he and Holt establish a clear working relationship: Remington Steele works for Laura Holt, she pays his salary, gives him orders, and disciplines him, while pretending to the outside world, and eventually the new office secretary, that he is her boss.

Holt’s character throughout this series is “bold” and “quick-witted” (Rauzi, 2005). She calls the shots both in the office and in the bedroom, determining the range and scope of her relationship with Remington Steele. As such, this series is clearly in conversation with the feminist movement: it acknowledges the glass ceiling, centers on a career-woman, positions Holt as the boss, and recognizes women’s sexual appetites.

Holt’s sexuality plays a prominent role in this narrative as Holt recognizes her own desires and strategically uses her sexuality to further investigations. For example, in the second episode, “Tempered Steele” (Gleason & Butler, 1982), Holt attempts to seduce a man she is investigating, hoping that he will confess his fraudulent activities. In

the same episode, Steele propositions Holt in the office while she argues with him over his recently unprofessional behavior.

Steele: We make such a winning combination –
 Holt: We have a deal –
 Steele: Let's enjoy our success.
 Holt: I do the work. You take the bows.
 Steele: Allow our passions to erupt into something outrageously fulfilling.
 Holt: *[pause]* You mean hop in the sack?
 Steele: A little crude, but to the point.
 Holt: Love to.
 Steele: Well, then?
 Holt: But I can't.
 Steele: Why not?
 Holt: It's tough enough pulling off this little charade without that kind of complication. As long as we're in business, let's keep it businesslike.

Steele is attracted to Holt throughout the entire series, often trying to convince Holt to date and/or sleep with him. While Holt recognizes her attraction to Steele, she always denies him, insisting that a sexual relationship will undermine her professional power over him. Holt is quite explicit about this reasoning. For example, further in the same episode, "Tempered Steele" (Gleason & Butler, 1982), Holt debates if she should sleep with Steele in a conversation with her friend and assistant, Bernice,

Holt: Who is he? What was he before he was Remington Steele?
 Bernice: Who cares? He's here. You're here. Go for it.
 Holt: Then what?
 Bernice: Depends on what you're looking for. Me, I'm all partied out. What I want is a slightly dull, filthy-rich husband, but if I were in the market for a heart-stopping, teeth-rattling, eye-rolling fling...

Holt: But I can barely keep him in line now. Can you imagine what he'd be like if we turn that corner?

Bernice: Might be fun finding out.

Holt: I've worked too hard to risk everything just to get my teeth rattled.

Bernice: So, where does that leave you?

Holt: Mm. *Itchy*.

Using this reasoning, Holt consistently rebuffs Steele's advances. However, she occasionally makes her own advances. These advances are premeditated, and the series gives Holt the opportunity to verbalize her reasoning and express her desire to sleep with Steele. For example, in the third season premiere (Melvoin & Weis, 1984), Holt explains to Mildred, the new secretary, that she plans to seduce Steele. Mildred is older, and this conversation specifically juxtaposes Holt's sexual empowerment with Mildred's more traditional expectation that men initiate sexual relationships:

Holt: Tonight's the night!

Mildred: For what?

Holt: A new chapter to begin! [...] Let me put it this way, Mildred. I've had certain reservations about Mr. Steele, but he and I have worked side by side for two years now, we've grown together. He's more responsible, more caring, and I feel bolder, more confident, so –

Mildred: Tonight's the night? That's great! How did Mr. Steele put it?

Holt: Actually, Mildred, he doesn't know yet.

Mildred: [*confused*] Am I missing something somewhere?

Holt: This is my decision. It's up to *me* to tell him how *I* feel.

While Holt claims this sexual freedom, her seductions are always interrupted, and usually by some complication Steele has accidentally created by dabbling in nefarious activities. Hence, the only sexual decisions Holt actualizes in this series are her refusals of Steele, which deny her own desires as she constructs a binary between her career and her personal life, and then values her career over her sexual desires.

Although clearly in a position of authority, Holt's power – unlike the heroines' power on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* – does not alienate her. Rather, Holt develops strong and healthy emotional connections. For example, she develops intimate and caring friendships with her female co-workers (Gleason & Butler, 1982) and empathizes with her clients (Zlotoff & Conner, 1983). Moreover, as a logical character, Holt follows the clues, scavenges for evidence, and slowly pieces the puzzle together. However, unlike Scully on *The X-Files* and the heroines of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, Laura Holt is not bound to the scientific method. Rather, Holt is simultaneously logical and intuitive: she follows hunches to see if the evidence supports them, constantly generating and refining her theories of “who-dun-it” in a tacking between her instincts and the evidence. Here, we see echoes of Agent 99 in Laura Holt's character: they are both emotionally healthy, intuitive, logical, and competent detectives.

While *Get Smart* parodied Smart's character, *Remington Steele* is kinder to its male lead. Yet Remington Steele is also played for laughs. He is a burden on Holt and the detective agency, often getting them into trouble when his dubiously legal side-projects go awry. As such, his character is a source of comedy as he tries to hide his mistakes from Holt, and then either attempts to preempt her by contritely confessing or waits till she corners him and then blusters through an argument. As such, like Smart, Steele adds a level of comedy to this program.

Moreover, he is a deeply emotional and intuitive character. The ongoing plotline that structures *Remington Steele* focuses on the mystery of his past. Essentially, Steele does not know his actual name and has never met his father. Having been abandoned as a child, he grew up on the streets, drifting from one crime and country to the next. As

such, he is a deeply nostalgic character, often recounting stories from his childhood, and searching for his name and his father. Steele's search for his father is a running plotline, which structures story-arcs and weaves episodes together. This storyline provides the space for Steele to express his emotions as he longs for an active father figure and for closure regarding his past. Notably, Steele is open about these emotions, never trying to appear stoic around Holt.

Replicating the dynamic in *Get Smart*, *Remington Steele* portrays characters that are equally aware of their emotional states, can create healthy emotional and familial connections, and function intuitively. However, the women are, in addition, competent detectives. Laura Holt solves the crime each week, while Remington Steele tags along, trying to solve the mystery by likening it to the plot of an old movie instead of looking for clues.

In addition to the running plotline related to Steele's unknown name and father, the sexual and romantic tension between Holt and Steele and their on-again/off-again relationship provides much of the momentum for this series, often driving the plotlines as Holt and Steele attempt to reconcile their personal and professional needs. As this complicated romance – which ends in their marriage *and* the discovery of Steele's father – structures this narrative, we see pieces of backlash built into this program (Faludi, 1991). The series itself is polysemic, simultaneously enacting both feminist and anti-feminist elements (Fiske, 1986). This tension is engrained in the basic structure, as the co-creator, Robert Butler stated, “When I had the original idea [for *Remington Steele*] I couldn't tell whether it was chauvinistic or feministic. [...] Because I can see it go both

ways ... it's both there. I guess its going to come in the eye of the beholder'' (Butler, quoted in Feuer, Kerr, & Vahimagi, 1984, p. 276-277).

Throughout the series, Holt's decisions and her agency are compromised by Steele's actions. He takes cases she refuses, and after Holt's original co-workers leave the series and they hire a new secretary named Mildred – who does not know that Holt is the boss – he often reallocates resources, occasionally bankrupting Holt's agency. While he still acknowledges that Holt is in charge, he often acts against her wishes, and she constantly has to scramble to pick up the pieces. Moreover, Steele takes all the public recognition for Holt's work. Here, we see both the replication of patriarchal structures and the series working to reveal those structures as Holt chafes under Steele's unwarranted notoriety. *Remington Steele* recognizes women's capabilities, the glass ceiling, and women's agency over their own sexuality, but then encapsulates this power within a fictional world where even Holt's power is constantly undermined: for all of Holt's empowered dialogue, the material reality of her life is governed by a man.

Just as *Remington Steele* borrows elements of its basic character types, its use of comedy, and its ability to reveal and gently chastise masculine authority from previous television detective agencies such as *Get Smart*, it also serves as an important forerunner of future programs. Specifically, the portrayal of Remington Steele as an overtly emotional and intuitive detective with deep family-related connections that structure the plot is rearticulated in the character of FBI agent, Fox Mulder on *The X-Files*.

Alien-ating Women

While *Remington Steele* functioned as a polysemic text, simultaneously inviting feminist interpretations and encapsulating power safely within traditional (patriarchal) structures, *The X-Files* ignores feminism almost entirely. Airing on FOX from 1993-2002, *The X-Files* ran for nine seasons as a mixed crime/science-fiction program. Unlike *Get Smart* and *Remington Steele* in which most episodes were stand-alone narratives, *The X-Files* incorporated serialized formatting. *The X-Files* has several story-arcs where the ongoing plot links a sequence of episodes together, creating mini-series within the broader narrative. While both *Get Smart* and *Remington Steele* had two-part episodes, running themes, and romantic developments that created a chronology within the series, (i.e. the series make more sense when watched in chronological order), for the most part, these series followed an episodic structure where each episode was an open-and-shut case. *The X-Files* still relied heavily on an episodic structure – nearly every episode had a “monster of the week,” but it used the science-fiction plot of an alien invasion to create an ongoing story, turning the “case-closed” endings of the crime genre into an open-ended mystery (Booker, 2004, p. 142).

The X-Files was a popular hit and spawned two short-lived spin-off series, *The Lone Gunman* and *Millennium*, and two feature films, *The X-Files: Fight the Future* (1998) and *The X-Files: I want to Believe* (2008). Moreover, like both *Get Smart* and *Remington Steele*, *The X-Files* relies on a logic of humor to navigate the gendered tensions. As such, *The X-Files* incorporates a variety of witty dialogue and banter

between Fox Mulder and Dana Scully in addition to “playful episodes that spoof the normal seriousness of the program” (Booker & Thomas, 2009, p. 36).

However, unlike *Get Smart* and *Remington Steele*, *The X-Files* textually ignores the feminist movement. *Get Smart* responded to the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s by parodying patriarchal structures: it positioned a lovable fool as the lead agent while clearly making Agent 99 the brains behind the operation. In *Remington Steele*, Laura Holt is clearly in charge and resists structural inequality as she champions second-wave feminism. The premise of *Remington Steele* rests on the fact that Holt is discriminated against because of her sex and is clever enough to succeed despite sexism. However, *The X-Files* largely pretends that feminism no longer exists and that there is no need for feminism. Unlike *Get Smart* and *Remington Steele*, the text of *The X-Files* – the dialogue, the plotlines, and the premise – assumes equality as a status quo. However, *The X-Files* portrays the least empowered woman and the most dominant man of the three “co-ed” detective agencies currently under consideration.

While the text itself generally ignores the topics of feminism and Scully and Mulder’s genders, *The X-Files* was celebrated in the popular press, by fans, and by academics as a break from the standard gender representations in crime television (Bellon, 1999, p. 149; Malach, 1996). Particularly, the move to position Scully and Mulder as partners is seen as feminist. This “equal” partnership is perceived as progress by directly contrasting Scully and Mulder’s “equality” with the “inequality” portrayed on earlier crime series (Bellon, 1999, p. 149). For example, if one ignores the parody, flattening *Get Smart* into a text where Smart is the primary agent and Agent 99 is his assistant/romantic interest and then compare this supposed hierarchy to a similarly

flattened portrayal of Scully and Mulder as career partners, one can suggest that *The X-Files* has catapulted the crime genre into equality.

In claiming that Scully and Mulder are equal partners, much attention is focused on how “empowered” Scully is. Both popular and scholarly reviews of *The X-Files* celebrate the novelty of Dana Scully as a female detective. According to the industry account, Scully’s character was different because she was not cast not for her physique. Although the FOX network requested that an attractive woman who “might look sexy in a bathing suit” be cast for the role, the creator, Christ Carter instead cast Gillian Anderson, because she looked “formidable” (Carter, quoted in Badley, 2000, p. 61). However, Anderson was still voted one of *People Weekly*’s “50 most beautiful people in the world” in 1997, suggesting that *The X-Files* (not unlike *Get Smart* and *Remington Steele*) did cast an attractive woman who looks sexy in a bathing suit (“50 Most,” p. 141).

However, by maintaining that Scully’s character is centered on her brains, not her body, these accounts focus on Scully’s training as an FBI agent with a background in both medicine and law. As such, Scully’s characterization is touted as novel and empowering (Badley, 2000; Bellon, 1999; Kantrowitz & Rogers, 1994; Rogers, 1998). However, both Agent 99 and Laura Holt were logical characters: they were the detectives, the brains in the operation, while Smart and Steele bumbled around charmingly. When compared to Laura Holt and Agent 99, Scully’s character is not novel. Scully is not a new portrayal of an empowered woman, or a surprising embodiment of feminism on television; rather, she follows a well established character type for female detectives in “co-ed” agencies.

Just as Scully is celebrated as a “new” female detective, Scully and Mulder’s partnership is touted as a “new” partnership – one marked by equality. On *Get Smart*, Smart was in control: he was the lead agent. But Smart had control in name only; the program was designed, in part, to parody patriarchal structures. Each scene mocks Smart, demonstrating that Agent 99 is a more competent agent than Smart. On *Remington Steele*, Steele was in control in name only – and only to some people. Unlike Smart, Steele is not a fool, he contributes to the investigation. However, he is also not a detective: instead of looking for clues he tries to solve mysteries by likening them to the plots of old movies. Although he can access some resources – underworld contacts – that are unavailable to Holt, his contacts are seedy and instead of helping him they usually create trouble for the detective agency. *The X-Files* supposedly presents an equal partnership because Mulder is not officially in control. Rather, as officially labeled partners, they have equal status. Unfortunately, they are equal in name only.

Although Mulder has no official power or authority over Scully, he has real power: he leads the investigations, he has seniority over Scully, he occupies the majority of the office space, he has special access to resources such as Deep Throat and The Lone Gunmen, he has specialized training as a profiler, and he is (almost) always right. Regardless of the investigation – whether the monster that week is an alien, a robot, or Loch Ness – Mulder correctly assumes that something supernatural is occurring, follows unlikely clues, and ultimately explains the supernatural phenomenon to a disbelieving Scully. While Mulder is solving the mystery, Scully refuses to consider irregular explanations, and wastes her time dissecting bodies, trying to find logical, scientific answers. While Agent 99 and Laura Holt solved crimes through a mixture of logic and

intuition, Scully is a scientific detective and only spins her wheels searching for testable hypotheses while her partner, Mulder pieces the puzzle together intuitively. As such, Mulder is the authority figure in *The X-Files*. While claiming that Scully and Mulder are equal characters who share power between themselves as partners, the narrative clearly gives Mulder more power.

As a female detective in the scientific tradition, Scully was interpreted as a new type of female detective with surprisingly “masculine” traits – coding science with masculinity. However, her partner Mulder was also celebrated as a new type of male detective. Pointing to his displays of emotion since Mulder occasionally cries when recalling his sister’s alien abduction, Mulder was welcomed as a feminized male detective. Specifically, Mulder is “feminine” because he “empathizes with families who lose their children” and often relies “more on intuition than deduction” (Bellon, 1999, p. 150). But these are not new traits for male detectives: throughout the history of crime narratives, some male detectives have had sensitive natures and many male detectives work intuitively instead of scientifically. Moreover, both Smart and Steele empathized with side characters and followed their intuition instead of the scientific method. Steele was also a deeply “emotional” character, occasionally crying as he expresses the desire to know his father, his real name, and to feel connected to a family unit.

There are differences among Mulder, Steele, and Smart. However, the difference is not that Mulder is more “feminine” than Smart or Steele. Rather, Mulder’s feminine qualities aid his detective work and give him more power than Scully, while Smart’s and Steele’s empathy and intuition were likely to lead them down the wrong path and get their agencies in trouble. Perhaps this can be understood as empowering since

traditionally feminine traits are valued on *The X-Files*. However, I suggest that a slight-of-hand is being performed. First, Scully and Mulder are touted as new detective characters who cross gendered boundaries “in all directions” (Bellon, 1999, p. 150). However, these are not new characters: across these three television detective agencies, the women are consistently smart, active agents and the men are empathetic, emotional, and intuitive. Second, *The X-Files* only rewards the “feminine” traits of emotion and intuition when they are performed by a man. Rather than valuing femininity and rewarding it with power and authority, *The X-Files* simply retools the male television detective: like Smart and Steele, Mulder is intuitive and emotional, but because *The X-Files* ignores the reality of structural sexism, it can put Mulder in a position of nearly absolute authority while claiming Mulder is a new type of man, one that embraces the feminine side.

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* borrow explicitly from *The X-Files*.

These new series incorporate the mixture of episodic narratives and running story arcs, the overtly romantic partnership, and the premise of equality between the “co-ed” detectives. Moreover, like Mulder, the male detectives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are heralded a new versions of feminine masculinity (Bianco, 2005; Cohn, 2006; Elfman, 2005; Mitchell, 2006; Owen, 2008; Willow, 2005). *The X-Files* aired on FOX, and FOX eagerly draws connections between its new series, *Bones* and *Fringe*, and *The X-Files*, linking the three series in their own production practices and making the connections apparent to viewers. For example, in *Bones*’ pilot, Booth quips that he and Brennan have a Scully/Mulder dynamic, and the episode titled “The X in the File” from

the fifth season of *Bones*, featured an alien-related case and played snippets of *The X-Files*' theme song throughout the episode.

Reviewing the Case

Television is a repetitive medium. It recycles series, plots, characters, episode formats, and genres. Simultaneously, television is an innovative industry, constantly adapting to changing cultures, values, technology, and airing new content every night. Broadly speaking *Get Smart* (1965-70), *Remington Steele* (1982-87), and *The X-Files* (1993-2002) feature the same innovation to the classic crime genre by partnering a man and woman together as career detectives.

This logic of repetition generates conflicted texts. *Get Smart*, *Remington Steele*, and *The X-Files* attempt to maintain generic conventions while approaching the premise with a fresh, new angle. To some extent, this new angle is achieved by mixing genres: *Get Smart* participates in slapstick comedy, *Remington Steele* dabbles in romantic comedy, and *The X-Files* draws heavily on science-fiction. Moreover, airing in the 1960s, 1980s, and 1990s, gender became a salient element through which these programs manipulated the conventions as they entered into conversation with the women's liberation movement, second-wave feminism, and postfeminism, respectively. These series form part of the context of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, demonstrating how "co-ed" detective agencies approach and tamper with different elements of the crime genre. In *Get Smart* and *Remington Steele*, both male and female detectives approached their cases intuitively, were emotionally aware, and could generate

and maintain meaningful relationships. *The X-Files* incorporated some of the narrative patterns from these earlier programs. Specifically, Mulder – like Remington Steele – is emotionally vulnerable and the series’ overarching plotline is tied to Mulder’s family members (his sister was abducted and his parents are complicit in government conspiracies) just as *Remington Steele*’s plot was tied to Steele’s murky past. However, while *The X-Files* followed in *Get Smart*’s and *Remington Steele*’s footsteps by creating a male detective who functions intuitively, is emotionally aware, and can maintain meaningful relationships, it altered the pattern for Scully. While Agent 99 and Laura Holt followed their intuition while still being smart, rational individuals, Scully is “masculinized” by her adherence to the scientific approach, an approach that consistently leads her to dead ends since she is investigating a supernatural – and therefore unscientific – world.

This historical trajectory of “co-ed” detective agencies on U.S. history helps contextualize the detective partnerships on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. While *Get Smart*, *Remington Steele*, and *The X-Files* were spread over a period of approximately thirty-five years, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* air contemporaneously, marking a proliferation of this romantic approach to crime dramas and making a further adaptation: these recent series all partner together a man and woman, one of whom is not a law enforcement officer. Moreover, starting in the pilot episodes, these series focus on the romantic tensions between the partners. Together, these series mark a significant change in the crime genre as Andrew Marlowe, the creator and executive producer for *Castle*, remarked: these series have taken a familiar genre and “blow[n] it up” (Ng, 2011). To achieve this twist on the standard crime genre, *Bones*,

Fringe, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have attempted a “gender reversal,” creating female detectives who are strong, independent scientist-types and partnering them with male detectives who are intuitive, sensitive, and domesticated (Mitchell, 2006).

These new series function as genre-texts (Neale, 2001), each mimicking the others as they continue in this sequence of co-ed crime programming. However, as demonstrated in the next chapter, by using postfeminist motifs to sew together the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy, these four programs will strip much of the humanity from the female detectives relegating them to alienation – where they stubbornly wait (like bitchy damsels in distress) for their heroes to soften their hearts, tame their tongues, and draw them back into community.

Chapter 3

Studies in Scarlet

It is a capital mistake to theorize before you have all the evidence.
It biases the judgment.

Sherlock Holmes - *A Study in Scarlet*

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* join the crime genre, incorporating motifs from other crime programming and – like *Get Smart*, *Remington Steele*, and *The X-Files* – pairing together “co-ed” detectives. These series are situated primarily in urban locations and incorporate supporting characters who work in forensic analysis or do the leg-work and track down paper-trails while the partners carry the bulk of the intellectual and physical work. As genre-texts (Neale, 2001), *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* function as a new iteration of the crime genre. Working in concert with each other, these series mimic each others’ character types, plot devices, and innovative elements. These are the only four series on broadcast, network TV that feature partnered, co-ed detectives – where one partner is a law enforcement official and the other is a civilian consultant. Moreover, these series have ensembles of supporting characters, and feature large story-arcs, which sew the episodes and seasons together by developing strong romantic themes. Essentially, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* re-fashion the crime genre by featuring romantic tensions between the partners (instead of the classic buddy-cop motif) and splitting the six central detective characteristics discussed in chapter two between the co-ed detectives. That is, on each program, one of the partners is a law enforcement official and one is a private investigator, one operates scientifically while the other is intuitive and tends to “jump the gun,” one partner is ethically

scrupulous while the other engages in shadier practices, and one can relate emotionally while the other is emotionally stunted. As such, these series feature the whole battery of detective characteristics common to the crime genre: by partnering one cop and one private-eye, these series craft crime genre narratives that explore all six common detective characteristics.

However, rather than splitting these attributes according to job description (i.e. all law enforcement officials are also scientific and ethical), *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* divvy up the characteristics by gender. The female detectives are all scientific, morally upright, legally constrained, emotionally unaware, and have difficulty creating and/or maintaining long-standing, meaningful relationships. Meanwhile, their partners – the male detectives – are intuitive, morally loose, legally unconstrained, emotionally aware and relationally adept. As noted in Table 2 on the following page, which I developed through a close analysis of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, the female detectives, Brennan, Dunham, Lisbon, and Beckett all demonstrate the same characteristics, even though Brennan is a civilian forensic anthropologist who works for the Jeffersonian museum while the other three are law enforcement officials (Dunham works for the FBI, Lisbon for the California Bureau of Investigation, and Beckett for the New York Police Department). Likewise, each male detective exhibits the same characteristics as his male analogues on the other series, despite the fact that Booth works for the FBI while Bishop, Jane, and Castle are civilian consultants.

Table 2: Key Detective Characteristics on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*

		Brennan (<i>Bones</i>)	Dunham (<i>Fringe</i>)	Lisbon (<i>Mentalist</i>)	Beckett (<i>Castle</i>)	Booth (<i>Bones</i>)	Bishop (<i>Fringe</i>)	Jane (<i>Mentalist</i>)	Castle (<i>Castle</i>)
Demo- graphics	Male					✓	✓	✓	✓
	Female	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Private Investigator	✓					✓	✓	✓
	Official Law Enforcement		✓	✓	✓	✓			
Detectives' Characteristics	Scientific	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Morally Upright	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Legally Constrained	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Emotionally Unaware	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Difficulty Maintaining Domestic Relationships	✓	✓	✓	✓				
	Intuitive					✓	✓	✓	✓
	Morally Loose					✓	✓	✓	✓
	Legally Unconstrained					✓	✓	✓	✓
	Emotionally Aware					✓	✓	✓	✓
	Maintains Domestic Relationships					✓	✓	✓	✓

However, these are not innocent or coincidental characterizations; it is no mistake that the female detectives are systematically portrayed as emotionally disconnected, unable to develop or maintain intimate relationships, absorbed by scientific processes, and constrained by legalities while the male detectives demonstrate the opposite characteristics. Rather, these characterizations are common postfeminist motifs: postfeminism often represents career-women as unhappy, uptight, emotionally disconnected individuals while men are portrayed as enlightened, easy-going, supportive, emotionally available characters (Douglas, 2010; Dow, 1996, 2006; Genz, 2009; Gill, 2007; Hill, 2010; Inness, 1999; McRobbie, 2009; Southard, 2008). By utilizing these postfeminist motifs, these four series sew together the genres of crime and romantic comedy, thereby reenergizing the crime narrative through this interplay of postfeminist characteristics.

As discussed in chapter one, postfeminism is – in part – the insidious ideology that feminism is no longer necessary. Most postfeminist voices in popular culture agree that men and women have equal value and should have equal rights and opportunities; nonetheless, this postfeminist perspective silences feminism by claiming that equality has already been achieved. Within this postfeminist logic, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* portray empowered women. However, as demonstrated through this analysis, the narrative structures of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* constrain these women, folding them back into patriarchy while claiming to be emancipatory texts. These postfeminist characters are heralded throughout the media as progressive portrayals of gender. Essentially, these series are greeted as adaptations of the crime genre that finally portray modern, independent women as lead characters. When *Bones* premiered in 2005,

it was welcomed as the newest incarnation of the crime genre (Laurence, 2005; Willow 2005). Like *CSI*, its graphic and gory sequences were designed to attract male audiences. However, the series deliberately featured a strong female lead character in an attempt to also draw a female audience (McDaniel, 2005). Popular newspapers' and TV guides' reviews of *Bones* describe Temperance Brennan as "logical and unemotional with people," while FBI Agent Seeley Booth is described as "feelings" oriented (Willow, 2005). These characterizations push even farther, explicitly stating that *Bones* has innovatively tampered with gender in U.S. television. For example, Sean Mitchell described *Bones* during its second season in the *New York Times*, stating,

In some ways the traditional male-female roles are reversed in *Bones*, with Brennan, the scientist, cast as the stolid, lonely careerist, while Mr. Boreanaz's character [Agent Booth] is, by contrast, emotional and caring, an unmarried father who is seeking redemption for his past as an Army sniper. (Mitchell, 2006)

After *Bones*' success, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* all followed suit, replicating *Bones*' "innovative" characteristics. As such, the female detectives on these series are coded as "masculine" through their use of science and emotional detachment while the male detectives are heralded as "in touch" with their "feminine nature" since they follow their "guts" and understand emotional responses (Bianco, 2005; Cohn, 2006; Elfman, 2005; Mitchell, 2006; Owen, 2008; Willow, 2005).

However, these new crime programs do not portray progressive characteristics or invert gender norms. Rather, they simply divvy up the classic detective characteristics between romantically involved partners and then strip the female detectives of agency while claiming that these characters are revolutionary within the crime genre. These programs perform a postfeminist sleight-of-hand, portraying constrained female

characters while claiming to feature empowered heroines. To explore how *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* perform this sleight-of-hand and the consequences this postfeminist iteration has for the crime genre I will first provide an overview of these four series. By situating these series in relation to each other and in relation to their own production and reception contexts, we can understand how this new genre iteration is culturally produced and popularly understood. Second, I will analyze how these series portray the female detectives, demonstrating that these series have simply allotted these characters typical detective traits common to the crime genre, but have then structured the narrative in a way that devalues these characteristics: although these women are viable detectives who embody detective traits common in the crime genre, their approach to detective work is not rewarded within these narratives. That is, the narrative structures at work within these four series privilege the male detectives – the men solve more crimes, close more cases, and are more engaging and relatable characters in the processes. Finally, I will place these female detectives in context with the other female characters who flesh out the ensemble casts on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*.

Overview of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have more in common than not. They are all crime procedurals, all feature the same type of characters, and all follow the same plot structure. Nonetheless, these series attempt to differentiate themselves from each other by altering minor elements. By analyzing the interplay of similarities and differences as these series situate themselves in conversation with each other and with the

crime genre, this chapter demonstrates how *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* use postfeminist themes and character types as the seam uniting the crime genre and the genre of romantic comedy. Specifically, I will contextualize these four series by first analyzing how each series' network describes and schedules the series as the industry positions these series as romantic crime stories; second, I consider the series' generic contexts in production and reception – i.e. what other programs these are placed in conversation with; third, I provide a brief overview of the series' narrative structure; and finally, I assess the romantic relationships between main characters. After I have contextualized these series, providing a brief industry-situated overview of the series' narratives, I will turn to a detailed analysis of the female detectives.

The Skeleton of *Bones*

Bones premiered on September 13, 2005 on the FOX network. As seen in Table 3 on the following page, *Bones*' scheduling has alternated days, swapping between Tuesday and Wednesday for the first three seasons before more permanently moving to Thursday evenings in the fourth season. Despite shuffling the schedule, FOX consistently paired *Bones* with a hit series such as *House* or *American Idol* during its early seasons to help improve its viewership and ratings (Lowry, 2005). The FOX network describes *Bones* as a “darkly amusing procedural,” which is “inspired by real-life forensic anthropologist and novelist Kathy Reichs” (About *Bones*, 2011). *Bones* capitalizes on the “realism” of this series, claiming that it is rooted in the real science and career experiences of Kathy Reichs.

Table 3: Programming Schedule for *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*

Season	Day		8:00-9:00 PM ET	9:00-10:00 PM ET	10:00-11:00 PM ET
Fall 2005	Tuesday	FOX	Bones 1	House	Local
Spring 2006	Wednesday	FOX	Bones 1	American Idol	Local
Fall 2006	Wednesday	FOX	Bones 2	Justice	Local
Spring 2007	Wednesday	FOX	Bones 2	American Idol	Local
Fall 2007	Tuesday	FOX	Bones 3	House	Local
Spring 2008	Monday	FOX	Bones 3	House	Local
Fall 2008	Tuesday	FOX	House	Fringe 1	Local
	Tuesday	CBS	NCIS	The Mentalist 1	Without a Trace
	Wednesday	FOX	Bones 4	Lie to Me/House	Local
Spring 2009	Monday	ABC	Dancing-Stars	Dancing/Surviving Suburbia	Castle1
	Tuesday	FOX	American Idol	Fringe 1	Local
	Thursday	FOX	Bones 4	Hell's Kitchen	Local
	Tuesday	CBS	NCIS	The Mentalist 1	Without a Trace
Fall 2009	Thursday	FOX	Bones 5	Fringe 2	Local
	Thursday	CBS	Survivor	CSI	The Mentalist 2
	Monday	ABC	Dancing	Dancing	Castle 2
Spring 2010	Thursday	FOX	Bones 5	Fringe 2	Local
	Thursday	CBS	Survivor	CSI	The Mentalist 2
	Monday	ABC	Dancing	Dancing/Romantically Challenged	Castle 2
Fall 2010	Monday	ABC	Dancing	Dancing	Castle 3
	Thursday	FOX	Bones 6	Fringe 3	Local
	Thursday	CBS	Survivor	CSI	The Mentalist 3
Spring 2011	Monday	ABC	Dancing	Dancing/Romantically Challenged	Castle 3
	Thursday	FOX	American Idol	Bones 6	Local
	Thursday	CBS	Survivor	CSI	The Mentalist 3
	Friday	FOX	Kitchen Nightmares	Fringe 3	Local
Fall 2011	Monday	ABC	Dancing	Dancing	Castle 4
	Thursday	FOX	The X Factor	Bones 7	Local
	Thursday	CBS	Big Bang/Rules of Engagement	Person of Interest	The Mentalist 4
	Friday	FOX	Kitchen Nightmares	Fringe 4	Local

Not only is Reichs credited in the closing sequence of each episode, the program references Reichs: in reality, Reichs is a forensic anthropologist who writes books about a character named Temperance Brennan; in the TV narrative, Temperance Brennan is a forensic anthropologist who writes books under the pen-name of Kathy Reichs.

Moreover, the series was originally hyped as a realistic program based on its connection with Reichs (Jicha, 2005; Lowry, 2005, Washburn, 2005). Finally, Hart Hanson (*Bones*' creator, executive producer, and occasional writer) is praised for his realistic depictions – which he cultivated through research with the Los Angeles Police Department (Jicha, 2005).

The series is in direct conversation with *CSI* and competes with *CSI* for audiences in the later seasons. This generic link is made explicit as the FOX network advertises *Bones* by stating “when the remains are so badly decomposed, burned, or destroyed, that *CSI* gives up ...” suggesting that *Bones* takes up where *CSI* leaves off (About *Bones*, 2011). Moreover, both the FOX network and Hart Hanson work to portray *Bones* as a sexier version of crime programming. For example, Hanson boasts that in the pilot episode a “character rips open her blouse to get the attention of an unhelpful clerk” and, by extension the audience’s attention (Washburn, 2005). While the FOX network clearly links *Bones* to other crime programs, it is anxious to emphasize *Bones*' innovations. This is particularly relevant since early TV reviews generally praised the casting, character development, and writing, but warned against “genre fatigue on the part of the audience” (Jicha, 2005; Laurence, 2005).

Bones is set in Washington D.C. where Temperance Brennan, who works for the Jeffersonian Museum as a forensic anthropologist and is partnered with FBI Special Agent Seeley Booth. In the early seasons, Brennan and Booth are often antagonistic, while sizzling with unstated sexual tension as this series mimics *The X-Files*' “will they/won't they” romance. *Bones* combines narrative forms, functioning in part as an episodic series (where each episode is a complete narrative), and in part as a serial

narrative, where the narrative form flows from one episode to the next much like *Lost*'s narrative structure, as discussed in chapter one. Through this mixture, *Bones* comprises an "episodic serial," combining episodic and serial programming (Mittell, 2010). In the early seasons, the serial narrative centered on the mystery of Brennan's dead mother as the detectives pieced together clues and tracked down the villain. After resolving her mother's murder, *Bones* featured a story-arc revolving around a serial-killer/cannibal in season three. Later seasons feature multi-season story-arcs about a villain nicknamed "The Gravedigger" who buries alive first Brennan and then Booth, and then a story-arc related to vigilante sniper.

Brennan grew up as an orphan in foster care and has difficulty developing and maintaining friendships, romantic relationships, and collegial associations. In the pilot episode, Brennan is a work-a-holic who has recently broken-up with a boyfriend she apparently did not like very much, has only one friend, Angela, and refuses to work with Booth. In contrast, Booth is a loving father, maintains close ties to his grandfather and brother, works closely with his ex-girlfriend, and has a genial relationship with the mother of his first child. Over the course of the series, Booth and Brennan flirt with each other while occasionally dating other individuals in various stages of commitment.

In the fifth season, Booth confesses his feelings to Brennan, who rejects him claiming that she does not have an "open heart" like he does and that she will ultimately hurt him because she is incapable of change (Hanson & Boreanaz, 2010). Booth then attempts to move on, and seriously dates a journalist in the first half of the sixth season. However, Booth and Brennan consummate their relationship, sleeping together towards the conclusion of the sixth season and currently in the seventh season, Booth and

Brennan are moving in together and are pregnant with their first child. However, the executive producer, Hart Hanson, has carefully designed the sixth and seventh seasons to avoid “gushy” scenes. Banking on the theory that no one wants to see characters call each other by pet names or act “squishy,” Hanson states that he has simply replaced the “unresolved sexual tension” with the unresolved issue of how they handle raising a child together (Paskin, 2011). The FOX network continues to promote the program through the tensions of their relationship with a section of the official *Bones* webpage titled “Will they or won’t they ... make it work?” with extras, slide-shows, and other bonus features related to their romantic relationship (Will they or won’t they? 2011).

Bones aired for three seasons before it was joined by its genre-texts, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. Through FOX’s careful scheduling, *Bones* aired in connection with hit series and maintained clear generic links to the crime genre without competing for audiences with other popular crime programs such as *CSI* or *NCIS* during its early seasons. Carefully marketed and welcomed by audiences as an innovative crime series, *Bones* functioned as a cumulative narrative by airing self-contained episodes that adhere to procedural crime programming’s pattern while threading larger narratives through multi-season story-arcs. *Bones*’ overarching narrative is the romantic relationship between Brennan and Booth, a relationship that can only come into fruition when Booth helps Brennan overcome her damaged past, learn to recognize her emotions, and value relationships. Just as *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* copied *Bones*’ narrative with minor changes, these series also share many similarities with *Bones*’ production and reception practices.

***Fringe* Benefits**

Clearly implementing the same scheduling strategy that had worked successfully for *Bones*, the FOX network premiered *Fringe* in the fall of 2008 directly after *House* and then moved it in the spring of 2009 to air after *American Idol*. After the first season, FOX moved *Fringe* again, this time pairing it with *Bones*, so that the two programs played back-to-back, with the logic that viewers who tuned into *Bones* would likely stay to watch its generic copy during the next hour of programming. *Fringe*, however, also mixes science-fiction motifs into the narrative, featuring a parallel universe and super-technological phenomena. Notably, this is not a fantasy series – there are no *supernatural* events, only impossibly advanced science.

Created by J.J. Abrams, *Fringe* is in direct conversation with Abrams' other recent TV hits, *Alias* (2001-2006), and *Lost* (2004-2010). These series contextualize *Fringe*, signaling to viewers that *Fringe* too will feature complex story-arcs. However, unlike both *Alias* and *Lost*, *Fringe* is designed to be more “‘sci’ than ‘sci-fi,’” meaning that this series is designed to “dwell in the realm of the possible” instead of fantasy (Levin, 2008). *Fringe* is also contextualized by FOX's earlier mixture of crime and science-fiction programming: *The X-Files*. In fact, *Fringe* was originally marketed to FOX as “*Indiana Jones* meets *X-Files*” (Levin, 2008). As such, *Fringe* was originally heralded as an “anticipated new series” but lacking in “originality,” since it was seen as a “slick variation” of *The X-Files* (Boedeker, 2008).

Fringe differs from *Bones* by featuring a more serialized narrative. Although each episode has its own mystery, which Agent Olivia Dunham and Peter Bishop solve,

these mysteries are linked, forming a pattern, and are known as “fringe events.” These fringe events form large story-arcs where nearly every episode contributes in some way to the ongoing narrative. Long, detailed narratives are risky ventures for TV programs, since the complexity requires that audiences keep up with the story in order to understand and enjoy the plot developments. Moreover, it makes it difficult for new viewers to join the program midway or even at the beginning of a new season since they are unfamiliar with the previous plot and character developments. However, audience members who follow the program are likely to be more committed fans since they invest the time each week and are rewarded by the program’s complex and developing narrative.

Given the risks of serialized programming, *Fringe*’s narrative was originally structured to not “leave casual fans feeling lost” (yes, a pun on Abram’s previous series *Lost*), and therefore borrowed the crime genre’s “procedural template” while following *The X-Files*’ pattern of “grafting a larger mythology onto the series” that “isn’t essential to any weekly episode” to reward loyal viewers without alienating new viewers (Levin, 2008). While the first two seasons carefully balanced the episodic form with the serialized narrative, seasons three and four have become increasingly complex and serialized. To compensate, FOX utilizes a variety of platforms in an attempt to balance the complexity and continually developing nature of *Fringe*’s narrative. First, using conventional methods, nearly every episode has a “previously on *Fringe*” segment to remind viewers of recent plot developments. Second, in keeping with the new conventions of digital technology, FOX streams five full episodes on their webpage for viewers who might have missed an episode of TV broadcast. Third, FOX’s official *Fringe* webpage promotes recap videos that are patched together from key moments in

the series and intermixed with commentary from the actors, writers, and directors. This effectively streams short summaries of the major plot and character developments. This webpage differs from FOX's official webpage for *Bones*, which promotes extras such as personality quizzes instead of recaps in the equivalent webpage location. Fourth, FOX provides almost complete summary material on *Fringe*'s "about the show" portion of the webpage, providing both streaming and written recaps of the series. Again, this differs from FOX's approach to the *Bones* website, which features "fun facts" with details about the characters, actors, and crew in the "about the show" section. Finally, at the end of each streaming recap of *Fringe*, these videos alternately prompt viewers to purchase the DVD and/or Blu-Ray collections or to purchase and download individual episodes via iTunes.

The first two seasons of *Fringe* aired on weekdays and were part of FOX's "Remote-Free TV" campaign: these episodes had fewer and shorter commercial breaks, airing approximately 50 minute episodes (instead of the customary 44 minutes of content per hour of programming) in a move "designed to reduce DVR skipping" (Levin, 2008). Starting in the third season, *Fringe* cut back to 44 minute episodes and moved to Friday evenings, a difficult time slot since many of the coveted 18-49 year old viewers spend their Friday evenings out of the house – instead of watching television. After moving to Fridays in the spring of 2011, *Fringe* dropped 16% of its viewers, slipping to "3.7 million viewers, with only 1.4 in the preliminary adult demo" (Hibberd, 2011a). In response to this dip in the ratings, Joshua Jackson, who plays the male detective, Peter Bishop, campaigned to convince fans to make the move to Fridays. *Fringe* "adds 133 percent more adult 18-49 viewers from DVRs," suggesting that many *Fringe* viewers prefer to

record the program and then watch the episode over the weekend; however, this is not ideal for *Fringe*'s advertisement-based economy (Adalain, 2011). Therefore, Jackson particularly lobbied for fans to watch the show while it aired on Fridays instead of recording the program (Hibberd, 2011b). When *Fringe* survived its Friday night transition and was renewed for a fourth season (still airing on Friday), Jackson credited *Fringe*'s success during an interview on *Chelsea Lately* to the loyal fans and particularly their organized campaign: fans demonstrated their support by sending Red Vines candy (a featured item in the program) to the FOX network (Handler, 2011).

Fringe's narrative opens when FBI Agent Olivia Dunham joins a high-tech FBI division – called Fringe – after her FBI partner and lover betrays her and dies in the pilot episode. She then recruits a brilliant but now insane scientist, Walter Bishop, to consult for the Fringe division, becoming partners with the scientist's son, Peter Bishop. Dunham's character is designed to “keep others on track” (Torv, quoted in Hurwitz & Neff, 2008). In an interview, Anna Torv, who plays Olivia Dunham, described her character as a “straight down-the-line FBI” agent who attempts to “wrangle” Peter and Walter Bishop into the realities of FBI investigations (Hurwitz & Neff, 2008). Meanwhile, Peter Bishop's character, as described by J.J. Abrams, is a “rogue” (Abrams, quoted in Hurwitz & Neff, 2008).

Although the series' overarching plot is based on the premise of parallel but conflicting realities, it is not until midway through the second season that these parallel realities are fully understood. Rather, during the first two seasons, the episodes function much more episodically, with shorter story-arcs tying a series of episodes together. For example, the first story-arc is centered on Dunham learning the truth about her ex-partner

who betrayed her and died in the pilot. During these seasons, much of the character development is focused on the relationship between Peter Bishop and his father, Walter. When the pilot opens, Peter and Walter are estranged, and Walter is in an insane asylum. Dunham needs Walter's expertise on a case, but Walter can only be released into the custody of an immediate relative. Hence, Dunham recruits Peter to join the Fringe division and care for his difficult and crazy father. During these early seasons, Peter grows to care for his father while the episodes hint that Walter did something nefarious related to Peter during his childhood. Ultimately, Peter's past becomes the focal point for *Fringe's* overarching plotline, when the series reveals late in season two that Peter is from the parallel universe. Seasons three and four build on this plotline, bringing the two worlds into direct confrontation with Peter in the crosshairs of both realities.

However, throughout the series, Peter and Olivia have an ongoing romance. This romantic element is touted throughout early TV reviews, directly comparing Bishop and Dunham's romance to Scully and Mulder's on *The X-Files* (Kinon, 2008; Levin, 2008; Hurwitz & Neff, 2008). For example, after describing *Fringe's* mixture of procedural programming and science fiction, the *New York Daily News* assured readers, "but there will be relationships" (Kinon, 2008). Their romance, designed by Abrams as a "slow-burn" (Kinon, 2008) is another focal point for this series' plot. Their romance is continually interrupted: for example, in season three Olivia is kidnapped and her doppelganger from the alternate reality takes her place, and in season four Peter Bishop is erased from both realities' histories and all of the characters revert to the people they would have been if they had never met Peter.

Erasing Peter from the other characters' realities significantly alters Olivia's character. In both timelines, she was abused as a child – primarily by her stepfather, whom she attempted to kill in self-defense when she was nine years old. As a child, she was also illegally experimented on by Walter Bishop (before he went insane) and now has unique mental abilities as a result of Walter's criminal experiments. Olivia's character is often divorced from her emotions as a result of this troubled childhood, and in the original timeline Peter was instrumental in helping her connect to her emotions and develop relationships. Without Peter's influence, Olivia has reverted to her earlier existence as an emotionally closed character and is recognizing (again) that her emotions are “stunted” (Pitts, Doble, & Hemingway, 2011).

Like *Bones*, *Fringe* is in direct conversation – in both its production and its reception – with other crime programming and focuses on cumulative narratives and romantic relationships. Unlike *Bones*, *Fringe* struggles to find a mass audience, cultivating instead a smaller group of dedicated fans, in part because of *Fringe*'s incorporation of science-fiction elements and FOX's decision to move *Fringe* to Friday evenings.

A Mental Leap

Just as FOX introduced *Bones* and then *Fringe* by first pairing them with well-rated programs and then grouping them generically to air in sequence with each other, CBS premiered *The Mentalist* in 2008 directly after their hit procedural, *NCIS*, simultaneously giving it a hit lead-in and scheduling it generically with a crime program.

In TV reviews, *The Mentalist* is related to *NCIS*, *Fringe*, *Bones*, and later *Castle*. For example, in a *New York Times* article, *The Mentalist* is described as a generic “companion” to *NCIS* and as outperforming *Fringe* – its generic competitor (Bernhard, 2008).

Welcomed as a clear genre-text that CBS could “do in its sleep,” *The Mentalist* was, nonetheless, congratulated for its ability to balance familiarity and innovation (Goodman, 2008). Recognized as a “well-done copy,” *The Mentalist* clearly featured elements from *Psych*, *House*, *CSI*, *Columbo*, and *Monk* (Bianco, 2008; Hale, 2009). Created by Bruno Heller, *The Mentalist* is patterned after the crime genre and yet remains distinct from other programming. As its lead actress, Robin Tunney stated, “Bruno is really eccentric, and his eccentricities definitely show on the series, but they’re packaged in a pill that’s very familiar, so people can swallow it” (Tunney, quoted in Bernhard, 2008).

The Mentalist distinguishes itself by juxtaposing its dark storyline with quirky, humorous characters while grounding the narrative in an episodic, procedural format. As revealed through flash-backs in the pilot, Patrick Jane used to be a phony psychic. He regularly appeared on television shows as a psychic and occasionally consulted for the police. When working on a serial case, Jane appeared on national news and denounced the serial killer – known as Red John – as a common murderer. In retribution, Red John gruesomely murdered Jane’s wife and daughter. After his family’s death, Jane quit working as a psychic, and now consults for the California Bureau of Investigation (CBI), where he is partnered with Teresa Lisbon. Jane is a cheerful but haunted man as he playfully works murder cases while Lisbon attempts to rein him in. Throughout the

series, the detectives occasionally work Red John cases and Patrick Jane adheres to a vigilante justice system and has sworn to avenge his family by killing Red John.

His partner, Teresa Lisbon, leads a team of agents in the CBI. Raised by an abusive and alcoholic father, Lisbon is portrayed as a “formidable” character and struggles throughout the series to empathize with others (Bernhard, 2008). Lisbon’s actress, Robin Tunney, describes her character’s role as one of the few “out there for smart women” and took the role after reading through scripts and thinking “I’m tough, I can handle this” (Wasley, 2008).

In contrast to Lisbon’s “smart,” “tough,” “formidable” character, Patrick Jane is described as the “cad-you-can’t-resist” and TV reviews, guided by *The Mentalist*’s generic companions, prophesied an ongoing romance for the partners. For example, the *New York Times* commented on the dynamic between the partners, stating that Lisbon is “long-suffering but ultimately charmed” by Jane’s antics (Bianco, 2008), and Robin Tunney stated that “the first sparks of sexual chemistry” between the partners is present in the pilot and that she anticipates a “slow-burning flirtation” (Wasley, 2008). While the series does indeed lay a foundation of “verbal sparring” and occasionally escalates this to the level of “sexual tension” (Wasley, 2008), this is the slowest moving of the romances between partners on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. Well into season four, Lisbon and Jane have never kissed, admitted feelings for each other (either to each other, themselves, or their respective friends), or dated – whether undercover or in “reality.”

Rather, *The Mentalist* features an ongoing romance between two of the supporting characters. Lisbon’s CBI team is comprised of Agent Cho, a no-nonsense serious character who is good at breaking suspects in interrogations, and Agents Wayne Rigsby

and Grace Van Pelt. Rigsby is clearly taken with Van Pelt – who is new to the team – in the pilot episode. They have an on-again/off-again romance complicated by the CBI’s “no dating” policy, which means that one of them would be required to transfer to another agency if the CBI director learned of their relationship. This romance between the supporting characters takes much of the focus off of Lisbon and Jane, allowing *The Mentalist* to draw out the relationship between the detective partners much longer than *Bones*, *Fringe*, or *Castle* managed with their lead characters.

The Mentalist employs the same strategies as *Bones* and *Fringe*, clearly tying the series to the crime genre, featuring co-ed detective partners, focusing on romantic relationships, and portraying a “formidable” female detective. Like *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*’s dominant plotline is connected to the male detective’s past and familial relationships. In contrast, *Bones* and – as we will see below – *Castle* focus their plotlines on the female detectives’ families. However, regardless of which character’s sordid family drama dominates the narrative, all four series portray charming, easy-going, well-adjusted male detectives and abrupt, detached, up-tight female detectives.

Storming the *Castle*

Like *Bones*, *Fringe*, and *The Mentalist*, *Castle* features a partnership between two unlikely individuals. Kate Beckett works for the New York Police Department (NYPD) and Richard Castle is a famous mystery novelist. He becomes her partner and NYPD consultant when his writer’s block spurs him to shadow her as a research experience for his new detective series. Later in the series, they solidify their partnership by choosing to

work with each other on a more permanent basis. Beckett originally resents his presence on her team of detectives and slowly comes to appreciate him as a friend, romantic interest, and detective over the course of the series.

Unlike *Bones*, *Fringe*, and *The Mentalist*, *Castle* was not scheduled in sequence with another procedural program. Instead, *Castle* airs after ABC's hit show, *Dancing with the Stars* and maintains a significant portion of that series' viewers (Lowry, 2009). Compared to *Bones*, *Fringe*, and *The Mentalist*, *Castle* was a late-comer in this new iteration of the crime genre, and ABC clearly feels little need to contextualize the series or introduce the "new" idiosyncrasies of the characters and their partnership. Rather, ABC quickly introduces the characters on *Castle*'s official webpage, situating Richard Castle as a single father raising his teenage daughter and kept "grounded" by his eccentric mother (About the show, 2011), and framing detective Kate Beckett as a tough, no-nonsense NYPD police officer.

Perhaps ABC feels so little need to contextualize or describe the series because it is so clearly linked to series such as *Bones*, *Fringe*, and *The Mentalist* that *Castle* is comfortably familiar for viewers. For example, *Castle* was greeted by *Variety* magazine as a "procedural spin" on ABC's classic dramedy that had "the misfortune to arrive in the wake of CBS' *The Mentalist*" (Lowry, 2009). Noting *Castle*'s premise, which situates an "intuitive male outsider paired with [a] prickly female cop," *Variety* continued by stating that "with so many similarly appointed dramas on the market, *Castle* can't help but feel like slightly better decorated track housing" (Lowry, 2009). Moreover, like *The Mentalist*, *Castle* derives much of its humor from the lead male detective characters.

Both Richard Castle and Patrick Jane are described as “charming” and “roguish” characters without whom the series could not continue (Bianco, 2008; Lowry, 2009).

However, *Castle* has fared successfully into its fourth season, and is the oldest series still promoted on ABC as a “hot show” and showcased as one of the top six popular series on the ABC website (ABC Shows, 2011). On *Castle*’s official webpage, ABC promotes videos of their latest episode and short teaser videos of the next episode. However, unlike *Fringe*’s website, which provided detailed plot synopsis, *Castle* promotes these streaming videos with captions relating to the characters’ relationships. For example, “Kill Shot,” which aired on November 21, 2011 was promoted with the caption “The team searches for a sniper who is terrorizing New York; Beckett tries to hide her worsening PTSD from Castle and the detectives,” and the episode “Cuffed” was captioned “Beckett and Castle wake up handcuffed together in bed in a locked room with no memory of how they got there” (Castle, 2011). Although these captions hint towards these episodes’ plotlines – catching a sniper and unraveling clues to understand what happened the previous night – these captions focus on relational elements.

In describing his vision for *Castle*, Marlowe has suggested that the plethora of entertainment options and their level of sophistication and potential for innovation has simultaneously driven him back to genre classics while searching for originality,

Because of the competition from cable, because of the competition from gaming and the internet, TV has had to become better, more complicated and better-looking. The fact that we’re competing against shows on HBO, shows that can push the envelope a lot more – everything on network television has had to evolve and if you look at a show today versus a show 20 years ago, the sophistication in storytelling has elevated... that sort of atmosphere that we’re all working in keeps me up at night and thinking, “How can I make this better? How can I deliver a

twist the audience hasn't seen before? How can I take a genre they're familiar with and blow it up?" (Ng, 2011)

Marlowe certainly created *Castle* as part of a genre viewers are familiar with, integrating "humor and sex appeal" into the "procedural mold" (Lowry, 2009). As such, the series has done well in the ratings, and continues to air smart, fun episodes.

Castle's plot structure is largely episodic with a new murder each episode and a closed case at the conclusion of the hour. Moreover, this program directly copied *Bones'* original story-arc, and the first four seasons are sewn together by the mystery of Beckett's mother's unsolved murder. However, the romance between Castle and Beckett has been on a faster track than the other series, with Castle realizing he was in love with Beckett early on and confessing his love in the third season's finale when Beckett was critically wounded. Keeping the romantic tension alive, Beckett has been pretending not to remember Castle's confession in season four, claiming to have no memories of the entire day of her injury.

Castle varies from the other series by giving both lead characters a supporting cast. That is, on *Bones*, *Fringe*, and *The Mentalist* the main supporting characters are all connected to the female detectives' work lives. However, on *Castle*, both Beckett and Castle have supporting characters: Beckett has two detectives on her team, Javier Esposito and Kevin Ryan and she works with her close friend, Dr. Lanie Parish, who is the medical examiner; meanwhile Castle lives with his daughter, Alexis, and his underemployed mother, Martha Rodgers. Since Castle works with Beckett in the precinct, he is friends and colleagues with detectives Esposito and Ryan, which means that he is the only character who has his own supporting network of friends/family: his

daughter and mother support him, while Esposito, Ryan, and Lanie (to a lesser extent) are friend and colleagues with both Beckett and Castle.

Reflecting on the ways in which the characters develop on *Castle*, the series' creator, Marlowe, stated "I'm somebody who believes characters need to grow in order to stay vital on TV and we showed some interesting character growth but without fundamentally changing the dynamic between our characters" (Ng, 2011). As Marlowe's statement indicates, the characters do grow – or at least they appear to grow and change – on *Castle*. For example, Beckett develops post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and the side character, Detective Ryan, gets married. These changes, however, are fairly superficial and do not change the ways in which the characters interact with each other.

All four series occasionally recast the authority figure, bringing new characters into the series. For example, in its second season, *Bones* replaced Dr. Goodman with Camille Saroyan as the head of the forensic division at the Jeffersonian Institute, and *The Mentalist* has transitioned between four supervising agents of the CBI. Starting in season four, *Castle* replaced its police captain, Roy Montgomery, with a new police captain, Victoria Gates.

On both *The Mentalist* and *Castle*, this administrative reshuffling is tied to the series' plotline: on *The Mentalist* administrators step down and/or are removed from office due to the serial-killer Red John's machinations; on *Castle*, Montgomery was implicated in Beckett's mother's death, and his replacement character is designed to add a layer of conflict to the series' waning tension. Specifically, Gate's character is intended to provide "a few more obstacles" for Castle and Beckett to "overcome" (Ng, 2011). Essentially, during the course of the first three seasons, *Castle* slowly exhausted Beckett's

ability to rein him in and he has been working outside normal police procedures, following his gut and disregarding the intricacies of the legal system. The new Police Captain, Gates, has no patience for Castle's antics and her character is meant to challenge Castle's ability to "conduct business the way [he] used to" (Ng, 2011). However, this ultimately brings Castle and Beckett into a closer relationship as Beckett finds that she must defend Castle from Gates if she is to continue working with her partner. Commenting on why Gates was added to the cast, *Castle's* creator, Andrew Marlowe stated, "it'll put Castle and Beckett on the same page, where the two of them get to conspire together. It's another way to solidify their relationship" (Ng, 2011).

Together, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* all perform the same innovation on the classic crime genre, pairing together a civilian and a law enforcement official as detective partners, liberally flavoring the series with romantic tensions and sexually frustrated characters by developing a slow romance between the partnered detectives and mixing large story-arcs into the episodic procedurals, transforming these series into cumulative narratives. Both the production and reception practices put these series in conversation with each other and with other crime narratives, clearly marking these series as "innovative" crime programs. Moreover, these series were welcomed as progressive programs that featured "gender reversals" (Bianco, 2005; Cohn, 2006; Elfman, 2005; Mitchell, 2006; Owen, 2008; Willow, 2005). Classifying the women as strong, independent characters and the male characters as simultaneously caring and roguishly charming, these series are touted as enlightened, progressive TV. However, I contend that these innovative crime narratives have simply jumbled the classic

characteristics of the crime genre and perform a sleight-of-hand, promising equality but achieving patriarchy.

Investigating Gender: Dangerous Characteristics

Drawing on the traditions of the crime genre, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have split the conventional detective characteristics between the partners. As discussed in chapter two, detectives within the crime genre have six primary characteristics; they are either law enforcement officials, or private investigators, either scientific or intuitive in their approach to crime-solving, either morally upright or loose, either legally constrained or unconstrained, either emotionally available or unavailable, and either relationally capable or incapable. However, these series divide the characteristics between the partners, so that one is a law enforcement official and the other is a private detective, etc. These characteristics are not randomly ascribed to the partners; instead, gender is the deciding factor for these characteristics. That is, these programs feature partnered detectives where the female character utilizes a scientific approach to crime-solving, is morally and legally upright, emotionally unavailable, and relationally distant – especially from family members. The male detectives have the opposite characteristics, approaching their detective work intuitively, working in moral and legal grey-areas while being aware of their own and others' emotions and developing and maintaining close relational ties – especially with family members. Through analyzing the portrayals of the female detectives, this chapter demonstrates that through these opposing characterizations, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* depict a world

in which female characters may have strong personalities and equal (or better) pay, but lack agency and most of their humanity. These women are alienated characters who – like damsels in distress – wait for the male detectives to rescue them from their damaged pasts and draw them back into community.

Scientific Women and Intuitive Men

In *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* the female detectives, like Sherlock Holmes, depend on the scientific method of gathering evidence and slowly piecing together the clues. The male detectives, however, prefer to follow their guts. For example, in the pilot episode of *Bones* (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a), Temperance Brennan and her team at the Jeffersonian Museum have used holographic technology to recreate a murder, thereby learning important details about the assailant. Brennan presents this evidence to Booth, recommending that he arrest a U.S. Senator based on their findings, and initiating a conversation,

Booth: You expect me to declare war on a United States Senator based on
your little holographic crystal ball?

Brennan: It's not magic. It's a logical recreation of events based on evidence.

Booth: No more valid than my gut.

Both detectives are following their own paths towards solving the murder: Brennan through science and technology and Booth through his instincts. Yet both are dismissive of the other's techniques: especially in the beginning of this series, Brennan has difficulty trusting Booth's instincts and Booth has difficulty trusting Brennan's evidence.

However, the narrative privileges Booth's intuitive methodology. While Brennan's

scientific approach rarely renders incorrect data, there is always more data to find. For example, in the pilot episode (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a), the U.S. Senator did not commit murder as Brennan's holograph suggested, a realization she reaches through further analysis of the evidence. As such, her approach works, but slowly. Booth, on the other hand, can follow his gut, reading people as he picks out villains. Additionally, Booth's method provides motives: Booth understands the crimes while Brennan is left to collect the evidence. Again, using the pilot as an example, after identifying and apprehending the murderer, Brennan states, "the evidence said he did it but...I don't know why. You know what? It doesn't matter. Motive does not matter" (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a). Yet motive clearly matters in the crime genre, and Brennan remains troubled despite her dismissal of motive. Booth, however, understands human nature and recognizes that the murderer was motivated by greed, stating, "he did it to save his job ... it's that simple" (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a).

While both scientific and intuitive methods contribute to solving cases and apprehending criminals in *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* these series subtly privilege the intuitive over the scientific. In the *Bones* pilot, Brennan's approach is slow and methodical while Booth's is faster and "natural." These series contrast the female and male detectives' approaches, in part by having the women train for their skills while the men's instincts are natural. Moreover, especially on *Bones*, the male detectives' approach allows the men to understand the entirety of the case while the female characters, like Brennan, are left struggling to understand human motivations.

Additionally, the intuitive approach is only privileged in these narratives when it is performed by a man. Occasionally, the male detectives try to teach their female

partners how to investigate intuitively, but *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, have no use for “women’s intuition.” To best demonstrate how this aspect functions in these series, I provide a close analysis of the role of intuition in a 2011 episode of *The Mentalist*.

The Mentalist’s seventh episode of season four, “Blinking Red Light” (Woodruff & Baker, 2011), opens with Patrick Jane fixing a flat tire while on the phone with his partner, Teresa Lisbon, who is at the crime scene. Lisbon tries to hang up on him to better attend to the case, when he offers to help via the phone – the mere description of a crime can start his intuition working. Talked into describing the case to him, Lisbon begins by stating how the body was found.

Lisbon: It [the wire tying her hands] is knotted neatly, carefully.

Jane: Someone took their time.

Short pause

Jane: Yeah, you’re right.

Lisbon: I didn’t say anything.

Jane: No, but you were thinking something. You were thinking: whoever did this has killed before, many times.

Lisbon: Yes, but I can’t assume that.

Jane: Trust your instincts, Lisbon.

When another agent then informs Lisbon that the case is a confirmed serial killing, Jane gleefully interjects over the phone, “You called it, Lisbon! You called it!” (Woodruff & Baker, 2011). Although Jane verbally affirms Lisbon’s intuition, the sequence privileged Jane: Jane made the actual call, stating aloud that the case was a serial killing, and Lisbon remains uncomfortable during the conversation.

Throughout the episode, Jane attempts to teach Lisbon how to trust her instincts and work intuitively. Returning to headquarters, Lisbon begins to assess the case files

local police had collected when they had searched for this serial killer. At this point, Jane realizes that the investigation will proceed quite slowly, since they have eight suspects, and he complains:

Jane: Now you're just going through the motions.

Lisbon: Yeah, it's called police work.

Jane: Why not try a fresh approach?

Lisbon: Like what? Tarot cards?

Jane: *[motioning towards the photos of the eight suspects]* Go directly to the one that feels right.

Lisbon: These are all viable suspects. The Fresno PD did their job well.

Jane: So you're just going to do the same job over again? Take a close look at these guys and use your intuition. Which one is guilty?

Lisbon: I don't know.

Jane: Oh come on. You've been a cop for a long time. What you don't know is how much you know without knowing you know it. Take a guess and run with it.

Lisbon: *[doubtful]* Right. OK.

She eliminates suspects, stopping to consider one's educational background

Lisbon: He's got a college education.

Jane: Ah, profiling blather. Forget about that. Go with your gut.

She continues eliminating suspects

Jane: There! In seconds you've whittled it down to a manageable three suspects. Which one of these guys jumps out at you?

Lisbon stares at one photo and Jane points to it

Jane: This one?

Lisbon: Yeah, but it's just a hunch. I don't even know why.

Jane: Best kind of hunch.

Throughout the episode, Jane encourages Lisbon to follow her gut and Libson utilizes Jane's intuitive methodology instead of following her own more scientific approach to police work. And she does apprehend a pervert. However, the man she arrests is not the serial killer and has not broken any laws. As such, Lisbon is both a successful intuitive detective in this episode and fails to apprehend the murderer. Meanwhile, Jane has been

following his own intuition, and – based on the “evidence” of a neatly organized medicine cabinet – correctly identifies the serial killer (Woodruff & Baker, 2011).

In the midst of popular clamor that positions these four programs as innovative and progressive in their portrayals of “gender reversal,” *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* only reward “feminine” characteristics – such as intuition – when they are practiced by male characters. Lisbon was successfully intuitive and yet she turns up empty handed at the end of the episode; Jane, however, catches a serial killer.

Moral and Legal Codes

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* present the female characters as good, upstanding citizens who function within moral and legal boundaries. The male characters, however, have shady, vice-ridden pasts: Booth was a compulsive gambler, Bishop and Jane were con-men, and Castle is a playboy on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* respectively. The difference between the male and female detectives’ morality works its way into the narratives at various levels. Occasionally, the difference in the detectives’ moral codes simply generates mild humor. For example, in *Bones*’ eighteenth episode of season five, “The Predator in the Pool” (Usher & Little, 2010), the detectives attempt to confiscate rare angelfish from Marilyn Stoddard who works in an aquarium:

Brennan: What’s wrong with these angelfish?

Stoddard: They’ve been listless the last few days. Most likely due to something they’ve ingested.

Booth: Or someone.

Brennan: We should take these fish back to the lab.

Stoddard: No you can’t. These are a gift from Morocco.

Brennan: They need to be tested for trace evidence in a murder investigation.

Booth: We'll get them back to you. Don't worry.

Brennan: I may or may not get them back to you.

Here, Booth lies with ease, knowing that the angelfish will likely not survive the process of extricating evidence from their digestion tracks. Brennan, however, feels the compunction to clarify that the angelfish may not return to the aquarium.

While this example from *Bones* demonstrates that the difference between their characteristics can be unrelated to the plotline and simply generate humor, often this difference in moral and legal boundaries is instrumental to the plot. Taking again the episode of *The Mentalist*, "Blinking Red Light," described above (Woodruff & Baker, 2011), we see that the female detectives are constrained by their sense of morality and adherence to legal processes. Lisbon releases the man she apprehended because she cannot generate evidence that he is guilty of any crimes. Jane, however, faced with the same scenario chooses a radically different option.

In attempt to console Jane since they cannot find evidence to link the man Jane asserts is a serial killer to the string of murders, Lisbon states, "our hands are tied"; Jane, however, replies, "Maybe yours are" (Woodruff & Baker, 2011). He then joins the serial killer – who is a journalist – on the evening news, badgering the serial killer by comparing these recent killings to Red John's murders. In so doing, Jane goads the serial killer into denouncing Red John as an amateur murderer on national news, knowing that Red John will kill this new serial killer in retaliation – which is how the episode ends. Here, Jane works outside moral and legal codes, purposely manipulating two serial killers and using one to enact justice on the other. Unlike the female detectives, Jane and the

other male detectives rarely find their hands tied by a sense of morality or the nuances of legal procedures.

The female detectives – especially Dunham, Lisbon, and Beckett who work for law enforcement agencies – are ultimately constrained by their adherence to moral and legal codes. In a genre where the entire premise is centered on finding and apprehending criminals, these women’s moral and legal compasses keep them from being effective. The male detectives, however, regularly lie, tamper with evidence, refuse to wait for warrants, utilize under-world contacts, and generally get the job done through morally grey and illegal avenues.

Emotions and Relationships

The female detectives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have difficulty recognizing their own emotional responses, relating to others’ emotions, and forming meaningful relationships – especially domestic relationships. For example, in the pilot episode of *Bones* (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a), Booth and Brennan must break the news to parents that their daughter has been found dead. When the mother asks if their daughter suffered, Brennan launches into an explanation, stating that based on the state of the skull fractures their daughter experienced a violent and painful death. Booth, however, interrupts her, reassuring the parents by stating “Cleo never saw it coming” (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a). Alone again, Brennan confronts Booth for lying to the parents, stating “Those people deserved the truth” (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a). Booth, however, recognized the emotional needs of the situation and replies, “They deserve the

kindness of a lie” (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a). Over the course of the next seven seasons, Booth slowly teaches Brennan how to recognize emotions, adequately respond to those emotions, and be aware of her own emotions. However, even in the seventh season, when she can openly state that she loves Booth, Brennan still struggles to recognize and/or value emotions. For example, in first episode of season seven, “The Memories in the Shallow Grave” (Nathan & Toynton, 2011), Booth and Brennan are trying to decide if they should move in together to raise their child. Finally agreeing that they should live together, Brennan states,

- Brennan: You can move into my apartment permanently.
 Booth: No. that is your place, we need our place.
 Brennan: But in the Uruguay society, the men always moved in with women.
 Booth: That’s your reasoning?
 Brennan: I did a very well respected paper on the Uruguay. Women controlled society, owned all the property.
 Booth: But we’re not the Uruguay.
 Brennan: But the baby is in me, Booth. I’m more financially secure than you. Objectively I am more rational. This should be my decision.
 Booth: Yeah. You know what? We’re family. Even you should know what that means.
 Brennan: *[Startled]* You’re angry!
 Booth: Yeah, I’m angry.

After seven years, Brennan can correctly identify Booth’s emotions but is clueless why he is angry and unaware that as “family” Booth expected them to make this decision together (Nathan & Toynton, 2011). Instead, she approached the decision through rational, objective logic. Similarly, in the next episode, “The Hot Dog in the Competition,” Brennan does not invite Booth to the first ultrasound. Reasoning that Booth does not enjoy black-and-white films and therefore will not enjoy the ultrasound

imagery, Brennan has the ultrasound alone and announces their child's sex to a group of friends without telling him first (Peterson & Little, 2011).

While Olivia Dunham, Lisbon, and Beckett are better at recognizing others' emotions than Brennan is, they still struggle to come to terms with their own emotions. For example, on *Fringe*, Olivia is unable to experience fear as a result of her own self-defense to Walter's illegal experimentation on her as a child. While fearlessness and/or courageousness are commonly portrayed as good detective qualities in the crime genre, *Fringe* refuses to reward Olivia for her fearlessness. Instead, Olivia is portrayed as damaged and her inability to be afraid jeopardizes the safety of New York City (Miller, Stentz, & Beeson, 2010). Essentially, in this science-fiction imbued program, because of the previous illegal experimentation, Dunham can foresee a coming catastrophe, but only if her brain is awash in fear. Thus, her inability to experience fear is a negative quality in this program.

The male detectives are aware of their own emotions throughout these programs, and are especially aware of how they feel about their partners. All four series feature romantic overtones in the partnerships, yet the men are aware of their feelings and can vocalize their feelings while the women cannot. For example, on the season three finale of *Castle*, Castle confesses his love to Beckett after she has been shot. When season four opens, Beckett is clearly attracted to Castle, yet claims that she has no memories from the day she was shot and works hard to preempt Castle from re-declaring his love.

These series portray emotionally damaged women who cannot process emotions and cannot build or maintain domestic relationships: all four women have tragic and/or abusive back-stories, have strained relationships with their siblings, have very few

friends, and generally feel no real attachment to their occasional boyfriends. The male detectives, in contrast, are deeply connected to the domestic sphere, have strong familial relationships, develop meaningful relationships with their occasional girlfriends, and have a wide variety of friends. Even Peter Bishop who is estranged from his scientist father at the beginning of *Fringe* develops a close relationship with this well-meaning but troublesome parent.

Throughout these series, the male detectives essentially teach their partners how to feel emotions and how to develop meaningful relationships. For example, in the *Fringe* episode “Jacksonville” where Dunham needs to experience fear in order to rescue New York City (Miller, Stentz, & Beeson, 2010), it is only through Peter Bishop’s reassurance that she can let her defenses down enough to experience fear. Essentially, these women need their male partners in order to experience emotions and develop relationships.

Feminizing the Feminine

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* all situate the female detectives as the lead agent who supervises a team of crime-solving characters: on *Bones*, Temperance Brennan leads a team of forensic scientists at the Jeffersonian; on *Fringe*, Olivia Dunham is the lead agent on the Fringe Division, coordinating her team of both scientists and FBI agents; on *The Mentalist*, Teresa Lisbon supervises a team of CBI agents; and on *Castle*, Kate Beckett is the lead detective for her team at the NYPD. These teams are the supporting characters who flesh out the ensemble casts, often providing comedic relief

and having their own minor dramas and background issues that add secondary plotlines throughout the episodes. Through the female side characters, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* construct alternate versions of femininity, and then place these different femininities in conversation, competition, and ultimately conformity with each other. Over the course of several seasons, the women on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* slowly come to resemble each other as the female detectives “soften,” changing to function more like their kind, supportive, sexy friends and assistants.

The four female detectives on these series are considered different, damaged, and/or unusual by their supporting female characters. Moreover, the series go to substantial lengths to surround these strong, independent female detectives with highly attractive, feminine, sexy female characters – visually demonstrating a difference between the two types of female representations. For example, the pilot episode of *Bones* opens with a scene where Angela Montenegro picks Temperance Brennan up from the airport. Running late, Angela attempts to ask an airline agent for information, but the man ignores her. In frustration, Angela rips her shirt open, revealing copious cleavage and a lacey bustier. Needless to say, Angela gets the man’s attention. But as this opening scene plays out, *Bones* contrasts Angela and Brennan’s femininities:

Angela flashes the airline agent

Angela: Yeah. Hi. The flight from Guatemala?

Brennan enters the scene in the background

Brennan: Tell me you tried “Excuse me” first.

Angela: Sweetie! Yes, I did. Welcome home! Are you exhausted? Was Guatemala awful? Was it horribly backward?

Brennan: Yet I was never reduced to flashing my boobs for information.

Angela: Flash them for any fun reasons?

Brennan: I was literally neck-deep in a mass grave. Not romantic.

Angela: Diving head first into a pit of cadavers is no way to handle a messy breakup.

Brennan: Nothing Pete and I ever did was messy.

Angela: Then you were not doing the right things!

Brennan stops, turns, and addresses the man behind her

Brennan: Sir, why are you following us?

He grabs her and begins to drag her away. She fights, pinning him to the ground with an arm-lock

Angela: *[shrieking]* Attack! Security! Hello?! Who runs this airport? Kick his ass!

Angela ineffectually hits at the man with her purse

Security arrives and threatens Brennan with guns

Security: Step back now!

Brennan: He attacked me!

Man: I'm Homeland Security.

Angela: Oh, a little misunderstanding.

Brennan releases the man and puts her hands in the air

Brennan: Put away your guns.

Man: What? Is she in charge now? No, I'll tell you when you can lower your weapons. Hand over the bag.

Brennan: Oh, is that what this is about?

She hands him a bag and he opens it, revealing a human skull

Brennan: Boo!

Man is startled and drops bag while Angela looks smug and pleased

This opening sequence quickly demonstrates at least five things about Angela and Brennan (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a). First, Angela, dressed in a black skirt, pink blouse, pink coat, and pink bustier, enjoys traditionally feminine clothing, while Brennan – dressed in neutral shades and a cargo vest – does not. Second, Angela is open with her sexuality and not unwilling to use her sexuality to facilitate non-sexual goals, while Brennan is not. Third, Brennan is physically fit and well trained in hand-to-hand combat, while Angela is not. Fourth, neither Angela nor Brennan is afraid of human remains (although neither find them titillating either). And fifth, Angela and Brennan are close

friends. Additionally, we learn that Brennan is heterosexual, recently single, and assertive. Through scenes like this, liberally sprinkled throughout *Bones*, the series constructs a sharp distinction between Angela and Brennan's femininities. Both are strong, independent women, but Angela embodies the traditional qualities of femininity as an attractive, sexually available, kind woman and in comparison, Brennan is unfeminine.

This motif is replicated in Brennan's other relationships with recurring female characters on *Bones*, and throughout *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. For example: on *Fringe*, Dunham is juxtaposed with her FBI assistant, Astrid, who is attractive, teachable, calm, and maternal; on *The Mentalist*, Lisbon is contrasted with her junior detective, Grace Van Pelt who is attractive, naïve, and trusting; and on *Castle*, Beckett is contrasted with her friend Dr. Lanie Parish who is fun, attractive, and sexually experienced. Through these contrasts, the female detectives are represented as unfeminine.

However, it is only in contrast with these exceedingly hyper-feminine characters that the female detectives seem unfeminine. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have all cast traditionally beautiful women as the lead detectives, and although they originally cloth them in no-nonsense outfits – such as Brennan's earth-tones ensemble complete with cargo vest from the pilot episode – these women are unquestionably beautiful, their clothes fit them snugly, and the male characters are sexually attracted to them. Additionally, these series quickly situate the female detectives as heterosexual, single women. For example, on *Fringe*, the extended ninety minute pilot episode introduces Olivia Dunham with a scene of her and her FBI partner in bed together. Approximately fourteen minutes later, the series has fatally wounded her lover in an

explosion, and our grieving, recently single heroine must find another partner, Peter Bishop, who – three seasons later – becomes her lover.

All four female detectives, Temperance Brennan, Olivia Dunham, Teresa Lisbon, and Kate Beckett, are traditionally beautiful, kind, heterosexual women who become romantically involved with their career partners. These female detectives are not progressive or “gender reversed” characters; they are classic depictions of U.S. white femininity who also – occasionally – carry guns, practice self-defense when attacked, and maintain professional demeanors when in professional settings. Yet by contrasting these women with hyper-feminine supporting characters, these icons of traditional femininity are rendered “un-feminine.” Again, these female detectives do not self-identify, nor do the series represent them as “tom-boys,” androgynous, asexual, or masculine. Rather, these series portray hyper-feminine side characters that by contrast make the female detectives seem un-feminine.

Over the course of the series, these female side characters counsel and encourage the female detectives to date, wear more feminine clothing, pursue romantic relationships, and develop maternal characteristics, essentially feminizing these already feminine characters. Yet these series portray these femininity lessons as positive moments. By contrasting the supporting characters’ normalized hyper-femininity with the female detectives’ “other-ing” as damaged, un-feminine characters, these series frame scenes where the hyper-feminine friend teaches the female detective to be more feminine as important opportunities for the female detectives to get in touch with their own emotions, to soften, to be normal, and to enjoy life. Essentially, these femininity lessons humanize the female detectives, drawing them away from their work and sending them

out on dates with the male detectives. For example, on *Castle*, Beckett waits for Lanie in the medical examination lab, intending to go out to drinks with her best friend,

Beckett: Hey.
 Lanie: Damn girl! You scared me.
 Beckett: Lanie, you're surrounded by corpses!
 Lanie: Yeah, I don't expect the living after seven o'clock.
 Beckett: Funny. Neither do I.
 Lanie: I'm an M.E., what's your excuse?
 Beckett: Oh, don't be mean!
 Lanie: You deserve it. Getting a drink with me after work instead of getting your freak on with writer-boy?
 Beckett: Yeah, well he is annoying, self-centered, egotistical, and completely –
 Lanie: Fun! And take it from me, girlfriend, you need some fun. I mean, how bad can he be?

Instead of going out for drinks with Lanie, after this conversation Beckett joins Castle at a nice restaurant where they question a prostitute as part of their ongoing investigation.

While this could not possibly qualify as “getting her freak on,” it nonetheless demonstrates the dynamic at play between Lanie and Beckett (Marlowe & Bowman, 2009b). Throughout the series, Lanie's interactions with Beckett often trying to “feminize” Beckett. For example, while examining a crime scene where a body is strewn with flowers (Marlowe & Bowman, 2009a), Lanie remarks,

Lanie: Even bought her flowers. Who says romance is dead?
 Beckett: I do. Every Saturday night.
 Lanie: Well, lipstick wouldn't hurt. I'm just saying.

In this brief example, Beckett is already commentating on her desire to date more actively, bemoaning her lack of good male candidates for Saturday night dates. Lanie's retort demonstrates how their friendship is designed to pull Beckett towards greater conformity with traditionally feminine roles. It is not enough for Beckett to want men to

bring her flowers, she must also wear lipstick. Lanie's comment simultaneously suggests that Beckett's femininity is currently insufficient and points out how she can become more normal. Again, these female detectives are surrounded by supporting female characters who "help" them become more feminine. These friends guide the female detectives into greater femininity, providing support and acting as role models for femininity. These hyper-feminine side characters actively chide the female detectives into greater femininity as yet another example from *Castle* demonstrates. During an episode in which Beckett must attend a black-tie event as Castle's date as part of an undercover investigation (Beall & White, 2009), Lanie helps Beckett select a dress for the evening,

Lanie: No, no. Uh-uh. That one goes to the thrift store.

Beckett holds up a fluorescent dress

Lanie: Whoa, *Karma Chameleon*.

Beckett: The girl at Saks said fluorescent is in.

Lanie: Well then, she was on commission.

Beckett drapes a sequined dress over her front

Lanie: Uh-uh.

Beckett: Too *Showgirls*?

Lanie nods. Beckett sighs in frustration and drops the dresses

Beckett: You know why he's trying to do? He wants to humiliate me.

The doorbell rings

Beckett: Lanie, can you get that, please?

Lanie: Alright. But you better not be wearing your prom dress when I come back.

Lanie re-enters the bedroom with a box

Beckett: Who was it?

Lanie: Delivery.

Beckett: From who?

Lanie: Let's find out.

She hands Beckett the box. Lanie opens a card with the word: BIBBITY-BOBBITY-BOO!

Lanie: Bibbity-bobbity-boo?

Beckett: *Cinderella*. It's from him [Castle].

Lanie: Oh, please. It's a dress. Now open it up, girlfriend.

Beckett: Oh! I knew he was arrogant, but this, this is complete...

Beckett opens the box, pulls the tissue wrap aside and Lanie gasps

Beckett: Oh.

They see a beautiful gown

Their conversation is not one of mutual support, pleasure, or camaraderie. Rather, Lanie is clearly involved in this preparation process as an authoritative, chiding presence.

Lanie deems Beckett's dresses untenable, suggesting that Beckett does not have the ability to dress herself. However, Beckett owns expensive dresses designed to accentuate her attractive physique. Beckett's closet clearly indicates that she is not a tomboy, or "un-feminine." Rather, she enjoys dresses, owns dresses, and knows that her closet does not have the caliber of dress required at Castle's black-tie event. This is not a woman who is "un-feminine." This is simply a character who is not yet hyper-feminine. But under Lanie's capable tutelage, and through Castle's influence – as we will see in the next two chapters – Beckett transforms from her already traditionally feminine self, into a hyper-feminine character.

This pattern is replicated throughout the other series. These female detectives are already traditionally feminine characters; yet their supporting female cast members and their male partners "help" feminize them. Within these narratives, the female detectives are treated as abnormal, damaged, and lacking in femininity; for them to become normal humans, they must attain increased levels of femininity – a process with which their supporting characters and partners are all too eager to help them. The female detectives are feminine characters surrounded by hyper-feminine supporting characters. Through

this juxtaposition, our female detectives seem barren – lacking their “humanity.” For women to be human within these crime series, they must conform to hyper-femininity.

Conclusion: Scientific Damsels

I recently purchased a DVD set of *Bones*, completing my collection of this seven season series. At the check-out counter, the cashier exclaimed, “I just love *Bones*. She’s the best!” Leaving the store, I realized that the cashier was likely correct, Temperance Brennan – nicknamed Bones – is one of the best female characters on current network TV and certainly within the crime genre. She is a strong, smart, independent, bold, and accomplished character. She takes pride in her work, is kind to her co-workers, is successfully and happily navigating a family and career, and is a good mother.

Brennan, Dunham, Lisbon, and Beckett are good female detectives, and good representations of women on U.S. crime programming. Unfortunately, these positive attributes are overshadowed and trapped within the confines of their detective characteristics and pushed towards ever increasing displays of traditional femininity – which centers on their sexual availability and willingness to enter into committed romantic and emotionally vulnerable relationships with their male partners. These may be the best women on TV, but they are funneling towards hyper-femininity and are entirely constrained by their generic form. The female detectives participate in classic characteristics within the detective genre, yet these narratives refuse to reward their versions of investigation: the female detectives successfully employ scientific methodologies when intuition is privileged; they are good moral characters who uphold

the law when shady practices and minor illegalities are more effective; and they are emotionally detached and relationally challenged in series that focus on romance as the running plotline. As postfeminist texts, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* claim to offer empowered narratives of equality and “reversed” gender portrayals, and yet – just as their episodes all follow the same narrative structure that the crime genre has featured for centuries – they portray patriarchy, again, on prime-time television.

Chapter 4

It's a Man's World After All

You know homicides? They are not solved by scientists. They're solved by guys like me asking a thousand questions a thousand times. Catching people telling lies every time. You're great at what you do, Bones, but you don't solve murders. Cops do.

FBI Special Agent Seeley Booth - *Bones*

As demonstrated in chapter four, the female detectives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* embody classic characteristics from the crime genre. Yet their traits – operating scientifically, being morally good, legally conscientious, and emotionally and relationally distant – confine them as the narratives frame these women as only partially human; these women need their friends and partners to further feminize them before they can be healthy, happy humans. To a large extent, the opposite is true of the male detectives. They embody the opposite characteristics: they operate intuitively, are morally and legally unconstrained, and emotionally and relationally adept – and the narratives reward their investigative approaches. The murder cases these partners work call for intuitive thinking and require someone who can read people, emotionally connect with victims and witnesses and understand the motivations of villains, while the running romances that structure these series require and reward the male detectives for their ability to form lasting commitments to the female detectives. Through these juxtapositions of character traits, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* operate within a man's world, where they star male characters, stock the supporting roles with more men, and affirm patriarchal norms, while asserting that these narratives focus on equitable gender relations and portray progressive, reversed gender characteristics.

The male detectives, Seeley Booth, Peter Bishop, Patrick Jane, and Richard Castle are contradictory characters – not gender reversed, but contradictory. The male detectives simultaneously embody traditionally feminine and masculine traits: they are capable of commitment, but readily engage in one-night-stand behaviors; they are undereducated, but smart; and they are domestic, but career oriented. These men are a strange combination of traits as these series carefully position male characters who have “progressive” characteristics yet also fit the bill as “manly,” sexually attractive characters.

Moreover, these male detectives are surrounded by male characters who fill in the supporting roles. Unlike the female detectives who are usually given one hyper-feminine friend and/or assistant and one antagonistic female character who is in a position of authority over the female detective, these male detectives are at the top of informal but more extensive hierarchies. These series create situations where the female detective is surrounded by her own investigative team: Brennan has the Jeffersonian lab, Dunham is the lead agent in the Fringe division, Lisbon is the head detective for her unit in the CBI, as is Beckett for her team at the NYPD. In each of these scenarios, the male characters are outsiders to the team – yet they have more power than the other male characters, and they lord it over them. Their power is unofficial: they have no legal or authorized authority, yet they boss the other men around.

Moreover, much of the publicity for these series center on the male detectives’ actors and characters. While the series are heralded as surprising new series that reinvigorate the crime genre through gender reversals and equitable, romantic partnerships, the press focuses on the men. The male actors’ backgrounds are touted in

newspaper reviews that often interview these male characters and emphasize their sexual attractiveness (Bianco, 2008; Clark, 2008; Elfman, 2005; Lowry, 2009).

Historically speaking, the crime genre typically features male detectives, with female detectives, such as Miss Marple, as rare exemplars. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* create narratives in which the women are positioned as the lead detectives: Temperance Brennan – nicknamed “Bones” – is the titular character on *Bones* and her expertise is needed to solve old crimes and the other three female detectives are the lead agents in charge of the investigations. These series have the makings for four updated versions of Miss Marple, featuring Ms. Brennan, Ms. Dunham, Ms. Lisbon and Ms. Beckett. Yet instead, these women have partners, and their partners steal the show. Through this analysis, I argue that *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* reassert patriarchal norms while positioning themselves as gender-enlightened TV. I demonstrate this by first exploring how these series characterize the male detectives with a mixture of traditionally masculine and feminine traits, and second, by examining the development and mobilization of unofficial masculine hierarchies on these series, as these male detectives come to overshadow the other characters.

A Contradiction in Terms

In 1988, Arnold Schwarzenegger made a guest appearance on *Saturday Night Live* where he chided his “cousins,” played by the comedians Dana Carvey and Kevin Nealon, for not being strong enough, fast enough, “pumped” enough, or speaking with correct diction. Criticizing them, he says “look what you are: Girlie-men” (Life “Pumps

Up” Art, 2001). Resurrecting the term in his political rhetoric, Schwarzenegger has applied it to Democrats, economic pessimists (or realists), and a variety of other political opponents (Nicholas, 2004). Rightly criticized as homophobic and sensationalist, Schwarzenegger’s phrase, “girlie-men,” suggests that in popular culture masculinity is not a static, biological category but a social hierarchy replete with its own catalogue of gender performances, nuances, options, and contradictions. However, as Schwarzenegger’s term, “girlie-men” again suggests, these options are not without social and material consequences as individuals can be more or less masculine, and correspondingly, more or less powerful (Petersen, 1998).

The male detectives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* combine traditionally masculine and feminine traits without risking Schwarzenegger’s appellation: their performances of traditionally feminine characteristics are not effeminate. Rather, as argued in the following analysis, these male detectives turn traits that are liabilities for female characters into attractive, positive characteristics and perform a dominant, virile version of masculinity on these programs. These characters achieve this by juxtaposing contradictory characteristics. While these male detectives exhibit numerous contradictory characteristics, for example they are undereducated but smart, there are two specific contradictions that bear substantive analysis. Namely, these male detectives are 1) domestic, but career oriented, and 2) relationally committed and monogamous, but sexually experienced, dominant, and promiscuous. Examining how *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* combine these oppositional characteristics in their male detectives by analyzing these key contradictions, I will argue two points. First, these series publicize these male detectives as enlightened characters, claiming these characters

embody the gender-reversed, pro-women masculinity of the twenty-first century and serve as role-models for how men can and should interact with female colleagues, but they are essentially the same patriarchal characters routinely portrayed in crime programming. These characters have a thin veneer of postfeminist glaze brushed over their patriarchal cores, but they are not substantively different. The “traditionally feminine” characteristics these male characters occasionally pay lip-service to are merely feints, gestures without substance. Second, this lip-service is richly rewarded within the narrative structures of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*: when men and women perform the same traditionally feminine characteristics – for example, being “emotional” or taking care of family members – the men are rewarded and the women are punished within these narratives.

Parental Work-a-Holics

The male detectives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are all parental figures, performing the traditionally feminine trait of taking care of children and/or ailing parents. This domesticates the male detectives, making them ideal family-men, since they are – without exception – good men who express love, care, and support to their dependents. For example, on *Bones*, Seeley Booth is an exemplary father to his son Parker; on *Fringe*, Peter Bishop takes care of his elderly father, Walter, maintaining the house, calming Walter’s unreasonable fears, coping with Walter’s outbreaks and demands, and even occasionally feeding and clothing Walter; on *The Mentalist*, Patrick Jane’s family has been murdered, but the series carefully constructs Jane as a caring and

devoted father through a series of flashbacks, Jane's reminiscing, and the way Jane interacts with other children; finally, on *Castle*, Richard Castle fathers his teenage daughter, maintaining an open, playful, honest relationship with a mature, kind-hearted, smart young woman – and he provides a home for his mother, who is a bohemian actress.

Not only do these relationships domesticate the male detectives, but they are further framed as exemplary caretakers. For example, on *Castle*, Richard Castle has a caring, open relationship with his daughter Alexis as they mutually discuss their lives together, often reminiscing on her childhood and his parental choices. These dialogues frame Castle as a conscientious but playful and accessible father, as demonstrated in these scenes from the episode “Nanny McDead” (Schindel & Terlesky, 2009). Returning home from the precinct, Castle begins to help Alexis with the after-dinner dishes:

Alexis: So, who got killed today?

Castle: The nanny.

Alexis: Do they know who did it?

Castle: Well, apparently, in an actual homicide they don't know who did it until after they guy gets caught!

Alexis: How come we never had a nanny?

Castle: Well, your mother and I decided that if someone was going to screw you up, we wanted it to be me. Only, you managed to turn out fine somehow anyway...

The conversation briefly shifts to a discussion of genealogies and nannies as Alexis' grandmother, Martha, enters the scene. When Castle takes a call from Beckett and decides to return to the precinct, the conversation continues as he kisses Alexis on the cheek and states,

Castle: Got to go! I would say, “don't wait up,” but I know you'll be asleep by eleven anyway –

Alexis: Ten-thirty. It's a school night.

Then kissing his mother, Martha, on his way out, he asks

Castle: *[To Martha]* Are you sure she has either one of our genes?

Martha: Well...

Castle: *[Still to Martha]* You will help her with the dishes?

Martha nods, and she calls after him

Martha: Be careful!

At the conclusion of the episode, after having caught the murderer, Castle is in his office, working on his newest novel when Alexis comes in to say good night:

Alexis: Did you guys get him?

Castle: On his way up the river as we speak.

Alexis: Cool. Was it who you thought?

Castle: Actually, it wasn't.

Alexis: Wow! It must have been a pretty good story to surprise you!

Then Alexis adds, teasingly

Alexis: You know, you'd better be careful or you'll turn into one of your readers!

Castle: OK, you just ruined it.

Alexis: You know? It's okay to be surprised sometimes, that's the fun.

Castle: You surprise me. All the time.

Alexis kisses his cheek good night

Alexis: I'll see you in the morning, dad.

Castle: Night, pumpkin.

Alexis: Dad?

Castle: Uh-huh.

Alexis: Thanks for being my nanny.

Castle: No sweat, kiddo.

These conversations are typical of *Castle*, where the father-daughter relationship is dynamic and fun, as the series clearly positions Castle as an exemplary father. Although he briefly mentions Alexis's mother, it is clear from the conversation that Castle was responsible for raising Alexis, and returning viewers know that Alexis's mother is a flighty, irresponsible woman who divorced Castle shortly after Alexis' birth, and that Alexis stayed with her father, who worked from home – writing novels.

All four of the detectives are positioned as caring, domesticated men who take care of those around them. Even Peter Bishop, who does not have a child during the first two seasons is framed as a caretaker as he nurses his ailing father, Walter. Their relationship is strained by Walter's erratic behavior: Walter was institutionalized in a mental facility when Peter was a teenager and he, subsequently, grew up alienated and angry, blaming Walter for abandoning him. However, in the pilot episode, Walter's scientific expertise is needed, and FBI Agent Olivia Dunham recruits Peter to take care of Walter during the experiments. This turns into a long-term arrangement, and Peter joins the Fringe division, becoming Olivia's partner. Peter quickly learns to care for Walter who is endearing if also frustrating. For example, in the following scene from "The Man from the Other Side" (Singer, Gross, & Hunt, 2010), Walter and Peter are at home, discussing a difficult case as Walter angrily makes a peanut-butter and jelly sandwich:

Peter places his hand on Walter's shoulder

Peter: Walter, you've been awake for two straight days. You need to get some rest.

Walter: I should have been more careful with my initial dissection. If I hadn't caused so much damage, it could have told us everything.

Peter: But you couldn't possibly have known that.

Walter: Still ... [*angrily*] Stupid! Inexcusable!

Peter, again, places his hand on Walter's shoulder

Peter: Calm down. It's going to be Okay.

Walter: Okay.

Peter: We're going to figure it out, just like we always do.

Walter: Okay.

Peter: Okay? I want you to get some rest, dad. I'm going to hit the sack. I'll be upstairs if you need me.

Walter: Dad.

Peter: Huh?

Walter: You just called me dad.

Peter: [*smiling*] I guess I did.

In this scene, we see Peter caring for Walter, helping him cope with a difficult case, calming him down, and allaying his fears. Although Peter does not have a child of his own in the first seasons, the series carefully frames Peter as a caretaker as he nurtures and provides for his elderly father.

However, all four men are career-oriented, and quite successful at their professions. Booth is a rising FBI Agent, with a large corner office, full autonomy in the later seasons, and a background as an elite Army sniper. Peter Bishop was a successful con-artist/entrepreneur who faked a Doctorate in physics and worked at MIT, publishing original research until his duplicity was discovered. When the series opens, Bishop has just successfully brokered an important – if shady – business deal when Olivia Dunham recruits him to work with the Fringe division. Patrick Jane was a consummate con-artist, successfully posing as a psychic in Los Angeles, where he had TV appearances, helped the local police departments with cases, and owned a mansion and an antique car collection. Finally, Castle is a famous, best-selling novelist, who plays poker with James Patterson, Stephen J. Cannell, and Dennis Lehane (who have cameos on this series), and is friends with the fictitious major of New York City. These men are at the top of their fields, each more successful than the next as they move from one achievement to another.

Here, we see that these male detectives' domesticity is simply a veneer, glazed over the traditionally professional, financial, and socio-political successes these men “naturally” accumulate. These are not “gender-reversed” characters: they are not feminine characters, stay-at-home-fathers, or house-husbands, nor do they actually do housework or spend time child-rearing. They have the joys of home and family without

the responsibilities. Instead, they are professionally and financially successful men who spend all of their time working. To achieve this level of success, any real-world individual would certainly be consumed in work – and these male detectives are too, but this goes almost unnoticed within the machinations of these story-worlds. For example, consider the two scenes described above in which Richard Castle and Peter Bishop are portrayed in these series as loving caretakers: both men are discussing work with their family members. Moreover, Castle has returned home late – he has missed dinner – and although he briefly begins to help with the dishes, he is called away *back to work*, and in the touching conclusion when Alexis thanks him for being her “nanny,” Castle is *still working* as he types away at his new novel. In the scene from *Fringe*, Peter has just gotten off a case-related phone call with Olivia Dunham, and after talking with Walter Bishop – about the case, Peter goes directly to bed. Even these exemplary caretakers who enjoy their home life and mutually supportive relationships with their dependents do not enjoy quiet evenings with home-cooked meals followed by a good book or settling down on the sofa to enjoy a movie together. These are not family-men. These are work-a-holics who have impossibly good relationships with kind family members, with whom they discuss the case in each episode.

Each of these series portrays male detectives who embody an irreconcilable juxtaposition of unparalleled professional success and domesticity. These male detectives are exemplary fathers *and* work-a-holics. These are care-takers who spend no time taking care of their dependents. Their domesticity is simply a new layer of paint on the classic patriarchal character. Moreover, these men’s domesticity is rewarded within the narratives while the female detectives’ is not. For example, both Seeley Booth on

Bones and Olivia Dunham on *Fringe* want to spend time with the children in their lives – Booth with his son Parker, and Dunham with her niece, Ella. Booth’s son lives with his mother, Booth’s ex-girlfriend, and Booth only has partial custody. Dunham’s sister and niece occasionally live with her, when the sister is having difficulties with her husband. In both series, the detectives plan special days to spend with these children who are clearly very important parts of their lives. Booth’s plans succeed while Dunham’s inevitably fail. For example, in “The Man in the Fallout Shelter,” Booth plans to celebrate Christmas with Parker, a plan that gets jeopardized when he and the other characters are quarantined due to exposure to a dangerous substance during the course of their investigation. Booth spends his time in quarantine quite happily stoned as a side-effect of prescribed medication, and – after solving the murder case and resolving the quarantine issue – Booth celebrates Christmas, as planned, with his son (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005b).

Meanwhile on *Fringe*, when Olivia takes a day off of work, planning to spend the day taking her niece to an amusement park, her plans are interrupted by a new work-related disaster, and Olivia must disappoint her niece by postponing their trip to the amusement park. Although the episode concludes with Olivia managing to take part of an afternoon off and taking Ella to the amusement park, even this happy scene is spoiled by two ominous characters who watch them from afar – stalking Olivia, as they remark, “Look how happy she is. It’s a shame things are about to get so hard for her” (Wyman, Pinkner, & Smith, 2009). Essentially, the *Bones* episode was designed to return Booth to his son, enabling them to happily celebrate Christmas together, as Booth remarked, “I’m the coolest dad this Christmas!” (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005b). However, the *Fringe*

episode is designed to take Olivia away from her niece, Ella. Booth's fathering is rewarded, but Olivia's involvement in her niece's life is not. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* consistently position the male detectives as capable of having successful domestic lives and careers, while the women suffer under the double-load when they try to have both a personal and professional life. Olivia cannot find the time to spend one day with her niece since work intrudes into her vacation time but the male detectives all have time to develop and maintain ongoing, dynamic, healthy relationships with their family members.

As encouraging as it is to see male characters positioned as good father figures on television, these series do so without considering the time these relationships require, creating impossible combinations of personal and professional achievements. In and of itself, this is not necessarily negative: television airs many impossibilities each day. Rather, the problem is that these male detectives are not domestic but are framed as such: Castle missed dinner, barely helped with the dishes, and rushed back out to work instead of spending the evening at home, while being framed as a loving, caring, and exemplary father. Moreover, the male detectives can achieve this impossibly happy contradiction of family and careers but the women cannot. The women do not have the time to date, raise children, or interact with their family members, and it becomes a crisis for the women when they – like Olivia – try to enjoy family. These series are all too cognizant of the double-load when it comes to women, reminding viewers that women cannot have it all while portraying male detectives who do.

Monogamous but Promiscuous

Drawing on the generic markings, most TV reviews of these series' pilot episodes hinted towards the promise of romance between the detective partners, citing witty dialogue, lingering glances, and sexual chemistry as evidence of the programs' assured "slow burning" romances (Cohn, 2006; Kinon, 2008; Lowry, 2009; Mitchell, 2006; Ng, 2011). From their opening episodes, these series have created a *telos* for their detective partners: the relationships are designed culminate in romantic, committed, monogamous love. Three of the four series have already made good on this promise of romance: in *Bones*, Brennan and Booth are a couple planning for the birth of their first child, in *Fringe*, Olivia Dunham and Peter Bishop were happily coupled until a time-machine device altered their history, so that Peter now has to re-win Olivia's affections, and in *Castle*, Castle has already confessed that he is in love with Beckett; only *The Mentalist* has successfully drawn out the partners' attraction to each other, and Patrick Jane and Teresa Lisbon have yet to kiss in the fourth season. Despite the clear intention to romantically couple the career partners, these series planned to accomplish these romances slowly: fearing the "moonlighting curse" these series have (more or less successfully) delayed the romance (Cohn, 2006; Kinon, 2008; Lowry, 2009; Mitchell, 2006; Ng, 2011).

Despite the presence of these slow-burning romances that add sexual tension and help structure the narratives, these series all frame the male detectives as sexually experienced and desirable by featuring episodes in which the male detectives seduce random women. Seemingly, there are two goals that are at odds with each other in these

series: the men are destined for committed, monogamous relationships with their detective partners but cannot consummate that relationship lest the series lose its romantic tension, yet the male detectives need to demonstrate sexual prowess. To resolve these competing goals, the male detectives engage in random, casual sexual activity.

These occasional forays are especially common early on in the series when it is far too soon for the male detective to seduce his partner, but – seemingly – he needs to seduce someone in order to assert his prowess. These romantic conquests are not central to the ongoing plotlines, nor are they carefully developed. Rather, these scenarios appear, almost at random, to demonstrate that the male detective has a sex drive, is sexually attractive, and is capable of seducing⁴ the woman of his choice. For example, in *The Mentalist's* fourth episode, “Ladies in Red,” Jane decides – at a funeral – to seduce the new widow (Glasberg & Long, 2008). This decision is part of a bet with Agent Wayne Rigsby: when Rigsby cannot figure out how to ask their colleague, Agent Grace Van Pelt out on a date, Jane remarks that by showing a woman “love and affection” a man can seduce any woman; Rigsby then bets Jane one-hundred dollars that Jane cannot seduce the widow – a bet Rigsby loses. The episode is salvaged from tawdriness, when Jane decides not to sleep with the widow, and instead reveals her as a murderess (Glasberg & Long, 2008).

While the other series are perhaps less outrageous, their machinations are just as contrived. For example, the sixth episode of *Castle*, “Always Buy Retail,” opens to

⁴ I use the word “seduction” throughout this chapter as a blanket term for the sexual behaviors these male detectives engage in when they work throughout an episode to lure women to their beds, and succeed in this enticement – even if the characters do not have sex. These series occasionally shy away from the act, usually killing the woman or revealing her as a murderer before she joins a male detective in bed.

Castle making love to his first wife – Alexis’ mother, and then her unexpected announcement that she’s moving back to New York to find a job (Stanton, Werksman, & Babbit, 2009). She then, unbeknownst to Castle, pulls Alexis out of school to go on a shopping spree, and when Castle gets home, Alexis expresses that her life is better when her mother does not live in New York City. Castle then calls in a favor and has a friend offer his ex-wife a terrific job across the country – a job she accepts (Stanton, Werksman, & Babbit, 2009). While this adds tension to the episode as Castle worries about how to get his ex-wife to leave New York City while working the case, the scenario is nicely designed to demonstrate Castle’s sexual prowess *and* his parental nature, which ought to be at odds in this episode but, instead, work together seamlessly. His sexual encounter with his ex-wife does not complicate his relationship with her or with their daughter: instead of being mad at Castle for sleeping with her semi-estranged mother, Alexis is grateful that she lives with her father, preferring him as a parent, and despite his dalliance, which would seriously complicate any real family, Castle is portrayed as the mature adult figure in this episode.

In case these early sexual exploits are forgotten, the series throw in unconsummated flirtations and seductions later on – after the male detectives have committed themselves to pursuing exclusive romantic relationships with their partners. For example: after confessing his love for Beckett in the third season finale, Castle flirts shamelessly with a non-recurring character in “Eye of the Beholder” (Francis & Terlesky, 2011); on *Fringe*, when Peter is distraught (after learning that Walter is not actually his biological father), instead of seeking comfort from Olivia who he has been romantically pursuing, Peter goes on a road trip and seduces a waitress – who conveniently dies before

Peter can hook-up with her (Miller, Stentz, Zuckerman, N., Zukerman, L., & Chappelle, 2010). Both instances demonstrate these series' penchant for exhibiting the male detectives' sexual prowess and attractiveness – without actually disrupting the monogamous relationships they have been pursuing with their partners. These men know they are in love with their partners, yet seduce other women. Again the clear contrivance is staggering: these series create scenarios – such as sending Peter off on a road trip – in which the men can encounter beautiful, unattached women to successfully seduce, thereby proving the men's sexual proficiency.

Essentially, since the men are not seducing their partners, they must, occasionally, bed some other woman. David Boreanaz – who plays Booth on *Bones* – commented to this extent in an interview. When asked “So you’ll get a love interest?” Boreanaz replied, “Yeah. There’s going to be more than one love interest ... I think my relationship with Bones will always be there, but hey, a man’s got to do what a man’s got to do” (Cohn, 2006). These exhibitions of sexual prowess are typically episodic: they do not affect the story-arcs or create ongoing tensions or jealousies between the partners. Rather, these sexual encounters occur and are forgotten within the narratives of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. This creates a strange contradiction in which the men are simultaneously players and yet are believably committed and monogamous in their relationships with their partners. It is not as if these men need to be reformed, tamed, or somehow “settled down.” The female detectives do not “catch” their partners. Rather, within these narratives, the men are already good, already commitment-types, and already serious about their partners. These good men are simply (in Boreanaz’s words) doing what a man’s got to do: chasing tail.

Not only do these male detectives exhibit these contradictory traits of caring monogamy and selfish promiscuity, their sexual encounters are framed very differently from the female detectives' sexual encounters. There are five prominent differences between how the male and female detectives' sex lives are represented on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*: first, the men simply have more sexual partners than the women; second, the male detectives are more often portrayed in the act of love-making than the female detectives are; third, the male detectives often engage in casual sex, while the women are more likely to have sex with committed partners; fourth, the women are more likely to be punished for their sexual encounters (committed or otherwise), than the men are; and finally, the women's sexual relationships are more likely to contribute to ongoing plotlines and/or character development within the series.

For example, on *Castle*, Kate Beckett has two boyfriends over the course of four seasons – i.e. four years in the story-world. Beckett is never portrayed in bed with any of her significant others, and her occasional boyfriends serve to make Castle jealous – which actually moves Castle and Beckett's relationship forward as Castle is able to recognize that he is jealous and then realize that he has strong feelings for Beckett. Finally, Beckett is punished for her relationships: in the third season finale, the series reinterprets her previous two boyfriends as crutches or hiding mechanisms, suggesting that Beckett is still too damaged to create meaningful bonds with her romantic partners. Castle confronts Beckett, stating "I know you hide there ... you hide in these nowhere relationships with men you don't love" (Beall & Bowman, 2011). This is a shaming statement, which clearly frames Beckett's sexual relationships not as fun, comforting, mutually supportive, and/or exciting, but as a negative, unhealthy behavior that needs to end. Fascinatingly,

Castle delivers this line without a hint of irony and the series itself in no way recognizes the enormous incongruity of having Castle – the proverbial player – chide Beckett for having loveless sex. Moreover, since this narrative has already tipped its hand – implying from the pilot episode that Castle and Beckett are destined for each other, this scene implies that Castle is the only man she can have a meaningful romantic relationship with, further implying that *Castle tames Beckett*, healing her of her crippled romantic behavior and rescuing her from a “wild-oats” stage, bringing her into a mature relationship.

Despite the clearly patriarchal influences structuring the way sexuality is portrayed in these series, *Bones* and *The Mentalist* both attempt to frame their female detectives as progressive female characters by having them engage in casual sex – as if casual sex is the benchmark of gender equality. For example, during the early seasons of *Bones*, Brennan talks about sex in clinical, scientific terms, eschews love as a chemical reaction, and believes that sex is primarily concerned with physical gratification.

However, even with this purposefully casual approach to sexuality, which is meant to frame Brennan as a woman who can have sex like a man, Brennan cannot escape the system of punishment and monogamy these series create for their female detectives. For instance, in “The Man in the Outhouse,” an early episode in the fourth season (Kettner, Lisson, & DePaul, 2008), Booth barges into Brennan’s apartment at 6:30 a.m., and is surprised to see a man there, prompting the following conversation with Brennan,

Brennan: It would be good if you called first.

Booth: Well who knew you were even dating?

Brennan: Well, I wouldn't call it dating. We occasionally make arrangements to spend time together.

Booth: I'm just surprised you're not more picky.

Brennan: My relationship with Mark is purely physical, and I am very satisfied with him in that area. Did you see his chest and thighs?

Booth: Bones. What [are you doing]?

Brennan: Haven't you chosen someone because they were satisfying sexually?

Booth: There has to be more than sex.

Notice that Booth is shocked that Brennan has had sex recently: Booth's surprise is warranted by how little Brennan dates in this series. Later in the episode, Booth is upset to learn that Brennan is going out on a date with a botanist, and assumes she has stopped seeing Mark,

Booth: Oh I get it. You dumped Mark. *[Sarcastically]* It's too bad, I kinda liked the guy.

Brennan: No, I didn't dump Mark, I'm seeing both of them.

Booth: At the same time?

Brennan: Mark and I have a physical connection. The botanist, while brilliant and fascinating, just ... just doesn't appeal to me in that way.

Booth: Okay, so all that stuff about monogamy being unnatural, you're just making excuses.

Brennan: I do not make excuses. Only people who are ashamed make excuses.

Booth: Bones, two guys at the same time, it's not right. I mean, that's why they invented dueling.

At first glance, their dialogue in these two conversations frames Brennan as progressive with a casual approach to sex and Booth as the champion of monogamy and committed relationships, thereby demonstrating their "reversed gender" characteristics: i.e. she is having sex like a man, and he thinks about sex like a woman. However, Booth is no stranger to one-night-stands, casual sex, and friends-with-benefits. Booth's problem is not with casual sex, it is with the idea of Brennan having sex. For example, in this same

episode when asked how his sex life is, Booth brags, “I do fine.” Moreover, the tension in this episode centers on Brennan’s apparently controversial decision to have two boyfriends, but she is only sleeping with one of them. This is hardly the polygamous crisis Booth seems to be reacting to.

Moreover, Booth’s dialogue throughout the episode is meant to punish Brennan, bringing her back in line with sexual standards he himself does not maintain. This punishment is completed in the final scene of the episode, where Brennan reveals that both men have broken up with her because they did not appreciate their respective roles as booty-call and conversation partner. Finally, Brennan’s interactions with these men served to make Booth blatantly jealous, and the episode concludes with Booth taking Brennan out for dinner and consoling her with the obviously hinting statement, “There is someone for everyone. Someone you’re meant to spend the rest of your life with. All right? You just have to be open enough to see it” (Kettner, Lisson, & DePaul, 2008).

Although the episode frames Brennan as a sexually progressive character who approaches sex casually enough to date two men simultaneously, the narrative structure hems her into a much more conservative stance by the end of the episode. Moreover, Brennan’s original approach to sexuality in this episode is hardly progressive: it was rare for her to have a sexual partner, she only had one sexual partner, she only wanted one sexual partner, and she recants from even this when punished at the end of the episode. Yet Booth’s “feminized” approach to sexuality causes him to shame Brennan during the episode, espousing a sexual standard he eschews in his own behaviors throughout the series.

The Mentalist also attempts to portray Lisbon as having a “masculine” approach towards sexuality. This is demonstrated in the only sexual encounter Lisbon has during the series’ four seasons. Yet even this suggests something is amiss in Lisbon’s “masculine” approach to sexuality: over the course of four years, Lisbon has sex once. Granted, since Jane is grieving his wife’s death, he – unlike his counterparts on *Bones*, *Castle*, and *Fringe* – does not sleep with many women. However, the point here is not in a comparison of how many partners Jane and Lisbon have. Rather, Jane and Lisbon have different approaches to sexuality in these series. Jane has a conquest approach to many of the women he meets, and he casually seduces, charms, and flirts with women on a regular basis. Although he rarely sleeps with the women he seduces, the series pointedly demonstrates that he could be sleeping with them. Lisbon, on the other hand, rarely demonstrates any interest in the men around her (other than her slight interest in Jane), never seduces or flirts with a man as part of her investigation, and never has a boyfriend. Other than her ongoing flirtation with Jane – which is at quite a low simmer – Lisbon seemingly has no sex-drive or romantic interests.

The only time Lisbon does have sex, the circumstances are unusual. An egotistical billionaire named Walter Mashburn, whom the team investigated as part of a murder case in season two returns in the episode “Red Hot” in season three (Gable, Long, 2010). Mashburn repeatedly hits on Lisbon, attempting to flirt with her throughout both episodes. He comes on strong, with overtly sexual propositions, operating far beyond the real-world’s definitions for sexual harassment. Mashburn is a powerful man with several ex-wives and a penchant for dating models. In “Red Hot,” Jane realizes that Lisbon has some repressed sexual attraction to Mashburn, and spends the entire episode trying to get

her to admit her attraction. Jane goes so far as to force Lisbon to pretend to be Mashburn's girlfriend during a party. The episode ends by cutting to a scene of Lisbon pulling on a shirt and fixing her hair as she walks through a hotel room. Mashburn is in the bed, and they have the following conversation,

Mashburn: Good morning.
 Lisbon: Morning.
 Mashburn: I'm very glad you came over last night.
 Lisbon: Me, too.
 Mashburn: I'll call room service, order some breakfast.
 Lisbon: Nah, nah, I can't. I'm late. What can I say? The bastards keep killing people.
 Mashburn: Well, when am I gonna see you again?
 Lisbon: Aren't you going to Europe tomorrow?
 Mashburn: Oh. For two months. I've got board meetings.
 Lisbon: Well, there you go then.
Lisbon walks over to the bed and kisses him goodbye
 Lisbon: It was nice seeing you, Walter.
Lisbon collects her gun and badge from the end of the bed
 Mashburn: Can't believe I'm a one-night stand for Dirty Harry.
 Lisbon: Yeah, well, I'd leave you cab fare, but you probably got that covered, right?
 Mashburn: Bye, Teresa.
 Lisbon: Goodbye Walter.
Lisbon takes a work call as she walks out of the hotel room

Lisbon's approach and attitude throughout this scene frames her in the clearly masculine position of leaving one's date after having sex, and the "masculine" accoutrements of her profession – her badge and gun – are explicitly focused on in this scene's camerawork (Gable & Long, 2010). In this scene, *The Mentalist* is making good on its opening premise of gender reversed characters and women who can act like men.

Yet, placed in context with the rest of the series, this scene – which lasts for approximately one minute and thirty seconds – becomes more of a token, an inconsistent departure from the norms developed and sustained in this series, and even the norms portrayed in this particular episode. Mashburn has been doggedly pursuing her, and she has been steadily rebuffing him. Jane, who has yet to admit his own feelings for Lisbon, intervenes on Mashburn's behalf in this episode because he believes that Lisbon needs to have more fun and needs to learn how to connect with other humans. Thus, Jane orchestrates Lisbon's encounter with Mashburn. Although *The Mentalist* successfully portrays a woman having casual sex and refrains from punishing her for it, this short scene does not countermand the entire series in which Lisbon is sexually passive while Jane is consistently portrayed as a romantically desirable character.

Throughout *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, the men are consistently portrayed as simultaneously committed, monogamous characters who are devoted to their partners and are steadily wooing their partners, *and* as sexy men who “do fine” and can seduce the women of their choosing. These are loving, dedicated men and hound-dogs: the series very pointedly develop both sides of these men's characters, creating this irreconcilable contradiction of monogamy and promiscuity. Meanwhile, the female detectives have sex less frequently, are almost never pictured in bed, usually cultivate sexual relationships only within committed, longstanding relationships with men who further the plot and/or character developments, and the female detectives are typically punished for their sexual encounters by shaming from the other characters and through plot machinations. Yet within these confinements, *Bones* and *The Mentalist* still try to frame their women as sexually progressive characters who approach sex casually.

These series create male characters with contradictory characteristics. They are work-a-holics and ideal father figures. They are committed, monogamous romantic partners and conquest-oriented players. And these are the men heralded as TV's enlightened, progressive characters, who are in touch with their feminine side. However, these contradictions are merely a façade, a light dusting of paint over the traditional patriarchal character. That is, these series' narrative structures would be exactly the same if the male detectives were not fathers, but could not exist in the absence of these men's professions. For example, *Bones* would be unchanged if Booth did not have a son, but could not exist if Booth was not an FBI agent, and *Castle* could continue seamlessly if Castle did not have a daughter, but the series would lose its entire premise if Castle were not a fiction author. Through these contradictions, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* frame their male detectives as enlightened, pro-women men. By scratching the surface, however, we see these male detectives are ultimately familiar patriarchal characters who are being welcomed on TV as progressive, feminist-friendly, if functionally unrealistic male role-models.

Masculine Hierarchies

The male characters on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* function in strict, but unofficial hierarchies. That is, the male characters are arranged into pecking orders, where each man teases, bullies, and picks on the men below him, creating a nice ladder structure where the man at the top subjugates all of the men beneath him, and each man participates in this organized oppression – except the man at the very bottom who

unsuccessfully tries to defend himself by lobbying insults back up the ladder. Yet, these men are good friends, working happily in close quarters with each other and regularly socializing together. In three of the four series, this hierarchy is codified into a very simple structure. On *Bones* (seasons 1-3), *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, the male detective is at the top of a stable hierarchy, which consists of two male best friends who are on the female detective's team: on *Bones*, FBI Agent Seeley Booth oppresses Jack Hodgins and Zach Addy who are close friends working together in the Jeffersonian Forensic Lab; on *The Mentalist*, Patrick Jane torments Agents Kimball Cho and Wayne Rigsby, who are best friends and professional partners with the CBI; on *Castle*, Richard Castle is a more powerful character than Javier Esposito and Kevin Ryan who are close friends and detective partners with the NYPD. Within the best-friend pairings, however, this structural pecking order persists: Jack Hodgins picks on Zach Addy, Kimball Cho makes fun of Wayne Rigsby, and Javier Esposito belittles Kevin Ryan. On the later seasons of *Bones* (seasons 4-7), Zach Addy is no longer part of the cast, and his position on the pecking order is filled by Lance Sweets – a new character in season three who works for the FBI – and by a rotation of forensic interns at the Jeffersonian Lab who Hodgins simultaneously befriends and pesters. See Table 4 on the following page for a summary of these masculine hierarchies.

While *Bones*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* adhere to this simple and stable hierarchy, *Fringe* does not. The male characters on *Fringe* engage in hierarchies, pecking orders, and the variety of verbal and behavioral oppression discussed below, but since *Fringe's* cast is quite large and the characters constantly change, this series does not participate in the other three series' structural arrangement.

Table 4: Masculine Hierarchies

Rank	<i>Bones</i>		<i>The Mentalist</i>	<i>Castle</i>
1	FBI Agent Seeley Booth		Patrick Jane	Richard Castle
2	Jack Hodgins		Kimball Cho	Javier Esposito
3	Zach Addy (seasons 1–3)	Lance Sweets (seasons 3–)	Wayne Rigsby	Kevin Ryan
		Vincent Nigel-Murray (seasons 4–6)		
		Wendell Bray (seasons 4–)		
		Clark Edison (seasons 4–)		
		Arastoo Vaziri (seasons 4–)		
		Colin Fischer (seasons 4–)		

Therefore, I have omitted *Fringe* from this section of the analysis, not because it eliminates male hierarchies, but because these male hierarchies shift too often and receive comparatively little screen-time. That is, the cast on *Fringe* is so large and the supporting male characters fluctuate so often that it is rare for male characters – other than Peter and his father, Walter – to have a relationship consistently portrayed in any depth. Therefore, although *Fringe* participates in the same system of male hierarchy as the other three series, I have limited my analysis in this section to *Bones*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* since these series conclusively demonstrate this genre’s penchant for masculine hierarchies with detailed and consistent male relationships and without the confusion of shape-shifters, parallel universes, doppelgangers, and altered timelines that interrupt the male relationships on *Fringe*.

Despite omitting *Fringe*, the pecking orders on *Bones*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* conclusively demonstrate this genre’s penchant for masculine hierarchies. Through this

organized system of oppression, these series naturalize hierarchy within relationships that have no need for official demarcations of rank. That is, these men are friends, none of these men report to any of the other male characters, none of the men are each others' bosses, and none of the male characters need to be in positions of authority over each other. Yet they operate according to strict social organizations of authority, lording their power over each other while being close friends – as if their system of bullying does not interfere with their friendships.

Even more troubling than this naturalization of bullying within meaningful and supportive friendships, is the way in which these male characters become ranked. Since there is no official ranking – none of these men is another man's boss – they filter into this patterned pecking order ranked by some other criteria. Through this analysis, I demonstrate that the ranking criteria are based on their performances of masculinity so that the more “masculine” characters are also the more powerful. This provides a very clear portrayal of which performances of masculinity are rewarded with power – especially since the system of bullying is usually designed to bring “less masculine” characters into greater socialized conformity with “masculinity.” That is, through negative reinforcement, the men at the top of these hierarchies are training the others to be “better” men.

This training usually focuses on the areas of sexual/relational achievements, personal grooming and style, and professional skills. While these areas may seem generally ubiquitous and innocuous, their training methods are not. Within these hierarchies, each man serves as a role model to the men below him while bullying them into submission. The idea here is not of a genial mentor/mentee relationship. Rather, the

“mentor” wins the right to force his friend into a “mentee” role by demonstrating his own superiority and his friend’s inferiority – often to an observing audience of female characters. This pits the men in a constant competition, and yet the outcomes are always already rigged. For example, on *Castle*, Castle will always win, Detective Esposito will always be ranked second, and Detective Ryan will always be at the bottom of the ranking because these are scripted characters who cannot escape their predetermined dialogues, characteristics, and privileges: Castle is rich, handsome, and witty; Esposito is sexy; and Ryan is cute and well-meaning but generally benign and hapless. Despite their predetermined and unalterable rankings, the male characters, nonetheless, perceive a constant competition.

For instance, on *Castle*, Esposito feels the need to protect his reputation as sexier than Ryan during a case regarding a male-stripper (Davis & Alcalá, 2010). During the course of the investigation, Esposito and Ryan visit a male stripping agency, where the manager mistakenly assumes they are there to audition when Esposito and Ryan enter the establishment:

Esposito: Lloyd Saunders?

Saunders: I'm already up to my ears in A-Rods. But, uh, your friend here...I got women requesting that skinny *Twilight* dude like crazy.

Saunders tosses Ryan a G-string

Saunders: They're one-size-fits-all. We can pad if need be. Bathroom's down the hall if you're shy.

Esposito: Hey. NYPD. We have some questions about Derek Brookner.

Saunders: My mistake. We're doing open auditions today.

After a brief interview, Saunders again offers a stripping job to Ryan, saying “Hey, if, uh, you change your mind, I'll provide fangs and some hair gel” (Davis & Alcalá, 2010).

Both Esposito and Ryan are adamantly against male-stripping, stating that the profession lacks respectability. However, Esposito is nonetheless nettled that Saunders offered Ryan the position – even under the dubious honor of being a “skinny” guy – overlooking his own athletic musculature. Within this environment of continual competition, Esposito must reestablish himself as sexier than Ryan, which he does by reminding Ryan, and viewers, of his superior physique by pumping push-ups while in their precinct office:

Ryan turns around to see Esposito's impromptu workout

Ryan: What the hell are you doing?

Esposito finishes and stands up

Esposito: Up to his ears in A-Rods? I got an A-Rod for that son of a bitch. Three years varsity ball, two years Special Forces triathlon, and NYPD police calendar 2007!

Although both Esposito and Ryan understood Saunders’ offer for Ryan to strip as Edward Cullen from *Twilight* as an insult, Esposito must reinforce his physical and sexual superiority within their competition-based friendship. The competitive foundation that undergirds these homosocial relationships effectively creates environments in which the male characters are not only always hierarchically organized, but constantly fighting within that hierarchy: there are always winners and losers in their masculine competitions. The masculinity training begins as the male characters “win” the right to train the other men, proceeds through verbal insults that continue to assert superiority, and then progresses by modeling the preferred behaviors and occasionally by explicitly teaching one’s inferior how to behave, as I will demonstrate through the following analysis.

Insulting Friendships

Through dialogue, the male characters assert their personalities, disclose personal background information, and subordinate each other by insulting one another. The male detectives are given preferential treatment over their male colleagues through the scripting, scene sequencing, and camera-work, which often give them both the first and last line – and laugh. In *Bones*' pilot episode, after Zach Addy's first scene on camera, he walks off screen and Booth remarks, "He's got no sense of discretion. That kid. Typical squint" (Hanson & Yaitanes, 2005a). This seemingly unprovoked insult situates Booth as the dominant male: in three short sentences he questions Zach's job performance, Zach's manhood by reframing him as a child, and punitively casts Zach as an inactive geek, a "typical squint," which he later defines as "Squints. You know, to squint at things." This scene clearly situates Booth as a dominant male – able to denigrate Zach at will and without repercussion. Zach, meanwhile, is off screen and has no chance for rebuttal: the scripted dialogue does not allow Zach to speak.

This is also the case in Booth and Hodgins' relationship, where Booth dismissively silences Hodgins throughout all seven seasons. Rather than insult Hodgins, denigrating him to Zach's level as a "kid" with "no sense of discretion," Booth simply disengages from conversation whenever Hodgins' theories on the case become unlikely. Again, the camera-work, sequencing, and scripting supports Booth: the cameras follow Booth when he walks away from Hodgins and the scripts usually give him the last word. For example, during a case where Booth and Hodgins are attempting to solve a mass murder where the victims were buried in an unmarked grave, Booth and Hodgins

converse over a video-conference. The camera-work privileges Booth by situating him as the focus while Hodgins primarily appears on a laptop monitor. During this briefing, Hodgins voices one of his many conspiracy theories, stating:

My conclusion is: we have uncovered the anonymous grave of the crew of the super secret stealth submarine Hawkfish, which disappeared in the late '90s. The U.S. Government denies the very existence of the submarine, yet I –

Mid sentence, Booth bangs the laptop closed, effectively silencing Hodgins (Hanson & Toynton, 2009). Given this unfair advantage through the scripting and narrative structures, the male detectives on *Bones*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* easily rule their homosocial relationships. These male detectives are imbued not only with “real-world” privileges such as wealth, intelligence, good looks, professional success, and strong connections to powerful political figures, but they also have whole production teams working to make them the most likeable and important men in the fictional room.

These male characters primarily interact through insults – which simultaneously reinforce the hierarchy and point out exactly where and how the “lesser” man is inadequate, thereby indicating how the subordinate character needs to change in order to avoid future denigrations. For instance, during the second season of *The Mentalist*, Agent Wayne Rigsby is having trouble deciding how to ask his colleague, Grace Van Pelt, out on a date. He has confided in his best friend and partner, Kimball Cho. Rather than being supportive or offering advice, Cho typically makes fun of Rigsby’s inability to express his feelings, as demonstrated in the following dialogue between Rigsby, Van Pelt, and Cho,

Rigsby: [To Van Pelt] You have any plans for tonight?
 Van Pelt: Home. TV.

Rigsby: Well ... have fun.

Van Pelt: You too.

Van Pelt walks out of the room

Cho: *[To Rigsby]* You're gonna die alone.

Cho's dry one-liner is humorous and well-delivered as he clearly insults Rigsby for being inadequate in romantic pursuits (Szentgyorgyi & Beeson, 2009). The other series also depend on insults as the constant feature in their male characters' interactions. For example, in a fifth season *Bones* episode in which Booth coerces Sweets – a licensed psychologist with the FBI – into signing his health paperwork prematurely (Hanson & Toynton, 2009), Booth insults Sweets' sexuality during a psychological evaluation. Sweets is concerned over Booth's recent head trauma, which has impacted part of his brain,

Sweets holds up images of Booth's brain scan

Sweets: You know what you're looking at?

Booth: Yeah, and I'm pretty sure you haven't been this close to one in a long time.

Booth indicates that the images are of female genitalia

Sweets: It's a PET scan of your brain.

Booth: Hmm, then I was wrong.

Sweets: This is called the ventral tegmental area. This is the dorsal caudate body. Now, these two areas have been proven to be linked to romantic love and sexual arousal.

Booth: Hmm. Okay, if this is your version of dirty pictures, it's really not working for me right now.

Here, although Sweets is temporarily in a position of authority as Booth's medical examiner, Booth asserts his dominance by insulting Sweets, indicating that Sweets is not as sexually proficient as he is (Hanson & Toynton, 2009). Through this regime of insults, the male characters on *Bones*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* establish this clear pecking order

that places the male detectives – Booth, Jane, and Castle – at the top and then ranks the two supporting male characters into a clear system of oppression despite their close friendships. Throughout these series, these insults indicate what is wrong with the “lesser” man’s masculinity, focusing on the areas of sexual/relational achievements, personal appearance and physique, and professional skills.

Ironically, muted group theory accurately speaks to these insult-based relationships. Muted-group theory suggests that “a group maintains dominance” by “stifling and belittling the speech and ideas of those they label as outside the privileged circle” (Kramarae, 2005, p. 55). Unsurprisingly, insults are the dominant mode of “stifling” and “belittling” another person, who – again, unsurprisingly – typically responds to this hostile environment by verbally withdrawing. That is, dominant individuals and/or groups insult others, effectively silencing them and discrediting their contributions. There is some irony in noting how well these masculine relationships correlate with muted group theory as dominant men shame and belittle other men – silencing them – through these systemic insults, since muted group theory was developed by feminist theorists (Brail, 1996; Herring 2003; Kramarae, 1981, 2005; Whitty & Carr, 2006) to describe the ways in which white men in positions of power often silence women and other groups comprised of social minorities. While muted group theory goes on to describe linguistic strategies – such as proverbial speech, outrage, and controlling the narrative (Hagan, 2012) – that are not applicable to the male relationships on these crime TV series, these programs still demonstrate a clear pattern of insults and silencing in these scripted, male friendships.

By considering these male, homosocial relationships through muted group theory, three items become very clear. First, these series definitively imbue masculine performances that contain the markings of wealth, professional success, physical attractiveness, and sexual proficiency with power. The codified male hierarchies on *Bones*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* operate according to those criteria: the wealthier, more professionally successful, more attractive, and more sexually proficient male characters have the power to silence others. While this is not groundbreaking news or a surprising deduction, it clearly establishes which performances of masculinity are valued and rewarded with power in this postfeminist crime genre. This leads to the second point: silencing is not a punishment reserved for keeping minority social groups in line; rather, it can also be deployed against white men. And finally, by analyzing these male relationships in terms of muted group theory, it becomes clear that only within these fictionalized narratives could healthy friendships withstand this constant regime of competitive insults without resentment seeping in to sour the relationship. These men are friends: on *Bones*, Zach Addy chooses to live with Hodgins; on *The Mentalist*, Rigsby and Cho are longstanding best friends and confidants; and on *Castle*, Ryan and Esposito are close partners and Esposito is a groomsman in Ryan's wedding (Davis & Roe, 2011). In contrast to these fictional friendships, muted group theory suggests that interactions marked by silencing behaviors become untenable for the suppressed individual who will withdraw from such violence when mediation fails. By featuring this relational violence as a norm in male friendships, these series promote unhealthy behaviors as normative for masculinity.

An Education in Masculinity

These series maintain this strict hierarchy in which some men teach others how to be masculine primarily through insults and silencing. Yet, the “masculinity” training extends into overt, explicit teaching and, as discussed in the next section, through role-modeling. By teaching, I am referring to scenes in which a more powerful man takes one of his male colleagues under his wing, and literally explains something to him. Just as the insults policed behaviors that were insufficiently masculine, these educational moments are also clustered around issues of sexual/relational achievements, physical attractiveness, and professional skills.

For example, in the second season Castle teaches Esposito and Ryan how to improve their grooming habits – thereby improving their physical attractiveness (Echevarria & Terlesky, 2010). While investigating the murder of the CEO of a boutique men’s skin-care company, Castle teaches Esposito and Ryan how to use a shaving cream product,

- Castle: I know of him [*the murder victim*], this is a photo of one of his ad campaigns. He runs a line of boutique men's skin care products.
- Ryan: You mean like bathroom stuff?
- Castle: He's got a toner; totally alcohol free. Fantastic. He's got a shaving cream that is ridiculous.
- Esposito: I'm good with the drug store stuff, man.
- Castle: No no no no, hang on. This stuff will change your life.
- Castle squirts the special shaving cream into Esposito's hand and then Ryan's*
- Esposito: It's hot...
- Castle: It's hot.
- Ryan: It's hot?
- Castle: It's HOT.
- Ryan: It's hot! How do they do that?

Here, Castle teaches Esposito and Ryan how to use an extremely expensive, luxury grooming product (Echevarria & Terlesky, 2010). Castle's status as a wealthy man gives him power within this series, positioning him at the top of their hierarchy. From this exulted position, he teaches Esposito and Ryan how to embody the lifestyle that makes him powerful – despite the fact that Esposito and Ryan could never afford the markers of Castle's masculinity on their NYPD salaries.

In a surprising move, these male detectives teach their colleagues how to be more proficient at their jobs. This is surprising because, with the exception of FBI Agent Seeley Booth, the other male “detectives” are not detectives; rather, they are civilians jovially tagging along with detective teams while trying to accomplish some ulterior motive (Castle wants to write a new novel and Jane wants to catch a serial killer who commits only a small fraction of the cases he works). Even Booth's expertise as a detective is only tangentially related to the work his colleagues do since Booth is an FBI agent and the other male characters are scientists. Yet these male detectives teach their supporting male characters how to be successful in their professions. For example, on *The Mentalist*, Jane teaches Agent Rigsby how to commit information to memory during a case related to a high school reunion (Dick & Lerner, 2010). For Jane's plan to work, Rigsby must work under-cover, which requires that he successfully remember detailed information about an entire high school class,

Rigsby: You want me to memorize everything we have on all sixty-seven alumni that showed up to the reunion?

Jane: Yes, I do.

Rigsby: But how would I do that?

Jane: It's easy, you build a memory palace.

Rigsby: I thought that was just some card-player's trick.

- Jane: Well, it's multi-purpose. It's perfect for recalling a large body of information. All you need is a physical location that you know well. And you break it down, in your mind, into smaller pieces. And link each one to a package of information. Like this: I walk in the door, and am greeted by Reunion Chair, Willow Brooke, the former class president, debate team captain, led the team to three county championships, now a talk-show-host in Chicago. I sit down at the table, and play catch-up with Danielle Greere: swimmer, now a realtor in Los Angeles, married to gentleman by the name of Arthur. And so on, and so forth.
- Rigsby: OK?
- Jane: When you want to remember the details, you close your eyes, and in your mind you walk around your very own memory palace.
- Rigsby: But I can't learn all this stuff in just a couple hours!
- Jane: It comes very quickly once you get the hang of it.

These "teaching" sessions do nothing to dissolve the competitive edge between these characters. Rather, these men easily swap between being happy to teach and to learn from each other to moments of intense oppression. Consider, for example, how the conversation between Jane and Ribsby continues:

- Rigsby: But why? I mean, why would I memorize all of these –
- Jane: It's fun!
- Rigsby: This is some dubious scheme that Lisbon doesn't know about, isn't it?
- Jane: Yeah, you can count me out.
- Rigsby: Sorry, you gotta do it.
- Jane: Ah, no, I don't.
- Rigsby: If you don't cooperate, I'm gonna be force to tell Lisbon about you and Van Pelt.
- Jane: Tell what? There's nothing to tell.
- Rigsby: Really?
- Jane: Yeah. I don't know what you're talking about.
- Rigsby: Ah. Contrary to very strict CBI rules, and regulations, you and Grace Van Pelt are engaged in an illicit affair.
- Jane: Nope.
- Rigsby: You're being childish. Think of it this way. You mess up. We blow the case. I tell Lisbon.
- Jane: You're a cold bastard. You know that!

Rigsby – who has only recently managed to begin his relationship with Van Pelt – is desperate for his CBI boss, Teresa Lisbon, not to know about their romantic involvement. Therefore, he quickly acquiesces to Jane’s unreasonable demand (Dick & Lerner, 2010). Having been taught how to memorize information and create a memory palace, Rigsby dutifully obeys Jane, and goes under-cover at the high school reunion.

Yet Jane’s machinations – which involve coercion and blackmail – have astonishing results: not only does Rigsby memorize all of the information, but he behaves as if he were a rich, professionally successful, sexually desirable man while under-cover. He behaves far outside of his normal performance of masculinity, imitating Jane’s masculinity instead.

Role-Modeling Masculinity

The overlap of aggression, oppression, and mentoring demonstrated in the scene between Rigsby and Jane detailed above is not unusual in these four crime series. Rather, the male detectives simultaneously insult, teach, and serve as role-models for their male colleagues. These interactions are embedded within a matrix of characters, relationships, dialogue, and scenes in each episode, so that the male hierarchies, friendships, insults, mentoring, and role-modeling are depicted throughout the narratives and are always influenced by (and influence) other narrative elements. To demonstrate the depth with which these masculine hierarchies impact the characters and narratives, I provide in this section a detailed analysis to a recent *Bones*’ episode, “The Prince in the Plastic” (Lopata

& Chapple, 2011). By necessity, this section is narrowly focused in order to most effectively demonstrate the interrelations and confluence of characters and gendered performances that structure the role-modeling relationships between the male detectives and their supporting male characters on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*.

Airing as part of *Bones*' seventh season, the characters in "The Prince in the Plastic" are already well developed and familiar to returning viewers: Booth and Brennan are living together and preparing for their daughter's birth; Hodgins and Angela are married and adjusting to their lives as new parents; Dr. Saroyan is in a committed relationship and on good terms with her adopted daughter; and Dr. Lance Sweets is established as the FBI psychologist and is dating Daisy Wicks – one of the interns at the Jeffersonian Museum. The plot in this episode is largely concerned with the murder of an executive at a toy-company, but the subplot revolves around Lance Sweets' decision to become licensed to carry a gun (Lopata & Chapple, 2011). Sweets is infantilized throughout the series as the other characters question his maturity level (Lopata & Woods, 2009), even having to remind him to use "fully grown up words" in professional settings (Ambrose & Szwarc, 2008). Throughout the series, Sweets looks up to Booth, treating Booth like a father-figure (Lopata & Woolnough, 2009). Given the often child-like role Sweets occupies in this cast and his attachment to Booth as a role-model, the series openly suggests that Sweets wants to grow up to be a man like Booth.

Despite this dynamic of familial, father/son, hero-worship that marks Booth and Sweets' relationship, Sweets – acting as a therapist – tries unsuccessfully to counsel Booth and Booth ridicules and insults Sweets, treating him pejoratively throughout the series. Again, Booth is training Sweets to be a man – a training Sweets wants – and yet

their relationship is based in competition and insults. Moreover, in training Sweets to be a man, Booth focuses on Sweets' sexual desirability, prowess, and professional achievements. The "professional" training largely centers around skills required to close cases, which includes physical capabilities, weapons training, interrogation skills, and the ability to make intuitive connections between clues in the investigation. By analyzing the dialogue surrounding Sweets' gun-licensing in "The Prince in the Plastic," I demonstrate how the episode combines these contradictory facets of role-modeling and insults to train Sweets into greater conformity with the series' privileged performance of masculinity: that is, with Booth's level of professional success, sexual desirability, and sexual prowess. This confluence of role-modeling, friendship, insults, and hierarchy is indigenous to *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, but to provide a holistic account of how these male relationships function within these crime narratives I have narrowed my focus, analyzing and citing extensively from "The Prince in the Plastic" (Lopata & Chapple, 2011).

The episode opens to a scene in which Booth, Brennan, and Sweets are getting coffee together. Booth has the first line in the episode's opening scene, which begins mid-conversation,

Booth: Oh no. Sweets carrying a gun. OK, now that's a bad idea.
 Sweets: What? I'm out in the field with you a lot lately, I should be certified to carry a gun!
 Brennan: I have a gun.
 Sweets: See?
 Booth: *[To Brennan]* Really? Did you have to bring that up?
 Brennan: What?
 Sweets: This way I'll have your back, Agent Booth.

Booth: I appreciate that, Sweets. I really do. But, you're a shrink. Shrinks have couches, not guns.

Brennan: I have a couch and I'm not a shrink.

Booth: *[To Brennan]* Really? I mean, you're not helping!

Brennan: What?

Sweets: Look, I don't need to ask your permission. Alright, I'm gonna get certified to carry a weapon and I don't want to talk about it anymore.

Booth: Whoa. No. We definitely have to talk about this, Mister Shrinky.

Sweets: How about we talk about your living arrangement instead. Have you two decided on a house or are you still arguing about it?

Booth: Ah! I know what you're doing, I'm not going down that road. I'm not gonna play that game.

Brennan: We're still arguing about it. I want at least an acre of land and he wants something called a "man cave."

Booth: Really? You really want to get him [Sweets] involved? Just tell him that it's crazy for him to carry a gun!

Brennan: But it's not!

Sweets: *[To Brennan]* Thank you.

Brennan: At the very least, he could draw fire away from you and get shot himself which would reduce the likelihood of me becoming a single parent.

Sweets: Wait-wait! We don't need to go through every eventuality –

Booth: You're not getting a gun.

Sweets: Why? Then I'll make sure you don't get a man-cave.

Booth: You're not gonna get a gun.

Sweets: Well then, you won't get a man-cave.

In this opening scene, Sweets wants a gun because Booth has one, and Sweets wants to be like Booth when they are out in the field together (Lopata & Chapple, 2011).

Moreover, having a gun would enable Sweets to "have Booth's back," thereby making himself more important to Booth. Booth is wholly against the idea, suggesting that he and Sweets are intrinsically different and that Sweets needs to stay within the parameters of his infantilized profession: Mister Shrinky should have a couch, not a gun. Although Sweets protests that he is not asking for Booth's permission to have a gun – as an under-

aged son would have to ask his parent (read father), Sweets is clearly asking for permission since their conversation devolves into a petty squabble instead of Sweets simply asserting himself and leaving to get his gun license. Within the narrative, Sweets does not need Booth's official permission or support to become licensed with the FBI to carry and deploy a gun. Yet he asks for Booth's support – and tacitly for his permission – revealing how important this surrogate father/son relationship is for Sweets.

In the next scene related to Sweets' procurement of a gun, Jack Hodgins, Camille Saroyan, and Daisy Wicks are analyzing the remains of this episode's murder victim. While hunched over gruesome remains, Hodgins remarks to Camille Saroyan,

Hodgins: Did you hear that Sweets is trying to get certified to carry a gun?

Saroyan: A *gun*? Our Sweets?!

Daisy: Lancelot is the kindest, most decent man I have ever known. Why shouldn't he carry a piece?

Hodgins and Saroyan both express shock and surprise that Sweets would want to carry a gun. With the exception of Daisy's perspective, the characters on *Bones* find the idea of Sweets carrying a gun entirely incongruous: as an infantilized character, Sweets is simply not “manly” enough within this narrative to warrant the status that a gun – with its connotations of masculine violence, protection, and power – would confer on Sweets. Daisy, who is dating Sweets, misses the incongruity because she already perceives Sweets as “manly.” Throughout the series, Daisy calls Lance Sweets by the nickname “Lancelot” (i.e. Sir Lancelot from the Arthurian legends) suggesting that her opinion of him already places him at the height of power, sexuality, justice, and violence. Notably, this perspective naturalizes the coexistence of kindness, decency, and gun toting (Lopata & Chapple, 2011). Daisy's chipper excitement about Sweets' ability to carry a gun

continues throughout the conversation despite the other characters' obvious shock as Daisy again matches together what the other characters (and viewers) perceive as incongruous ideas, "Lance is so smart! And soon he'll be able to shoot people!"

As a character, Daisy Wicks is dismissed throughout the series. She is the only female intern at the Jeffersonian, and the other characters treat her poorly, constantly asking her to be quiet and dismissing her findings and unusual preferences. For example, in this episode Daisy prefers to work on finding all of the pieces of the toy that was damaged in the murder rather than in focusing on the victim. Within this narrative, her attraction to Sweets is framed as a similarly unusual preference, and Sweets' attraction to her is portrayed as an equally unusual anomaly. The other characters on *Bones* dislike Daisy to the extent that Brennan has even temporarily fired her from the Jeffersonian. Tacitly positioned as a smart woman – since only the best graduate students in forensic anthropology can intern with Brennan – Daisy is, nonetheless, easily dismissed by the other characters who find her obnoxious and childish.

Given this characterization, Daisy's perspective of Sweets is subordinated to the other characters' perspective of her and Sweets. Hers is the subaltern voice in this narrative and her opinion of Sweets is discredited in light of the main characters' dominant and easy dismissal of her. Yet even from this disadvantaged position, Daisy's interest in Sweets is dependent on patriarchal values. Rather than valuing Sweets because he is the only person who treats her with dignity, respect, kindness, and loving generosity, Daisy is sexually attracted to Sweets in this episode because of his ability to "shoot people" (tying violence, sexuality, masculinity, and power together) as becomes clear when she discusses the issue with Booth. Daisy and Booth are driving together to

investigate the crime scene. It is unusual for Booth to go into the field with any scientist other than Brennan, but since Brennan is pregnant, he “has” to take another “squint” with him. Daisy, as usual, cannot stop talking and chatters away, saying,

Daisy: I just want to thank you again for allowing me in the field!

Booth: Right. Okay. Bones just couldn’t make it. I need you to squint. So don’t read anything into it.

Daisy: Of course!

Booth: Right. Exactly.

Daisy: But you know! After today, I will have been field tested and Lance is getting a gun, which means that someday, you and Dr. Brennan, and Lance and me can be in the field together! It’ll be like “A Murdery-Double-Date!”

Booth: No! It won’t. I’m gonna be really clear on this: You are not to open up your mouth unless it’s relevant to the case.

Daisy: Roger that.

Brief pause

Daisy: But I just have to mention how disappointed I am that you aren’t more supportive of Lance getting a gun. I just thought you were a better friend.

Booth: Seriously?

Daisy pantomimes locking her lips closed

Booth: Right.

In this conversation, it becomes apparent that Daisy wants her and Sweets’ relationship to mirror Brennan and Booth’s relationship, where each man is an accomplished FBI Agent and each woman is a gifted forensic anthropologist (Lopata & Chapple, 2011). To a large extent, Daisy seems to believe that if Lance is certified by the FBI to carry and deploy a weapon, he will be more like Booth, and she believes that Booth should help Lance achieve this. Ironically, Daisy – a disadvantaged character – is the only one who calls Booth out for being a poor friend in this episode, rightly suggesting that if Booth were a good friend, he would help his mentee, Sweets, pursue his goals.

Daisy's interest in Sweets' ability to shoot becomes explicitly tied to her perception of Sweets' masculinity and sexual desirability the next time the episode returns to this subplot. Sweets is at the shooting range, practicing for his upcoming certification test as this scene opens.

Sweets: *[Yelling in an official manner as he draws his gun]* Agent Lance
Sweets! FBI! Hands where I can see them! I said hands! *[He shoots at a paper target]*

Daisy: *[Clapping and squealing with excitement]* EEEE!

Sweets: Daisy! What are you doing here?

Daisy: I'm here for luck and support, and a kiss! *[She kisses him]* And to give your tush a little squeeze!

Sweets: *[Uncomfortably]* No! Daisy, come on. I can't have any distractions, my test is tomorrow.

Daisy: *[Disappointed]* Sorry, I won't say a thing. It's just, seeing you with a gun! I know it's wrong, but it makes me all ahhhhhhh *[she growls and does a short dance while he looks askance]*.

Sweets: Daisy, come on.

Daisy: Right. Concentrate. Shoot.

Sweets shoots again, but misses widely, distracted by Daisy's presence

Sweets: Come on. Damn it! I haven't missed all day.

Daisy: Lancelot. Look at the man on that target. He's trying to hurt me, Lance! You don't want him to hurt me, do you?

Sweets: *[He draws again, looking serious]* You will not hurt Daisy!
He shoots three shots into the heart of the target

Daisy: Oh god. I wish I didn't have any clothes on right now!

This scene explicitly ties Sweets' professional skills – his ability to shoot – to his sexuality and, therefore, his masculinity (Lopata & Chapple, 2011). Daisy is titillated by Lance's ability to shoot well, which also links sex and violence together in ways that make even Daisy's fictionalized character uncomfortable, as she states "I know it's wrong, but it makes me all ahhhhhhh." As this scene demonstrates, these series tie together the male characters' professional success, ability to enact violence, and sexual

desirability into a package of masculinity. Sweets must be able to shoot well to be sexy in this episode; therefore, he attempts to copy Booth's version of masculinity, learning to shoot guns and explicitly cultivating the mindset that his masculinity is both (and simultaneously) violent and sexual. Moreover, Sweets and Daisy actively participate in the myth of the "damsel in distress," as Daisy purposefully objectifies herself into passivity urging Sweets to "rescue" her each time he pulls the trigger – a fantasy Sweets happily engages in.

When Sweets and Booth discuss Sweets' upcoming licensing test, Booth operates within these series' normalized parameters of insults and degradation. Rather than encourage Sweets to strive after his goals and rather than teach Sweets how to become an accomplished marksman, Booth chooses to test Sweets' mettle while they wait in a stakeout.

Booth: Look, it's not that I don't want you to carry a gun, Sweets. You understand that? It's just that I am concerned about your welfare.

Sweets: Because you think that I'm incompetent. Guess what! I aced my last practice round at the range.

Booth: That's a *practice range*. Alright? There's a difference but you know when the real guns come out there's no time for thinking, it's just reaction. You understand? That's why they put people through Boogeyman's Alley.

Sweets: You think I'm not aware of that!

Another car pulls up and Booth gets out of the car

Sweets: Oh! What? You're just going to walk away, end of discussion?

Booth: *[Pointing]* Perp! You see what I mean, Sweets? You're too busy talking!

Sweets: *[Embarrassed and scrambling out of the car]* I didn't see him! I'm sorry!

This scene reinforces the dynamic between the two male characters, as Sweets strives to earn Booth's trust and respect, and Booth withholds his approval, offering insults and belittlement instead (Lopata & Chapple, 2011). However, given these series' penchant for happy endings that affirm their recurring characters, Sweets does pass his examination – and therefore wins Booth's grudging and conditional trust. Yet even here, Sweets literally has to “win” Booth's trust and the environment is, again, one of competition and judgment. When Sweets walks into the test at Boogey-man's Alley, which is a large warehouse where cardboard targets pop out and the lights flash in a discombobulating manner, Sweets is surprised to find that Booth is his test administer. Booth had to call in a favor in order to administer Sweets' exam, which he did in order to learn if he could truly trust Sweets to “have his back.” Sweets conducts himself admirably, until a bullet he fires ricochets and he is injured by the shrapnel. When Booth runs out into the warehouse, concerned for Sweets' wellbeing, Sweets is so invested in his attempt to win Booth's trust that he begs Booth to let him finish the course. Booth, however, ends the exam, instead declaring that Sweets did “good-ish.” When Sweets – who is bleeding – compulsively asks what “good-ish” means, Booth grudgingly replies, “Good enough to have my back,” and they shake hands in a congratulatory and affirming manner.

Having successfully passed this examination, Sweets acts as if his masculinity has just gotten a “power-up mushroom” like the characters in a Mario Brothers Game, and he tests his limits during his next scene with Booth, stretching the new parameters of his masculinity and – therefore – power. During an interrogation, in which Sweets usually

stands behind the one-way mirror, Sweets instead joins Booth in the interview and goes so far as to challenge Booth's authority, interrupting him,

Booth: Do you know this woman?

Booth passes a photo of the victim to the suspect

Suspect: Yeah, that's Vickie Cortez. She's an executive at Dillio Toys. Why?

Booth: She's dead. She was murdered.

Suspect: What happened?

Booth: Well, that's what we're –

Sweets interrupts, annoying Booth

Sweets: That's what we're trying to find out. And I was shot, so I'm not in the mood to play games.

Booth shakes his head in the background

Suspect: I'm not playing games.

Booth: *[Trying to get Sweets to stop, because the suspect looks sad]* Sweets.

Suspect: I hadn't heard from her in two weeks. I thought she was breaking up with me.

Sweets understands his weapons licensing as an empowering achievement, empowering enough to challenge Booth's authority within the interrogation. Here, we see that the competition and antagonism is not a one-way street. Rather, like young bucks, the male characters who are low on these totem poles are not passive recipients of aggression and dominance; rather, they continually challenge their "superiors," trying to improve their own standing by taking others down. Sweets attempts to gain dominance in their interrogation scene, interrupting Booth and acting as the principle interrogator instead of watching quietly and profiling the suspect – which is his official role within the FBI. And Sweets claims this power through his professional achievement and its violently rendered evidence – his gunshot wound. Unfortunately for Sweets, however, Booth is still (and always) the dominant male and he – not the trained psychologist – recognizes that the suspect being interviewed is truly surprised and deeply saddened to learn of the

victim's death. This insight returns the power to Booth, and their hierarchy remains unchanged despite Sweets' gun licensing.

While Sweets' successful completion of the licensing exam and his achievement in earning Booth's conditional and begrudging trust is not enough to move him up in the hierarchy, it is enough to make him sexually desirable. In the conclusion of the episode, Daisy returns to examine Sweets' bullet wound, surprising him at his office.

Sweets: Daisy!

Daisy: How is my Lancelot?

Sweets: I'm fine.

Daisy: I know you're not! You're just so brave!

Sweets: Uh, no, I'm actually totally fine.

Daisy: *[Excited]* Can I see it?

Sweets exhibits his holstered gun and Daisy gasps and bights her lip

Sweets: When all those bad-guys were popping up *[referring to the targets in his test]*, it was you I was saving.

They kiss

Sweets: We can't! We can't keep having sex in my office, Daisy.

Daisy: We can't?

Sweets: Nope.

She kisses his neck and then growls while he moans

Sweets: Okay, but this is the last time.

In this episode, Sweets successfully imitates Booth's professional skills, becoming more like him, and – therefore – becoming more masculine, which is overtly codified by Daisy's sexual attraction to him during and immediately after he displays his skill with guns. This dominant version of masculinity is dependent on passive women: Sweets performs so well during his exam in Boogey-man's Alley because he imagines that he was saving Daisy during the test. For Sweets to summon the ability to shoot proficiently,

he must objectify and subordinate his girlfriend, which is rewarded within this narrative by her support, admiration, and sex.

By focusing carefully on the matrix of relationships between characters in “The Prince in the Plastic,” this analysis effectively demonstrates the interdependent system of male friendships, hierarchies, pejorative treatment, mentoring, and insults that overlap with these characters’ romantic pursuits and the episodes’ plots. The system so clearly exemplified in “The Prince in the Plastic,” is indigenous to *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* where the male friendships replicate this pattern while the characters simultaneously pursue romantic interests and murder suspects. The relationships amongst these male characters are marked by competition, aggression, insults, and – impossibly – real friendship and admiration. Moreover, these characters become more masculine (and therefore more powerful) by imitating the male detectives’ professional skills, sexual desirability, and sexual prowess.

Impossible Men

I grew up reading crime novels, raised on a steady diet of Sherlock Holmes and Nero Wolfe. As legendary as Sherlock Holmes’ exploits are, I inexplicably preferred Nero Wolfe. Like Sherlock’s brother, Mycroft, Nero Wolfe can rarely be roused from his chair. Written by Rex Stout in the 1930s and 1940s, these detective stories are intricate and yet familiar. In each book, Nero Wolfe and his smart-mouthed assistant, Archie, size up suspects, reason out cases, and – uniformly – mistreat women. Wolfe dismisses all women. For example, in *Too Many Cooks*, when a female character protests, asking

Wolfe to take her seriously by stating quietly, “I am not hysterical,” Wolfe responds “Of course you are. All women are. Their moments of calm are merely recuperative periods between outbursts” (Stout, 1938/2009, p. 126).

Nero Wolfe is an obese, cranky recluse who works occasional cases in order to avoid boredom and afford his passion for growing orchids. On the surface, he is foil for the male detectives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*: at first glance, these new crime drama detectives are family-men who are charming, committed individuals capable of mature and healthy relationships with their female detectives. However, by scratching at the surface of these new TV detectives, this analysis demonstrates that the male detective partners on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are not refreshingly different or more equitable portrayals of masculinity. Rather, the vitriol Wolfe so openly spewed is merely diluted and flavored on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. Like Wolfe, these male detectives treat others with disdain, insulting them, dismissing them, and subjugating them.

The male detectives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are updated, but not new. Like their detective predecessors, Seeley Booth, Peter Bishop, Patrick Jane, and Richard Castle are selfish, self-promoting characters who individuate themselves by treating others poorly. These male geniuses are touted as “different” because they have families and pursue relationships with women who are (supposedly) their equals. However, as this analysis has argued, these male characters remain patriarchal as the narratives reward these men for appearing domesticated and monogamous, without burdening them with the responsibilities or values of being either domesticated or monogamous. These four TV series promised new gendered performances for their male

detectives and they have shaken things up, but these characters remain patriarchal, continuing to subordinate women – as we will discuss anew in the next chapter. Rather than performing “gender-reversals,” Seeley Booth, Peter Bishop, Patrick Jane, and Richard Castle normalize, police, and enforce hyper-masculinity in these series.

Chapter 5

Mixing Genres and Fixing Genders

The proverb, “a woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle,” often attributed to Gloria Steinem, pithily overstates the case, and yet serves as a snappy reminder of one of feminism’s central claims: women should not be dependent on men. Fish and bicycles have no use for each other, and while this is not and should not be the case for men and women, the proverb’s overstatement teasingly cautions that *need* has no place in gender relations. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* need both their male and female detectives. These unusual career partnerships are the *raison d’être* of these series, without which *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have no claim to originality – nothing “new” to offer viewers. Dependent upon the ongoing romance between the partners for tension, humor, and a significant portion of their viewing audience, these series ultimately combine the generic structures of crime dramas and romantic comedies, transforming the episodic form of the crime genre into a cumulative narrative with character-driven running plotlines that ultimately focus on romance. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* tell stories about men and women who originally refuse to admit their mutual attraction, channeling their energy into verbal sparring, but who slowly come to respect and ultimately love each other. Meanwhile, someone dies a gruesome death each week, providing background activity for the partners as they alternately flirt and argue with each other. These series need the partners in order to transform the crime genre into a romantic comedy.

Yet there is a second level of *need* at play in these series: the women need the men, while the men love the women. As discussed in the previous chapters, the male detectives, Seeley Booth, Peter Bishop, Patrick Jane, and Richard Castle, are the height of masculinity and power: these are men's men who simultaneously exhibit impossibly contradictory characteristics while insulting and silencing the very men whom they tutor in masculinity. Meanwhile, the female detectives are taught how to be hyper-feminine. These hyper performances, in which femininity is performed at the height of sexual desirability, passivity, nurturance, and acquiescence while masculinity is performed at the height of sexual desirability, sexual prowess, professional success, aggression, and dominance, are normalized within these series. The female detectives evolve into greater and greater conformity with this version of femininity while the male detectives role-model, teach, and negatively reinforce this version of masculinity.

Even in getting their characters into these extremely patriarchal roles, these series exhibit a gender-based inequity: the male detectives are always already normal. The male detectives are the standard for masculinity while the female detectives fall short of hyper-femininity and constantly needing to be taught how to achieve "normalcy." From their positions of power, these men love their partners, caring for them and gently guiding them into hyper-femininity. The men wait patiently (except when bedding other women), fixing the female detectives, repairing their broken emotional pasts, and teaching them to turn off their brains and open their hearts, as Booth so eloquently states, "Bones, just, take the brain, okay, put it in neutral. Alright? Take the heart – pop it into overdrive" (Ambrose & Szwarc, 2008). These men love their female partners, but the women *need* the men in order to become "normal" women.

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* stitch these romances into their crime drama episodic form creating narratives that seamlessly recombine genres. By analyzing these series' narrative form, their combinations of episodic plots, story-arcs, and romances, I argue that these programs 1) embed crime genre narrative structures into character-driven romantic comedies, mixing the two genres into a composite genre, and 2) develop patriarchal narratives that work by transforming the women into hyper-feminine characters. I develop these arguments through three analytic considerations. First, I work to expose how the generic constraints of the crime genre influence the characters and plotlines in these series. Second, I explore the relationship between the episodic plot structure, the story-arcs, and the ongoing romances, arguing that these three distinct narrative units interact in *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* by simultaneously interlocking and overlapping. This ultimately combines the crime and romantic comedy generic forms. Third, I analyze how the female detectives' characters develop as a result of these integrated story-arcs/romantic narratives. Ultimately, this chapter considers how these four series deviate from the norms of the crime genre as these programs utilize postfeminist generic forms to suture together the genres of crime and romantic comedy.

Policing Procedurals

Bones, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are explicitly defined in U.S. popular culture as part of the crime genre. For example, *Bones*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are listed on TV guides as "Crime Dramas." Moreover, in the 2011 People's Choice Awards, Simon

Baker's portrayal of Patrick Jane was nominated for "Favorite TV Crime Fighter," and in the 2012 People's Choice Awards, *Bones* and *Castle* were nominated along with crime dramas such as *CSI*, *NCIS*, and *Criminal Minds* as the top five favorite "Crime Drama Series" and *Castle* won the award in this category (People's Choice Awards). *Fringe*, with its penchant for the super-scientific, is not regularly nominated for crime drama awards; instead, *Fringe* is nominated for and wins awards in both drama and sci-fi/fantasy categories. Yet all four series adhere to the strict generic forms of the crime genre and all four are popularly recognized as crime series (McNamara, 2009).

As procedurals, all four series follow a prescribed sequence in each episode, conforming to the narrative form of crime programming as discussed in chapter two. Beyond predetermining the episode's narrative pattern, these series flesh out their casts, locations, and background scenes with the stock characters and props from traditional crime programming. This shapes and constrains these series in several ways. First, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* orchestrate crime-solving behaviors based on the assumption of a legal system. Second, all four series have a formal authority figure whose role it is to enforce order, uphold the legal system, reprimand the detectives and/or their team, and orchestrate inter-department liaisons. Third, these series rely heavily on forensic science, which requires a forensic character, a laboratory, and a penchant for gruesome remains and mangled corpses. Fourth, as crime dramas, these series are work related and the activity, therefore, centers in professional spheres as the characters interact within work-related settings: the precinct, crime scenes, and eateries, such as diners, coffee-shops, and the local pub, where the characters spend their lunch-hours or get drinks after a long day of crime-solving. In analyzing each of these four ways or

areas in which the crime genre shapes these four series – beyond the episodic narrative form iterated each week in all four programs – I demonstrate the pervasive reach of this crime drama generic form.

Built on the assumption of a legal system, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* embed their characters within law-enforcement professions, locations, and activities. With the exception of the *Bones* characters, the majority of the characters are employed by a law-enforcement agency and are required to abide by official rules, regulations, and policies. Although the forensic team on *Bones* works for the Jeffersonian Museum, they are deeply enmeshed in the legal system since their director, Dr. Saroyan, was a former police officer who understands the legal policies related to forensic science, and the scientists regularly testify as expert witnesses in the cases they investigate. In fact, *Bones* has a recurring side character, Caroline Julian, who is a prosecutor and coaches them through legal trials.

These four series certainly derive their premise from the assumption of a legal system as they set up these characters within and around law-enforcement agencies. But the legal system also provides story-arcs and plotlines. For example, *Bones* spends two story-arcs preparing the characters to testify in legal trials and taking the storylines through the court procedures – first when Brennan’s father is tried for murder in season three and again when the Grave-Digger (a recurring villain) is on trial in season six. *The Mentalist* also uses the courts as a plotline when Patrick Jane is on trial for murdering the serial killer Red John at the beginning of season four. While *Fringe* and *Castle* have yet to run a court related story-arc, they too use the legal system as fodder for storylines as

the characters obtain warrants, argue over jurisdiction, and deal with lawyers during interrogations.

Finally, these programs are predicated on the assumption that convicted perpetrators go to prison, which then structures the ways in which these investigators go about their jobs. The detectives must obtain conclusive evidence or a confession in order to close each case – otherwise the villain would go free. These prisons are never left to viewers' imaginations: all four programs have plotlines in which the detectives visit incarcerated criminals, usually gathering further testimony or hoping to gain insight in a related case. Additionally, Patrick Jane is sent to prison in seasons two and four for misconduct. By assuming the existence and inherent goodness of the U.S. legal system, these four series structure each of their episodes so that in the conclusion the villain confesses to the crime and the detectives usually celebrate sending a violent perpetrator to prison.

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are dependent upon the legal system for their premise, plotlines, episodic procedures and side characters. By assuming a legal system, however, these series also invoke a sense of morality: these programs are predicated upon the notion that justice is meted out through the courts, not through personal interventions. While this serves as the basic premise, these series simultaneously suggest that the legal system is broken – that law-enforcement officials are unable to close cases while working within the legal system's strict confines. This is demonstrated through the male detectives and their male colleagues who often take the law into their own hands, threatening and torturing suspects, committing perjury, investigating without warrants, and a variety of other illegal practices such as

manipulation, coercion, and trespassing. Hence, these series affirm and reify the legal system as the status quo while rewarding the male characters for working outside of it to “get the job done.”

These series also follow the crime genre’s predilection towards satellite authority figures. All four series position one character in authority over the others, imbuing this character with the ability to punish and reward the other characters. To some extent, this can be seen as an extension of the series’ adherence to legal systems since this authority figure is usually situated as the police captain or equivalent position within the law enforcement agency. Generally, these characters are simply used to enforce the law and are therefore imminently replaceable: all four of these series have replaced the authority figure at least once. However, these authority figures also affect the dynamic between the other cast members.

On *Bones*, Dr. Goodman directed the forensic team at the Jeffersonian Museum during the first season. A black, male character, Dr. Goodman rarely interacted with the other characters, typically only appearing on-screen to reprimand Dr. Brennan, forcing her to work with FBI Agent Seeley Booth – although he had a soft-spot for Brennan and often seemed amused by her bickering with Booth. Like the other black male authority figures on these series – Agent Broyles on *Fringe* and Captain Montgomery on *Castle* – Dr. Goodman epitomized Jhally and Lewis’ conceptualization of enlightened racism as black male characters are often cast in positions of authority on television series, thereby seeming to counter racist trends. However, a subtle form of racism remains unchallenged through this sleight-of-hand: rather than forming friendships with other characters and integrating into the narrative’s relationships, these black male characters remain as

satellite leaders, occupying formal positions of authority but with very little actualized power, character development, or integration into the narrative's central tensions (Entman & Rojecki, 2000, p. 159; Jhally & Lewis 1992). Dr. Goodman is replaced at the beginning of season two with a black, female character, Dr. Saroyan. Dr. Saroyan has the least authority of the authority figures on these series as she struggles with Dr. Brennan for control of the lab – a struggle she always loses. Yet, she is also the only authority figure who becomes enmeshed in her team's relationships. Unlike Dr. Goodman and the authority figures on *The Mentalist*, *Fringe*, and *Castle*, Dr. Saroyan actually works in the lab – she too is a forensic scientist and she works with the fleshy remains while Dr. Brennan handles the bones. However, the other characters in the lab find Dr. Brennan more intimidating and usually obey Dr. Brennan when she countermands Dr. Saroyan. Dr. Saroyan struggled for power during her early seasons, but in season four, Dr. Saroyan adopts a teenage daughter and her character transforms from a teetering authority figure into a maternal character as her sub-plots changes from arguments with Brennan to handling her daughter's new boyfriend or college applications.

On *Fringe*, Colonel Broyles recruits Olivia and allows her to manage the Fringe Division with relatively little oversight. He is a harsh and withdrawn character, but he grows fond of Olivia and tends to grant her leeway on cases. However, in the parallel universe, the Colonel Broyles there is merely a middleman, overseeing the Fringe Division, but receiving his orders from the Secretary of Defense. When our world's Olivia becomes trapped in the parallel universe due to a villain's machinations in the beginning of season three, the parallel Broyles shelters and protects Olivia, ultimately enabling her escape and losing his life in the process.

This model of benevolence and protection is repeated on *Castle* where the black, male police captain, Montgomery, has a shady past and therefore knows the truth related to Detective Kate Beckett's mother's death. Montgomery, however, purposefully keeps Beckett in the dark – thereby protecting her from the villains who would kill her if she found out too much. Montgomery is beyond lenient with Castle's shenanigans, and gives Beckett a long leash with which to pursue her cases. However, as Beckett and Castle get closer to the truth, Montgomery – now repentant of his past sins – orchestrates an elaborate set-up, which ends in a shootout where Montgomery dies protecting Beckett.

Montgomery is replaced with a black, female character, Captain Gates, at the beginning of *Castle*'s fourth season. Captain Gates is extremely harsh, distant, and formal – insisting that everyone call her “Sir.” As discussed previously, Gates dislikes Castle's investigative methods and severely reprimands Beckett, threatening them at every turn, which creates narrative tensions as she holds Beckett responsible for Castle's unorthodox behaviors.

This type of character – and the ensuing plotline – was also used on *The Mentalist*. When the white, male CBI Director, Virgil Minelli, retires during season two, he is replaced by Director Hightower. While Minelli was benevolent and lenient, allowing Lisbon and Jane to close cases however Jane saw fit, Director Hightower – who is black and female – is cold and distant as she pressures Teresa Lisbon, holding her responsible for Jane's shenanigans and threatening to fire Lisbon if she cannot rein Jane in while still closing cases at the same productive rate. Hightower's character, however, is drastically altered during season three, when we learn that she is a loving mother of two small, adorable children. She then becomes the target of Red John's plotting, and

Jane rescues her in a complex plotline that necessitates her retirement. After Hightower, *The Mentalist* returns to a rotating slate of white, male CBI Directors who Jane easily manipulates.

Police captains and like-type authority figures are stock characters in TV's crime dramas: Starsky and Hutch reported to Captain Harold Dobey, Scully and Mulder reported to the FBI Director, the *NCIS* team reports to a director, and even David Hasselhoff on *Knight Rider* had to report to Devon Miles, the Leader of the Foundation for Law and Government (FLAG). By following this generic marker of crime dramas, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have stocked their casts with familiar figures who serve important functions (depending on their race and gender) as protectors, antagonists, and/or benevolent figureheads. However, these series deviate from the norm by placing the male detective outside of the authority figure's command. While both Starsky and Hutch reported to their Captain and both Scully and Mulder were responsible to the FBI director, in the partnerships on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, only the female detective is employed by – and therefore reports to and is punishable by – the authority figure: Dr. Saroyan runs the Jeffersonian Lab, Agent Broyles heads the Fringe Division, and the rotation of authority figures on *The Mentalist* and *Castle* lead the CBI and the NYPD, respectively. The male detectives are consultants – working with, but not for these agencies. As such, they escape the system of responsibilities and penalties that constrain the female detectives.

Following the recent trend in crime programming (Allen, 2007), *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* delve into forensic science, featuring dissections, DNA analyses, and the minutia of evidence collection. By focusing on forensics, these series

supply their narratives with familiar characters and procedures. Yet here, again, these series offer a “twist” on the established narrative. Only *Castle* stocks its morgue with the traditionally idiosyncratic forensic scientist: Dr. Lanie Parish is a black female who is best friends with Detective Kate Beckett and Esposito’s on-again-off-again girlfriend. In contrast, nearly all of the characters on *Bones* are forensic scientists – but each with their own specialty who collecting different types of evidence from the mangled corpses on their laboratory tables. On *Fringe*, Dr. Walter Bishop and his assistant and caregiver, Astrid Farnsworth, dissect bodies each episode and then submit them to bizarre science experiments rather than collecting the usual sort of forensic evidence.

Across these three series, however, a pattern emerges: the three characters who perform the most traditional elements of TV’s forensic science are Dr. Lanie Parish, Dr. Saroyan, and Astrid Farnsworth – all attractive black women who play supportive and nurturing roles while covered in body fluids. The confluence of race, gender, and traditionally performed femininity – as marked by their physical attractiveness and nurturing roles – suggests, again, that enlightened racism is at work in these series. These black women are given an expertise, which nominally marks them as educated characters, but then relegates them to the sidelines where these sexually desirable women “mother” the other characters, simultaneously embodying the racist stereotypes of the Jezebel and the Mammie (Jackson, 2006). *The Mentalist* is the only one of the four series without a main character who performs forensic analyses. Instead, forensic evidence is gathered by recurring (white male) minor characters whom Jane dislikes because their scientific approach conflicts with his own – and because he typically smells the corpses and often removes evidence from their bodies, which the forensic teams frown upon.

As crime dramas, these four series are all set in work-places. Drawing upon the classic sceneries from the crime genre, these four series largely take place in 1) a precinct, 2) the crime scene(s), 3) a laboratory, and 4) interrogation rooms. Additionally, the detectives visit suspects' and witnesses' homes and work-places to ask them questions and the detectives typically frequent a local restaurant for lunch breaks and/or a local pub or coffee shop to unwind after closing a case. With the exception of Richard Castle, who goes home in nearly every episode to see his family, it is rare to see the inside of one of the detectives' homes. For example, Teresa Lisbon's apartment is unseen until the second season when Jane visits Lisbon's apartment in order to hypnotize her so that she can recall memories relevant to their case that are buried in her subconscious (Gable & Laneuville, 2009). Since it is both the viewers' and Jane's first visit to Lisbon's apartment, the episode provides a tour of Lisbon's furnishings,

Lisbon: It's kinda a mess.

Jane: No, not at all. It's nice. I like those pictures.

Lisbon: Those are all mostly from the last tenants.

Jane stares at a small family photo of Lisbon and her brothers

Lisbon: Where are we going to do this? *[indicating either the table or the couch]*

Jane walks over to her CD collection

Jane: Ahhhh. Interesting.

Lisbon: Let's just do it. Let's go.

Once Jane has successfully hypnotized Lisbon, he admirably restrains himself from abusing the opportunity to pry into Lisbon's personal life, but cannot resist at least one question:

Jane: How are you feeling?

Lisbon: Good.

Jane: Good. You're going to remain in this relaxed trance state, while we

think about Tuesday night. But first, sometimes you dance to that Spice Girls CD, don't ya?

Lisbon: *[dancing slightly in her seat]* Yeah.

Jane: I thought so.

Essentially, these series borrow their scene locations from the stockyard of the crime genre, shuffling the characters in and out of their offices, labs, and a dizzying array of crime scenes (Gable & Laneuville, 2009).

Beyond adopting the narrative form of crime drama episodes (discussed in chapter two), thereby structuring each episode as a progression from discovering a body to arresting a villain, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have taken up the generic form of crime programming and used it to supply their cast of characters and determine their scene locations, while providing a “twist” on these standardized elements.

Predicated on the assumption of a legal system, these series embed their characters within law enforcement agencies and position an authority figure over them whose allegiance lies not with the team but with the governing agency. However, the male detectives work outside of this system. Even Seeley Booth, who is an FBI Agent, is relatively disengaged from the legal system since he is partnered with Brennan – a civilian – and works primarily with the Jeffersonian forensic team without being under Dr. Saroyan's domain. Similarly, each of these series participates in forensic science and the modern accoutrements of laboratory equipment. Yet only *Castle* has a character whose plot-based interactions function as the equivalent of *NCIS*'s medical examiner, Dr. Donald Mallard. The other series conduct similar experiments but spread the responsibility to a team (*Bones*), partner together two scientists (*Fringe*), or relegate the forensic analysis to minor characters who conduct their experiments off-screen (*The Mentalist*). Finally, as

work-related narratives all of these series are set almost exclusively in work places where the characters maintain a fairly professional demeanor. Yet, as I argue in the following analysis, the goal of each of these series is to move from the precinct into the detectives' homes as the partners become lovers – a process which is nearing completion in *Bones*' seventh season, where the camera spends more time in their personal spaces than ever before and the partners are buying a house together.

The Personal is Procedural

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have three distinct elements that structure the narratives: the individual episodes, the story-arcs, and the ongoing romance between the partners. Excluding the rare exceptions of “to-be-continued” episodes, each episode in these series introduces and then resolves a crime while following the highly regimented, formulaic generic form of crime dramas. The story-arcs sew a succession of episodes together, so that each episode contributes in a small way to the larger mystery without actually focusing on the larger mystery. Finally, the ongoing romance between the partners structures the narrative, creating tension between the characters and influencing the type of plots that surface in the episodes and story-arcs depending on if the partners are growing closer together or temporarily moving apart. For example, episodes where the partners work undercover, posing as a couple, are often used to move the romance along, drawing the two characters together, whereas episodes in which the male detective betrays the female detective in order to complete a side project tend to halt the romance, creating a sequence of episodes in which the partners are more distant.

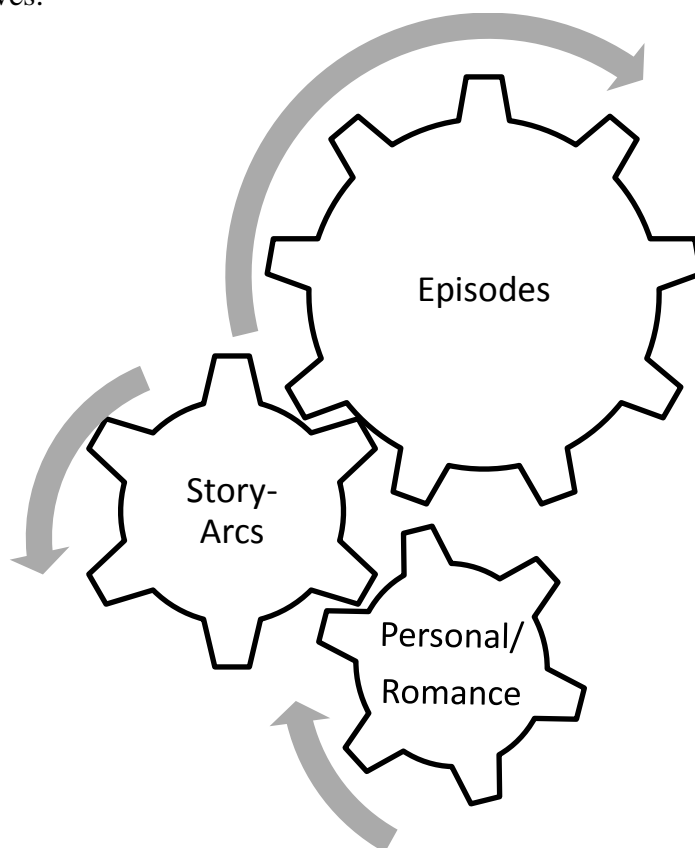
Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* combine their episode's plots, their story-arcs, and the romance in two different ways. First, these narrative structures are designed as interlocking systems where each element fuels the next. Second, these narrative structures can be understood as overlapping systems in which each element borrows content from the next, creating narratives in which the story-arcs are about the characters' personal lives, and their personal lives develop through changes in the story-arcs. Through analyzing how these series simultaneously interlock and overlap their narrative elements, I demonstrate how *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* combine crime and romantic comedy generic forms.

Interlocking Systems

These three distinct elements, the episode's plots, the story-arcs, and the ongoing relationship, can be understood as an interlocking system where each affects the next. This perspective would suggest that each element drives the next: like interlocking gears pictured in Figure 1 on the following page, the episodes' plots drive the story-arcs, which in turn drives the romance. This model draws attention to the interlocking nature of all three elements. This is a crucial aspect to understanding these series since they tie their romantic developments to story-arcs.

To explore how these narrative elements interlock on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* creating separate but intrinsically connected episodes, story-arcs, and romances, I demonstrate how these three components interact on these series.

Figure 1: Interlocking relationship between episode's plots, story-arcs, and characters' personal lives.



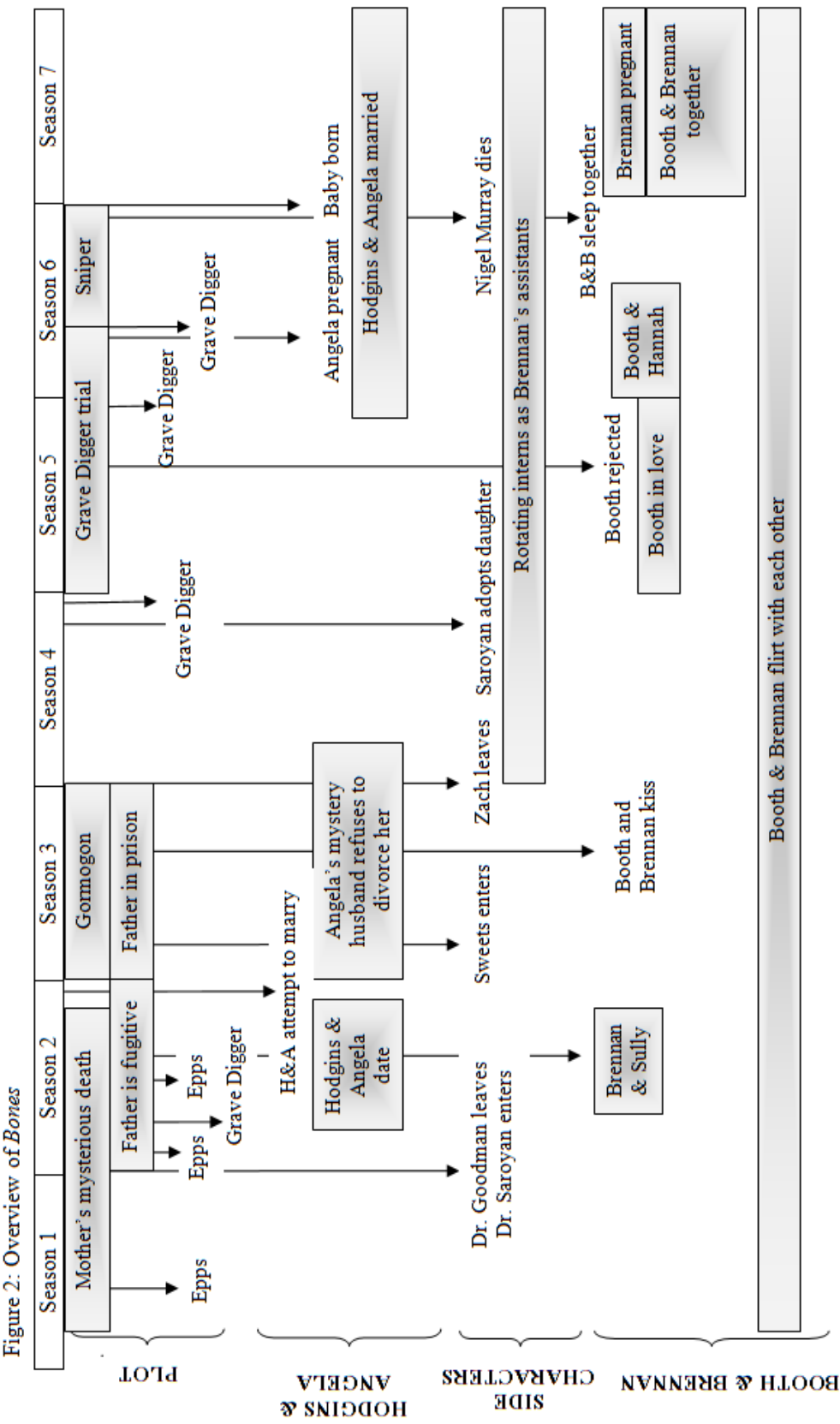
To portray the relationships between the plotlines, story-arcs, and romances on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, I have created figures as discussed below which visualize the developments over the course of each program's seasons. While all four programs interlock these narrative elements, they do so in different ways with different results.

Bones

As the longest of these series with seven seasons, *Bones* has shifted through different levels of interaction: sometimes tightly interlocking the episodes, story-arcs, and

romances, sometimes only moderately combining the three, and in seasons four and seven, dropping the story-arc component altogether as the romance plateaus. During the first three seasons, *Bones* has a tight interlocking system as the characters investigate Brennan's mother's death and her father's ensuing court case. As demonstrated in Figure 2 on the following page, during the first two seasons of *Bones* the story-arcs revolve around the mother's mysterious death and Brennan's father's life as a fugitive. These running story-arcs are punctuated by a plotline revolving around a serial killer named Epps, and by an unresolved case in which a villain known as the Grave Digger buries Brennan and Hodgins alive. During the third season, there are two simultaneous story-arcs as the team tries to apprehend the serial-killer and cannibal known as Gormogon, and as the team comes to terms with Brennan's father's crimes and his court case. Meanwhile, during the first three seasons, Hodgins and Angela date, attempting to marry in the conclusion of season two but are unable because Angela has a mysterious previous marriage, which makes it temporarily impossible for her to legally marry Hodgins.

Notably, *Bones*' early seasons, especially season two, focus on the romance between Hodgins and Angela as a substitute for the slow-moving relationship forming between Booth and Brennan – much as *The Mentalist* is doing with the relationship between Agents Rigsby and Van Pelt. For example, the episode that features the Grave Digger in season two (Tamaro & Ross, 2006) fuels the romance between Hodgins and Angela as the experience of nearly losing Hodgins helps Angela recognize how much he means to her and the two begin a more serious relationship.



Dr. Saroyan and Lance Sweets join the cast in seasons two and three, respectively, and Zach leaves at the conclusion of season three when it is revealed that he has been in league with Gormogon. Booth and Brennan flirt with each other throughout these seasons, and Booth becomes distraught when Brennan dates his FBI colleague, Agent Sully, in season two. Booth and Brennan share their first kiss during season three.

These first three seasons have a tightly interlocking relationship between the individual episodes' plots, the story-arcs, and the ongoing relationships, as each episode contributes in some small way to the ongoing story-arcs, and the story-arcs draw our romantic couples closer together. For example, in season three, nearly every episode contributes to their ongoing case against Gormogon and/or to Brennan's father. These two story-arcs unify the third season: although each episode has its own distinct plot, together, the season tells the story of two larger narratives.

Moreover, these story-arcs feed the romance between Booth and Brennan. By working together on the Gormogon case, Booth and Brennan's relationship changes from being antagonistic but flirtations partners to being the "center" of the team as Booth and Brennan assume parental roles, shepherding their friends through a difficult and gruesome case. The tie between the Gormogon story-arc and Booth and Brennan's relationship is explicitly laid out in the first episode of the season, as Booth and Brennan reflect on how a serial-case will affect their team (Hanson & Toynton, 2007). Although lengthy, I provide their conversation in full because it openly and unambiguously demonstrates how the story-arc is designed to fuel Booth and Brennan's relationship.

Brennan: The ancient Greek section translated the motto at the back of the vault door, “will no one help the Widow’s Son.” Hodgins was right. This killer’s part of something bigger.

Booth: Here’s your coffee.

Booth tries to pass her coffee, but she continues discussing the case

Brennan: Gavin Nichols’ violin was in there. I bet there are belongings from other murder victims too. We have to catalogue every item in that vault.

Booth: Hot coffee.

Booth tries to pass her coffee again, and again she ignores the cup

Brennan: After we do the visual and microscopic examination of each human bone in the silver skeleton, we’ll take samples and do an in-depth auxiological breakdown. We really have a lot to do.

Booth: Yeah, starting with coffee.

He gives her the cup of coffee

Brennan: An isotope profile will allow us to narrow down possible geographical hits...

Brennan starts to take a sip, but Booth abruptly covers her coffee cup with his hand to keep her from drinking the coffee, but since the cup is nearly at her mouth, his hand brushes her lips

Booth: Hey, it’s hot!!!

Brennan lowers the cup

Booth: You were gonna burn yourself, Bones.

Brennan: Thank you.

Booth removes his hand from the cup

Booth: Listen, this whole serial-killer, it’s not gonna be our usual case.

Brennan: Why?

Booth: Why? Because it’s big and he’s bad.

Brennan: I don’t see what difference that makes!

Booth: Cause you have to slow down, right. Take a breath. You have to realize that this is not a sprint, it’s gonna be a marathon. Marathon, Bones, coming from the Greek meaning “Really, really, really long run.”

Brennan: It’s not how the word “marathon” originated.

Booth: Look, there’s something else I gotta know, and it’s important. We solid?

Brennan: You and me? Yeah!

Booth: No, not just you and me. Squints, too. Zack is back for good. Angela and Hodgins have their head back in the game. Cam, she’s locked in.

Brennan: Why are you asking me this?
 Booth: Because. You and me – the center.
 Brennan: *[nodding]* And the center must hold.
 Booth: Right. So, are we gonna hold?
 Brennan: Yeah. We'll hold. We're the center.
 Booth: The center.
Brennan holds out her hand and Booth cautiously takes it; they shake hands
 Booth: Ha hah.
 Brennan: What's funny?
 Booth: Ha, I thought you were going to kiss my hand again.
 Brennan: I did not kiss your hand. You put it over my coffee cup.
 Booth: Huh, felt like you kissed it.

Here, the story-arc is designed to bring Booth and Brennan into a closer relationship with each other as they work together to solve the Gormogon case (Hanson & Toynton, 2007). As the “center” of their team, they work to strengthen their partnership so that they can provide support to their colleagues during this difficult case. Layered on top of this story-arc is her father's court-case. This second story-arc continues to fuel Booth and Brennan's relationship as the two must sort out difficult emotional issues since Booth arrested her father. This tightly interlocking narrative, the components work in sequence with each other as each episode feeds the story-arcs, which in turn feed the romance between Booth and Brennan. Given the intensity of this system, it comes as no surprise that Booth and Brennan kiss during this season.

In contrast to the tightly interlocking system of the first three seasons, the fourth season of *Bones* has a very loose connection between the episodes' plots, the story-arc, and the ongoing relationships. Broadly speaking, this season is lacking a major story-arc. Instead, the season focuses on introducing the rotating slate of interns who take Zach's place as Brennan's lab assistant. During this season, Dr. Saroyan adopts a daughter,

which radically changes her role in the series as her sub-plots change from being power struggles in the Jeffersonian to mother-daughter drama. Additionally, Hodgins and Angela break-up, and the episodes in this season often feature sub-plots surrounding Angela's new significant-others as she dates different individuals. However, without a story-arc season four is figuratively missing a "gear" between the episodes' plots and the ongoing romance, which means that no progress is made in Booth and Brennan's relationship. By removing this piece from the interlocking system, *Bones* effectively stalls the relationship between Booth and Brennan and season four functions almost entirely episodically.

However, the fourth season closes with a reinvigoration of the Grave Digger case when the Grave Digger buries Booth alive on a sinking ship. As Brennan rescues Booth and arrests the Grave Digger, *Bones* lays the groundwork for the next story-arc, which structures season five and extends into the sixth season. In season five, there is a moderate connection interlocking the episodes' plots with the story-arc and the story-arc with the relationship. The Grave Digger's trial is not a high-intensity case in the same way that Brennan's mother's death was in the first two seasons or the way that the Gormogon case and her father's trial were in season three. Instead, information related to the Grave Digger's trial sporadically pops up during episodes. In response, the interlocked system is working, but sluggishly: Booth decides to confess his love for Brennan in the first episode of season five after his near death experience with the Grave Digger spurs him to action. But it takes him sixteen episodes before he actually confesses to her. Brennan rejects him, claiming that she believes "all meaningful relationships are doomed" and that as a "scientist" she is incapable of change and cannot

gamble on their future together (Hanson & Boreanaz, 2010). Although still in love with Brennan, Booth decides to pursue other romantic possibilities (seriously dating a journalist named Hannah in the beginning of the sixth season) since Brennan has rejected him, and Booth and Brennan's relationship teeters along in this holding pattern as the Grave Digger trial slowly wraps up.

However, in the second half of season six, *Bones* introduces a new plotline centering on a vigilante sniper. This new plotline is a return to tightly interlocking relationship between the episodes' plots, the story-arc, and the romance, as the episodes contribute to the story-arc more consistently and the story-arc works to pull Booth and Brennan back together as they work closely to solve this case. Only two episodes after this new story-arc is introduced, Booth and Hannah break up (Lopata & Little, 2011), and Booth is, shortly thereafter, again pursuing a relationship with Brennan. In the season's conclusion, we again see the tightly interlocked system as the episode focuses on catching the sniper, thereby concluding the story-arc (Kettner, Usher, & Chapple, 2011). In the process, however, the sniper kills one of the interns, Vincent Nigel Murray. This final twist in the sniper's story-arc sends Booth and Brennan into each other's arms, seeking comfort as they grieve for Nigel. Finding more than comfort, Booth and Brennan sleep together – finally establishing their relationship. Again, this tight, interlocking connection between the narrative elements of individual episodes' plots, the broader story-arc, and the ongoing romance results in a chain reaction. *Bones* functions by tying these three narrative components together so that each impacts the other. Although it is possible for *Bones* to continue without a story-arc – as demonstrated in seasons four and

seven – this places the relationship between Booth and Brennan in a holding pattern. Their relationship cannot progress without a story-arc to fuel it.

Fringe

As a crime series with science-fiction themes, *Fringe* is never lacking in story-arcs. As demonstrated in Figure 3 on the following page, each season usually has at least two different story-arcs in progress. Although these story-arcs often eventually intertwine, they function as different mysteries so that the characters are working on two (or three, or four) larger mysteries, which just happen to coalesce in the season finales. With these story-arcs in full swing, *Fringe* utilizes a tightly interlocking relationship between the episodes' plots, story-arcs, and the ongoing relationship between Olivia Dunham and Peter Bishop. Much like the early seasons of *Bones*, this tightly interlocking system on *Fringe* welds the characters' romance to the progress of the story-arc.

For example, in the first season, the opening story-arc revolves around Olivia's previous FBI partner's betrayal. However, since she and John were also lovers, this story-arc brings closure to her previous traumatic relationship, laying the groundwork for her relationship with her new partner, Peter. Working closely together in the second half of the season while they confront her traitorous FBI boss and attempt to discover what the villainous Mr. Jones has planned, Olivia and Peter develop a strong relationship while uncovering – through these two story-arcs – that a parallel universe exists.

The second season quickly escalates their relationship as the story-arcs become more intense. First, their FBI colleague, Charlie, is replaced with a shape-shifter from the parallel universe, which begins a story-arc revolving around shape-shifters and developing a war between the two universes. Then a second story-arc develops as the chief shape-shifter begins working towards opening a portal between the universes. This story-arc forces Olivia to use her extra-sensory powers (which she has as a result of being experimented on as a child) to protect our world from the damage the shape-shifter's portal would wreak. The strain of using these powers pull her and Peter closer together, as Peter comforts and supports Olivia during these difficult experiences. Cementing their relationship, Peter tries to kiss her during the culmination of an episode that was particularly stressful for Olivia. However, with her new powers, Olivia can sense that Peter is originally from the parallel universe, causing her to pull away from the relationship he is attempting to instigate. This begins a story-arc about Peter's past – a story-arc which is resolved only when Olivia follows Peter into the parallel universe, confesses her love for him, and they decide to return to our universe to be a couple at the conclusion of season two.

This tight interlocking relationship between each episode's plot, which has its own murder victim and super-scientific investigation, the combined story-arcs, and the ongoing romance continues into seasons three and four, although the storylines become – if possible – even more farfetched. When they return to our universe in season three, Olivia and Peter begin their relationship. Unfortunately, it is not Olivia who returns, but her doppelganger, known as Fauxlivia. This begins an eight-episode story-arc related to Fauxlivia's infiltration of our world and Olivia's imprisonment in the parallel universe.

When Olivia escapes back to our universe and Peter finally discovers Fauxlivia's duplicity, Olivia breaks up with Peter because he has been sleeping with her doppelganger.

However, as they continue working together to solve the secondary story-arc during season three related to a doomsday device, Peter and Olivia are drawn back together and soon begin a relationship. Yet as each episode fuels the story-arcs, which in turn affects the romance, the end of the doomsday story-arc spells disaster for Peter and Olivia's relationship: while avoiding the destruction of both universes, Peter accidentally erases himself from existence and during season four both worlds revert to the form they would have taken if Peter had died as a child. Hence, season four provides a new story-arc revolving around this altered timeline in which Peter – when he mysteriously reappears – attempts to win Olivia's heart again.

The Mentalist

Unlike *Bones* and *Fringe*, *The Mentalist* has one story-arc that spans the entirety of the four seasons: Patrick Jane hunts the serial killer, Red John, in an attempt to avenge his wife and daughter. Unlike the other series where most episodes contribute in some small fashion to the over-arching plotline, in *The Mentalist* the vast majority of the episodes are entirely unrelated to the Red John story-arc and (as demonstrated in Figure 4 on the following page) only two or three episodes per season focus on a Red John case and therefore bring Jane closer to catching Red John.

While each of these Red John episodes deepens the relationship between Jane and Lisbon as they work together, rescue each other, and fight with each other regarding Jane's intention to execute Red John without a trial, Jane and Lisbon have yet to begin a romantic relationship. Although Jane flirts with Lisbon continually, this series has successfully kept their romance at a slow burn, instead of resorting to the on-again/off-again shenanigans that *Fringe* is engaged in or the frustrating holding pattern that *Bones* utilized in its fourth season. *The Mentalist* interlocks the episodes' plots, story-arc, and romance, but only two or three times each season. The rest of the episodes typically function as stand-alone narratives, and the program threads a romance between the two agents Wayne Rigsby and Grace Van Pelt into the narrative to provide the romantic progress that is missing from Jane and Lisbon's relationship. Rigsby and Van Pelt's relationship is not tied to the Red John narrative until season three.

The third season deviates from the program's typical episodic format. This was not an entirely new deviation, *The Mentalist* had dabbled in a running story-arc for the first eight episodes of season two when Lisbon's CBI colleague and former partner, Sam Bosko takes over the Red John case. During this eight-episode story-arc, Jane is outraged not to be allowed to work on the Red John case and hounds Bosko, creating a running storyline as Jane bugs Bosko's office, is briefly sent to prison for interfering with Bosko, and slowly earns Bosko's trust and is allowed to help him on the Red John case. This story-arc ends when Red John's disciple murders Bosko and his CBI team of detectives. This brief story-arc in season two demonstrates the type of interlocking system familiar from *Bones* and *Fringe*: during the Bosko story-arc, Jane and Lisbon grow closer together

as she defends Jane, as Jane is jealous of her relationship with Bosko, and as Bosko (who is in love with Lisbon) is jealous of Jane.

Just as their brief story-arc in season two activated an interlocking system of narrative elements the longer story-arc in season three does too. This time, however, the story-arc it is tied to Rigsby and Van Pelt's relationship instead of Jane and Lisbon's. In season three, it becomes apparent to Jane that Red John has a mole working within one of the California law enforcement agencies. At the conclusion of a Red John case, Jane and Lisbon have caught one of Red John's disciples and the villain offers to talk to Jane. But when Jane goes to speak to him in the holding cell, he finds that someone has killed the man through immolation. While the CBI management mistakenly believes it is one of their own agents taking the law into his or her own hands, Jane convinces Lisbon that Red John has a mole who silenced the disciple before he could reveal Red John's identity.

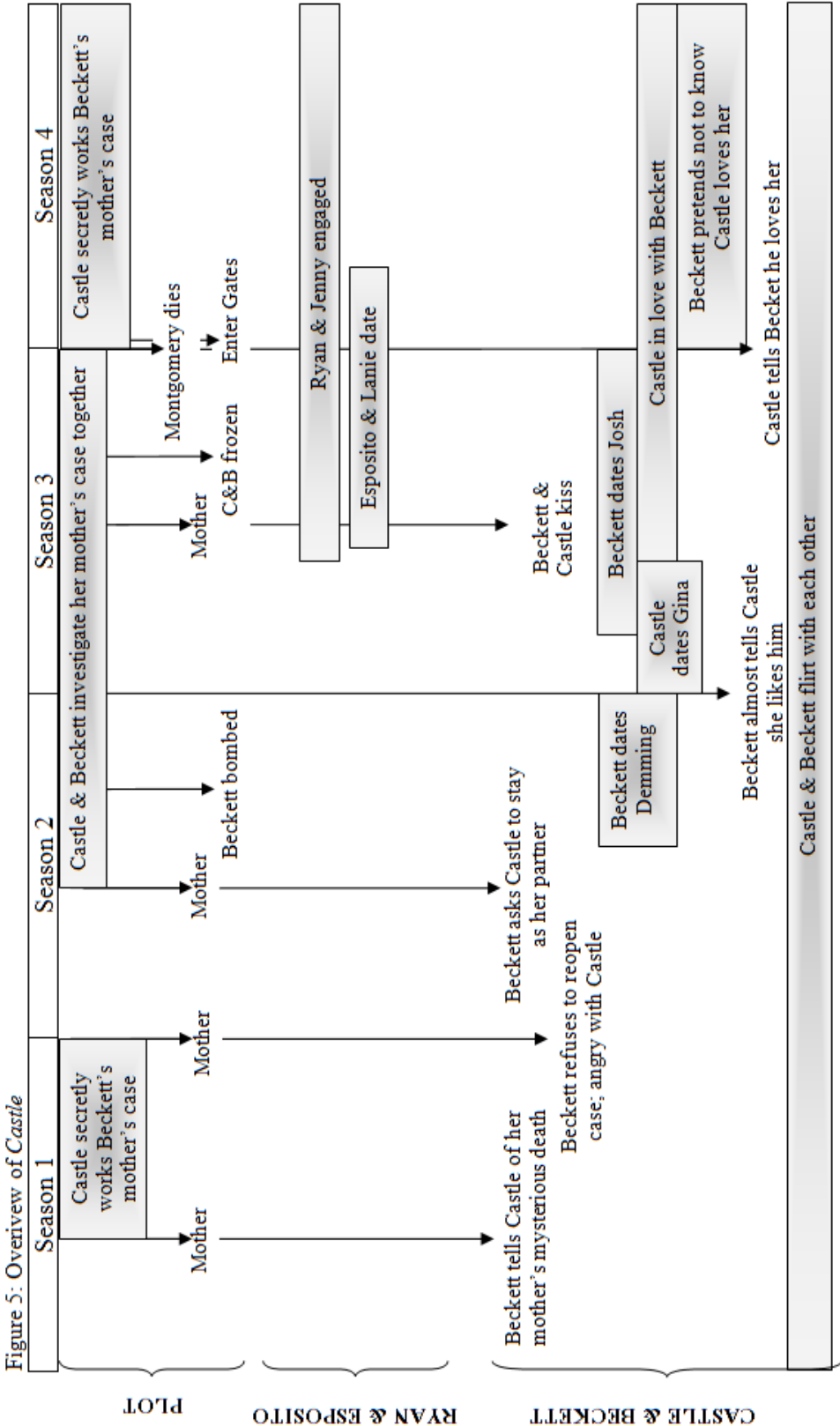
While Jane and Lisbon begin hunting the mole and then protecting CBI Director Hightower when she is framed for the murder, Grace Van Pelt begins a relationship with FBI Agent O'Laughlin. Hightower had previously ordered Rigsby and Van Pelt to break up towards the conclusion of the second season since intradepartmental dating is against CBI policy. However, Rigsby remains in love with Van Pelt throughout the third season and pines for her as she dates and subsequently becomes engaged with O'Laughlin. However, since *The Mentalist* interlocks this story-arc with Rigsby and Van Pelt's relationship, Van Pelt first meets O'Laughlin at the end of a case related to Red John, they begin a serious relationship shortly before the arson is committed, and (unsurprisingly, in retrospect) their relationship ends when Jane reveals that O'Laughlin

is the mole and Van Pelt must shoot him dead to protect herself, Lisbon, Hightower, and Hightower's children. In this dramatic conclusion to this story-arc, Van Pelt again becomes a single woman, and she and Rigsby recommence their flirtatious relationship in season four – despite Rigsby's new girlfriend, Sarah.

The Mentalist has the slowest development of the partners' relationship as Lisbon and Jane flirt interminably without ever crossing the line into a serious relationship. In part, this is because the series only interlocks an episode's plot with the story-arc, and the story-arc with their relationship approximately twice a season (in contrast to *Bones*' third season in which nearly every episode functions in this interlocking system). And when *The Mentalist* did construct a long-running interlocked narrative system, *The Mentalist* tied it to Rigsby and Van Pelt's relationship instead of Jane and Lisbon's romance.

Castle

Castle develops a nearly identical plotline as *Bones*' original story-arc, centering on female detective's mother's mysterious death. However, *Bones* wrapped this mystery up in two seasons. *Castle*, however, has developed this mystery over the entirety of four seasons, so that it, like *The Mentalist*, only has one running plotline. See Figure 5 on the following page. As such, the case develops more slowly, with fewer episodes directly contributing to the story-arc than *Bones* utilized. Despite this retardation, *Castle* exhibits the same interlocking of episodes, story-arcs, and romance that *Bones* and *Fringe* do. Unlike *Bones*, however, the story-arc's developments on *Castle* are just as likely to push the characters apart as draw them together.



For example, in the first season, Beckett bonds with Castle when she first tells him of her mother's case. Yet in telling Castle about her mother's case, Beckett also reveals that when she worked the case she became obsessive and self-destructive as she worked tirelessly and ineffectually to solve her mother's murder and bring the perpetrators to justice. Despite her warning, Castle is unable to leave the case alone, and unbeknownst to Beckett, he begins working the case. When Beckett discovers this at the end of the first season, it destroys their relationship and she refuses to let Castle continue shadowing her as inspiration for his novels.

When season two opens, however, Beckett readmits Castle, allowing him to continue their partnership, with the understanding that neither of them will work her mother's case. When a case they work midway through season two directly connects to her mother's case, Beckett and Castle decide to reopen the investigation together and begin growing closer as the episodes, story-arc, and romance interlock in a reinforcing sequence. This draws the partners together and Beckett almost confesses her feelings for Castle at the end of season two, they kiss midway through season three, and Castle confesses his love to Beckett in the season three finale.

Moreover, *Castle* runs mini-storylines in seasons two and three that explicitly focus on Castle and Beckett's relationship. These mini-story-lines consist of two-part episodes, creating dramatic "to-be-continued" cliff-hangers. In season two, this storyline revolves around a serial killer who has targeted Beckett. The cliff-hanger ends with the serial killer bombing Beckett's apartment – while she showers – and the next episode recommences with Castle rescuing our naked heroine from the flames. In the mini-storyline in season three, Castle and Beckett become trapped in a large freezer while they

investigate a terrorist attack on New York City. They talk through their relationship as they settle down to die of hypothermia in each other's arms, only to be rescued at the last moment. Unsurprisingly, these instances of intense emotional and physical intimacy become milestones in their ongoing relationship as *Castle* connects the episodes, story-arcs, and romance into an interlocking system where each element fuels the next.

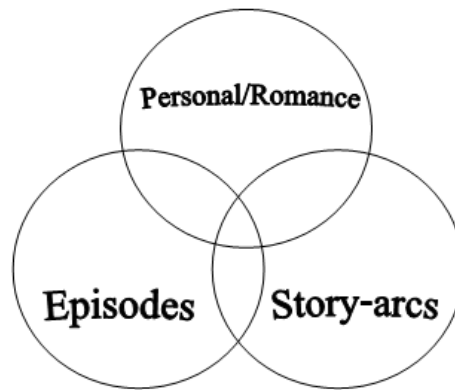
Together, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* demonstrate a proclivity toward this interlocking system as the episodes feed the story-arcs, and the story-arcs are directly tied to the program's ongoing relationships. This system, where each element fuels the next combines the distinct narrative components, making them interdependent as the elements interlock. However, this is not the only way in which the story-arcs and the romances interact. In addition to interlocking, these narrative elements also overlap.

Overlapping Plots and Romances

Not only do *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*'s narrative components of the episode, story-arc, and ongoing romance interlock as demonstrated above, but these elements can also be seen as overlapping spheres. This perspective draws attention to the *shared content* between the episodes' plots, the story-arcs, and the partners' relationships. By overlapping content, I mean that an episode's plot shares content with a story-arc, and/or with the characters' developments and relationships. To some extent, all series that have story-arcs share content between the episode and the story-arc: shared content is necessary in order to sew episodes together into a plotline. However, fairly traditional crime series such as *NCIS*, *CSI*, and *Law & Order* keep the content of any given episode,

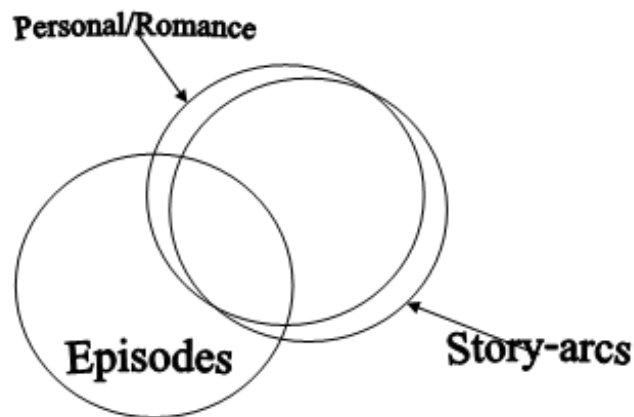
story-arc, and the characters' personal lives fairly distinct, overlapping only at the edges to create narrative drama or develop a story-arc, as pictured below in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Overlap between episodes' plots, story-arcs, and the characters' personal lives.



The case is different for *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* as these series essentially squish the traditional Venn-diagram, so that the story-arcs and the characters' personal lives and romantic relationships almost entirely overlap, as depicted in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Overlap between episodes' plots, story-arcs, and personal lives on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*



On *Bones*, the first three seasons focus intensely on Brennan's relationship with her parents and brother as she and Booth – assisted by the team at the Jeffersonian Lab – investigate her mother's mysterious death. Brennan's personal life provides all of the characters, motivations, and most of the major plot developments during the first three seasons as the series develops story-arcs that revolve around her parents. When *Bones* returns to a tightly interlocking system of narrative components in the second half of the sixth season with the sniper story-arc, it again furnishes this story-arc out of the characters' personal lives. The vigilante sniper is Booth's friend and mentor from his time in the military. Scavenging through the detectives' back-stories, *Bones* pieces together large story-arcs with detailed plots that fold the detectives' personal lives into the ongoing mystery, sharing content between these traditionally separate narrative spheres.

Castle's ongoing story-arc revolving around Beckett's mother's mysterious death imitates *Bones'* opening story-arc almost exactly. And like *Bones*, *Castle* develops its story-arc from Beckett's personal life. Instead of keeping these narrative components – the characters' personal lives and relationships and the crime-related story-arc – separate, these series share content between the two. On *Castle*, the central case is Beckett's mother's death, and the central characters for this are fleshed out by Beckett's friends and mentors. By investigating her mother's death, Beckett – joined by Castle – is investigating her own history.

Bones and *Castle* both opened with fairly episodic cases, and slowly introduced the “mother's death” story-arcs. That is, these series laid the groundwork for these story-

arcs by providing back-stories for the characters. For example, early on in the first season of *Bones* viewers learn that Dr. Temperance Brennan became a forensic anthropologist because her parents disappeared when she was fifteen and “no one ever found out what happened to them” (Coen & Bookstaver, 2005). By becoming a forensic anthropologist, Brennan is “trying to solve the mystery of their loss” and provide closure for other families by identifying remains, closing cases, and apprehending perpetrators (Coen & Bookstaver, 2005). On *Castle*, Beckett also became a detective because she wanted to find closure for her mother’s death and to help other families not experience the same trauma of an unresolved case (Marlowe & Bowman, 2009a). *Bones* and *Castle* overlap their characters’ personal lives and ongoing romances with the story-arcs. The content that allows viewers to understand the characters better – e.g. why they became forensic anthropologists or policewomen – is the same content that helps their partners to emotionally connect with them, and it is the same content the plotlines are built from.

On *Fringe*, the inbreeding between story-arcs and the characters’ personal lives is a tangled web of shared content. Unlike *Bones* and *Castle* where the story-arcs develop gradually as we learn more about these female detectives’ mother’s deaths, *Fringe* launches into its opening story-arc in the pilot, establishing a “pattern” of related cases involving super-scientific crimes. Seemingly these early story-arcs are fairly unrelated to the detectives’ personal lives and ongoing romance. However, as the mysteries deepen, and the series begins to hint that Olivia has special mental powers involving – at the very least – telekinesis and pyrokinesis and that Peter is not Walter Bishop’s biological son, the story-arcs and their personal lives begin to overlap. As these story-arcs develop, *Fringe* creates plotlines that overlap with their characters’ back-stories and the ongoing

investigations as the detectives search to find out their own personal histories. For example, Olivia discovers that Walter experimented on her when she was a child and – as a result – she has unusual capabilities and is the only human who can travel between universes without damaging them. Drawing on her back-story, *Fringe* then constructs plotlines that center around her abilities and those who attempt to misuse her powers. Moreover, her back-story contributes to her romance with Peter as he coaches her through frightening situations, helps her to hone and control her powers, and to reconcile with Walter – through sweet, supportive, and romantic interactions.

Peter’s own back-story is equally embroiled in *Fringe*’s story-arcs. The series hints and teases that something is “off” about Peter in the first season as his father, Walter, seems to remember burying Peter and worries that Peter will discover some great secret. As the seasons unfold, we learn that Walter’s son died during childhood, and Walter crossed to the parallel universe and stole his doppelganger, “Walternate’s” son. This back-story becomes a major anchor in the developing story-arcs as Walternate attempts to lure Peter, who is now an adult, back to his parallel universe. Walternate then plans to use him to activate a mysterious doomsday device, which turns out to have been designed specifically for Peter by a prehistoric civilization – a mystery the series has yet to resolve.

These *Fringe* characters’ back-stories are central to the series’ story-arcs. The characters’ personal lives are the content of the story-arcs: the two narratives spheres share content almost entirely on *Fringe*, especially since their back-stories also determine their romantic relationship. For example, Olivia cancels her first date with Peter when her trauma-induced extra-sensory abilities reveal that Peter is from the parallel universe

(Miller, Stentz, & Beeson, 2010). Here, their personal back-stories, the story-arc, and their romance all converge in a single moment: because Walter experimented on Olivia when she was a child, she has the ability to sense objects from the other universe and when Peter finally asks her out and they are about to begin a romantic relationship, she realizes that he is from the other universe bringing his back-story into focus and launching a new story-arc surrounding Peter's origins and destiny.

Fringe combines its characters' personal lives and the developing romance between Olivia and Peter with the story-arcs, which prod into their histories and utilize their special capabilities. Unlike *Bones* and *Castle*, *Fringe* makes their personal back-stories a mystery so that story-arcs are required to simply unearth their pasts. Despite this added layer of mystery, *Fringe* operates like *Bones* and *Castle* as the story-arcs in *Fringe* can only occur because of the characters' personal lives and the developing romance between the detective partners. For example, on *Bones* and *Castle*, only Beckett and Brennan (and their respective partners) can solve their mothers' cases since they are the only people who know the mysterious back-stories, since these back-stories are their own personal histories. Similarly, on *Fringe*, only Peter and Olivia could possibly neutralize the doomsday device or discover that "Fauxlivia" had infiltrated the Fringe Division, because only Peter and Olivia have their specialized abilities because of their traumatic pasts. Each of these series creates story-arcs out of their characters' personal lives and romances, sharing the content between these two narrative spheres.

The Mentalist takes this one step further. The running story-arc on *The Mentalist* surrounds Patrick Jane's commitment to tracking down and killing Red John, thereby avenging the deaths of his wife and daughter. This story-arc is incredibly simple –

especially in comparison to *Fringe's* complicated entanglements – but drives the entirety of the series. Deviating from the other three programs, *The Mentalist* tells viewers in the pilot that this series is about Jane's search for vengeance: the series opens with Jane and Lisbon investigating a copy-cat case where a murderer has attempted to cover his tracks by copying Red John's *modus operandi*; as such, the series quickly demonstrates that Jane is a vigilante detective who works with the CBI because it brings him closer to catching and killing Red John and avenging his family (Heller & Nutter, 2008). *The Mentalist* wastes no time in instigating the running story-arc and overtly tying it to Jane's personal background.

Not only does *The Mentalist* foreground this story-arc as its *raison d'être*, but it also refuses to create any other story-arcs. While *Bones* happily spins story-arcs such as the Grave Digger and Gormogon, *Castle* airs to-be-continued episodes that are not derived from the characters' personal lives, and *Fringe* features several story-arcs at once and only belatedly reveals their connection to the characters' back-stories, *The Mentalist* essentially tells one story-arc for the entire series. The two additional plotlines that *The Mentalist* develops, the Bosko and mole plotlines in seasons two and three, respectively, are complications and developments of the Red John story-arc. Essentially, *The Mentalist* is entirely dependent upon Jane's personal history to fuel the entire series. This became self-evident in the conclusion of the third season when Jane shoots and kills Red John, only to have season four open by revealing that the man Jane killed was only one of Red John's disciples, demonstrating that the series (as currently formulated) cannot continue without the storyline of Jane's continued hunt for Red John.

By sharing content between the characters' personal lives and the ongoing story-arcs, these series create stories that overlap these two narrative elements. The narratives focus on and develop mysteries that either originate in or explicate the characters' backgrounds, simultaneously complicating and fueling the romance between the partners. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* use the detectives' histories to comprise the major story-arcs and plotlines. These narratives are ultimately about the characters' personal lives and set in motion plot developments that will drive the partners into each others' arms and beds.

Deducing Femininity

Romantic comedies are stories constructed "around a series of obstacles" that the protagonists must overcome in order to fall in love; these obstacles can include "class, national, or racial differences, inhibitions, stubbornness, and last but not least, their mutual loathing" (Gill & Herdieckerhoff, 2006, p. 490). As such, the obstacle to love may be situational or circumstantial, but often has to do with the protagonists' personalities. That is, despite their mutual attraction, the characters are unhappily single until they overcome some aspect of themselves at which time they can engage in a healthy, happy relationship with their one true love (Johnson & Holmes, 2009). For example, in the popular romantic comedy, *27 Dresses*, the main characters have sexual chemistry but bicker continually because he cynically believes that marriage is a doomed enterprise and she is a hopeless romantic who has been a bridesmaid in twenty-seven weddings (Fletcher, 2008). Over the course of the film, he comes to recognize the

enduring power of love – shedding his cynical perspective – and she learns to develop healthy boundaries so that acquaintances cannot importune her as a bridesmaid again. Having resolved their personality conflicts, the film closes with their wedding.

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* – like *27 Dresses* – begin their narratives with bickering but sexually attracted partners. Before these partners can become couples, they too must overcome an obstacle. However, unlike *27 Dresses* where both individuals experience life-changing epiphanies that revolutionize their personalities and perspectives, on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* only the women have to change. The male detectives come pre-fabricated as “boyfriend material”; the female detectives are the obstacles to their own relationships.

This is a notable deviation from the types of romantic conflicts primarily featured in television series that target adolescent viewers. A recent content analysis by de Souza and Sherry (2006) demonstrates that the norm for television programming popular amongst teenagers is to portray romantic conflict as the male partner’s fault. Essentially, these teen programs (such as *Friends*) which feature adult characters but target adolescent viewers suggest that men’s behavior “is the cause of the conflict” (de Souza & Sherry, 2006, p. 19), thereby suggesting that the male characters need to change in order for the relationship to progress. However, drawing on now familiar postfeminist motifs, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* feature the female protagonists as the obstacles to their own happiness.

The four female detectives, Temperance Brennan, Olivia Dunham, Teresa Lisbon, and Kate Beckett are the problem, the obstacle to be overcome in order to achieve the *telos* or narrative goal embedded in these series from their pilot episodes: uniting the

partners in a committed romantic relationship. To overcome the obstacle of the female detectives' personalities, these series utilize their simultaneously interlocking and overlapping narrative structures to transform the female detectives into suitable girlfriends. Essentially, these programs open with women who cannot engage in meaningful romantic relationships and then use the story-arcs to "feminize" the female detectives until they are capable of accepting their partners as lovers.

Of the female detectives, Temperance Brennan on *Bones*, has the farthest to go. Portrayed by Emily Deschanel, Brennan's character is set as a brilliant scientist – a point newspaper articles quickly point out as "ground breaking" for women (Gray, 2007). However, being a scientist costs Brennan her social skills, even to the extent that her social "cluelessness" requires that her male partner, Booth, "become a sort of guide to the world outside Brennan's laboratory" (Gray, 2007). As if her limited social skills were an insufficient obstacle to their romance, Deschanel and Hart Hanson (*Bones*' creator and executive director) describe Brennan as a high-functioning autistic character – particularly ascribing her social ineptitude to Asperger's syndrome (Gay, 2012; Gray, 2007; Sepinwall, 2010). As "ground breaking" as it may be to portray a woman at the top of a science-related career on TV, *Bones* then saddled its break-through character with a significant and difficult disability, that – strangely enough – keeps her from accepting true love but does not interfere with her career.

Through the story-arcs, however, Brennan's personality slowly changes until she is willing to accept Booth, becoming "honest" with herself and him about her feelings. Since *Bones* stretches the romance over seven seasons, this is a slow process. In the early seasons, *Bones* comes to admire and respect Booth's intuitive abilities and emotional

acumen as they work together in the field. After having arrested Brennan's father at the end of the second season, Booth and Brennan are ordered by the FBI to attend "partners' counseling," which is how Dr. Lance Sweets enters the cast: he is their therapist (Rosenthal & DePaul, 2007). Sweets becomes an influential confidant as he helps Brennan slowly recognize that she and Booth are in love, and he helps Booth to wait patiently. Here, we see again how the characters' personal lives and story-arcs interlock and overlap as the conclusion of one story-arc ends with Booth arresting Brennan's father, which then causes Sweets to join the cast as their therapist, which in turn furthers their romance.

Brennan reaches a mile-stone in her emotional development at the end of season three. During season three, one of the story-arcs revolves around Brennan's father's trial. He is being tried for first degree murder because he killed the man who killed his wife. Unfortunately, since they investigated the murder, Booth and the Jeffersonian team are expert witnesses in the court case. During the trial, Booth and Brennan are not allowed to work together, and therefore, they cancel their therapy sessions with Sweets. As their conversation with Sweets demonstrates, Booth and Sweets believe Brennan's rationality – as she protests that her father's trial does not trouble her – is a significant flaw (Ambrose & Szwarc, 2008).

Booth: I mean, there's no use in doing partners' therapy when we aren't partners.
 Sweets: What? You split up?
 Booth: We got split up.
 Brennan: The FBI says we can't work together.
 Sweets: Why?
 Booth: Brennan's dad murdered the deputy director of the FBI.

Brennan: His trial begins next week.
 Sweets: I should have been informed.
 Brennan: Of the trial? Why?
 Booth: Oh, because Sweets did the psychological profile of Max for the prosecution.
 Brennan: What? Why didn't you tell me before?
 Sweets: Why is that important to you?
 Booth: Sweets! No therapy! Didn't I just – listen. *[To Brennan]* Because while it wouldn't matter to say – a normal person – I just figured you wouldn't care.
 Brennan: You're absolutely right.
 Sweets: Dr. Brennan. Everyone you work with, including your therapist –
 Booth: Former therapist.
 Sweets: Is endeavoring to imprison your father. That's wicked stressful.
 Brennan: Booth is right, it doesn't bother me.
 Sweets: No, Booth is wrong. Yes, it does. May I suggest that this is a golden opportunity for you to feel a situation rather than simply rationalize it?
 Brennan: I'm fine.
 Sweets: If you were fine, you'd be balled up in the corner, weeping, or semi-catatonic.
 Brennan: *[To Booth]* Does that sound fine to you?
 Booth: I'm sorry, Bones, but I'm gonna have to agree with Sweets on this one.
 Sweets: I think it's important that you know that we know that the colder and more objective you appear on the outside, the more pain you're feeling on the inside.
 Brennan: I'm fine.

Booth rightly assess that Brennan, unlike a “normal person,” does not care if Sweets is involved on her father's case (Ambrose & Szwarc, 2008). Yet both Booth and Sweets believe that Brennan *should* be experiencing significant emotional distress, and should take the “golden opportunity” to “feel” rather than “rationalize.”

In the episode's conclusion, they get their wish and Brennan chooses to honor her relationship with her father – becoming a dutiful and loving daughter – by committing perjury. However, it takes the entire episode before Brennan is able to assume this

“emotionally honest” reaction. Early in the episode, Brennan persists in her detachment and is stunned when her best friend, Angela, refuses to testify and equally stunned when the other scientists “mind” testifying against her father. Again, their dialogue is insightful in how Brennan’s approach is framed in this series.

Brennan: I didn’t see Angela today.
 Booth: Angela refuses to testify.
 Brennan: Why?
 Booth: Probably because she’s your best friend...
 Brennan: Well, you’re my friend and you don’t mind.
 Booth: I mind. We all mind. Except for Zack.
 Brennan: Well, in that case, Zack is the only one thinking clearly. I had to give Hodgins permission. I don’t know what’s wrong with everyone.
 Booth: It’s not what’s wrong, Bones. It’s what’s right.

Booth’s insistence that their emotional distress is what is “right” with their approach to the situation firmly situates Brennan as outside the bounds of humanity: Brennan is what is “wrong” (Ambrose & Szwarc, 2008). To be normal, Brennan must be brought to emotional distress. The turning point for Brennan is during a conversation with Booth where he tells her that she is not “Dr. Brennan” during the trial, that instead she is “Temperance” (Ambrose & Szwarc, 2008). Assuming her role as a daughter, Brennan offers herself up as a potential murderer, casting “reasonable doubt” on her father’s case since she could have committed the murder, avenging her mother’s death. Her self-sacrificial act is rewarded: her father is released a free man, they resume their father/daughter dynamic, her friends at the Jeffersonian are proud of her, and Booth is thrilled with her emotional development.

Through this interlocking and overlapping plot structure, where the story-arcs are furnished out of the characters' personal lives and the plots fuel the romantic relationship, Brennan's character is slowly transformed over seven seasons from a hyper-rational scientist who cannot relate to other humans into a hyper-feminine woman who loves her father, loves Booth, and loves their daughter. Brennan becomes a daughter, girlfriend, and mother over the course of the series as she sheds her professional persona and takes on relationally-defined roles, transforming from "Dr. Brennan" into "Temperance."

Just as Brennan's character is portrayed as wrong and broken in the early episodes of *Bones*, *Fringe* presents Olivia Dunham as a damaged woman still reeling from the affects of being experimented on as a child. As a result of this experimentation, she is capable of super-scientific feats (such as telekinesis and pyrokinesis) and incapable of experiencing fear, which is often broadened into general emotional detachment. She was also raised in an abusive home where her violent step-father brutalized her; to escape, she was forced to shoot him when she was nine. Introduced in the pilot episode as someone who is "sorta bad at [love]," (Abrams, Kurtzman, Orci, & Graves, 2008), Olivia is transformed over the course of the series from a damaged individual incapable of emotionally connecting with others because of her past into a woman capable of giving and receiving love. This transformation is largely developed through the "Fauxlivia" story-arc. During the beginning of season three, Olivia is held captive – forced to live as her parallel self in the parallel universe while her doppelganger, known as Fauxlivia, impersonates her in the primary universe. Through changing places, Olivia becomes jealous of Fauxlivia's life, believing that Fauxlivia is a healthier, happier individual. Meanwhile, Fauxlivia – who was not experimented on as a child or raised in an abusive

home – finds Olivia’s emotional detachment quite difficult and later taunts Olivia stating, “You know, being you and living your life only made me more homesick for my universe. Must be hard to develop trust in people when all you've got is yourself. Must get terribly lonely” (Pinkner, Wyman, Goldsman & Chappelle, 2011).

Upon returning to her world and finding that Peter had been sleeping with Fauxlivia, Olivia becomes convinced that Fauxlivia is a better version of herself – in part, because Peter describes Fauxlivia as such a good girlfriend. For example, when Peter tries to explain how he did not notice the differences between Fauxlivia and Olivia, he states,

There's something that I have to talk to you about – about her. I noticed changes – small changes, but they were definitely there. She's, she's much quicker with a smile and less, I don't know – less intense maybe. She said that when she was over there, what she saw of her other life, it made her want to change, to be happier. And I believed her, because that made sense. (Owusu-Breen, Schapker, & Chappelle, 2010)

Olivia takes these words to heart, coming to believe that she is the lesser of the Olivias as she states in a conversation with Nina Sharp – a powerful, professional, and maternal character. Here, Olivia also ties Fauxlivia’s emotional health to her femininity (Wilcox, Gross, & Anderson, 2011).

Olivia: I – I was her for a while and she’s – she's like me, but better.

Nina: Oh, Olivia –

Olivia: No, I mean, she still has her mother and she wasn't experimented on as a child. And she can laugh. She has real friends. She even wears a dress every once in a while.

Fauxlivia's healthy childhood has enabled her to develop into a healthy, happy woman – one who displays her femininity in dresses, unlike Olivia who finds herself trapped in pantsuits, unable to trust others.

Peter is the most understanding of the characters, as he recognizes Olivia's emotional trauma and coaxes her into a healthier situation. For example, as he apologizes (again) for not recognizing that Fauxlivia was from the parallel universe, he states,

Peter: I know that you struggle with trust issues. That you have a difficult time letting people in.

Olivia: Well, I... I'm struggling because the reasons are real. I'm not making them up.

Peter: I know. I never wanted to be one of the reasons. And I still think about her, because I spent so long imagining going down that path with you. Imagining what it would be like to wake up in a bed next to you. To sit around, just the two of us having a cup of coffee, reading the paper. And then finally, I had it. I've seen what the two of us together looks like. And it's beautiful.

Olivia: Peter, she's the one that took it away from us, not me.

Peter: And now? Who's the one stopping us now?

In this conversation (Whitman, Chiappetta, & Yatsko, 2011), Peter simultaneously apologizes for his indiscretion, attempts to comfort Olivia, and lays the blame at Olivia's door by stating that they are not currently a couple because of her trust issues. Olivia, already thinking that Fauxlivia is a better version of herself, accepts Peter's criticism, and when she later tries to overcome her trust issues and experience the "beauty" of a relationship with Peter, she finds herself overwhelmed by terror. The only other time Olivia has been frightened as an adult was during season two when New York City was about to be destroyed through a collision of the two universes – the same episode in which Peter tried to kiss her. In season two, Peter's warmth allowed Olivia to relax

enough to feel her fear, which enabled her to “see” the impending doom and they rescued a building in New York City from being swapped with its parallel structure, thereby averting the coming disaster (Miller, Stentz, & Beeson, 2010). Now, in season three, as she is finally choosing to overcome her trust issues and she kisses Peter, she finds that she can again “see” the parallel universe’s “glimmer,” and pulls away from Peter, terrified (Whitman, Chiappetta, & Yatsko, 2011).

Olivia: Peter... you glimmered. When we kissed, you glimmered.

Peter: So you're afraid. Afraid of what?

Olivia: That you were right. That this isn't just about her. It was, but I think that this is me, I think that I'm stopping us. Maybe I am just incapable of being vulnerable.

Peter: Olivia, come on, you know that that's not true.

Olivia: It must be. I'm terrified, that I can't fix this, that... that this is just who I am.

Confirming that the trouble in their relationship is not related to Peter’s accidental infidelity with Fauxlivia, but is due to her own emotional trauma, Olivia concludes that she is incapable of being vulnerable. However, by the end of the episode, after witnessing Peter’s incredible warmth and tenderness with a victim and his care and love for her, Olivia decides to try again, and – overcoming her emotional trauma and trust issues – Olivia and Peter begin a romantic relationship. Throughout this progression, *Fringe* utilizes the interlocked and overlapping narrative structure to move Olivia towards what is framed as greater emotional health. Yet this greater emotional health is marked by the ability to feel fear and accepting that Peter, the love of her life, could not differentiate her from the villainous Fauxlivia. The story-arcs, which originate in the characters’ personal lives, fuel these changes in Olivia’s personality and her relationship

with Peter. Only through her experiences with Fauxlivia does Olivia recognize that she needs to change, becoming happier and more feminine, and only through the plot machinations do Peter and Olivia develop their relationship. Even their dating-status is related to the ongoing story-arcs: unbeknownst to the characters, the doomsday device is tied to Peter's emotions so that whichever Olivia he loves more will be safe along with her universe, while the other Olivia and her universe will be destroyed.

When Peter finds a peaceful alternative to the doomsday device, creating a bridge between the universes and accidentally erasing himself from both worlds' timelines at the beginning of season four, Olivia reverts back to her damaged self – incapable of emotional attachment and trust. For example, after a difficult case, in which her colleagues were deeply troubled by a perpetrator who was experimented on during childhood, Olivia mulls things over with Nina Sharp – who is her adoptive mother in this altered timeline (Pitts, Doble, & Hemingway, 2011).

Olivia: All he wanted was to be like... everyone else. But how could he? He'd never be like anyone else. Not after what they did to him.

Nina: So you're thinking about what was done to you.

Olivia: You know, even with my colleagues, I'm different. Things that should bother me... Do you think that it's possible the Cortexiphan Trials stunted my emotions?

Without Peter's influence on her life and the story-arcs that bring her into a relationship with him, Olivia is back at square one, only just recognizing that she is "emotionally stunted," and beginning to wonder if and how she can change into a better person.

Like Brennan on *Bones* and Olivia on *Fringe*, Lisbon and Beckett have equally troubled pasts, which have left them emotionally damaged as adults on *The Mentalist* and *Castle*, respectively. Lisbon's mother died when she was young, and her father became

an alcoholic, leaving her to raise herself and her siblings as neglected – if not abused children. Similarly, Beckett’s mother died and her loss and the mystery surrounding her death marked Beckett, keeping her from developing meaningful romantic relationships. Like Brennan and Olivia, these female detectives are also “softened” through their relationship with their partners as these men actively work to help the female detectives reconnect with their emotions, becoming vulnerable, happier, more light-hearted, and capable of trust.

Since Beckett’s story-arc is so similar to *Bones*’ opening story-arc as the detectives investigate the mothers’ deaths, Beckett’s progression into greater conformity with traditional feminine roles – as a dutiful daughter, vulnerable girlfriend, and good mother – is remarkably similar to Brennan’s. The key difference is in the acceleration. While *Bones* paused the romantic developments by eliminating story-arcs from the fourth and much of the fifth season, thereby also pausing Brennan’s personal “growth,” *Castle* has continued the story-arc, the romance, and Beckett’s personal “growth.” For example, before meeting Castle, Beckett had tried to solve the mystery of her mother’s death. Working the case alone had pushed Beckett’s fragile character over the brink and she had to let it go, as she explains to Castle at the end of season one when he asks why she stopped investigating.

Same reason a recovering alcoholic doesn't drink. You don't think I haven't been down there? You don't think I haven't memorized every line in that file? My first three years on the force, every off-duty moment was spent looking for something someone missed. It took me a year of therapy to realize, if I didn't let it go, it was going to destroy me. And so I let it go. (Marlowe, Schindel, & Spicer, 2009)

However, once Beckett has been partnered with Castle for a while and he has lent her support and excitement, making her feel sexy, smart, and desirable, she is ready to reopen the case, working with him. She successfully works on the case for a season and a half, catching middle-men and a sniper related to case, but has yet to get to the bottom of it when it becomes evident that Captain Montgomery is in on the conspiracy. This drives her back over the brink and her father appeals to Castle, asking Castle to intervene and return his daughter to him.

What happens when she finds him? I've already lost my wife over this. I've already lost... Look, it took me years, but I've made my peace with that. But Katie, she won't listen to me, and she won't back down. Not unless someone can convince her that her life is worth more than her mother's death. Look, she cares about you, Rick. And, unless you're a lot dumber than you look, I know you care about her. Don't let her throw her life away. (Beall & Bowman, 2011)

Castle agrees, literally carrying Beckett to safety later in the episode. Just like *Bones*, the story-arc in *Castle* interlocks and overlaps with Beckett's personal life, pushing her towards greater conformity with traditionally feminine roles. In the fourth season, Beckett attends weekly therapy sessions (mandated by the NYPD for a near-death experience) where she and her therapist regularly discuss how she can become more emotionally vulnerable and how her relationship with Castle is progressing.

While Brennan, Olivia, and Beckett welcome their male partners' input in their lives as the men obviously and actively reform the women, challenging them to be better *women*, Lisbon, in contrast, actively resists Jane's meddling in her personal life. Lisbon is notoriously distant, enjoying the fact that her colleagues go out for drinks without her (Swafford & Roth, 2011), and attempting to hide most of her private life from her co-workers in general and especially from Jane. While Jane – like Booth, Peter, and Castle

– constantly pries into her personal life trying to learn more about her past, Lisbon rebuffs him. For example, when Lisbon and Jane work a case at a local high-school reunion, Jane learns that she plays a band instrument and spends the rest of the episode trying to guess which instrument she plays. In similar situations, Brennan, Olivia, and Beckett always reveal the personal information at the end of the episode, but Lisbon never tells – leaving Jane (and the audience) with the distinct impression that he has guessed correctly and she is lying to deny him the pleasure of knowing (Dick & Lerner, 2010).

The difference between Lisbon and the other female detectives' response to their partners is, in part, dependent on the story-arcs. Lisbon is the only female detective out of the four who does not have a story-arc connected to her personal life. Rather, Jane's personal life drives the plotline as he hunts Red John. Without the plot-related necessity the other female detectives experience – where they *must* divulge themselves to their partners to progress with the case – Lisbon has no plot-related reason to share herself with Jane. As such, Lisbon is usually capable of rebuffing Jane, resisting his overtures and keeping her personal life personal. Even so, Jane burrows into her psyche and her history, demonstrating that he cares for her by giving her gifts and advice that push her towards greater traditional femininity. For example, towards the end of the first season (Mahony & Kane, 2009), the CBI team celebrates Lisbon's birthday and Jane explains that Lisbon's gift is on the way and will arrive later. Lisbon is grumpy throughout the episode, thinking that Jane had forgotten her birthday. Jane, however, has deduced that Lisbon always wanted a pony when she was a child and her parents – like most parents – refused to get her a pony. Deciding to fulfill her girlhood desire, Jane has arranged for a

pony wearing a “happy birthday” banner to left as a present in her office at the end of the day. The gift is sweet, thoughtful, reassuring, outrageous, flirtatious, and overwhelmingly “girlie,” and Lisbon is stunned and delighted by it.

While Lisbon is not yet convinced that she should adopt the more traditionally feminine roles of daughter, girlfriend, and mother that the other female detectives slip into as the story-arcs grind their way towards romance necessitating that the women stop being their own obstacles, Lisbon is charmed by Jane. Here, one cannot fault the female detectives: the men are charming. In TV reviews, Booth is described as “growly and grrr” in a review that further suggests that the title *Bones* might “refer to more than skeletons” (Elfman, 2005); Castle is described as a “bad-boy novelist” with “roguish charm” (Lowry, 2009); Jane is described as the “cad-you-can’t-resist” (Bianco, 2008); and Peter Bishop is “baby-faced” with a certain “cockiness” (Clark, 2008).

In each of these narratives, the women stand as obstacles to their own happily-ever-afters, but as the story-arcs and the characters’ personal lives interlock and overlap, the women’s personalities are slowly changed as they become less rational, scientific, and career-oriented and more emotionally vulnerable, caring, and nurturing – while they assume traditionally feminine roles as daughters, girlfriends, and mothers.⁵ All four female detectives transform over the course of several seasons – Lisbon more slowly than the others – into women who want their partners. The irony here is that the women are the problem. Although the men are less than reliable, trustworthy, or moral characters, it is the women who must radically alter their personalities in order for the romances to

⁵ Although Brennan is the only female detective to carry a child to term during the series, all of the women have at least surrogate daughters with whom they bond during the series: Olivia mothers her niece, Beckett bonds with Castle’s daughter, Alexis, and Lisbon raised her siblings and maternally bonds with her niece.

progress. And the women are radically altered by the time they admit their love. The Brennan who is moving in with Booth and carrying his child in season seven is virtually unrecognizable from the character with Asperger's Syndrome in season one who states "I don't know what that means" nearly every time another character references popular culture. Although these series open with female detectives who are incapable of romance, the story-arcs develop their relationships with their male partners, delving into their histories and personal lives until the women are sufficiently (hyper) feminine and can accept their partners into their beds.

Romancing the Precinct

These four series, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, combine the crime genre with the genre of romantic comedy, creating a mixture that depends upon postfeminist ideology and motifs to transform the female detectives from scientifically minded women at the top of their careers into emotionally vulnerable mothers. By focusing on the romantic relationships as the female detectives overcome themselves in order to love their men, these four series bridge between genres – to the extent that TV reviews have suggested that these series' premises sound more like chick-flick movies than like multi-season TV programs (Lowry, 2009). These four series, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are greeted as a combination of "Nick and Nora" (read romantic comedy) and "Sherlock Holmes" (read crime genre) as they pair together a "sleuth-with-something-extra" with a "more standard-issue model" of the opposite sex (McNamara, 2009).

This genre mixing is intentional as Andrew Marlowe, *Castle*'s creator and executive director, stated that *Castle* is "a different kind of procedural," one that is really "about two characters, and those character moments are the pearls on a piece of string, and the piece of string is the procedural" (Pierce, 2009). Marlowe continued to say "our point of view is that this is a character show and a relationship show that happens to be defined by it being a close-ended procedural" (Pierce, 2009). Actor David Boreanaz, who portrays FBI Agent Seeley Booth on *Bones*, made the same point stating that *Bones* was "never about a procedural show" (Gay, 2007); instead, as Boreanaz continued to state, *Bones* is a romantic comedy that unlike *CSI*-style procedurals is "cute" and "fun" (Gay, 2007).

Romantic comedies are a staple in U.S. entertainment, and *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have clearly been quite successful in merging the crime genre with the romantic comedy genre as the major networks continue to renew these series' contracts, ordering more seasons and selling advertising time for these programs. The concern, here, is not that these genres are mixing. The concern is in *how* these genres are mixing. *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have combined these genres through postfeminist motifs. Postfeminism simultaneously suggests that feminism was successful and is now dead: these series open with women at the top of their fields (which is only possible if feminism was successful) who never mention – much less support – feminism. Postfeminism further reifies patriarchy, suggesting that women are incomplete without men: these series portray severely "damaged" women who can only be healed through their male partner's love.

I have watched these four series for years. I am emotionally invested in these relationships. I have giggled over their romantic gestures, hosted viewing parties with my girlfriends, marathon-ed seasons when they were released on DVD, avidly discussed recent episodes with my sister, and even refused to watch the *Bones* episodes when Booth had a girlfriend in season six, saving them on my DVR until I knew they had broken up because I could not bear to watch Booth be with anyone other than Brennan unless I knew there was an end in sight. Packaged in witty hour-long episodes that end in reassuring confirmations of the U.S. legal system, these romances are delightful, addicting, and ultimately dangerous. Through their postfeminist motifs, these four series embed romantic comedies into crime narratives (and vice-versa), and yet these postfeminist narratives tell the story of single women who need to be in romantic relationships with patriarchal men in order to become healthy, happy, normal members of society.

Chapter 6

Conclusion: Once Upon a Crime

You two are a walking fairytale.
Lanie Parish - *Castle*

On February 6, 2012, at 10:00pm, I (along with 8.7 million other viewers between the ages of 18-49) turned on the TV to watch “The Blue Butterfly,” *Castle*’s newest episode (Seidman, 2012b). The episode opened as the camera slowly panned across a lush, 1940’s style jazz club (Marlowe & Bowman, 2012). Pausing briefly, the camera focused on the medical examiner, Dr. Lanie Parish, who was on stage, crooning softly into an old microphone, clearly recognizable despite her sultry gown and flapper’s bob (Weinbaum et al., 2008). Through the haze of the *film noir* production style, the camera continued its path around the jazz club, coming to rest at the bar, where Castle leaned, downing whiskey while wearing a trench coat and fedora.

Castle: Keep ’em coming, pal, you’re doing great.
The bartender refills Castle’s whiskey
Castle: Say – maybe you can help me. I’m looking for a dame.
Bartender: Aren’t we all?
Castle: This one’s special. [*Castle shows the bartender a photo*] You know her?
Bartender: Know her? I’m looking at her.
The camera cuts to Beckett – who is wearing a gown and fur wrap
Castle: Where have you been all my life?

In a sudden shift, the scene cut to Castle and Beckett walking into the same room, now dilapidated and abandoned. A body lies in the center of the floor, cold and bloody. Castle is excited, chattering about the history of 1940s jazz clubs in New York.

Castle: Talk about a slice of history! The Pennybaker Club. You know back in the forties all the greats played here. Man! If these walls could talk, the stories they would tell!

Beckett: Yeah, but the only story we need to hear is about –

Lanie: Stan Banks. Single GSW to the sternum. I'm calling the time of death between six and eight this morning. Looks like he tried to defend himself with this. Obviously it didn't work.

Beckett: So robbery gone wrong?

As Beckett and Lanie discuss the details of the case, Esposito and Ryan join them, contributing information and hashing out possibilities. Castle, meanwhile, wanders off-screen, headed towards the bar. When Beckett realizes he is missing, she follows him to the decaying bar, and chidingly asks, "You looking for a drink, Castle? Because I'm pretty sure the bar is closed." Unperturbed, Castle responds, "Actually, I was looking for a clue, and I think I found one!"

As the episode progresses, we learn that Castle has indeed found a clue, and not just any clue, he has found the centerpiece to the entire episode: amongst the rubble, Castle found the journal of a private investigator who was working a case in the 1940s. As the episode continues, we learn that the opening sequence was actually part of the 1940s mystery, and that Castle is reading the journal, imagining himself as the private-eye, and casting his colleagues as the individuals related to a drama involving mobsters, revenge, murder, a missing diamond necklace, a damsel in distress, and – of course – romance. As Castle reads from the journal, the episode alternates between the present-day murder investigation and the private-eye's love story. Adhering to TV conventions, the episode closes by combining the two storylines so that in uncovering the long-cold trail of the missing diamond necklace featured in the 1940s romance the detectives solve the present-day murder.

Throughout this dissertation, I have drawn on representative examples from *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* to exemplify my points as I argued that these four series use postfeminist motifs to combine the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy. Moreover, I have demonstrated that these postfeminist motifs are particularly dangerous because they clothe patriarchy in the garments of equity – promising gender reversals and delivering (again) the subjugation, dismissal, and devaluation of the feminine. As demonstrated by the breadth of my analysis, this trend is pervasive and infiltrates to the core of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*.

To focus these closing remarks, I opened this chapter with the narrative of “The Blue Butterfly,” which was “Monday’s most-watched TV show” (Seidman, 2012a). I did not hunt for this episode amidst the 408 episodes analyzed in this dissertation, which aired, collectively, on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. I simply turned on my TV, experiencing both the joy and danger of researching popular culture in that my texts are on-going: *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* air new episodes each week. Each week these series produce a new iteration of the themes discussed here. Each week these programs promise to feature an empowered woman, and I watch with rapt attention, devouring the wit, charm, and comfortingly familiar pattern of the crime drama formula. And each week, episodes like “The Blue Butterfly” faithfully merge the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy, trotting out postfeminist motifs that reifying patriarchy in the name of equity.

For example, “The Blue Butterfly” explicitly links *Castle* with its generic predecessors, tying the character of Richard Castle to the classic role of private investigator, complete with fedora. Second, it foregrounds romance as a driving narrative

element. Third, it positions the modern male detective as progressive by contrasting him with the generic archetype of a hardboiled private-eye, but actually conflates the two, simply adding a postfeminist gloss to the male detective through contradictory characteristics. Fourth, it privileges and rewards the male detective: Castle found the journal, Castle solves the modern-day case, and Castle is the only detective present in the 1940s storyline. And fifth, the woman must change; just as Beckett must change to accept Castle's love, in the 1940s storyline the woman, despite being a damsel in distress, must be tamed – renouncing her less-than-reputable position as the mobster's girlfriend and settling down with the private-eye to raise a family.

Fascinatingly, the tropes common in *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* seep into this episode's portrayal of the *film noir* detective. Despite the costuming, camera-work, and production effects that make the 1940s scenes in "The Blue Butterfly" look and feel like the era of Humphrey Bogart, this episode writes Castle and Beckett's personas onto the 1940s characters so that the hardboiled detective easily becomes a committed, loving family-man while the female character must be tamed and rescued from a self-determined but ultimately self-injurious career path. Finally, this story is presented as a modern-day romance as the 1940's character of Lanie Parish explicitly tells the 1940's versions of Castle and Beckett, "you two are a walking fairytale" (Marlowe & Bowman, 2012); yet this "progressive" narrative features an incarnation of Beckett who has neither power, money, or professional skills and whose only role is to overcome her emotional fears and let Castle rescue her.

Case Closed

Bones, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are smart, fun, successful TV programs. These four series offer “fresh” approaches on the crime genre by suturing episodes together into running story-arcs that are based in the characters’ personal lives, thereby fueling a romance between the detective partners. By pairing together a law enforcement official and a civilian who has an extra talent, these series feature distinct “specializations.” For example, on *Bones* Temperance Brennan is the civilian consultant whose specialization is forensic anthropology and this series features grotesque skeletons and elaborate forensic science. On *The Mentalist*, Patrick Jane is a ex-fake-psychic, and (therefore) this series features mind-tricks, card-tricks, hypnotism, cons and scams as a regular part of solving murder cases. Beyond the “specialization,” having one partner work outside of the agency allows these series to maneuver the detectives into equitable career relationships, since neither partner is the senior agent (as Mulder was on *The X-Files* and Laura Holt was on *Remington Steele*).

These four series engage in crime dramas’ generic format even while their producers, creators, and actors clamor that their series are new, different, and “character-driven” (Gay, 2007; Pierce, 2009). The crime that starts each episode and the ensuing crime-drama-formatting of each hour-long program is more than a backdrop; it provides the bulk of the episode’s material, blocks in the characters, and contains the narrative structure while fulfilling audience expectations. These series explicitly bank upon the genre of crime drama, making withdraws for their detective profiles, case mock-ups, and

narrative structures even as they deposit romantic story-arcs and their unique blend of interlocking and overlapping narrative elements.

Drawing on the hallmarks of the crime genre, these series have fashioned their partners out of the classic characteristics for detectives, but splitting the typical detective attributes by sex instead of profession. In a move that had the potential for melding the crime subgenres of police procedural and hardboiled private-eye, these series partner together a cop and a private investigator; but instead of splitting the classic detective attributes so that the private-investigator was a generically familiar character who worked outside the legal system, followed hunches, nursed an alcohol addiction, and had trouble emotionally connecting with others, these four series split the characteristics by sex. As such, the female detectives approach their investigative work scientifically, are morally upright, constrained by the legal system, emotionally stunted, and have difficulty maintaining domestic relationships. Meanwhile the male detectives work intuitively, are morally loose, legally unconstrained, emotionally cognizant, and cultivate healthy domestic relationships. Listed out, these series have eight detectives: four are female, four are male; four are official law enforcement officers, four are civilians; one woman is civilian, and one man is a law enforcement officer; none of the women are married; none of the private detectives are hardboiled; and all of the detectives are white.

The distribution of detective characteristics is significant because it purposely steers away from the familiar storyline of a great (male) detective who is emotionally unavailable and domestically challenged until tamed by the feminine. Instead, by dividing the detective characteristics so that the male characters are unconstrained, intuitive investigators with good family lives and the ability to emotionally connect with

others, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* tell stories where these men tame the women – nurturing them out of their scientific, rule-bound, romantically sterile lives and helping them transform into girlfriends.

As framed by the narratives themselves, by the creators, producers, and actors' remarks, and by their popular reception in TV reviews, the distribution of detective characteristics makes these series "gender reversed" (McDaniel, 2005; Mitchell, 2006; Willow, 2005). These female characters are described as "ground breaking" roles for women on TV because they are scientist-types who are good at their careers (Gray, 2007; Wasley, 2008). Meanwhile, the male characters are considered domesticated and nurturing because they care for their family members and love their partners. Beyond the enormous absurdity that *women who are scientific* and *men who care for others* would qualify as "gender reversed" characters, these narratives actually tell patriarchal stories where career women are not only unfulfilled but are actually career women *because* they were emotionally traumatized during childhood. Moreover, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* have a patriarchal *telos*. As the producers, creators, actors, and TV review columnists are quick to point out, from their pilot episodes these narratives are designed to end with the partners in bed together (Bernhard, 2008; Bianco, 2008; Kinon, 2008; Levin, 2008; Lowry, 2009; Ng, 2011; Paskin, 2011; Washburn, 2005; Wasley, 2008). Which means that the stories exist to constrain these "ground breaking" women, pulling them away from their scientific careers, "healing" them of their emotional detachment, training them to enact (hyper) femininity, and sending them home with their male partners.

Within this already patriarchal narrative structure, the male detectives are further rewarded while the female detectives are punished. The male detectives' investigative skills and personalities are systematically prioritized throughout these series. On *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, the male detectives are the civilians – the characters with “something extra” that differentiates their programs from the others. As such, their talents are showcased in each episode as part of the plot: *Fringe* needs Peter Bishop's scientific expertise, *The Mentalist* needs Patrick Jane's mind-games, and *Castle* needs Richard Castle's imagination to solve each crime. The female detectives in these series – who are the trained professionals – simply cannot cut it without their male partners' expertise: they need men to close cases. This privileging of the male detectives exists even when the man is not the extra-special detective: on *Bones*, Temperance Brennan has the “extra” skills, yet the series clearly stipulates that Seeley Booth is the one who understands the motives and rationales behind the crimes – Booth's intuitive skills close cases while Brennan finds the proof in the remains.

At the level of crime-related-plots, these male detectives have the requisite skills to solve the cases and are, therefore, rewarded within the narrative while the female detectives trudge along gathering evidence week after week. At the level of the overarching romantic story-line, the male detectives are again rewarded, this time for their personalities. While the female characters are portrayed as emotionally stunted, often introspectively bemoaning their own lack of social skills and/or inability to form meaningful relationships, the male detectives are already in committed familial relationships and are quick to dedicate themselves to their partners. By portraying these male detectives as charming men who understand love and commitment and who are

actively working to develop a romantic relationship with their female partners, the series privilege the male detectives and consistently reward them: each incremental development in the partners' romance is presented as a reward for the male detectives' persistence, patience, and exemplary personalities.

In contrast, the female characters' personalities must be transformed. These women are punished throughout the series for their inability to connect with others as this disconnect hinders their investigative skills and as their friends and partners alternatively shame them for being "cold" or tutor them in the proper use of emotions. The female detectives' personalities stand between them and happiness. Within these narratives, the female detectives are all positioned as scientific rule-followers who cannot emotionally connect because they had anguished childhoods. The women are framed as damaged – and their health is predicated on falling in love with their partners. The women are what is wrong in these stories.

Finally, the male detectives rule their roosts, insulting and suppressing the other male characters, even while earning their respect, admiration, and friendship. These male detectives are treated as the height of masculinity and authority by the other male characters. These programs also imbue their female detectives with power: all four women lead their detective teams. Yet the types of power are different. The men have social power, the women have formal authority. As such, the women are also responsible to higher authority figures, while the men operate outside of formal power relations. Which means that the women can be reined in but the male characters act as they choose – often endangering their female partners' reputations and standings within the precincts.

Additionally, the female characters are at the bottom of the femininity scales, while the men were on top of the masculinity charts.

As *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* desperately differentiate themselves from previous crime drama TV series as well as from each other, there are of course differences between these programs. For example, *Fringe* has a science-fiction component, which complicates the storyline adding so many characters that the male characters do not conform to the strict social hierarchy enacted in the other three series. Also, on *The Mentalist*, the partners have yet to embark on the type of committed relationships present on *Bones*, *Fringe*, and *Castle*. In part this is because the narrative surrounds Patrick Jane's wife's murder, which dampens the mood. However, two other factors also play a role in retarding this program's romance. First, the overarching storyline only occasionally interlocks with the episodes' plots, which means that this series' narrative elements do not interlock as consistently as the other series and therefore the impetus that drives the romance is sluggish. Second, Detective Teresa Lisbon has no female friend or mentor to goad her into greater femininity and urge her to accept Patrick Jane's advances. While there are differences between the four series, the similarities as discussed in this dissertation are overwhelming, and *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* form a genre as they exhibit the same constellation of substantive, stylistic, and situational elements (Jamieson & Campbell, 1982). Moreover, these programs are framed as a genre through the rhetoric surrounding these texts.

Ultimately, these four series, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, use postfeminist motifs to blend the genres of crime drama and romantic comedy. For example, first, postfeminism portrays women in power but then divests them of that

power (Douglas, 2010; Dow, 1996, 2006; Genz, 2009; Gill, 2007; Hill, 2010; Inness, 1999; McRobbie, 2009; Southard, 2008). These series situate women in positions of equality and power in order to create tension between the partners who cannot use seniority to end a dispute. Yet this tension is romantic and sexual as the detectives verbally spar, matching wits and outsmarting each other in seemingly endless seasons of foreplay; ultimately, these romantic relationships maneuver the women into submissive heterosexual relationships. These series start with seemingly empowered women, whom they then strip of actual power – and this process merges the crime and romantic comedy genres. Second, postfeminism regularly portrays career women as unhappy women (Douglas, 2010; Dow, 1996, 2006; Genz, 2009; Gill, 2007; Hill, 2010; Inness, 1999; McRobbie, 2009; Southard, 2008). These series star career women who became career women because of their traumatic childhoods and who are still running scared. This provides the perfect “obstacle” for the romantic narrative as these women “heal” from their emotional detachment. These career women are unhappy, which provides part of the tension for the romance – again, merging the crime and romantic comedy genres. And third, postfeminism classically suggests that feminism is no longer necessary (Douglas, 2010; Dow, 1996, 2006; Genz, 2009; Gill, 2007; Hill, 2010; Inness, 1999; McRobbie, 2009; Southard, 2008). These series present men who are so chivalrous they accept their female partners’ expertise and happily work with them, providing “evidence” that feminism has no work to do in these characters’ relationships. However, despite being false, this “enlightenment” enables the men to love their troubled partners, which, again, works to merge the crime and romantic comedy genres. Postfeminism is ubiquitous in U.S. culture and these themes – that women have equal access to power,

that career women are unhappy women, and that feminism is dead – parade across media and genres (Douglas, 2010; Dow, 1996, 2006; Genz, 2009; Gill, 2007; Hill, 2010; Inness, 1999; McRobbie, 2009; Southard, 2008). However, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* use postfeminism systematically. It is the thread that stitches the crime genre to the genre of romantic comedy. Postfeminist tropes provide familiar scenes and character types, enabling *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* to propel their characters through the conventions of a murder investigation each episode while telling love stories.

Rhetoric, Genre Theory, and Feminist Media Studies

This dissertation has made three important contributions to communication scholarship. The first contribution is disciplinary specific. Rhetorical studies has a rich tradition of genre analysis that narrowly focuses on oratory and political speech-acts, with the occasional film analysis (Bradford, 2006; Campbell, 1995; Campbell & Jamieson, 1978; Darsey, 1995; Downey, 1993; Gunn & Frentz, 2008; Jamieson, 1975; Jamieson & Campbell, 1982; Miller 1984; Murphy, 2003; Ware & Linkugel, 1973). The connection between genres and political speeches is both intentional and explicit within rhetorical studies, as demonstrated by Walter Fisher's article, "Genre: Concepts and Applications in Rhetorical Criticism," which includes a list – in the article text itself – of over forty published articles of rhetorical scholarship that focus on political speech genres (1980). Through this close analysis of the generic mixing of crime dramas and romantic comedy, I have built grounded theory, as I will elaborate below, that first conceptualizes genre as a cultural production understood by the ways in which a society defines, utilizes,

and produces the genre, instead of conceptualizing genres as the product of exigence; second, developed a conceptualization of genre mixing as aesthetic instead of focusing on functionality as the impetus for genre mixing; and third, developed sewing motifs as an overarching metaphor for genre combinations instead of defaulting to the terminology of hybridity, which invokes a limiting biological metaphor.

Instead of working within the familiar vein of rhetorical studies by approaching genre through political speeches, I have taken up the rhetorical apparatus of genre analysis through television entertainment. In studying the rhetorical nature, dimensions, functions, and form of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* I hope to reinvigorate genre studies within the rhetorical community. Television is a productive and influential industry, and as this dissertation demonstrates, genre is an essential component of TV entertainment and a rhetorical analysis can peel back the layers revealing not only *what* these narratives portray but *how* they function.

Rhetorical genre theory typically links genres to Bitzer's conceptualization of exigence (Benoit, 2000; Campbell, 1995; Campbell & Jamieson, 1978; Harrell & Linkugel, 1978; Jamieson & Campbell, 1982; Miller, 1984). Essentially, similar exigencies generate similar fitting responses – and these similar rhetorical responses are then conceptualized as a genre. However, in focusing on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* as generic texts, I have situated genre as part of the cultural production, not as a byproduct of exigence. Instead of searching for a particular exigence that called forth these particular combinations of the crime and romance genres, I have focused on the *rhetoric of genre* these texts engage in. Each of these television programs goes to great lengths to identify their own mix of genres through their promotions and through their

use of generic conventions in the episodes themselves. Additionally, the creators, producers, and actors regularly comment on the generic markings of their programs in press interviews. Finally, I have focused on the ways TV reviews frame these programs' genres in popular newspaper and magazine publications. Essentially, I have answered the question "what genre is this?" not by looking at exigence, but by focusing on the rhetoric of genre these programs engage in: how they frame themselves, how they are received, and what role this generic framing plays in the program's narrative form.

In addition, I have reconceptualized the concept of genre mixing. As commonly theorized in rhetorical studies, genres are combined in order to meet a mixed exigence. For example, as Jamieson and Campbell explicated in their landmark article, "Rhetorical Hybrids," John F. Kennedy's untimely death created a complex rhetorical situation that called for a speech that fused the generic forms of eulogy and deliberative address as Lyndon B. Johnson simultaneously consoled the nation and provided legislative leadership (1982). Recognizing the validity of this model – complex rhetorical situations are often best met through an appropriate combination of genres – this research further suggests that genre mixing may often be aesthetically motivated in addition to or even instead of functionally motivated.

Here, I do not mean to construct a false dichotomy between the aesthetic and the functional. Rather, I am suggesting that entertainment media suffers from fatigue: viewers grow accustomed to and then bored with a genre (Rose, 1985, p. 6-7). Genre mixing recombines familiar elements in new ways: *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* are not radically new stories in the U.S. nor do they meet a radically new and complex exigence. Instead, as both crime dramas and romantic comedies, they are

familiar narratives but the combination creates an aesthetically new form. While this research has focused exclusively on television entertainment, I suggest that areas of political and even religious rhetoric may dabble in this type of genre mixing – combining genres not to meet new, complex rhetorical situations, but simply to present new aesthetic forms to fatigued audiences.

For example, in Madeline Albright's speech, "White House Address Commemorating International Women's Day" (2010), Albright's exigence is fairly conventional as an invited speaker in a formal ceremony. Yet she fuses a long poem into an otherwise traditional epideictic address, combining the genres of poetry and commemorative speeches. The poem she quotes is not an attention-getter or literary device. Rather, the poem comprises approximately one third of her entire speech (in both word count and speech time) and the poem makes the argument that her opening remarks introduce. Here, like the genre mixing on *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, the text combines genres not as a response to a particularly tricky rhetorical situation or to fulfill a unique functionality, but – seemingly – for aesthetic appeal.

Finally, this research intervenes into rhetorical studies' conceptualization of mixed genres by moving away from the terminology of hybridity typically invoked within communication studies (Ekdom Vande Berg, 1989; Harriss, 2008; Jamieson & Campbell, 1982; Kelley-Romano, 2008; Miller & Van Riper, 2011; Morris, 2011; Murphy, 2003; Picart, 2004; Rose, 2003). Hybridity invokes a biological metaphor, which then introduces questions of purity, race, ancestry, familial relations, species and genus configurations, and nature into the conceptualization of genres, as well as driving genre studies towards taxonomy – as if the process of naming and classifying was a

sufficient end for genre studies (Bellon, 1999; Edgerton & Nicholas, 2005; Neale, 2001; Small, 1979). Steering away from biological metaphors, this approach to generic analysis has relied upon sewing metaphors, conceptualizing genre mixing as acts of weaving, sewing, suturing, and embroidering.

The shift here, from biology to sewing, is important. Where the biological metaphor casts “hybridity” as a natural phenomenon, the concept of sewing keeps the seamstress as part of the equation, thereby keeping the production and authorial elements in mind. The biological metaphor carries the sense of a “pure” species, which implies that deviations are dilutions and therefore inferior, but garments can be made from a variety of cloths, which captures the nature of genre mixing without implying preference for older forms as “purer” forms. Genres, like cloth, can be combined and recombined into a variety of garments and styles. While the biological metaphor could not neutrally describe the process of transporting a genre into a new setting – as when a Western lawman moved to the big city in *McCloud* (1970-1977), cloth can be dyed, which dynamically captures the essence of this type of genre shift. Although the biological metaphor struggles to account for minor changes in a genre – such as the “buddy cop” motif which added humor to police dramas, cloth can be patched or embroidered. Where the biological metaphor insists upon genealogical (and not in a Foucauldian sense) histories from ancestor to descendant that simply does not account for the variety of ways in which genres change, revert, and reemerge, clothing styles regularly re-adapt earlier fashions, which again captures the essence of how genres resurface in entertainment. Finally, the biological metaphor, with its connections to recombinant DNA implies very advanced technologies. In contrast, the sewing metaphor is open to a wide range of

technologies – from hand-stitching to automated mass production – which better represents the types of media that genres inhabit over the centuries.

The second key contribution this dissertation adds to communication scholarship is in combining the diverse areas of rhetorical, media, and gender studies. I drew on these three aspects of the communication discipline in order to holistically assess the role that gender plays in these four series' generic innovations. Yet in combining aspects of these three fields, my dissertation also works to augment the conceptualization of TV entertainment and genres within rhetorical studies and to make rhetorical theories and methodologies more relevant to feminist media scholars.

My approach to this research demonstrates the combination of rhetorical, media, and feminist methodologies. Like media studies research (Brook, 2009; Cragin, 2010; Fuller, 2010; Genz, 2009; Levine, 2008; Lotz, 2006; Mittell, 2004; Swenson, 2009; Vavrus, 2002), I have selected multiple texts for analysis, grouping together TV series that participate in the same genre and limiting my selection by industry-related contexts.⁶ As such, this dissertation analyzes four different series, in their entirety, placing them in conversation and each other and their media contexts. Yet working as a rhetorical critic, I focus closely on the text: this dissertation focuses on the dialogue, scenes, characters, settings, and narrative forms of *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*. My concern is with the text: what these programs are and how they function in society. As a feminist audience member, I was uneasy with the portrayal of gender in these series. As a

⁶ *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* all air on network channels during primetime and became popular in close chronological proximity with each other. Programs that participate in the same generic forms during this time period, but air on cable channels, such as *Warehouse 13* and *In Plain Sight*, were omitted from this research because they are produced and distributed in a different economic system.

feminist scholar, my attention is to the systematic reproduction of patriarchy in these new genre combinations.

In addition, studying TV entertainment is relatively rare for rhetorical scholars. The methods of rhetorical criticism can be broadly applied in a variety of contexts, and Herbert Wichelns captured essence of rhetorical criticism when he stated in his landmark essay, “The Literary Criticism of Oratory,” that “rhetorical criticism lies at the boundary of politics (in the broadest sense) and literature,” adding that “its atmosphere is that of the public life” (1925, p. 26). However, despite rhetorical criticism’s proficiency at this boundary between politics and literature, which is surely where entertainment media falls, rhetorical studies has taken up its longstanding – indeed, ancient – connection to public life by primarily studying political speech-acts. As a result, few distinguished scholars who self-designate as feminist rhetoricians study TV entertainment.⁷ Yet, as the fruitful work of feminists in media and cultural studies demonstrate (Battles & Hilton-Morrow, 2002; D’Acci, 2004; Douglas, 2010; Ekdom Vande Berg, 1989; Genz, 2009; Gill, 2007; Helford, 2006; Hill, 2010; Lotz, 2006; Malin, 2010; McRobbie, 2009; Nunn & Biressi, 2003; Spiegel, 1995; Sydney-Smith, 2007; Wlodarz, 2005; Vavrus, 2002), patriarchy is alive and well and runs rampant in entertainment media. Last year, the average U.S. citizen watched thirty-four hours of TV each week (Stelter, 2011); those are hours spent with texts that reproduce patriarchy, sometimes quite obviously, sometimes, like *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle*, in a smoke-and-mirrors game. Feminist media scholars are actively engaged in helping scholars, students, friends, community

⁷ Bonnie Dow and Sarah Projansky are two examples of feminist rhetorical scholars who work extensively with entertainment texts.

members, and industry personnel understand the toll sexism takes on our culture and the role TV plays in this system. To this scholarly and activist work, rhetorical studies can supplement media methodologies by contributing the technologies of rhetorical criticism. Rhetoricians have carefully honed and theorized the methods of close textual analysis, of stasis theory, of narrative and metaphoric analysis. Rhetoricians have studied form, style, genres, persuasion, context, audiences, and production for centuries. In merging the methods of rhetorical, media, and feminist studies, this dissertation works to make these disparate scholarly conversations relevant to each other, complementing and supplementing the theories and methodologies of rhetorical studies with the critical and qualitative approaches indigenous to media and feminist studies.

Finally, this dissertation's third major contribution is to remove the veneer of postfeminist gloss from *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* and demonstrate their complicity within limiting patriarchal structures. These four series present themselves – and are received as – progressive television that pushes crime dramas into the gender-enlightened, twenty-first century where women can have careers and can be scientifically minded and men can be good single fathers. Arguably, these series can be seen as a step beyond many of the current primetime sitcoms and dramas.⁸ However, this is not only a hollow victory, it is also a further entrenchment of sexism in our culture. These series claim to be and are received as progressive TV programs but they are deeply sexist as

⁸ For example, the popular sitcom, *The Big Bang Theory*, tells the story of four genius-level if socially awkward male scientists who are befriended by one working-class, highly sexualized female; the new highly rated sitcom on CBS, *Two Broke Girls* focuses on the mishaps of two highly sexualized women who would do almost anything to earn money and who work in a diner where they are consistently sexually harassed by the cook and the owner. Moreover, recently popular network dramas such as *NCIS*, *Hawaii Five-O*, and *NCIS Los Angeles* star male characters, relegating females to support positions and romantic interests.

demonstrated throughout this dissertation and it is a mistake to think that these series portray equality. If these patriarchal narratives are accepted as portrayals of equality, then our culture has lost sight of what gender equity can look like.

You're Asking Me to Support Your Delusion?

To close, I offer one final glimpse at the way these series skirt around issues of feminism, promising equality but delivering patriarchy. Fittingly, I close with the final scene of a seventh season episode of *Bones*, “The Twist in the Twister” (Rosenthal & Szwarc, 2011). *Bones* has been on-air longer than the other series, and this episode presents viewers with the mature version of the partners’ relationship: Booth and Brennan are in love, are living together, and are preparing for their daughter’s birth. Brennan has transitioned from a staunch career woman who approaches life, sex, and investigations scientifically to a nurturing mother and loving girlfriend whose former, socially inept personality only occasionally surfaces like a vestigial tail. At this point in the series, Booth has healed Brennan of her emotional trauma, reuniting her with her father and helping her to recognize and experience her own emotions.

In this episode, Booth is overly protective of his pregnant girlfriend, orchestrating events and encumbering Brennan as he attempts to keep her at home resting instead of listening to her when she states that she wants to continue her normal lifestyle and work since both she and the baby are healthy and their doctor recommends an active lifestyle. Booth refuses to accept this and lies to her, leaving her in D.C. while he pursues the

investigation without her. This is a major source of tension in the episode, which is only resolved in the final scene as they sit at home discussing the issue together.

Booth: Listen, ah, Bones, I do trust you.
 Brennan: Does that mean that you're not going to hover over me like a crab whose mate is about to molt?
 Booth: I don't actually follow that, but no, I'm not.
 Brennan: You're not going to stop?
 Booth: I know it's not fair, but no, I'm not going to stop.
 Brennan: Why?
 Booth: Why? Because I know that I'm not always going to be able to protect you and this beautiful baby. So acting like I can actually makes me feel less helpless.
 Brennan: So basically, you're asking me to support your delusion?
 Booth: Yes.
 Brennan: That's crazy.
 Booth: Well, you've got a little bit of the crazy in you too.
 Brennan: Excuse me, but I am a supremely rational person.
 Booth: Really? Walking around these hardwood floors with bare-feet? I mean, you could get a splinter! I'm gonna go get your slippers.
 Brennan: Awww. You're starting again!
 Booth: I told you I wasn't going to stop! Do you want the ones with the little bunny ears or the slipper socks?
 Brennan: No. I'm not going to wear them.
 Booth: I'm not going to pull a splinter out of your feet.
 Brennan: I don't have a splinter.
 Booth: You will. You will!
 Brennan: No, I won't!
 Booth: Yes, you will.

This scene fades as cheerful music adds a sense of comfort and levity to the situation as the couple teasingly banters through the final lines, their earlier frustrations forgotten as Brennan accepts Booth's pampering. However, *this is not pampering*. This is an overbearing boyfriend/father who refuses to listen to his partner, refuses to accept that she understands her own body, and refuses to let her make her own decisions. Even as

the dialogue winkingly nods towards familiar feminist arguments as Brennan protests that Booth's over-protectiveness only feeds a fantasy of masculine control and protection, the program frames Booth's inappropriate behavior as sweet, domestic, kind, and comforting. This scene reverses the stereotypical 1950s scene where the housewife fetches her husband's slippers, but it does not reverse or equalize the power dynamic between the couple. Booth exerts his will against Brennan's wishes, controlling and containing her.

These postfeminist detectives unite the crime and romantic comedy genres. The partners flirt over corpses and fall in love while investigating their own personal lives as the characters' back-stories provide fodder for the story-arcs. Participating in the genre of crime dramas, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* all attempt the same twist on this classic narrative form by threading the storylines together through a running romance between unusual detective partners. Together, they mark a significant change in both the crime genre and in popular gender portrayals. The male and female detectives on these four programs are portrayed and welcomed in U.S. culture as new, gender reversed characters who interact with complete equality. However, as this analysis has demonstrated, *Bones*, *Fringe*, *The Mentalist*, and *Castle* merge these disparate narrative formats by drawing on postfeminist motifs to suture these crime and romantic comedy genres together. In so doing, these programs portray both the seed and fruit of patriarchy under the guise of equality.

References

“50 most beautiful people in the world 1997.” (1997, May 12). *People Weekly*, 141.

ABC shows. (2011). *ABC.com*. Accessed 16 November 2011. Retrieved from

<http://abc.go.com/shows>

About *Bones*. (2011). *Fox.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.fox.com/Bones/about/>

About the show. (2011). *ABC.com*. Retrieved from

<http://beta.abc.go.com/shows/castle/about-the-show>

Abrams, J.J., Kurtzman, A., Orci, R., & Graves, A. (Writers & Director). (2008, Sep 9).

Pilot [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*.

FOX.

Adalian, J. (2011, Nov 17). Which TV shows rich people hate the most, and 27

other unexpected ratings facts. *NY Magazine*. Retrieved from

<http://nymag.com/daily/entertainment/2011/11/which-tv-show-rich-people-hate-the-most-and-27-other-unexpected-ratings-facts.html#photo=21x00012>

Adams, V. (1965, Dec 7). Networks break fall rating tie. *The New York Times*, p.

95. Retrieved from

<http://search.proquest.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/docview/117090280/1365FAE2B682E12335/2?accountid=13158>

Albright, M. (2010, March 8). White House Address Commemorating International

Women’s Day.” Retrieved from

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/madeleinealbrightinternationalwomensdayspeech.htm>

- Allen, M. (Ed.). (2007). *Reading CSI: Crime TV under the microscope*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Ambrose, C. & Szwarc, J. (Writer & Director). (2008, May 5). The verdict in the story [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Andrejevic, M. (2009). The twenty-first-century telescreen. In G. Turner & J. Tay (Eds.), *Television studies after TV: Understanding television in the post-broadcast era* (pp. 31-40). New York: Routledge.
- Aristotle. (1954). *Rhetoric*. Trans. W. Rhys Roberts. New York: Modern Library.
- Badley, L. (2000). Scully hits the glass ceiling: Postmodernism, postfeminism, posthumanism and *The X-Files*. In E.R. Helford (Ed.), *Fantasy girls: Gender in the new universe of science fiction and fantasy television* (pp. 61-90). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Battles, K. & Hilton-Morrow, W. (2002). Gay characters in conventional spaces: *Will and Grace* and the situation comedy genre. *Critical Studies in media Communication*, 19, 87-105.
- Beall, W., & Bowman, R. (Writer & Director). (2011, May 16). Knockout [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Beall, W., & White, D. (Writer & Director). (2009, April 20). Home is where the heart stops [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Bellon, J. (1999). The strange discourse of *The X-Files*: What it is, what it does and what is at stake. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 16, 136-154.

- Benoit, W.L. (2000). Beyond genre theory: The genesis of rhetorical action. *Communication Monographs*, 67, 178-192.
- Benson, T.W. (1984/91). Killer media: Technology, communication theory, and the first amendment. In M.J. Medhurst and T.W. Benson (Eds), *Rhetorical dimensions in media: A critical casebook* (pp.378-397). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Bernhard, L. (2008, Nov 28). *Mentalist* is a hit, but who can see into its future? *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/11/30/arts/television/30bern.html?pagewanted=1>
- Bianco, R. (2005, Sep 13). "The Stars Flesh out 'Bones.'" *USA Today* final ed.: 3D+.
- Bianco, R. (2008, Sep 23). *The Mentalist* is familiar but smartly done. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/life/television/reviews/2008-09-22-mentalist_N.htm
- Bitzer, L.F. (1968). The rhetorical situation. *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 1, 1-14.
- Black, E. (1965). *Rhetorical criticism: A study in method*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Boedeker, H. (2008, Sep 7). J.J. Abrams' *Fringe* is slick, lacks originality. *Orlando Sentinel*. Retrieved from http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2008-09-07/entertainment/typrime0907_1_anna-torv-abrams-olivia-dunham
- Booker, M.K. (2004). *Science Fiction Television*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Booker, M.K. and Thomas, A.M. (2009). *The science fiction handbook*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Bowman, R. (1998). *The X-Files: Fight the future*. 20th Century Fox.

- Bradford, V. (2006). Neoliberal epideictic: Rhetorical form and commemorative politics on September 11, 2002. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 92, 1-26.
- Brail, S. (1996). The price of admission: Harassment and free speech in the wild, wild west. In L. Cherny & E.R. Weise (Eds.), *Wired women, gender and new realities in cyberspace* (pp.141-157). New York: Seal Press.
- Braithwaite, Ann. (2002). The personal, the political, third-wave and postfeminisms. *Feminist Theory*, 3, 335-344.
- Brooks, M., Buck, H., & Morris, H. (Writers & Director). (1965, Sep 18). Mr. Big [Television series episode]. In L.B. Stern (Executive producer) *Get Smart*. NBC.
- Brook, V. (2009). Convergent ethnicity and the neo-platoon show: Recombining difference in the postnetwork era. *Television and New Media*, 10(4), 331-353.
- Buel, J.W. (1880). *Life and marvelous adventures of Wild Bill*. Chicago: Belford, Clarke.
- Butler, J. (2006). *Television: Critical methods and applications*. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Caldwell, J.T. (1995). *Televisuality: Style, crisis and authority in American television*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Campbell, K.K. (1995). Gender and genre: Loci of invention and contradiction in the earliest speeches by U.S. women. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 81, 479-495.
- Campbell, K.K. (2009). Genre. In W.F. Eadie (Ed.) *21st century communication: A reference handbook* (pp. 257-265). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Campbell, K.K. & Jamieson, K.H. (1978). Form and genre in rhetorical criticism: An

introduction. In K.K. Campbell & K.H. Jamieson (Eds.) *Form and genre: Shaping rhetorical action*. Falls Church, VA: Speech Communication Association.

Castle. (2011). *ABC.com*. Accessed 3 December 2011. Retrieved from

<http://beta.abc.go.com/shows/Castle>

Chamberlain, D. (2010). Television interfaces. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 38(2), 84-88.

Clark, E. (2008). *Fringe* filling void in *X-Files* fan's heart. *The Gazette*.

Retrieved from <http://nl.newsbank.com/nl->

[search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum)

[=1&s_dlid=DL0111122916043806913&s_ecproduct=SUB-](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum)

[FREE&s_ecprodtype=INSTANT&s_trackval=GooglePM&s_siteloc=&s_referrer](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum)

[=&s_subterm=Subscription%20until%3A%2012%2F14%2F2015%2011%3A59](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum)

[%20PM&s_docsbal=%20&s_subexpires=12%2F14%2F2015%2011%3A59%20P](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum)

[M&s_docstart=&s_docsleft=&s_docsread=&s_username=freeuser&s_accountid=](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum)

[AC0109010521115830983&s_upgradeable=no](http://nl.newsbank.com/nl-search/we/Archives?p_action=doc&p_docid=123BAA612BDB8DE8&p_docnum)

Coen, D. & Bookstaver, S. (Writer & Director). (2005, Nov 29). The girl in the fridge

[Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones*

[Television series]. FOX.

Cohn, A. (2006, Aug 30). *Bones'* Booth gets his sexy on. *TV Guide*. Retrieved

from <http://www.tvguide.com/news/Bones-booth-gets-37492.aspx>

Cragin, B. (2010). Beyond the feminine: Intersectionality and hybridity in talk shows.

Women's Studies in Communication, 33, 154-172.

- Creeber, G. (Ed). (2008). *The television genre book*. London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- D'Acci, J. (1994). *Defining women: Television and the case of Cagney and Lacey*. Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press.
- D'Acci, J. (2004). Television, representation and gender. In R.C. Allen & A. Hill (Eds.), *The television studies reader* (pp. 373-388). New York: Routledge.
- Darsey, J. (1995). Joe McCarthy's fantastic moment. *Communication Monographs*, 62, 65-86.
- Davis, E., & Alcalá, F. (Writer & Director). (2010, Nov 1). Almost Famous. [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Davis, E. & Roe, B. (Writer & Director). (2011, Nov 7). Heartbreak hotel [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- de Souza, R.T., & Sherry, J.L. (2006). Portrayals of romantic relationships on adolescent television: A content analysis. *Media Report to Women*, 34(1), 13-21.
- Dean-Ruzicka, R. (2009). Vengeance, healing and justice: Post 9/11 culture through the lens of *CSI*. *Quarterly Review of Film and Video*, 26, 118-130.
- Dick, L. & Lerner, D. (Writer & Director). (2010, Jan 14). Rose-colored glasses [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.
- Douglas, S.J. (2010). *Enlightened sexism: The seductive message that feminism's work is done*. New York: Henry Hold and Company.
- Dow, B.J. (1990). Hegemony, feminist criticism and *The Mary Tyler Moore Show*. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 7, 261-274.
- Dow, B.J. (1996). *Prime-time feminism: Television, media culture, and the women's*

- movement since 1970*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Dow, B.J. (2006). Conversation and commentary: The traffic in men and the *Fatal Attraction* of postfeminist masculinity. *Women's Studies in Communication*, 29(1), 113-131.
- Downey, S.D. (1993). The evolution of the rhetorical genre of apologia. *Western Journal of Communication*, 57, 42-64.
- Echevarria, R. & Terlesky, J. (Writer & Director). (2010, May 10). Overkill [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Edgerton, G.R. & K. Nicholas. (2005). "I want my niche TV:" Genre as a networking strategy in the digital era. In G.R. Edgerton & B. Rose (Eds.), *Thinking outside the box: A contemporary television genre reader* (pp. 247- 267). Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Edgerton, G.R. & Rose, B.G. (Eds). (2005). *Thinking outside the box: A contemporary television genre reader*. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Eklund Vande Berg, L.R. (1989). Dramedy: *Moonlighting* as an emergent generic hybrid. *Communication Studies*, 40, 13-28.
- Elfman, D. (2005, Sep 13). "Bones" star is one strange agent. *Chicago sun-Times*. Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=10D32AD92AEB1750&p_docnum=3&p_queryname=8
- Entman, R. M. & Rojecki, A. (2000). *The black image in the white mind: Media and race in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Faludi, S. (1991). *Backlash: The undeclared war against American women*. New York:

Anchor Books Doubleday.

Feuer, J. Kerr, P. and Vahimagi, T. (Eds.). (1984). *MTM: "Quality television."*

London: British Film Institute.

Fisher, W.R. (1980). Genre: Concepts and applications in rhetorical criticism. *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 44, 288-299.

Fiske, J. (1986). Television: Polysemy and popularity. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 3(4), 397-408.

Fletcher, A. (Director). (2008). *27 Dresses* [Motion Picture]. USA: Fox 2000 Pictures.

Fox.com. (2011, July 4). Glee. Retrieved from <http://www.fox.com/glee/>

Francis, S., & Terlesky, J. (Writer & Director). (2011, Oct 17). Eye of the beholder [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.

Freedman, E.B. (2002). *No turning back: The history of feminism and the future of women*. New York: Ballantine Books.

Fuller, J. (2010). Branding blackness on US cable television. *Media, Culture, & Society*, 32(2), 285-305.

Gable, A. & Laneuville, E. (Writer & Director). (2009, Oct 8). Red badge [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.

Gable, A., & Long, C. (Writer & Director). (2010, Nov 4). Red hot [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.

Gallagher, V. (2006). Displaying race: Cultural projection and commemoration. In L. Prelli (ed.), *The rhetorics of display* (pp. 177-196). University of South Carolina press.

Gates, P. (2004). Always a partner in crime: Black masculinity in the Hollywood

- detective film. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 32, 20-29.
- Gay, V. (2012, Jan 10). Want quirky? The Finder discovers it. *Newsday*. Retrieved from <http://www.newsday.com/entertainment/tv/want-quirky-the-finder-discovers-it-1.3442779>
- Genz, S. (2009). *Postfemininities in popular culture*. London: Palgrave MacMillian.
- Gill, R. (2007). Postfeminist media culture: Elements of a sensibility. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 10(2), 147-166.
- Gill, R., & Herdieckerhoff, E. (2006). Rewriting the romance: New femininities in chick lit? *Feminist Media Studies*, 6(4), 487-504.
- Gitlin, T. (1979). Prime time ideology: The hegemonic process in television entertainment. *Social Problems*, 26, 251-266.
- Gitlin, T. (1983). *Inside Prime Time*. New York: Pantheon.
- Glasberg, G. & Long, C. (Writer & Director). (2008, Oct 21). Ladies in red [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.
- Gleason, M., & Robert, B. (Writer & Director). (1982, Oct 1). License to Steele [Television series episode]. In M. Gleason (Executive producer) *Remington Steele*. NBC.
- Gleason, M. & Butler, R. (Writer & Director). (1982, Oct 8). Tempered Steele [Television series episode]. In M. Gleason (Executive producer) *Remington Steele*. NBC.
- Goodman, T. (2008, Sep 22). TV reviews: *Worst Week*, *The Mentalist*. *SFGate.com*. Retrieved from http://articles.sfgate.com/2008-09-22/entertainment/17159827_1_worst-week-kyle-bornheimer-kurtwood-smith

- Gorman, B. (2011, June 1). 2010-11 season broadcast primetime show viewership averages. *TV by the Numbers*. Retrieved from <http://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2011/06/01/2010-11-season-broadcast-primetime-show-viewership-averages/94407/>
- Goulart, R. (1972). *Cheap thrills: An informal history of pulp magazines*. New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House.
- Gould, Jack. (1965, Oct 17). Seasonal discontents. *New York Times*, p. X21.
- Gray, E. (2007, Jan 31). Boreanaz says *Bones* is not a procedural. *Daily News*. Retrieved from http://www.philly.com/philly/columnists/ellen_gray/20070131_Ellen_Gray___Boreanaz_says___Bones___is_not_procedural.html?c=r
- Griffin, M. & Friedman, H. (1975 -). *Wheel of fortune*. NBC and CBS.
- Gronbeck, B.E. (1984/91). Audience engagement in *Family*. In M.J. Medhurst and T.W. Benson (Eds), *Rhetorical dimensions in media: A critical casebook* (pp. 398-426). Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Gunn, J. & Frentz, T. (2008). *The Da Vinci Code* as alchemical rhetoric. *Western Journal of Communication*, 72, 213-238.
- Guthrie, M. (2010, Feb 1). An entire genre may be *Lost*. *Broadcasting & Cable*, p. 3-6. Retrieved from http://www.broadcastingcable.com/article/446730-An_Entire_Genre_May_Be_Lost_.php
- Hagan, M. (2012). Contested playgrounds: E-mail harassment in the academy. In M. Meyers & D. Rios (Eds.), *Women in higher education: The fight for equity* (pp. 73-93). New York: Hampton Press, Inc.

- Hale, M. (2009, Aug 6). Obsessive Influence. *New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/07/arts/television/07monk.html>
- Handler, C. (Writer & Director). (2011, April 11). Joshua Jackson [Television episode]. In C. Handler & T. Brunelle (Executive producers) *Chelsea Lately* [Television Series]. Borderline Amazing Productions, on E!
- Hanson, Hart. (2005-). *Bones*. United States: FOX.
- Hanson, H. & Boreanaz, D. (Writer & Director). (2010, April 8). The parts in the sum of the whole [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Hanson, H. & Toynton, I. (Writer & Director). (2007, Sep 25). The widow's son in the windshield [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Hanson, H. & Toynton, I. (Writer & Director). (2009, Sep 17). Harbingers in the fountain [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Hanson, H. & Yaitanes, G. (Writer & Director). (2005a, Sep 13). Pilot [Television series episode]. In H. Hanson (Executive producer) *Bones*. FOX.
- Hanson, H. & Yaitanes, G. (Writer & Director). (2005b, Dec 13). The man in the fallout shelter [Television series episode]. In H. Hanson (Executive producer) *Bones*. FOX.
- Harrell, J. & Linkugel, W.A. (1978). On rhetorical genre: An organizing perspective. *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 11, 262-281.
- Harriss, C. (2008). Policing Propp: Toward a textualist definition of procedural drama.

Journal of Film and Video, 60(1), 43-59.

Hart, R.P. (1986). Contemporary scholarship in public address: A research editorial. *The Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 50, 283-295.

Hartley, John. (1984). Encouraging Signs: Television and the power of dirt, speech, and scandalous categories. In W.D. Rowland & B. Watkins (Eds.), *Interpreting Television: Current research perspectives* (pp. 119-141). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Heller, B. & Nutter, D. (Writer & Director). (2008, Sep 23). Pilot [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.

Helford, E.R. (2000). Feminism, queer studies, and the sexual politics of *Xena: Warrior Princess*. In E.R. Helford (Ed.), *Fantasy girls: Gender in the new universe of science fiction and fantasy television* (pp. 135-162). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Helford, E.R. (2006). *The Stepford Wives* and the gaze. *Feminist Media Studies*, 6, 145-156.

Herring, S.C. (2005). Gender and power in on-line communication. In J. Holmes & M. Meyerhoff (Eds.), *The handbook of language and gender* (pp. 202-228). Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Hibberd, J. (2011a, Feb 12). Uh-oh: *Fringe* ratings drop again. *Entertainment Weekly*. Retrieved from <http://insidetv.ew.com/2011/02/12/Fringe-ratings-drop-friday/>

Hibberd, J. (2011b, Feb 18). Joshua Jackson: "Start the campaign" to save *Fringe*. *Entertainment Weekly*. Retrieved from <http://insidetv.ew.com/2011/02/18/joshua-jackson-Fringe-renewal/>

- Hill, L. (2010). Gender and genre: Situating *Desperate Housewives*. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, 38, 162-169.
- Hill, W. (Director). (1995). *Wild Bill* [Motion Picture]. MGM.
- Holloway, S. (2011). Episode review: Castle “*Eye of the beholder*.” *Jacksonville TV Examiner*. Retrieved from <http://www.examiner.com/tv-in-jacksonville/episode-review-Castle-s04e05-eye-of-the-beholder-review>
- Hurwitz, M. & Neff, L. (2008, Sep 2). *Fringe* benefits from J.J. Abrams’ creativity. *Reading Eagle*. Retrieved from <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1955&dat=20080902&id=uFoxAAAAIBAJ&sjid=oqIFAAAAIBAJ&pg=2143,268718>
- Inciardi, J.A. & Dee, J.L. (1987). From the keystone cops to *Miami Vice* images of policing in American popular culture. *Journal of Popular Culture*, 21(2), 84-102.
- Ingraham, P. (1884). *Wild Bill, the pistol prince*. New York: Beadle & Adams.
- Inness, S.A. (1999). *Tough girls: Women warriors and wonder women in popular culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Jackson, R.L. (2006). *Scripting the black masculine body: Identity, discourse, and racial politics in popular media*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Jamieson, K.H. (1975). Antecedent genre as rhetorical constraint. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 61, p. 406-415.
- Jamieson, K.H, & Campbell, K.K. (1982). Rhetorical hybrids: Fusions of generic elements. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 68, 146-157.
- Jermyn, D. (2007). Body matters: Realism, spectacle and the corpse in *CSI*. In M. Allen (Ed.), *Reading CSI: Crime TV under the microscope*. London: I.B. Tauris.

- Jhally, S. & Lewis, J. (1992). *Enlightened racism: The Cosby Show, audiences, and the myth of the American dream*. Boulder: Westview press.
- Jicha, T. (2005, Sep 13). Anything but dry, *Bones* reflects about life. *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*. Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=10C9B2E191AA3780&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=1
- Johnson, K.R., & Holmes, B.M. (2009). Contradictory messages: A content analysis of Hollywood-produced romantic comedy feature films. *Communication Quarterly*, 57(3), 352-373.
- Kantrowitz, B. & Rogers, A. (1994, Dec 5). The truth is X-ed out there. *Newsweek*, p. 66.
- Kelley-Romano, S. (2008). Trust no one: The conspiracy genre on American television. *Southern Communication Journal*, 73, 105-121.
- Kettner, C., Lisson, M., & DePaul, S. (Writers & Director). (2008, Sep 17). The man in the outhouse [Television series episode]. In H. Hanson (Executive producer) *Bones*. FOX.
- Kettner, C., Usher, K., & Chapple, A. (Writers & Director). (2011, May 12). The hole in the heart [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Kinon, C. (2008, Sep 8). J.J. Abrams illuminates dark science with *Fringe*. *Daily News*. Retrieved from http://articles.nydailynews.com/2008-09-08/entertainment/17905842_1_abrams-anna-torv-Fringe

- Kompare, D. (2009). The benefits of banality: Domestic syndication in the post-network era.. In A.D. Lotz (Ed.), *Beyond prime time: Television programming in the post-network era* (pp. 55-74). New York: Routledge.
- Kompare, D. (2010). Revising repetition for multiplatform television distribution. *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, 38(2), 79-83.
- Kramarae, C. (1981). *Women and men speaking, framework for analysis*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Kramarae, C. (2005). Muted group theory and communication: Asking dangerous questions. *Women and Language*, 28(2), 50-72
- Kumar, Shanti. (2005). Innovation, imitation, and hybridity in Indian television. In G.R. Edgerton & B. Rose (Eds.), *Thinking outside the box: A contemporary television genre reader* (pp. 314- 335). Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.
- Laurence, R.P. (2005, Sep 13). Fox throws *Bones* onto that heaping pile of *CSI* imitators. *San Diego Union-Tribune*. Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=10CA59F789E3D470&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=6
- Levin, G. (2008, Sep 8). J.J. Abrams lures casual scifi fans to *Fringe*. *USA Today*. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/life/television/news/2008-09-07-abrams-Fringe_N.htm
- Levine, E. (2008). Distinguishing television: The changing meanings of television liveness. *Media, Culture, & Society*, 30(3), 393-409.
- Life "Pumps Up" Art. (2001). Schwarzenegger.com. Retrieved from

http://www.schwarzenegger.com/en/life/retroclip/retro_en_arn_hanzfranz.asp?sec=life&subsec=retroclip

Lisanti, T. & L. Paul. (2002). *Film fatales: Women in espionage films and television, 1962-1973*. Jefferson (NC): McFarland & Company, Inc, Publishers.

Lopata, D. & Chapple, A. (Writer & Director). (2011, Nov 17). The prince in the plastic [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.

Lopata, D. & Little, D. (Writer & Director). (2011, Feb 10). The daredevil in the mold [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.

Lopata, D. & Woods, K. (Writer & Director). (2009, Dec 3). The gamer in the grease [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.

Lopata, D. & Woolnough, J. (Writer & Director). (2009, April 16). Mayhem on a cross [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.

Lotz, A.D. (2006). *Redesigning women: Television after the network era*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Lotz, A.D. (2007). If it's not TV, what is it?: the case of US subscription television. In S. Banet-Weiser, C. Chris, & A. Freitas (Eds.), *Cable visions: Television beyond broadcasting* (pp. 85-102). New York: New York University Press.

Lowry, B. (2005, Sep 13). *Bones*: TV review. *Variety*. Retrieved from <http://www.variety.com/review/VE1117928109/>

- Lowry, B. (2009, March 5). *Castle*. *Variety*. Retrieved from <http://www.variety.com/review/VE1117939819?refCatId=1264&ref=related>
- Mahony, E. & Kane, A. (Writer & Director). (2009, April 28). Red Sauce [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.
- Malach, M. (1996). I want to believe ... in the FBI: The special agent and *The X-Files*. In D. Lavery, A. Hague & M. Cartwright (Eds.), *Deny all knowledge: Reading the X-Files* (pp. 63-76). Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.
- Malin, B.J. (2010). Viral manhood: Niche marketing, hard-boiled detectives and the economics of masculinity. *Media Culture & Society*, 32, 373-389. doi: 10.1177/0163443709361168
- Marlowe, A.W. & Bowman, R. (Writer & Director). (2009a, March 9). Flowers for your grave [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Marlowe, A.W. & Bowman, R. (Writer & Director). (2009b, March 30). Hell hath no fury [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Marlowe, A.W., & Bowman, C. (Writer & Director). (2012, Feb 6). The blue butterfly [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Marlowe, A.W., Schindel, B., & Spicer, B. (Writers & Director). (2009, May 11). A death in the family [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.
- Marmer, M., & Sandrich, J. (1968, Nov 30). The laser blazer. [Television series episode]. In L.B. Stern (Executive producer) *Get Smart*. NBC.

- Martin, W. (1986). *Recent theories of narrative*. Ithica: Cornell University Press.
- McAllister, M.P. (2010). Hypercommercialism, televisuality, and the changing nature of college sports sponsorship. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 53(10), 1476-1491.
- McCrohan, D. (1988). *The life and times of Maxwell Smart*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- McDaniel, M. (2005, Sep 13). Fox is relying on a skeleton crew – network roles the *Bones*, but how it'll fare in genre remains to be seen. *Houston Chronicle*. Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=10C9E3474839F118&p_docnum=2&p_queryname=7
- McNamara, M. (2009, March 9). *Castle* a dry piece of cake – mmm, cake. *The Anniston Star*. Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=126D6E75C63B6DB0&p_docnum=8&p_queryname=4
- McRobbie, A. (2009). *The aftermath of feminism: Gender, culture and social change*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications.
- Medhurst, M.J. and T.W. Benson (Eds). (1984/91). *Rhetorical dimensions in media: A critical casebook*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company.
- Melvoin, J. & Weis, D. (Writer & Director). (1984, Sep 24). Steele at it [Television series episode]. In M. Gleason (Executive producer) *Remington Steele*. NBC.
- Miller, A.E., Stentz, Z., & Beeson, C. (Writers & Director). (2010, Feb 4). Jacksonville [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive Producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Miller, A.E., Stentz, Z., Zuckerman, N., Zuckerman, L., & Chappelle, J. (Writers and

- Director). (2010, May 6). Northwest passage [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Miller, C.J. & Van Riper, A.B. (2011). Blending genres, bending time: steampunk on the Western frontier. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, 39, 84-92.
- Miller, C.R. (1984). Genre as social action. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 70, p. 151-167.
- Miller, T. (2008). The action series. In G. Creeber (Ed.), *The television genre handbook* (pp. 24-29). London: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Mitchell, S. (2006, Dec 27). Ex-vampire turns into regular guy. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/27/arts/television/27bore.html>
- Mittell, J. (2004). *Genre and television: From cop shows to cartoons in American Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Mittell, J. (2010). *Television and American culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Moran, A. (2009). Global franchising, local customizing: the cultural economy of TV program formats. *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies*, 23(2), 115-125.
- Morris, D. (2011). Hick-hop hooray? “Honky Tonk Badonkadonk,” musical genre, and the misrecognitions of hybridity. *Critical studies in Media Communication*, 28, 466-488.
- Murphy, J.M. (2003). “Our Mission and Our Moment”: George W. Bush and September 11th. *Rhetoric & Public Affairs*, 6, 607-632.
- Nathan, S. & Toynton I. (Writer & Director). (2011, Nov 3). The memories in the

- shallow grave [Television series episode]. In H. Hanson (Executive producer) *Bones*. FOX.
- Neale, S. (2001). Studying Genre. In G. Creeber (Ed.), *The television genre book* (pp. 3-5). London: BFI Publishing.
- Nelson, G. (1989). *Get Smart, again!* ABC.
- Newcomb, H. (2004). Narrative and genre. In J. D. H. Downing, D. McQuail, P. Schlesinger & E. Wartella (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of media studies* (pp. 413-428). Thousand Oaks: Sage.
- Newcomb, H.M., & Hirsch, P.M. (1983). Television as a cultural forum: Implications for research. *Quarterly Review of Film Studies*, 8(3), 45-55.
- Nicholas, P. (2004, July 18). Schwarzenegger deems opponents “girlie-men” – twice. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/chronicle/archive/2004/07/18/MNGH57NKAF1.DTL>
- Ng, P. (2011, Sep 19). *Castle* creator talks season 4, future of the Castle-Beckett relationship and the new captain (Q&A). *Hollywood Reporter*. Retrieved from <http://www.hollywoodreporter.com/live-feed/Castle-creator-talks-season-4-237181>
- Norden, M.F. (1985). The detective show. In B. Rose (Ed.), *TV Genres: A handbook and reference guide*, pp. 33-56. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Nunn, H. & Biressi, A. (2003). *Silent Witness*: Detection, femininity, and the post-mortem body. *Feminist Media Studies*, 3, 193-206.
- Ono, K.A. (2000). To be a vampire on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*: Race and (“other”)

- socially marginalizing positions on horror TV. In E.R. Helford (Ed.), *Fantasy girls: Gender in the new universe of science fiction and fantasy television* (pp.163-186). Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Oppenheimer, J. (Writer & Director). (1967, Nov 4). One of our olives is missing [Television series episode]. In L.B. Stern (Executive producer) *Get Smart*. NBC.
- Owen, R. (2008, Sep 23). TV preview: Ex-*Guardian* Baker lightens up as *The Mentalist*. *Post-Gazette*. Retrieved from <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/08267/914216-42.stm>
- Owusu-Breen, M., Schapker, A., & Chappelle, J. (Writers & Director). (2010, Dec 9). Marionette [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Panse, S. (2007). "The bullets confirm the story told by the potato": Materials without motives in *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*. In M. Allen (Ed.), *Reading CSI: Crime TV under the microscope*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Paskin, W. (2011, November 3). *Bones* creator Hart Hanson on the show's new season, Booth and Brennan's future make-outs." *New York Magazine*. Retrieved from http://nymag.com/daily/entertainment/2011/11/hart_hanson.html
- People's Choice Awards*. (2012). Retrieved from <http://www.peopleschoice.com/pca/awards/nominees/>
- Petersen, A. (1998). *Unmasking the masculine: "Men" and "identity" in a skeptical age*. London: Sage Publications.
- Peterson, M. & Little, D. (Writer & Director). (2011, Nov 10). The hot dog in the

- competition. [Television series episode]. In H. Hanson (Executive producer) *Bones*. FOX.
- Phoca, S. & Wright, R. (1999). *Introducing Postfeminism*. New York: Totem Books.
- Picart, C.J.S. (2004). The third shadow and hybrid genres: Horror, humor, gender and race in *Alien Resurrection*. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 1, 335-354.
- Pierce, S.D. (2009, March 9). Will *Castle* finally make Fillion into a big TV star? *The Deseret News*. Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=126D40979E140320&p_docnum=9&p_queryname=5
- Pinkner, J., Wyman, H., Goldsman, A., & Chappelle, J. (Writers & Director). (2011, Sep 23). Neither here nor there [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Pitts, M., Doble, J., & Hemingway, A. (Writers & Director). (2011, Nov 18). Wallflower [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Pribram, E.D. (2011). *Emotions, genre, justice in film and television*. New York: Routledge.
- Projansky, S. (2001). *Watching rape: Film and television in postfeminist culture*. New York: New York University Press.
- Propp, V. (1968). *Morphology of the folktale*. L. Scott (Trans.). 2nd edition. Austin: University of Texas Publishing.

- Propp, V. (1984). Historical Roots of the wondertale: Premises. A.Y. Martin & R.P. Martin (Trans.). In A. Liberman (Ed.) *Theory and history of folklore* (pp. 100-115). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota.
- Rauzi, R. (2005, Sep 8). Following in her fedora; A Laura Holt fan goes on location, sort of, with her hero. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <http://articles.latimes.com/2005/sep/08/news/wk-here8>
- Riggs, K.E. (1996). The case of the mysterious ritual: Murder dramas and older women viewers. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 13, 309-323.
- Robards, B. (1985). The police show. In B. Rose (Ed.), *TV Genres: A handbook and Reference guide* (pp. 11-32). Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.
- Rose, B. (1985). *TV genres: A handbook and reference guide*. Westport: Greenwood Press.
- Rose, B. (2003). TV genres re-viewed. *Journal of Popular Film & Television*, 31, 2-4.
- Rosenthal, K., & DePaul, S. (Writer & Director). (2007, Oct 23). The secret in the soil [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Rosenthal, K. & Szwarc, J. (2011, Dec 8). The twist in the twister [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Rosenzweig, B. (1982-1988). *Cagney & Lacey*. CBS.
- Rogers, A. (1998, March 2). Hey, Ally, ever slain a vampire? *Newsweek*, p. 60.
- Rovin, J. (1977). *The great television series*. New York: A.S. Barnes.
- Scharrer, E. (2001). Tough guys: The portrayal of hypermasculinity and aggression in

televised police dramas. *Journal of Broadcasting & electronic Media*, 45, 615-634.

Schindel, B., & Terlesky, J. (Writer & Director). (2009, March 16). Nanny McDead [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.

Schwarzenegger: No Country More Welcoming than the USA. (2004, August 31).

CNN.com. Retrieved from

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/ALLPOLITICS/08/31/gop.schwarzenegger.transcript/>

Scott, J.W. (2007). *The politics of the veil*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Seidman, R. (2012a, Jan 24). ABC's *The Bachelor* hits season highs; *Castle* is Monday's

most-watched TV show. *TV by the Numbers*. Retrieved from

<http://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2012/01/24/abcs-the-bachelor-hits-season-highs-castle-is-mondays-most-watched-tv-show/117457/>

Seidman, R. (2012b, Feb 7). Monday Final Ratings. *TV by the Numbers*. Retrieved

from <http://tvbythenumbers.zap2it.com/2012/02/07/monday-final-ratings-the-voice-alcatraz-house-two-and-a-half-men-adjusted-up/119033/>

Sepinwall, A. (2010, Feb 28). How TV shows try (or chose not) to depict Asperger's

Syndrome. *The Star-Ledger*. Retrieved from

http://www.nj.com/entertainment/tv/index.ssf/2010/02/how_tv_shows_try_or_choose_not.html

Sheldon, S. (1979-1984). *Hart to Hart*. ABC.

Shows. (2011). *ABC.com*. Retrieved from <http://abc.go.com/shows>

Singer, J., Gross, E., & Hunt, J. (Writers & Director). (2010, April 22). The man from

the other side [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.

Small, E.S. (1979). Literary and film genres: Toward a taxonomy of film. *Literature Film Quarterly*, 7, 290-300.

Smith, E.A. (2000). *Hard-Boiled: Working-class readers and pulp magazines*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Spigel, L. (1995). From the dark ages to the golden age: Women's memories and television reruns. *Screen*, 36, 16-33.

Southard, B.A.S. (2008). Beyond the backlash: *Sex and the City* and three feminist struggles. *Communication Quarterly*, 56, 149-167.

Stanton, G., Werksman, H., & Babbit, J. (Writers & Director). (2009, April 13). Always buy retail [Television series episode]. In A.W. Marlowe (Executive producer) *Castle*. ABC.

Stelter, B. (2011, Jan 2). TV viewing continues to edge up. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/03/business/media/03ratings.html>

Stout, R. (1938/2009). *Too Many Cooks*. New York: Bantam Books.

Sultan, A., Stern, L.B., Burns, A., Hayward, C., & Bilson, B. (Writers & Director). (1968, Sep 21). The impossible mission [Television series episode]. In L.B. Stern (Executive producer) *Get Smart*. NBC.

Swafford, E.G. & Roth, B. (Writer & Director). (2011, March 10). Bloodstream [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.

- Swenson, R. (2009). Domestic divo?: Televised treatments of masculinity, femininity and food. *Critical Studies in media Communication*, 26(1), 36-53.
- Sydney-Smith, S. (2007). Endless interrogation: *Prime Suspect* deconstructing realism thorough the female body. *Feminist Media Studies*, 7, 189-202.
- Szentgyorgyi, T. & Beeson, C. (Writer & Director). (2009, Oct 1). The scarlet letter [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.
- Tamaro, J. & Ross, C. (Writer & Director). (2006, Nov 15). Aliens in a spaceship [Television series episode]. In Hanson, H. (Executive producer) *Bones* [Television series]. FOX.
- Tasker, Yvonne, and Negra, Diane (Eds). (2007). *Interrogating Postfeminism: Gender and the politics of popular culture*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Today Television*. (2008, Aug 27). J.J. Abrams works overtime on *Fringe*. *MSNBC.com*. Retrieved from <http://today.msnbc.msn.com/id/26426275>
- Tolchin, M. (1965, Nov 28). She slyly spoofs sex and spies. *New York Times*, p. X19.
- Turner, G. (2008) The uses and limitations of genre. In G. Creeber (Ed.), *The television genre book* (pp. 6-8). London: BFI Publishing.
- Usher, K. & Little, D. (Writer & Director). (2010, April 22). The predator in the pool [Television series episode]. In H. Hanson (Executive producer) *Bones*. FOX.
- Ware, B.L. & Linkugel, W.A. (1973). They spoke in defense of themselves: On the generic criticism of apologia. *Quarterly Journal of Speech*, 59, 273-83.
- Washburn, M. (2005, July 29). FOX show *Bones* up on forensics. *Charlotte Observer*.

Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=10BAC96E5B12D110&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=3

- Wasley, A. (2008, Oct 1). Simon Baker meets his match in Robin Tunney on *The Mentalist*. *The Daily Telegraph*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/entertainment/tv/simon-baker-meets-his-match-in-robin-tunney-on-the-mentalist/story-e6frexlr-1111117626559>
- Weinbaum, A.E., Thomas, L., Ramamurthy, P., Poiger, U., Yue Dong, M., & Barlow, T (Eds). (2008). *The Modern Girl around the world: Consumption, modernity, and globalization*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Whitman, G., Chiappetta, R., & Yatsko, T. (Writers & Director). (2011, Feb 18). 6B [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Whitty, M.T. & Carr, A.N. (2006). New rules in workplace: Applying object-relations theory to explain problem Internet and email behavior in the workplace. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 22(2), 235-250.
- Wichelns, H. (1925). The literary criticism of oratory. In C.R. Burgchardt (Ed.) *Readings in rhetorical criticism* (pp. 3-27). State College, PA: Strata Publishing, inc.
- Wilcox, D., Gross, E., & Anderson, B. (Writers & Director). (2011, Feb 11). Immortality [Television series episode]. In J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Wilcox, R. (2005). Unreal TV. In G.R. Edgerton, B.G. Rose (Eds), *Thinking outside the box: A contemporary television genre reader* (pp. 201-225). Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky.

- Will they or won't they ... make it work? (2011). *Fox.com*. Retrieved from <http://www.fox.com/Bones/photos/#extras/willorwont:6799047>
- Willow, M. (2005, Sep 13). Pair sure to heat up morgue. *Columbus Dispatch*. Retrieved from http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezaccess.libraries.psu.edu/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AWNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=10C9BF4BF6630CC8&p_docnum=5&p_queryname=9
- Wlodarz, J. (2005). Maximum insecurity: Genre trouble and closet erotics in and out of HBO's *Oz*. *Camera Obscura*, 58, 58-105
- Woodruff, K. & Baker, S. (Writer & Director). (2011, Nov 3). Blinking red light [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.
- Woodruff, K. & Beesley, M.E. (2008, Nov 25). The thin red line [Television series episode]. In B. Heller (Executive producer) *The Mentalist*. CBS.
- Wyman, J.H., Pinkner, J., & Smith, D. (Writer & Director). (2009, Nov 19). August [Television series episode] in J.J. Abrams (Executive producer) *Fringe*. FOX.
- Vavrus, M.D. (2002). *Postfeminist news: Political women in media culture*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Zlotoff, L.D., & Conner, K. (Writer & Director). (1983, Sep 27). Red Holt Steele [Television series episode]. In M. Gleason (Executive producer) *Remington Steele*. NBC.

VITA

Sarah J. Kornfield

Education

- Ph.D. in Communication Arts and Sciences at The Pennsylvania State University (August 2012)
- M.A. in Communication at Texas A&M University (May 2009)
- B.A. in Communication and English Literature, *Summa Cum Laude* at Wheaton College (May 2007)

Publications

- Kornfield, S.J. (2011). Cross-cultural cross-dressing: Japanese graphic novels perform gender in U.S. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 28(3), 213-229.
- Kornfield, S.J. (In Press). The e-man-ci-pation of Jeannie: Feminist doppelgangers on U.S. television. *Communication, Culture, and Critique*.
- Ramasubramanian, S., & Kornfield, S.J. (In Press). "Japanese anime heroines as role models for U.S. youth: Implications for cross-cultural entertainment effects. *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*.

Selected Grants, Fellowships, and Awards

- Kenneth Burke Prize for the Best Graduate Student Essay in Rhetoric, 2012
The Center for Democratic Deliberation
The Pennsylvania State University
- Carroll C. Arnold Award for Scholarly Excellence, 2011-2012
Department of Communication Arts & Sciences
The Pennsylvania State University
- Women's Studies Outstanding Graduate Student Award, 2011-2012
The Women's Studies Department
The Pennsylvania State University
- Dissertation Support Award, 2012
College of Liberal Arts
The Pennsylvania State University
- Research Award, 2009
Communication Arts and Sciences
The Pennsylvania State University
- University Graduate Fellowship, 2009-2012
The Pennsylvania State University
- Distinguished Graduate Student Award, 2009
Association of Former Students
Texas A&M University
- Graduate Merit Fellowship, 2007-2009
Texas A&M University