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How to Save...A Nation? Televisual Fiction Post-9/11

Melissa R. Ames



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EDITED BY HISHAM RAMADAN
AND JEFF SHANTZ

Manufacturing Phobias

The Political Production of Fear in
Theory and Practice

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5 How to Save ... A Nation?: Television Fiction Post-9/11

MELISSA AMES

To claim that the national tragedy of 9/11 is a defining moment in the first decade of the twenty-first century for the United States is not profound, nor is the statement that it directly and indirectly influenced the cultural production within American society throughout these years. Regardless of the obviousness of these claims, it is exactly upon these assumptions that this chapter rests. In the years following the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon, cultural products have been sites for interrogating and remediating the trauma that 9/11 caused for the citizens of a country that believed itself to be untouchable. Although these cultural concerns were played out in both non-fictional and fictional spaces across media, this essay argues that television narratives in particular provide great insight into societal concerns during the start of this century. They do this in a unique space that repackages these concerns from "reality" and displaces them into the safe comforts of "fiction" where they can be addressed time and again with more favourable results.

In terms of rapidity of response to 9/11, there was no contest: in general, television was quicker to respond to the tragedy than any other medium (e.g., film, print novel), both as it was happening and in the months after. Obviously, there was the real-time news broadcasting the day of the events, but also special programs and documentaries in the weeks that followed. However, the events of 9/11 also seeped into the fictional worlds found in television sitcoms and dramas within only a few weeks' time. The speed of this response is attributed more to television's production processes and freedoms and less to its actual desire to be the pioneers of post-9/11 narrative. But what is more interesting, and not as theorized, is how television responded to 9/11 (and

continues to respond) to it years later. Although, to be fair, there were some early television attempts at understanding the tragedy. CNN re-aired its documentary *Beneath the Veil* and its sequel *Unholy War* – both focused on the plight of Afghani women under the Taliban regime – in the weeks following 9/11, and to commemorate the six-month anniversary of the attacks CBS aired Jules and Gedeon Naudet's documentary *9/11* on 10 March 2002.

However, as might be expected (and partially planned to await audiences ready to consume such narratives), Hollywood did not begin producing films inspired by or based on 9/11 until 2006 with the release of both Paul Greengrass's *United 93* and Oliver Stone's *World Trade Center*. It is this specific year, one marking the five-year anniversary of the attack, that grounds my analysis of television narratives as well. However, when compared to the films being released at this time, the stories delivered through television separate themselves from the documentary-style narratives of 9/11-related film and enter into the deep recesses of fiction – into the realms of science fiction even, where it is once again acceptable to be playful and perverse while trying to work out cultural concerns lingering from a half decade prior. But before getting to that year of 2006 – the year that broadcasted loud and clear that the United States was a nation waiting to be saved – one must start at the beginning: TV post-9/11 and TV's history of being a cultural tool for coping with the catastrophic.

The Television Landscape in the Wake of 9/11

Television did not immediately begin spawning fictional narratives loosely related to the attacks. In fact, right after 9/11 television executives were quite concerned about the content of their programming, and specifically any fictional narratives that might be considered disturbing, violent, or traumatic in the aftermath of the national crisis. Lynn Spigel (2004, 235) recounts how films like *Collateral Damage*, *The Siege*, *Lethal Weapon*, *Carrie*, and even *Superman* and *King Kong* were pulled from television line-ups. However, inadvertent censorship and coverage changes also occurred during this time. For example, Spigel (2004, 236) notes that "humorists Dave Letterman, Jay Leno, Craig Kilborn, Conan O'Brien, and Jon Stewart met (their) late-night audience(s) with dead seriousness" on the nights following 9/11, causing some critics to declare "that the attacks on the Pentagon and World Trade Center had brought about the 'end of irony.'" Although the industry heads

were altruistically attempting to save viewers from their pre-packaged violent imagery, during this time period the public was actually eager to consume such depictions of trauma. Video retailers reported an increase in customer check-outs of films like those pulled from the network's line-ups, suggesting that the consumption of explosions, toppling buildings, and apocalyptic scenarios – at least when situated in fictionalized backdrops – was just what the doctor ordered in terms of coping strategies and escapism (Spigel 2004, 236). So it is not really a surprise that televisual narratives would pick up on these motifs in a relatively short period of time in the crafting of new programs and episodes.

Although much was going on in the fictional programming found on television, for the most part media scholarship on 9/11, the US attacks in Afghanistan, and the early stages of the "war on terror" focused on print and television news coverage (Spigel 2004, 238). This work from the academy often attended to "the narrative and mythic 'framing' of the events; the nationalistic jingoism ...; [the] competing global news outlets, particularly Al Jazeera; and the institutional and commercial pressure that has led to 'infotainment'" (Spigel 2004, 238). But as Spigel states, despite its important achievements, "the scholarly focus on news underestimates (indeed, it barely considers) the way the 'reality' of 9/11 was communicated across the flow of television's genres, including its so-called entertainment genres" (238). In order to investigate this lacuna, her essay "Entertainment Wars: Television Culture after 9/11" analyses Comedy Central's 7 November 2001 episode of *South Park* and NBC's 3 October 2001 episode of *West Wing* to showcase the various ways that television genres responded to the attacks through their narratives. Similarly, this essay aims to address this academic void by analysing various thematic motifs that appeared (or are amplified) in televisual fiction post-9/11 in order to show that these are important sites where the "'reality' of 9/11" is being worked out.

Although one might have expected television programming to "step up" and grow more serious in the wake of September 11th, the opposite ultimately occurred. Some reporters, such as Louis Chunovic of *Television Week*, were hopeful that the face of television would change following the attacks:

In the wake of the terrorist attack on the United States, it's hard to believe Americans once cared who would win Big Brother 2 or whether Anne

Heche is crazy. And it's hard to believe that as recently as two weeks ago, that's exactly the kind of pabulum, along with the latest celebrity/politician sex/murder/kidnapping scandal, that dominated television news ... We cannot afford to return to the way things were. (2001, 15)

But as Spigel notes, ironically, "the industry's post 9/11 upgrade to quality genres – especially historical documentaries – actually facilitated the return to the way things were" (2004, 241).

Susan Douglas (2006) suggests it was not that television was incapable of a shift into a more permanent state of serious programming. In fact, she returns to Marshall McLuhan's infamous (and idealistic) notion of technology uniting everyone within a global village to prove that, although it is quite possible in the era of around-the-clock coverage and international media collaboration to have this sort of worldly programming, it was not at all what Americans wanted. No: they wanted escape. She writes:

After 9/11, when one would have expected the nightly news programs to provide a greater focus on international news, attention to the rest of the world was fleeting, with the exception of the war in Iraq. After a precipitous decline in celebrity and lifestyle news in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 catastrophe, a year later the percentages of these stories in the nightly news were back to where they had been pre-9/11. In 2004, despite the war, the percentage of stories about foreign affairs on the commercial nightly news broadcasts was lower than it had been in 1997. (619)

Rather than 9/11 bringing about an era of entertainment Enlightenment, American society returned quickly to a state of global/foreign affairs ignorance. In the United States, Douglas claims, "new communication technologies have not created a global village but have, ironically, led to a fusion of ethnocentrism and narcissism, best cast as a 'turn within'" (619). Enter in escapism. Analysing the popularity of reality television in the early years of the twenty-first century, Douglas argues that if television news, in particular, bears especial responsibility for squandering its ability to enhance a global awareness despite its ever-augmented capabilities to do so, reality TV, colonizing television as it did between 2001 and 2005, insisted that the most productive way to use communications technologies was to focus them on individual Americans in confined and controlled spaces hermetically sealed from foreign peoples and culture. (621)

Studying this exploding genre was, indeed, important, as "by January 2003, one-seventh of all programming on ABC was reality based" (632). This televisual trend continues to date, with entire networks devoted to the genre. Arguably, at least in the early years, these shows provided emotional comfort and quelled the negative affect from which they derived. Although Douglas discusses primarily the escapism provided by the format of reality TV, I argue that the escapism provided by televisual fiction during this time period is even more fascinating and operates in a slightly different way.

Watching Trauma Unfold (on the Small Screen)

In order to understand how the consumption of television narratives could work this affectual wonder, one must first attend to exactly how 9/11 was framed as a trauma *to be seen* (in order to be felt) and how television has long been the medium in charge of controlling feelings through the art of "seeing" specifically constructed imagery. First of all, to many Americans, 9/11 unfolded in front of their eyes much like a Hollywood blockbuster film – almost too spectacular to believe. Slavoj Žižek writes: "when we watched the oft-repeated shot of frightened people running toward the camera ahead of the giant cloud of dust from the collapsing tower, was not the framing of the shot itself reminiscent of spectacular shots in a catastrophe movie, a special effect that outdid all others?" (2002, 11). Indeed, many survivors used the simile that it felt "like a movie" to explain the experience (Redfield 2007, 68). As Susan Sontag argues, "'it felt like a movie' seems to have displaced the way survivors of a catastrophe used to express the short-term unassimilability of what they had gone through: 'It felt like a dream'" (2003, 22). So is it really a surprise that the American public turned to the realm of visual culture/media to "replay" the event dominating their own memories? Marc Redfield argues that the phrase "'it was like a movie' conjures up not just an excess of event over believability, but a sense that this event *is to be mediated*, that it would have no sense, perhaps would not even have occurred, if it were not being recorded and transmitted" (2007, 69). In this explanation it would seem that the media was needed; it was the only way that people could move from disbelief (that which they could not comprehend and some could not physically see) to belief (that which they could only comprehend through repeated seeing).

This "hard to believe" tragedy of 9/11 is often classified as a cultural trauma, but it actually differs quite a bit from other national catastrophes. Redfield points out:

That the attacks inflicted a shock of historical scale seems clear, but the shape and scope of this wound is not ... If we try to conceive of trauma on a cultural level things become more ambiguous ... [The attacks] were not of a society-threatening scale (as warfare, genocide, famine, or natural cataclysm have been for so many human societies) and the literal damage they did to the military and commercial orders symbolized by the Pentagon and the World Trade Center was minuscule; it is of course as symbolic acts of violence that they claim culturally traumatic status. (2007, 56)

He continues to analyse the common affects of trauma and the coping process that individuals usually go through: "trauma involves blockage: an inability to mourn, to move from repetition to working-through. It is certainly plausible that hyperbolic commemorative efforts such as those on display in '9/11 discourse' ... are in fact testimonials to blockage" (56). He argues that "wherever one looks in 9/11 discourse, trauma and the warding-off of trauma blur into each other, as the event disappears into its own mediation" (56). I propose that a very similar process is at work in the televisual narratives that proliferate after 9/11; through their mediation of fictionalized scenarios they present trauma in order to do away with it, hence becoming a sort of emotional security blanket for viewers existing in an unstable post-9/11 world.

Douglas posits that communications technologies "have some inherent capabilities that privilege some senses – and thus some cognitive and behavioral processes – over others" (2006, 635). I agree, and claim that these cognitive and behavioural processes relate to certain affects – the most prevalent being the affect of fear.¹ To claim that television has this emotional power is not new, nor is the association of television with fear. However, in determining how television portrays 9/11 (and post-9/11 concerns) the association seems important. Television scholar Louise Spence observed that her students a year after 9/11 "still understood the events of 9/11 in affective and emotional terms" (2004, 101). It could be argued that over a decade later most Americans still do. Part of this emotional understanding, and emotionally charged memory, of the events is due to the way it was presented through the medium of television.²

Television and the Catastrophic: A Brief Overview of Affect Theory

A short overview of affect theory is useful here. In his work on affect, Silvan Tomkins states that "affective responses are of course 'caused' and that 'there are specific conditions which activate, maintain them, and reduce them' (Sedgwick and Frank 1995, 37). I suggest that the viewing of television programming can be one of these "specific conditions." Tomkins comes up with the notion of a weak affect theory, which, despite what its name might imply, is one that works efficiently to produce (or not produce) certain affects. So a weak affect theory relating to negative affect (such as fear) would work to prevent an individual from feeling the negative affect. In other essays I have argued that the viewing of certain television programming, like the nightly news, might operate like a weak negative affect theory, helping viewers to not experience negative affect as a result of the habitual exposure to certain content (i.e., violent imagery) they receive from the programming's staple imagery (Ames 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014).

How the news is able to operate in this fashion is worthy of note. Mary Ann Doane builds on Roland Barthes's discussion of photography, in particular its *noeme* (the essence of "that-has-been" or its "pastness") to argue that television offers quite a different visual experience, that of "this-is-going-on" or a sense of "present-ness" (1990, 222). Likewise, Jay Bolter and Richard Grusin (2000) explore the connected concept of immediacy in regard to new media. They argue not only that immediacy is a sense of transparency in which the media gives off the illusion that it is *not* a mediation or a representation, and hence indicates an absence or erasure of mediation, but also that immediacy can be tied to "the viewer's feelings that the medium has disappeared and the objects are present to him, a feeling that his experience is therefore authentic" (70). News broadcasts obviously capitalize on television's claim to immediacy. The capitalized word "LIVE" in the lower corner of the TV screen and the anchor's quip of "this just in" help transport the viewers to the event, giving them the illusion that they are there, that they are witnessing this event unfolding before their eyes (and allow them to ignore the fact that it is being delivered to them across distance and through tainted technology).

It is important to note that networks do exploit their power as a "live" supplier of coverage and do systematically manipulate the viewer's affective responses. The news attempts to deliver anxiety (or the illusion

of said affect) in order to have its role of relieving it. In fact, Patricia Melencamp argues that "anxiety is television's affect" (1990b, 243, emphasis added) and suggests that when studying this media we should shift "our analysis from theories of pleasure to include theories of unpleasure." She states, "TV envelops the shock, delivering *and* cushioning us from stimuli which it regulates in acceptable levels ... turning news or shocks into story and tragic drama" (254). The reporter is there to inject viewers with anxiety, fear, and anger (or try to do so) but also to quickly administer the antidote, the assurance that everything will be just fine, and that he or she will be there to present that final happy diagnosis just as soon as it occurs. Richard Grusin argues that this media practice is increasingly common post-9/11 and is a crucial component of what he terms "premediation" (2004, 21). He explains the logic of premediation as insisting "that the future itself is ... already mediated, and that with the right technologies ... the future can be remediated before it happens" (19). Grusin argues that a new media environment has arisen in post-9/11 United States, one that "is preoccupied with the mediation not of the present or the immediate past but of the future." As a result, "news media have begun to give up on – or perhaps more accurately to subordinate – their historical role in favor of a prophetic or predictive role of reporting on what might happen" (23). However, "unlike prediction, premediation is not chiefly about getting the future right ... In fact, it is precisely the proliferation of future scenarios that enables premediation to generate and maintain a low level of anxiety in order to prevent the possibility of a traumatic future" (28–9). This line of analysis might very well be aligned loosely with the argument that repeated television news consumption functions like a personalized form of a weak negative affect theory. Grusin writes: "because of the repetitive structure of the everyday built into televisual programming, the repeated premediation of future disasters or catastrophes works to guard against the recurrence of a trauma like 9/11 by maintaining ... an almost constant low level of fear" (26). Brian Massumi (2005) would likely agree with this. In his essay "Fear (The Spectrum Said)," which deals with the government of the United States' use of the colour-coded terrorist alert system put into place by the Homeland Security Office, he argues that the terrorist alert system is a dangerous political tool that allows the government post-9/11 to conduct a sort of "affective modulation of the populace" and create a climate of controlled "affective attunement" (primarily grounded in fear) (1).

The everyday news does this on a small scale, but in attending to large-scale catastrophes this practice, which indeed predates 9/11,

is all the more noticeable. The affect manipulation in this noticeable practice is often quite evident. Mary Ann Doane discusses these moments of impact that disrupt "ordinary routine" (1990, 228). TV from its onset has had the capacity to capture these moments and deliver them right to the viewer in his or her living room: Kennedy's assassination, the Challenger's explosion, Chernobyl, the rescue of Baby Jessica, the massacre at Columbine, 9/11, the 2005 tsunami, Hurricane Katrina, the earthquake in Haiti, and countless other natural disasters, acts of violence (bombings, wars), or unexpected death (plane crashes, fires) (Doane 1990, 229; Mellencamp 1990b, 249). These mediated moments not only disrupt our routine, drawing us to the screen to consume them in endless (even painful) repetition, but they end up acting as time markers for those who witness them, epochal reference points, and they most likely play a large role in a generation's structure of feeling. Doane claims that "catastrophic time stands still" (1990, 231). The lyrics of a popular country song by Alan Jackson, written in the aftermath of 9/11, echo this sentiment: "Where were you when the world stopped turning on that September day?" Hence the event, the frozen moment in time, becomes one shared with an entire generation, so that every member of the current generation can answer the question "Where were you when the twin towers were attacked," just as the previous one can quickly supply their whereabouts when they heard that Kennedy had been shot, and probably how the generation before that could remember where they were when they heard of the atomic bombs being dropped on Japan or the attack on Pearl Harbor – shared moments, shared affect that make a generation.

The reason people are able to "feel" these events so strongly, other than their out-of-the-ordinary nature and the tragedy they encapsulate, is largely due to how they are packaged and distributed by the networks thriving during their height. The non-stop news coverage of such disasters brings about a "condensation of temporality," in which "the crisis compresses time" (Doane 1990, 223). When something abnormal is unfolding, television has the capacity to make its audience spellbound, watching the same image flash across the screen, listening to the same reports recapped hour after hour. It also has the power to reinforce certain beliefs and emotional states. In the aftermath of 9/11, two motifs seemed to receive this constant reinforcement in both fictional and non-fictional television programming: the rejuvenated theme of national patriotism and the fear of the "other."

Post-9/11 Thematics

In the news broadcasting world these two areas of focus seem quite interrelated. Scholars have compared this current trend of a patriotism grounded in fear to the post-World War II cold war era. Dennis Broe argues:

The reading of the so-called war on terrorism as similar in scope and aim to the anticommunism of the former cold war is, of course, denied by media outlets such as the Fox News Channel, which operate in a perpetual present or in a historical moment that began on September 11, 2001. The promotion of an external enemy for the purposes of global domination and of quelling domestic dissent, coupled with the revival of a faltering economy through military spending, are characteristics in common with the Cold War. The current endless war is a global civil war fought by an apparently triumphant capitalist system against both a new, more ethnically diverse and predominantly female working class and a global anticorporate movement. At the center, this war takes the form of attacks on wages and curbs civil rights, while at the periphery, war is more openly declared against states with natural resources (oil, natural gas, water). (2004, 98)

In this sense the media can be seen as acting the part of the man behind the curtain shouting: "Look over here, look over here. Focus on those dark, dangerous 'others' around the globe – don't think about the dark, dangerous downfalls happening right here in your own country" (e.g., the economic crisis plaguing the United States at the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century).

But regardless of the selfish motives that sparked the rhetoric for this move to national unity, waves of patriotism did flow across the country post-9/11 and flood the cultural narratives of the time. Spigel notes, "given the political divisions that have resurfaced since 2001, it seems likely that the grand narratives of national unity that sprang up after 9/11 were for many people more performative than sincere. In other words, it is likely that many viewers really did know that all the newfound patriotism was really just a public performance staged by cameras" (2004, 255). But as she notes, what is problematic is the fact that after 9/11 "many people found it important to 'perform' the role of citizen, which included the performance of belief in national myths of unity. And if you didn't perform this role, then somehow you were a bad American" (255).

With all of this going on in supposedly non-fictional television programming, it is not surprising that these same thematic messages and cultural concerns seeped into fictional programming as well. In television shows airing in the years following the attacks, there was a sudden preoccupation with this notion of unity at both the national level and on a larger scale (themes of interconnectedness, fate, and destiny). There was also a common thematic obsession with the necessity of being "saved." In the following pages I turn to the analysis of fictional narratives on television, focusing on an overview of the programming popular in the years immediately following the September 11th attacks, the specific television season of 2006–2007, which marked the five-year anniversary of the attacks (concentrating on two breakout shows, NBC's *Heroes* and ABC's *Lost*), and the continuation of these televisual trends at present (proving that both the narratives and viewers remain haunted by the national crisis even as it approaches the decade's close).

Some would claim that "Americans have yearned to see current geopolitical realities portrayed in popular culture ever since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001" (Stillwell 2007, 1). I would argue that Americans want to see a *version* of those realities on television. Of course, ideally this version would be one that can be brought to a neat and tidy, Hollywood-style dénouement by the end of the season and/or series. The show that best showcases this desire is Fox's *24*, which debuted on the heels of 9/11 on 6 November 2001. Broe (2004) critiques Rupert Murdoch's news corporation, the parent entity of the Fox network, arguing that it is no surprise that *24* found a comfortable (and long) run-time with this conglomerate. In fact, Broe states that the show "was seen as a prestige item in the Murdoch canon" (100) and argues:

In *24*, the sensationalism that marks Murdoch entertainment is employed in the service of promoting and rationalizing the endless war. The emphasis on the clock, on racing against time during both the hour of the show and the show's six-month running time, keeps the audience afraid of terrorists, nuclear bombs, and viruses. Meanwhile the sympathetic vigilante ignores the legal rights and speeds rapidly ahead in his battle to save humanity (with humanity reduced to the United States only), while, as Adorno would say, fear and anxiety replace contemplation. (101)

Most definitely, the show is a hyped-up version of current events, a compressed hyperbole of many of the viewer/citizen's concerns. For example, as Stillwell argues, "the political and moral dilemmas raised

by the show could be ripped straight out of the headlines. References to the Patriot Act, NSA surveillance and Guantanamo Bay figure in the show's plot. Probably the most controversial topic is Jack Bauer's (Keifer Sutherland) propensity for torturing prisoners, particularly in cases where a 'ticking time bomb' terrorist plot is involved" (2007, 3). Although *24* might be the most blatantly obvious show broadcasting this motif of needing to be saved (specifically from an "other" in the form of a terrorist), a motif that reinforces the beliefs of the non-fictional programming surrounding it, it is not alone in exploring this televisual theme.

ABC's *Alias* actually aired over a month before *24* on 30 September 2001. Like *24*, this show focuses on a world (read: country) in crisis needing to be saved. While Jack Bauer is part of the government's CTU (Counter Terrorist Unit), *Alias*'s main character, Sydney Bristow (Jennifer Garner), is an undercover CIA agent working to bring down SD-6, a component of the Alliance of Twelve, an international crime group wreaking havoc on the world. Some of this fictional organization's goals consist of black market weapon trading and the assembling of ancient relics that might help form a weapon of mass destruction like none existing in current times. While *24* finds Bauer fighting to prevent one major national crisis per season/day, *Alias* exists as a more traditional drama with plot arcs that both exist within an episode and stretch through episodes and seasons. Therefore, Bristow often has to defuse more bombs (so to speak) in one season's time. (And she is more likely to be the one tortured than the one doing the torturing.) Shows such as these continued to be made even years after 9/11. In March 2006 another network decided to create its own drama centred on a governmental protection group: CBS released *The Unit*, which focuses on a top-secret military unit modelled after the real-life Delta Force.

While these dramas were maintaining popularity, another format was having varied success: dramas that focused on saving the country from the top down. From 1999 to 2006 NBC's *The West Wing* found popularity as a television drama focused on the behind-the-scenes happenings of a fictional president, his family, and his staff as they navigated through particular legislative or political issues. In the seasons following 9/11, not surprisingly, plots often turned to the spectre of both foreign and domestic terrorism. In 2005, ABC attempted a short-lived series, *Commander in Chief*, focusing on the presidency and familial life of the first female president of the United States, President Mackenzie

Allen (Geena Davis). This show, like the others, attended to the global tension and domestic insecurity present at the start of the twenty-first century.

Although the theme of needing to be saved has been prevalent throughout all time (and throughout all narrative forms), the abundance (and popularity) of this motif on television is quite interesting in the wake of 9/11. What can one make of viewers' attraction to watching fictional figures do this saving (be it in the field or from the oval office) time and time again? And what happens when this motif of needing to be saved shifts? By 2006 television was still obsessed with this motif but not necessarily in the same ways that it had been five years prior. Shows like *Alias* and *West Wing* reached their series close and other programming lined up to fill the void. Salvation was still the name of the game, but one would have to look closer to see the links to the tragedy of 9/11 lurking beneath this regurgitated theme. A snapshot of a year – the television season of 2006–2007 – reveals quite a bit about American society's preoccupation with this notion of being saved.

Five Years Later: An Analysis of 2006–2007 Television Programming

In fall 2006 one of ABC's hit dramas, *Grey's Anatomy*, launched its season with television promos and a special viewer initiation (or refresher) episode centred on The Fray's hit song, "How to Save a Life." This same fall NBC released its soon-to-be hit series, *Heroes*, with its tagline "Save the Cheerleader; Save the World." As mentioned, although the fictional landscape of American television had been dominated by the theme of needing to be saved for much of the new twenty-first century (especially post-9/11), never before had this motif been so clearly vocalized and marketed. Doled out alongside this theme was the aforementioned focus on unity/interconnectedness. Quite often in the televisual texts of this time these two themes worked together; in fictional spaces, a world connected, a group united, was one that would survive and/or be saved.

During this television season, twenty-nine shows ran on the four major networks of ABC, CBS, NBC, and FOX that could fit into these categories. While some fit loosely into this grouping, like the crime dramas (CBS's *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*, *CSI: Miami*, *CSI: NY*, *NCIS*, *Criminal Minds*; NBC's *Crossing Jordan*; Fox's *Bones*, *Cops*, and *America's Most Wanted: America Strikes Back*), the law dramas (CBS's *Shark*; NBC's *Law & Order*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Law & Order: Special Victims*

Unit; ABC's *Boston Legal*; Fox's *Justice*) and the medical dramas (NBC's *ER*; ABC's *Grey's Anatomy*, Fox's *House*), others more obviously earn this classification due to their central preoccupation with needing to be saved from personal predicaments or national crises. This category would include shows previously discussed like *24* and *The Unit*, but also similar shows like CBS's *Jericho* (concerned with the aftermath of nuclear attacks on twenty-three American cities), ABC's *Traveler* (focused on the road trip of three college graduates that results in a terrorist attack on a museum), and Fox's *Standoff* (about an FBI Crisis Negotiation Unit). This grouping also includes shows that discuss needing to be saved in different ways: ABC's *Lost* and NBC's *Heroes* (both of which will be analysed in greater depth below) as well as Fox's *Prison Break* (which focuses on a governmental conspiracy that sends a man to death row for a crime he did not commit) and ABC's *Day Break* (a *Groundhog Day*-type series replaying one day in the life of a detective accused of murdering the assistant district attorney). And still other programs fall into this grouping due to their focus on interconnectivity, shows like ABC's *The Nine* (which follows the lives of nine strangers who survive a hostage crisis) and *Six Degrees* (as evidenced in the title, this show plays on the theme that everyone is connected to one another in some way).

Although many of these shows did not enjoy a long run-time, the fact that these themes were so prevalent is telling. Even more intriguing is the central affect that each of these shows share: fear. Logically, it makes sense that each would foreground this human emotion. In situations where one needs rescuing or redemption, fear is often the affect that drives individuals. And, just as nonfiction television programming operates, these narratives exist to deliver this fear so that they can also be credited with having alleviated it. At first thought it might seem that consuming this constant array of fear-evoking, life-threatening situations might make viewers more fearful in their everyday lives. However, "the quotidian fare of violence, disaster, and death that TV audiences consume (actually) nourishes fantasies of invulnerability" and hence diminishes fear (Redfield 2007, 73). As in the regular consumption of serial news broadcasts, the habitual consumption of these fictional series operates like a weak negative affect theory – repressing societal fears through narratives of salvation.

Not surprisingly, many of these narratives grounded their installations of fear in a problematic "us" versus "them" binary. Although this opposition has long been used to stimulate dramatic conflict, its

possible tie to the media rhetoric of 9/11 is hard to overlook. In discussing this common binary, Michael Bader explains that the "feelings of insecurity and disconnectedness that plague us in our personal and social lives" are often "blamed on the actions of some 'other' who is then demeaned and attacked" (2006, 584). Like in the case of the political powers-that-be post-9/11, "this process of projection is deliberately used by conservatives to solidify their base. By creating an imaginary 'us' and 'them,' they can then promise satisfaction of deep and legitimate longings for a community safe from both real and illusory threats posed from the outside" (584). This us-versus-them binary also exists to nurture a superiority complex common to citizens of the United States.

In analysing the responses of her students in the wake of the national disaster, Spence noted:

The idea that the greatest power in the world might not also be the greatest country seemed to be too much for the students to handle. As a matter of fact, for some, the only way of explaining the "why" of the attacks was that "they" hated "us" because of our freedoms and affluence, because "we" are so great. They wanted so much to believe in our goodness and innocence that they ignored everything they had "learned" [previously] about the banality of evil. (2004, 102-3)

This sort of mindset, beyond solidifying this dangerous (and hierarchical) binary, also resulted in the "sentimentalizing of 9/11" – again showcasing how emotion is deeply intertwined in the (mediated) events of September 11th (Spence 2004, 104). In order to prove that this emotional fixation was not short-lived and played out in narratives long after the attacks, I turn to two specific hit shows of 2006: NBC's *Heroes* and ABC's *Lost*. Both of these successful narratives utilize fear amplification, the us-versus-them binary, and motifs of unity/fate/interconnectedness to subtly tease out this theme of a nation needing to be saved.

NBC's *Heroes* (2006–2010): Season 1

The main premise of *Heroes* revolves around a plot where seemingly ordinary individuals realize they have extraordinary (super) powers. Throughout the first season of this series these main characters begin a physical odyssey that forces their paths to cross with those of the other "heroes" and a spiritual odyssey that forces them to come to terms with

the responsibility that accompanies their special abilities. The inner conflict these characters face symbolizes larger societal conflicts: when does one step up, when does one speak up, when does one strike back, when does one actively play the role of the hero, and when does one passively lie back and wait to be saved. In their analysis of the show, Lynette Porter, David Lavery, and Hillary Robson pick up on this cultural conflict: "If heroes can be (or are, according to the series) genetically enhanced, then the rest of us regular mortals are off the hook as far as trying to save humanity collectively or one person at a time. Not everyone can be a hero. Heroism becomes a genetic imperative of the few, who can then wield their power as they see fit" (2007, 6). But although the show's foundation does in part enable a mindset of passing the proverbial buck, its use of everyday individuals aligning themselves for a common altruistic goal does tap into the common longing to be part of the larger scheme of things, to make a difference, to be one of the good guys. *Heroes* encourages "viewers to think about what makes a modern hero and how each person might be called upon to do something extraordinary. Because *Heroes* deals with life-or-death events and presents so many characters facing crisis points in their lives it quite naturally provides a more philosophical framework for thinking – at least sometimes – about life's larger themes" (Porter, Lavery, and Robson 2007, 33). And some of these large themes become more important to viewers in the wake of a national tragedy.

This being so, one of the major themes of the show circulates around the previously theme of interconnectedness/fate/destiny. In fact, in the final episode of season 1, "How to Stop an Exploding Man," Mohinder's voice-over states this directly: "So much struggle for meaning and purpose, and in the end we find it only in each other, our shared experience of the fantastic and the mundane" (*Heroes* 2007c). Of course, it is the shared experience of the fantastic that dominates the show. In this final episode all of the characters' paths, their destinies, have crossed so that they are all at one shared point in time where they can prevent a national tragedy, one foreshadowed throughout the season's run.

Returning to the previous discussion of censorship post-9/11, this apocalyptic storyline actually changed quite a bit from its original creation to its eventual airing. Tim Kring, the creator of *Heroes*, recounts the revamping of the explosion storyline:

The bomb that ultimately goes off or is prevented from going off in New York was actually attached to a terrorist story and at the heart of that

terrorist story was a very sympathetic character, a Middle Eastern engineer. A young, very brilliant engineer who had become disillusioned and disenfranchised and finds himself involved with a terrorist cell and is basically the architect of the bomb. That character could actually generate and emit a tremendous amount of radioactivity through his hands. That character became Ted on our show once we moved away from the terrorist story. The terrorist story was actually shot and beautifully finished, but it never saw the light of day. It didn't make it past the screening at the network. (Porter, Lavery, and Robson 2007, 59)

Changed or not, a terrorist-like disaster did end up bringing all of the characters together at the closure of season one. In analysing the tragedy that motivates them to join forces, we should not overlook the allusions to 9/11.

The first mention of this pending disaster within the show, and hence the first allusion to 9/11, comes in the form of Isaac's painting on the floor of his art studio – a vision of a New York cityscape in flames (Heroes 2006). This disaster finally becomes "reality" towards the end of the season when, "in 'Five Years Gone,' *Heroes* presents an alternative future vision not only of the characters' world but also of the series itself. In terms of the season's story line, the episode reveals a dystopia that is yet to come" (Porter, Lavery, and Robson 2007, 149). The echoes of 9/11 are not all that subtle, as Porter, Lavery, and Robson note: "Rather than opaquely addressed, references to terrorism are hammered home. After the introduction of the Linderman Act, Homeland Security is called upon to clamp down on attackers 'acting against America's interests'" (149). In this episode, as the president speaks to a sober crowd in the ruins of the city beneath a banner reading "America Remembers," the scene is reminiscent of memorials stationed at Ground Zero years after September 11th.

This episode highlights our fascination with the theme of the "do-over." Viewers are shown this post-explosion scene in order to hope (along with the main characters) that it can still be prevented. Television scholars suggest that "a deeper reason" behind our love of this theme

might be that since 9/11, we are perhaps collectively foreseeing a terrible future and shuddering at the view. Now the kaleidoscope turns into a mirror, and in "Five Years Gone" we are suddenly looking at a distorted image of ourselves, at what we could become in the aftermath of 9/11. Viewers experience a shock of recognition when President Nathan Petrelli

(actually Sylar) appears in front of a devastated New York landscape to speak inspirational platitudes designed to unite Americans and prevent another disaster. The scene is a slightly twisted reflection of ceremonies upon the fifth anniversary of September 11, 2001. (Porter, Lavery, and Robson 2007, 162–3)

As Porter, Lavery, and Robson (2007) note, the timing of this episode is important. In it the characters have travelled to a time five years in the future – one that if they could go back in time *just five years*, they could change. If they could go back in time (and some do have this power) and alter events, an explosion would not hit New York and forever change the world. And when viewers are watching this episode full of longing to rewrite the past, it is not unimportantly *five years* after the attacks of September 11th, 2001.

These visual images of the fictionalized ground zero are quite stirring and interesting from an ideological standpoint. Marc Redfield analyses the term "Ground Zero" which "emerged quasi-spontaneously as a proper name in American mass media immediately after the attacks. As a proper name, uncontextualized and capitalized, it refers to the site formerly occupied by the World Trade Center towers" (2007, 63). He explains that "as an idiom in more general use, it refers to the impact point of a bomb or the exact locus of an explosion. The term was military jargon when it was used at the Trinity site during the development and testing of the atom bomb; after the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, it entered the American sociolect and is now commonly used to describe centers of devastation, natural or man-made" (62). The term "both calls up and wards off ghosts of Hiroshima, remembering that other scene of destruction while also distancing or demoting it by rendering it an *other* ground zero" (62). Redfield claims that

just as "Ground Zero" appropriates and effaces the past, it appropriates and effaces the future. Invoking the nuclear threat, it imagines the future *as* past, and as imaginable. The hammer-blow has fallen: Ground Zero itself has appeared in the world – and yet we have survived. Thus "the worst," in Derrida's phrasing (or at least a version of the worst) is at once conjured up and conjured away. (63)

Therefore, I would argue that remediated fictionalized images of ground zero, like that seen in *Heroes*, reassure viewers that they can survive the worst – that humans can and will save themselves.

Although that analysis may suggest the scene is comforting, the viewer's first exposure to it is likely somewhat disturbing. However, it is not necessarily the images of this fictionalized ground zero that are so chilling, but rather the rationalization given within the narrative for allowing it to come to be. It is a rationale grounded in the affect of fear. In ".07%" Daniel Linderman, one of the key "villains," offers this justification to up-and-coming politician Nathan Petrelli for allowing the explosion to occur: "I said people needed hope but they trust fear. This tragedy will be a catalyst for good, for change. Out of the ashes, humans will find a common goal. A united sense of hope couched in a united sense of fear. And it is your destiny, Nathan, to be the leader who uses this event to rally a city, a nation, a world" (*Heroes* 2007a). When Nathan objects to the plan, stating that half of New York will be lost, Linderman states that it will amount to *only* a .07 per cent decrease in the total world population – an acceptable loss. The importance here is again the amplification, the manipulation, of fear.

This idea of capitalizing on fear surfaces one episode later when Claire speaks to Sylar, the principle bad guy of season 1, as he is disguised as Nathan: "You made everyone afraid of us" (*Heroes* 2007b). Sylar responds, "I made everyone aware of us, fear is just a natural response." Again fear is stressed, but this time the focus is the fear that arises out of a societal structure founded upon the binary of us versus them, as the characters are now living in a world where "normal" humans are terrified of the "heroes" because of their special powers.

ABC's *Lost* (2004–2010): Season 3

Another show that plays out these issues of us versus them, fate/destiny, and fear in a fascinating way is *Lost*. In the fall of 2006 when *Heroes* was debuted, *Lost*, a show some credit as being an ancestor text for *Heroes*, was beginning its third season. This program, when read at the surface level, is about a group of passengers who survive on an unknown island after a plane crash. However, it is actually a show about much, much more, as its complicated thematic undertakings show.

There have been over one hundred references to fate/destiny or free will in the show to date.³ Once of the most obvious scenes is when Charlie scribbles the letters F-A-T-E across his taped fingers at the start of the series (*Lost* 2004a; Piatt 2006, 81). Another occurs when "Sun wonders if the survivors are being punished for past actions or secrets" (*Lost* 2005a; Porter and Lavery 2006, 100). Yet another happens when

Ana Lucia contemplates killing Sayid in an episode where he has been remembering his past wrongdoings and comments that perhaps she is *meant* to kill him (*Lost* 2005c). Two of the main "spiritual" characters, John Locke and Mr Eko, both at different times believe it to be their *destiny* to press the button in the hatch (and save the world). Hurley, a character more often used for comic relief than deep philosophical ponderings, believes that he might have been destined to end up on the island, but he equates his negative destiny with that of the *curse* he believes accompanied his tainted winning lottery numbers (Porter and Lavery, 2006, 102). And this recurring motif is foregrounded in the first episode of the second season, "Man of Science, Man of Faith," which pits the logical doctor, Jack Shephard, against the spiritual hunter, John Locke (*Lost* 2005b; Porter and Lavery 2006, 103). The conflict between these concepts (and characters) continues throughout the program's duration.

Like *Heroes*, this cycling back to explorations of fate/destiny might be attributed to being a narrative formed post-9/11. In *Living Lost: Why We're All Stuck on the Island*, Wood argues that there are many parallels within the plot that echo "our real concerns since September 11, 2001."

What *Lost* does so successfully is take these very real concerns straight off the front pages, abstract them into their psychological impression, and then crystallize that sense back into the framework of the narrative. [...] It involves the psychodynamics of terrorism that the contemporary audience experiences in the everyday world and plays it out on television 24 times a year. As such, *Lost* performs a very necessary function: It gives a narrative (and a safely distant context) to a real-felt sense of trauma. By giving these abstract ideas a tangible narrative with a beginning and ending each week, that sense of terror is contained by the show, and thus becomes something that might actually be manageable. (2007, ix)

In Wood's reading, "the overall narrative of the show abstracts and co-opts our very real concerns over the War on Terror(ism)" and becomes in a sense "a repository for the sense of distress that has been generated, rightly or wrongly, through our media, government, and the collective cultural response to such voices" (ix). In terms of content too, *Lost* fits "the U.S.'s own national narrative since the attacks of September 11, 2001: from plane crashes out of the clear blue to a frightened group under attack to the rallying around a leader figure and the simultaneous distrust of some members within the group" (5). Like the

previously mentioned 24, *Lost* attends to topics fueling national debate, such as torture. This gets touched on in various *Lost* episodes; examples include the episode when Sayid tortures Sawyer for Shannon's asthma medicine, when Sayid himself is tortured once captured by Rousseau, and when Sayid once again turns capturer, holding Ben hostage in the hatch (*Lost* 2004c, 2004d, 2006; Wood 2007, 6–7).

Not quite as obvious is the way the series explores the notion of survival post-trauma. Wood notes that what the fictional survivors on *Lost* "have that most don't is a group that has all survived the same unbelievable trauma to support both the individual and the individual's need to be part of the group ... This aspect of the psychology of the show shouldn't look unfamiliar because it's what most people think happened after our own big plane crashes on September 11, 2001. But that kind of response doesn't just automatically 'happen'" (2007, 54). Wood compares the sacrifices made following WWII to 9/11, claiming:

[the same] things didn't really happen after September 11th, as we were told that our comfy lifestyles would not have to change and no sacrifices beyond simple symbolic gestures were necessary – just think of all the flags posted on gas-guzzling cars in the months after September 11th, while next to nothing was done to lessen U.S. dependence on a fossil fuel economy and its crazy market fluctuations due to events in the places that provide a good deal of those fossil fuels. In its own manner, *Lost* became a model for how we could have responded as a group after a trauma, but weren't able to or chose not to. (54)

Although *Lost* does offer a community united, it does not fail to offer up the us-versus-them binary, sometimes within that united community but also between it and its outside source of conflict: "the others." The inner-group conflict first begins in the second part of the pilot episode when Sawyer accuses Sayid of being a terrorist and having caused the plane to crash, simply because of his Middle Eastern background (*Lost* 2004b). But the mysterious "others" exist as the dangerous "them" that sparks fear in the survivors throughout the first few seasons of the show. The term itself, "other," is packed with cultural baggage, but in a post-9/11 American cultural text, does this necessarily symbolize "terrorist"?

Wood answers this question: "Are the Others terrorists? Not exactly, not in the popular sense: Terrorists need to be dehumanized in the rhetoric used to describe them in order to reinforce their difference from us. This often comes in the form of turning them into animals

and monsters. The Others don't use the same tactics we've come to associate with terrorism, like beheadings and suicide bombings" (2007, 107–8). He cautions against reading this too simplistically: "it's not as if *Lost*'s writers and producers actively set out to create some sort of allegory of the times. When you're steeped in the culture (as an artist or consumer), some kind of reaction to events and circumstances will exercise itself through a work, whether directly, obliquely, or actively ignoring those circumstances" (121). *Lost* does not explore our current circumstances as directly as the post-9/11 dramatic "saving" shows previously mentioned, 24, *Alias*, and *The Unit*. But, in Wood's analysis, this makes sense, especially if we are, as he suggests, "stuck in a state of unconscious distress because we don't have any clear grasp on what it is we're supposed to be afraid of" and therefore "can't really confront that distress directly (because) we just don't know enough about it" (121–2). As a result, the fear citizens feel as a nation post-attack unconsciously resurfaces and seeks resolution in narrative spaces through repetition.

Conclusion: The Continuation of a Televisual Trend

Although *Heroes* and *Lost* serve as great televisual texts housing this cultural baggage, and the 2006–2007 season itself is fascinating for the storylines it offered up to consumers, this sort of narrative "working through" continues at present even past the close of the decade. During the 2008–2009 television, Fox launched another narrative, *Fringe* (which continues to the present), that explores the concerns of a nation (forever) battling an invisible enemy called "terror." Created by J.J. Abrams, Alex Kurtzman, and Roberto Orci, this science fiction program focuses its plot around the FBI "Fringe Division," agents operating under the supervision of Homeland Security. At the heart of this show lies an eclectic team headed by Olivia Dunham (Anna Torv), an FBI agent with enhanced supernatural skills leftover from being part of a childhood experiment; Dr. Walter Bishop (John Noble), a mad scientist figure and former government researcher who understands the capabilities existing on the periphery of science; and his son, Peter Bishop (Joshua Jackson), a potential/eventual love interest to Olivia and investigative sidekick. Originally the program was concerned with investigating "the pattern" – a series of unexplainable, and often catastrophic, events caused by fringe science attacks. The perils from which the characters save society hint at mass concerns about the possible use of biological

warfare and new technology. Like *Heroes*, this program ended its first season with an obvious moment of wish fulfilment when it presented viewers with a parallel universe in which the Twin Towers had not been destroyed on 9/11 (*Fringe* 2009). This storyline is continued into its later seasons.

Although not as popular, as indicated by their early cancellations, each subsequent year has featured a similar program. In 2009 ABC premiered their new drama *FlashForward* (2009–2010), a program hinted to be the replacement for the soon-to-depart *Lost*. Brannan Braga and David Goya adapted Robert J. Sawyer's 1999 science fiction novel to create this program about a mysterious event that caused a blackout wherein the entire human population lost consciousness for two minutes and seventeen seconds. During this brief time, all unconscious persons had visions of their lives six months later. A team of Los Angeles FBI agents assembled the Mosaic, a database system that compiled the visions of all who volunteered what they saw through an online website. These tentative future visions laid the foundation for their investigation as they attempted to discover not only how this event was possible but how it could be prevented in the future. This program, only airing for one season, both began and finished its run with a catastrophic terrorist attack that was loosely reminiscent of 9/11. The following year NBC tried its own hand at a new post-9/11 drama, promising (even more directly than ABC did with *FlashForward*) that this would be the show to fill the void left by popular culture juggernaut *Lost*. *The Event* (2010–2011) opened with a terrorist attack in which not only was the US government the target (and specifically the president), but the weapon of choice was an airplane. Created by Nick Wauters, the drama is decidedly science fiction, focusing on a group of extraterrestrials who were trapped on earth (some detained by the American government) for sixty-six years. As the one-season program progressed, this group began mounting escalating attacks (first on the United States and then on a wider scale) in an attempt to deplete the human population so that they can occupy Earth. As with the majority of the post-9/11 themed shows, it was up to a small group of people (mostly government officials) to attempt to save the day ... the nation ... the world.

The televisual landscape from 2010 to 2015 further revealed lingering post-9/11 trends. The salvation motif remained in a variety of post-apocalyptic programs, such as NBC's *Revolution* (2012–2014) and AMC's *The Walking Dead* (2010–present). And a proliferation of supernatural/fantasy programs – such as The CW's *The Vampire Diaries*

(2009–present), ABC's *Once Upon a Time* (2011–present), NBC's *Grimm* (2011–present), Fox's *Sleepy Hollow* (2013–present), and ABC's *Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.* (2013–present) – often found the “good versus evil” theme common to these shows reading as a loose 9/11 allegory. The prevalence of government-focused programs continued, and with subsequent releases the political critique found within such shows escalated: Showtime's *Homeland* (2011–present), ABC's *Scandal* (2012–present), Netflix's *House of Cards* (2013–present), NBC's *The Blacklist* (2013–present), FX's *The Americans* (2013–present), CBS's *Madame Secretary* (2014–present), and NBC's *State of Affairs* (2014–present).

Well over a decade after the terrorist attacks, this type of programming is not ending, and this could be viewed as troubling. After all, as long as viewers continue to buy into the rhetoric that we need to be saved (and consume shows that reinforce this), this cycle could continue indefinitely and we could remain a nation waiting to be saved (from itself) by our protective Big Brother figure, the government, or its right-hand man, the media. However, the more recent addition of shows that provide harsher social commentary and unflinching political critique suggest that perhaps the escapism found in these post-9/11 narratives is not completely problematic. While the catharsis provided by these shows could potentially disarm political engagement and social dissent, in the midst of their hyperbolic plots these shows are providing viewers with an opportunity to grapple with important geopolitical concerns. And therefore, in between their carefully planned cliffhangers and other promotional stunts, perhaps these shows could spark real political action. If so, then maybe fictional television is the unlikely key to saving this nation after all.

NOTES

- 1 Although there is some scholarly debate concerning the collapsing of the two terms, in this essay I use the terms *affect* and *emotion* interchangeably.
- 2 I have argued in another work, *Feminism, Postmodernism, and Affect* (2009), that the medium of television can be analysed as a storage house of affects on many different levels. Most obvious would be that television programs store the affects of actors in fictional programming and the (usually) unscripted affect of non-actors in non-fiction programming. These stored programs can then act as an archive of affect in terms of the affect they created in their viewers at that time. Analysing television programs from

the same time period allows one to see trends in collective affect (similar to Raymond Williams' notion of structures of feeling) at that time. However, what makes this notion of television as keeper of affect so interesting is that it gives a technological apparatus a power usually associated with humans alone. Crediting the medium of television (in part) with the stimulation and storage of affects personifies it on some level and simultaneously draws attention to the ways that the human affect system functions similarly to this powerful media tool.

- 3 As one of the most analysed shows with one of the most active fan bases, *Lost* is the inspiration for many sites full of thematic dissection. One of the most intricate fan sites is *Lostpedia*. The posters on this site have documented the theme of fate/destiny or free will and list it as occurring regularly through seasons 1 through 6 with increased frequency as the series reaches closure. Contributors to this site record references within episodes to the term "destiny," to the concept of having "a purpose," to the word "fate," to the notion of free will, and to incidents highlighting the concepts of serendipity and karma.

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- 2007c. Episode 1.23, "How to Stop an Exploding Man." First broadcast 21 May 2007 by NBC. Directed by Allan Arkush and written by Tim Kring.
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- 2004b. Episode 1.2, "Pilot, Part 2." First broadcast 29 September 2004 by ABC. Directed by J.J. Abrams and written by J.J. Abrams, Damon Lindelof, and Jeffrey Lieber.
- 2004c. Episode 1.8, "Confidence Man." First broadcast 10 November 2004 by ABC. Directed by Tucker Gates and written by Damon Lindelof.
- 2004d. Episode 1.9, "Solitary." First broadcast 17 November 2004 by ABC. Directed by Greg Yaitanes and written by David Fury.
- 2005a. Episode 1.23, "Exodus." First broadcast 18 May 2005 by ABC. Directed by Jack Bender and written by Jeffrey Lieber.
- 2005b. Episode 2.1, "Man of Science, Man of Faith." First broadcast 21 September 2005 by ABC. Directed by Jack Bender and written by Damon Lindelof.
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