

MORE THAN “JUST A HUNCH:” MEANING, FEMININE INTUITION AND
TELEVISION SLEUTHS

by

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MORE THAN "JUST A HUNCH": MEANING, FEMININE INTUITION AND TELEVISION

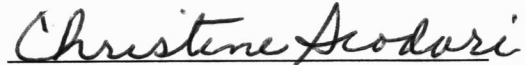
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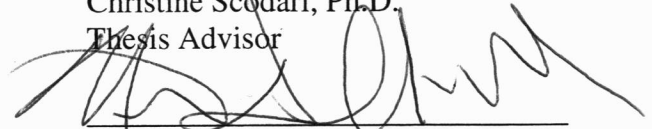
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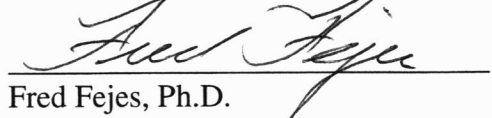
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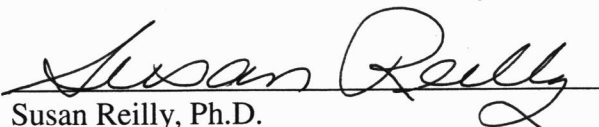
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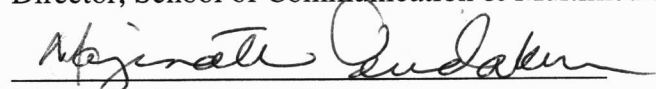
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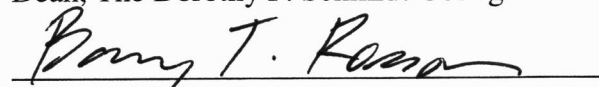
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ABSTRACT

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The rise in popularity of the female sleuth television programs makes it important to explore representations of gender and knowledge. This investigation analyzes interpretations of intuition in the television sleuth genre and relevant paratexts, examines gendered public and private spheres and raises broader questions about gendered knowledge in the series *Medium*, *Crossing Jordan*, *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*, *Veronica Mars*, *Monk*, *The Profiler* and *True Calling*.

Rooted in feminist cultural studies, historical and sociological analysis, television and film theory and work on the detective genre, this investigation establishes common frames, or filters, through which the television sleuth genre represents intuition and the gendered experience of knowledge. Women with intuition are depicted as unstable, dangerous and mentally ill. Though framed similarly, intuitive men have more freedom.

This study expands on academic research on television representations of gender and knowledge. Societal implications include further understanding of meaning-making in regard to gendered knowing.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The introductory chapter elaborates the background and justification for this investigation, as well as explores the literature that is being used as the foundation for this research. Research questions are presented, and methodologies and procedures are detailed.

Background and Justification

As women's issues have gained prominence in the media over the last few decades, female leads in dramas have increasingly infiltrated the television medium. Traditionally, television has seemed ambivalent in its depictions of female characters. Going from reactionary to progressive and every representation in between, women have been portrayed as simple and multifaceted, housewives and professionals, warm and cold-blooded, sexually liberated and repressed and more. Sometimes these conflicting traits are manifested within the same series or even in the same character. Perhaps in response to a social movements for professional equality between the sexes, the roles women increasingly occupy on television have seemingly shifted from the wholly domestic (*I Dream of Jeannie* (NBC 1965-1970), *Bewitched* (ABC 1964-1972)), to some form of the professional (*Ally McBeal* (FOX 1997-2002), *Law & Order* (NBC 1990-present))—albeit in a partial, conflicted or contextualized manner. Female professionals cannot seem to fully escape domestic settings and roles as their male counterparts have done, however, and shown to occupy professional/public/business roles as well as

domestic/private/personal lives that are foregrounded in these texts. Bonnie Dow notes of the growing sector of females who lead lives outside of the domestic sphere:

The qualities, responsibilities, and/or characteristics associated with “woman’s place” in the private sphere are still expected from women, both inside and outside television discourse. Such qualities include specific caretaking behaviors ranging from cooking, cleaning, and child-rearing to more general qualities of nurturance and emotional support. (xxi)

Not only are these characteristics expected, but they are often portrayed as conflicting with a woman’s professional goals. As if to punctuate the simultaneity of the female dual role, female professionals are portrayed as attempting to balance the two seemingly irreconcilable spheres, many times sacrificing one for the other. Such dualism sets up what is often the pivotal point of conflict and dramatic impetus for the television worlds the female characters inhabit.

Historian Glenna Matthews has traced the social history of the housewife, who is prototypical of the domestic, private female. Matthews details how women have been traditionally encouraged to sacrifice professional ambition for the sake of their husbands and children. The career woman, or “public woman” (a term used interchangeably for “prostitute”), has traditionally been portrayed as threatening to the social order and overall stability of society. In addition, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, a functional domestic life—where the housewife was crucial—became silently assumed, providing the unnamed and overlooked private foundation to public social life. Matthews concludes that, “a disproportionate emphasis on one realm at the expense of the other impoverishes the whole of life” (226). Popular media have often served to reinforce this

gender hegemony by fragmenting the female image into a mutually exclusive binary of a public, professional life versus a naturalized, private, domestic one.

However, although these female characters represent conflict and often occupy and reinforce traditional gender dimorphism, it is still possible to find images of empowerment in these characters. Despite the issues surrounding female representations on television and hardly any leads in dramas prior to the 1980s, women have had increasing presence since then as dramatic protagonists. As Priscilla Walton and Manina Jones posit in *Detective Agency*, “television has defined its audience as female” (244). Using Julie D’Acci’s argument, they point out that the reason for this is primarily economic. Television defines women as the main consumers of household goods and targets them for the benefit of these particular advertisers. However, this isn’t a wholly bad thing, as Walton and Jones show, because it “ensures female protagonists and ‘women’s issues’ get air time” (244).

One role in particular—the female sleuth—has been on the rise on U.S. networks. The Oxford English Dictionary defines *sleuth* as “The track or trail of a person or animal,” “a bloodhound” and “a detective.” For the purposes of this study, *sleuth* and *detective* can be used interchangeably. However, sleuth is used to more generally denote an activity rather than a profession. Every new television season, major networks and cable channels alike unveil new series in which female characters engage in sleuthing, be it as professional crime fighters or private enthusiasts. In this analysis, female sleuths act as discoverers of truth, uncoverers of assumption and are complex sites of multiple subjectivities and negotiated meanings.

Important to note here is that even in series that are not explicitly in the detective genre, and although not all the characters work professionally as police or private detectives, many of the characters engage in such work and many of the conventions of the detective genre are used. That is, detective work and sleuthing remain central driving forces of the narrative. Even for those characters that are involved in some aspect of professional detective work, a large part of the episodes in many of the series are set in places other than the professional space. This means that much of the aforementioned conflict and contradiction is introduced as the female characters struggle to balance the demands of their domestic lives and their work as professional or recreational sleuths. Often, the seemingly opposite demands of their lives tear at the character's self-identity, producing self-doubt and guilt over not being able to devote fully to the traditional roles of "woman," "mother," and "wife." The guilt these characters reveal is often naturalized and supported by other characters and events in the series, making it quite easy to interpret the work they do as rebellious and selfish. However, this can also be read as empowering. As Danae Clark points out in her article about the 1980s detective series *Cagney & Lacey*:

The power and credibility of Cagney and Lacey as heroines derive from the text's refusal to separate the public and private aspects of their lives...the dissolution of this distinction in *Cagney & Lacey* can thus be read as an attempt to represent women in more empowering social relationships. As women engaged in a demanding profession, work forms an integral part of Cagney's and Lacey's experiences and provides a context outside the home in which decisions are discussed and acted upon. (124)

It can be argued that the same theory applies to the characters in this investigation. Although not all are professional sleuths, their experiences range from the home to the workplace and everything in between. By portraying all aspects of their lives in a fluid manner, the characters become empowered. Audiences can also read such characters as empowering for their own lives. Walton and Jones emphasize that viewers can still “take pleasure in the portrayal of the strong woman investigator, viewing ‘against the grain’,” although they point to Robert Deming’s argument that while audience reception is an important factor, the “range of freedom is limited” for such reading (243).

As such programs become increasingly commonplace and many maintain wide audiences over multiple seasons, the need to explore meanings related to gender and power has gained importance. The impact these programs can have is undeniable, as many have had millions of viewers. More generally, popular genres are often overlooked as sources of serious theoretical contemplation and critical analysis. However, Linda Mizejewski theorizes, “Popular genres are often goldmines for cultural studies,” because they “tap into fantasies and assumptions about gender, power and sexuality” (15). Therefore, studies of popular television series and television characters, however wide an audience or commercially successful, can be potentially powerful as a site for cultural analysis. At the very least, popular genres function based on assumptions a mass audience understands—which Jacqueline Bobo describes as a “cultural competency.” In her work on African American audience response to the movie *The Color Purple*, Bobo observed how viewers approach a text with knowledge of stereotypes and other cultural meanings, and then create new meanings that apply to their own lives. “Unhinging” and examining such cultural assumptions can uncover wider social trends and issues and

allow for a greater understanding of common (mis)conceptions in such areas as gender, power, race and sexuality.

Theoretically, this research is based in cultural and feminist studies, with literary theory and textual analysis serving as the foundation for an analysis of conventions of television, detective and mystery stories as they relate to the television sleuth genre. This study is also important because little research has been done on the topic of intuition, particularly as it is represented in popular media. Research on gender representation in the television sleuth genre has not been widely done, and in that regard this investigation has wider social implications. For this investigation, the data set includes the following programs: *Medium* (NBC 2005-present), *Crossing Jordan* (NBC 2000-2007), *Law and Order: Criminal Intent* (NBC 2001-present), *Veronica Mars* (CW 2004-2007), *Monk* (USA 2004-present), *The Profiler* (NBC 1996-2000) and *True Calling* (FOX 2003-2005), which are either still on the air first run, available in syndication or on DVD.

Issues to be Addressed

This study addresses the following primary issues: What are the available interpretations and meanings available of intuition as represented in female television sleuths? How do relevant paratexts contextualize the experience of intuition? This analysis also looks at the ways intuition is portrayed in both female and male characters to explore any possible meanings based on their similarities and differences. Also implicit is the secondary issue of the meanings available of gender representation in the public (masculine, professional) and private (feminine, domestic) spheres. The domestic has traditionally been considered a feminine mode of knowing (“mother knows best”),

and this study is interested in exploring the ways such domestic knowledge is represented and interpreted through television sleuth characters.

Literature Review

Cultural Studies and Feminist Cultural Studies

Coined by Marxist philosopher Antonio Gramsci, “cultural hegemony” is an important term in the study of mass media. Gramsci’s theory posits that one group can subjugate another through the use of ideology, when the subjugated masses voluntarily adopt the ruling group’s perspective and conform to its dominant practices. As such, the subjugated group (Gramsci’s laborers) begins working towards the goals of the ruling group as if those goals were their own. Hegemony has been understood to wholly encompass every aspect of life, although it is ultimately unstable as it needs to be recreated and reenacted in order to maintain power. Patriarchy is understood as one such hegemonic institution, and work in feminist cultural studies, particularly in relation to mass media, addresses how meaning can be negotiated from within this structure.

To begin to understand what the feminist cultural studies discipline undertakes, one must first understand where the discourse developed and what it is not, and a distinction must be made between feminism and feminist cultural studies. As Suzanna Walters explains in *Material Girls*, feminism has been based on or been closely tied to feminist politics and interventions (31). In relation to media studies, the “images” view taken by much of the early feminist communications research is of popular media as a “reflection of dominant social values, that is, media images as the symbolic manifestation of prevailing social norms and ideals,” and as the propagator of hegemonic meaning and messages (32). Walters then discusses the shift from an “images of women” approach in

feminist research to a view of “woman as image” (39). Though in no way simple or linear, the shift basically meant that research began to take the view that media is not a reflection of woman, as there is no “real” woman in the world to reflect. Research also shifted away from the idea of the consumption of media as a one-way flow of information from media to audience. In other words, the theories got more complex as it was understood that woman’s identity is not a fixed or simple thing, no matter what the mode.

The new feminism thus sought to look at “how representations *construct* sexual difference, rather than simply reflect it” “we began to examine how our cultural images produce this category ‘woman’ and thus help to produce gender distinctions and gender dominance” (47). Walters points out, however, that this approach once again takes too extreme a stance. Instead of viewing the image of woman as reflecting a non-existent reality, the signification approach assumes the “entire cultural notion of ‘woman’ is itself constructed in and through images rather than somehow ‘residing’ in the images themselves” (48). Walters’ problem with this view is that it assumes a split between social woman and the cultural image of “woman.”

Walters proposes going beyond the cultural text that both the “image” theorist and the “signification” theorists reinforce. That is, both camps take the media text to be the subject and object of analysis (144). Both approaches generally ignore the audience member as active participant in the cultural process (except, as Walters points out, more recent feminist work on the audience). Walters’ primarily proposes a theoretical shift in the way feminist cultural studies is undertaken:

This is not to say that feminist cultural theorists should not engage in semiotics or other methods of decoding cultural objects, but that these approaches should be used to enhance *feminist* cultural theorizing, rather than the other way around...women's unique position vis-à-vis mass culture (woman as both subject and object, as the one defined by that which she is not—"man"—as the body through which difference is produced) renders feminism *as a standpoint* privileged access to the arduous process of demystification and subversive interpretation. (153)

While understanding the shortcomings of a strict theoretical approach, the sources for this research vary across discourse, time period, literary form and approach. Casting a wide theoretical net provides valuable insight. While staying firmly rooted in the feminist cultural studies approach, sources from film and television studies, mass media theory, cultural studies, literary theory, and sociological discourse prove useful in gaining the widest and most inclusive perspective.

In addition, in response to Walters' views about feminist cultural studies and the inclusion of the audience, this study uses Stuart Hall's encoding/decoding theory and the terms hegemonic/preferred reading, negotiated meaning, and oppositional reading in particular, as detailed by Suzanna Walters. Hall's framework allows for an array of interpretive opportunities, and both hegemonic reading and potential oppositional readings are identified by examining the subjectivities of primary as well as secondary texts that include network websites and actor interviews. Walters delineates Hall's theory of encoding/decoding with relation to representation as follows:

First is a reading of the image wholly within the dominant ideology; this first reading position would interpret the representation as it was “encoded” by the producers. Second is a “negotiated” reading, whereby one accepts the underlying framework of the ideology but challenges some of its particulars. Third is the “oppositional” reading, something like a reading against the grain where the viewer challenges the fundamental assumptions of the representation. (78)

The potential for oppositionality is one of the main focuses of this analysis. As Walton and Jones put it, “Despite its [television’s] homogenizing mass-market appeal and its accountability to corporate concerns—both features of mass culture at large—television has the potential to speak oppositionally from within mass culture and thus help negotiate change” (244). Interpretive possibilities within each of these categories are explored.

Hall describes oppositionality as a text being approached by an unintended audience, or a targeted audience understanding the preferred reading of a text, but deriving counter-hegemonic meaning from what is intended. In this investigation, these programs all air or were aired during prime-time and geared towards women. As such, that the domestic sphere is portrayed in these programs can be argued to be the strategic marketing of household goods. Additionally, that women find empowerment in these characters is not unintentional, since the struggle between a feminist consciousness and sexist representation can serve as the underlying drama that captures an audience’s attention and earns their loyalty. Oppositionality in these instances is more nuanced. The truly oppositional audience or subjectivity would be one that resists the implicit guilt these female characters convey because they lead non-traditional lives. The oppositional stance also raises questions about the very consumerism implied surrounding gendered

spheres of knowledge (public/professional sphere as male, private/domestic sphere as female).

Also important is Suzanna Walters' view that feminist cultural studies needs to address the larger social contexts of a media text. Eileen Meehan emphasizes, "Culture may be a whole way of life, but it seems to be studied principally through close readings of texts" (213). While this simplifies issues methodologically, Meehan points out that there is much more to a text than the actual text. Part of the work undertaken in this study is to examine the contextualization of the sleuth characters within the broader culture through the consideration of metatextual matter produced by the media, using Gérard Genette's notion of paratext, which he defines as things in a published work that accompany the text and provide a framework through which to understand the text. Generally, paratexts produced by the same media networks that produce the television series strongly favor a dominant hegemonic reading of the media text. Many other paratexts, such as reviews, program summaries and related interviews and articles also may favor a dominant reading of the text. However, there are potential oppositional opportunities within each of these, which this investigation aims to identify. Meehan positions such audience meaning-making as the very definition of culture if one looks beyond the text: "Culture, then, becomes what people do to express meaning—the encoding and decoding that produces artifacts and renders meaning accessible" (216). By reading both hegemonic meaning and potential audience perspectives into these texts, both the encoding and decoding process are analyzed.

Women in the Detective Genre

Kimberly J. Dilley's book *Busybodies, Meddlers, and Snoops* places female sleuths into categories like "the private eye," or "the amateur sleuth," though she recognizes the possibilities for many different combinations and experiences outside of these categories. Although written as a literary analysis, the categories apply to the different types of television sleuths in this study. Dilley provides an interesting framework through which to look at how women are positioned within the detective genre as simultaneously powerful and vulnerable. By being positioned in various ways, for example by labeling an older woman as nothing more than a busybody, power is taken away from the female sleuth character, even if the "busybody" ultimately solves the crime. However, it is often precisely within this framework that female sleuth can be most successful, since women are often regarded as nothing more than background at worst, sex object at best (135). Many of the sleuths analyzed in this analysis use their cultural position as a type of disguise, similarly to Kathleen Rowe's analysis of masquerade.

In terms of visibility, Dilley positions this masquerade (or "brazen hussy," as she calls the unapologetic female sleuth) as a site of empowerment, "A brazen hussy elicits connotations of being out in public, not hiding her 'wares' but rather proclaiming herself to those who pass by, knowing it to cause scandal and titillation" (137). In her article, Danae Clark quotes the creator of *Cagney & Lacey* as saying, "[t]his is not a show about two cops who happen to be women; it's about two women who happen to be cops" (118). Interestingly, Dilley makes the similar point that women sleuths are just that—women first, "The woman investigator does not succeed because she looks and acts like a man.

She neither scorns masculine society—becoming ‘ultra-feminine’—nor adopts it as her own—becoming an ‘honorary male’” (138). Both authors center the action of female sleuth texts to be the female. As such, the focus is taken off the dead body, though it is often the murder (or other crime) that catalyzes the narrative action. The focus thus shifts, as Dilley posits:

The woman hero...does not just figure out ‘whodunit.’ She takes the author, characters, and reader on a journey—a quest. It is the journey that is central to these mystery novels, not the dead body. During this journey, gender stereotypes are illuminated, struggles take place over ‘assumptions’ and ‘essentials,’ and new types of fantasies and narratives for women are tried out. (139).

It is in this respect that female sleuths—and characters who possess feminine intuition—reposition the detective mystery to be about more than just the solution. The narrative refocuses on the process: “Women’s mystery novels examine and highlight life. They involve relationships, the details of the everyday, and the construction of community” (139).

Interestingly, Dilley points out, it’s a breakdown in community that leads to this journey of redefinition and refocusing. Necessarily, detective stories thrive on societal disorder. It is then up to the sleuth to reveal the cause of the breakdown and reestablish order. As Dilley posits, “The women are not necessarily looking to restore order in the sense of that which was before. It was because of that ‘order’ that there was a breakdown. The community of the individual mystery novels gives the detective permission to dig into lives and their secrets.” What the sleuth turns up with is generally more profound

than a critique of a specific series of events leading up to a crime, but rather a criticism of “society’s secrets and oppressions” (140).

While sleuths traditionally seek truth and justice, female sleuths and characters who possess feminine intuition not only search for the truth, but emphasize the unfixed nature of “truth” altogether. These sleuths recognize that truth is subjective and fluid, as Dilley surmises:

Clues have multiple meanings...the detective signifies to the reader and characters that there is no one “truth.” Signs (clues) have various meanings depending on who is telling the story, and/or its purpose. Meaning is determined by who has the power and authority to control it. (140)

Therefore, while the sleuths in this study are all generally after truth and justice, truth is not an absolute. Perhaps one of the most important ways sleuths expose hegemonic frameworks is in revealing the artificial nature of absolute, objective truth.

In her book *Hardboiled and High-heeled*, Linda Mizejewski analyzes the female detective in literature, television and film, and emphasizes how the “detective is classically the character that sees what others miss and even what’s missing” (7).

Whereas in most cases it is the woman who is being looked at, Mizejewski points out that for female detectives, it isn’t the woman’s job to look good, it’s her job to look (4).

Female sleuths also shift the gaze away from the female body and onto the body at the center of the crime or mystery. *Hardboiled and High-heeled* makes the point that unlike the traditional female role as mother, which begins with a birth, the detective story usually begins with a death. Suzanna Walters says of motherhood in the media that birth is presented as “a woman’s most significant moment, as transcendent, as inevitable” (17).

For the female detective, the reversal plays on the image of ‘woman as mother’ versus ‘woman as detective’ and the shift in gaze from the woman’s body to the dead body, which is a “threat to meaning and order” (14). Birth isn’t presented as natural anymore—death, often gruesome, is what becomes inevitable and serves as the catalyst and beginning of the story instead of the end of it.

Mizejewski also analyzes the etymology of “detective” and encapsulates what women in the genre have done to shift the gender roles. The definition of detective is “dick, fellow or man,” as well as “to watch.” This means a detective is, by definition, a man who watches, or a man on the watch (14). A female detective is thus a “female with a gun”—a female dick (13). As such, the female detective is already a threatening oddity in the male dominated world of sleuthing. In the detective story and film noir, it is usually the woman who is always the “dark secret” to be penetrated and exposed (17). Now, in turn, it’s the woman’s turn to probe and expose. Mizejewski points out that part of the thrill of women detective stories like the tales of Nancy Drew is her capacity to have non-romantic and non-domestic adventures (18). Women detectives are given the opportunity to form self-identities not based on their roles as mothers or wives, although it’s important to note that female detectives in this literature generally have failed personal relationships, as in the mystery series by Sue Grafton and Patricia Cornwell.

The issue of visibility is once again explored in many of the detective television series Mizejewski analyzes; particularly in *The Profiler*, where heroine Sam Waters has a “psychic gift of forensic intuition” that allows her profession as an FBI profiler to take on a supernatural and highly personal tone (108). Sam’s brand of intuition makes her body the site of a battle between her intuitive capacity and her scientific training, which

Mizejewski likens to the character of Jordan Cavanaugh in *Crossing Jordan* (110). In *The Profiler*, vision is a central theme, and Mizejewski theorizes that Sam's unique ability to visualize graphic crime scenes with clarity and detail reverses the traditional male-dominated detective genre where women got attention for what they looked like rather than what they saw (110). In the heroines and programs analyzed for this research, vision is a pivotal theme—and generally it's the woman who's doing the looking. Interestingly, she is also always being looked at—both by other characters in the series and by the television viewers themselves.

In the article “*Cagney and Lacey: Feminist Strategies of Detection*,” Danae Clark discusses the so-called “woman question” in detective fiction, which generally entails finding a woman's place in the narrative (124). Clark compares *Cagney and Lacey* (CBS 1982-1988) to more traditional detective fiction, such as film noir, where “the woman question is generally resolved by determining the guilt or innocence of women, and guilty women...are killed, punished, or otherwise eradicated from the text” (124). However, in *Cagney and Lacey* Clark finds a different approach to solving the woman question. Mainly, the characters in *Cagney and Lacey* are the ones trying to work through issues of patriarchal oppression, and “resolution of the woman question thus becomes a resolution of the issues that affect women's autonomy and expression” (124). This is similar to many of the television sleuths analyzed in this study. The woman question is not seen as an external judgment imposed by an assumed male arbiter. Instead, women themselves are working through their problems with and within a patriarchal structure. In cases where the character is male, their feminization often brings to light the same issues of gender hegemony.

Feminine Modes of Knowing

A feminine mode of knowing, as defined by Susan Bordo in “The Cartesian Masculinization of Thought,” is set apart from the limited range of knowing involved in the masculine scientific principles of detachment, distance, and clarity. Bordo defines the hierarchical system of knowing as reinforcing hegemonic patriarchy, and sets masculine scientific understanding above all other ways of understanding the world. Feminine modes of knowing, therefore, as represented by the defined characters in this investigation, draw on different, non-scientific, non-standard, and often misunderstood ways of seeing and understanding the world. Feminine modes of knowing draw on ethic and moral concerns, as well as empathic and intuitive knowledge as primary and essential in interpreting reality with the hope of achieving justice and balance.

Bordo defines feminine epistemological perspectives as being based “not in detachment and distance, but in closeness, connectedness, and empathy” (263). Intuition, through its opposition to rationality—which implies a certain amount of both detachment and distance—can be considered a feminine mode of knowing. Intuition undermines hegemonic gender representation by virtue of creating “epistemological [in]security,” and is impossible to contain and control because it cannot be defined and bound (253). Another uniquely threatening aspect is its inaccessibility to men. The epistemological insecurity created by female intuition demonstrates the power that exists in the mystical and reconnects feminine knowing directly to the mother world from which masculine rationality and idealized scientific thought strives to separate itself (248-249). A return to a feminine mode of knowing threatens to disrupt the scientific foundation of hegemonic masculine power.

As defined by the Oxford English Dictionary, *intuition* is “direct or immediate insight,” and to *intuit* means “to know anything immediately, without the intervention of any reasoning process.” Female intuition, therefore, poses the distinct threat of making transparent the otherwise invisible devices that filter culture to the masses and otherwise reinforce hegemonic gender roles for a variety of reasons.

The feminine mode of knowing this study has identified as intuition does not only reconnect the feminine to the world through direct knowledge, however. By bridging the privately visible to the external world in the form of knowledge that enters one’s consciousness directly from external sources, intuition functions as a link between the public and private spheres which, as has already been established, have traditionally been set in irreconcilable opposition. As defined by Kathleen Rowe, liminality connects women to a more “animalistic,” instinctual, and sensory mode of knowing. From the multiple points of liminality (public/private, culture/instinct) female intuition has the power of “possession and control of the *visible*” (12, emphasis mine). Interestingly, the Oxford English Dictionary defines visibility as being “clearly...observable,” “free from concealment” and “the power of seeing.”

In the sociological work *The Sex of Knowing*, Michelle Le Doeuff discusses the origins of intuition and how it came to be associated with the feminine. Le Doeuff begins with historical and philosophical writings—such as Descartes and Rousseau—that depict intuition as being associated with a monotheistic deity, either as an attribute of that deity or a gift from the deity to humanity (4-5). As Le Doeuff point out, however, once education came to signify different levels of social strata, intuition became devalued in favor of discursive knowledge, “since intuition can hardly be taught...it was a foregone

conclusion that discursivity would win out wherever learning is transmitted” (7). Another interesting and valid point Le Doeuff makes is the ‘specificity prejudice’ the very term “feminine intuition” employs, “‘Specificity’ applies only to the feminine, as if the masculine were the norm and the universal” (8). While this study understands that through the very differentiation of intuition as a feminine mode of knowing it plays into the masculine universality assumption, it is not within the framework of this research to analyze and deconstruct gendered language. Rather, it seeks to look at the ways producers, audiences and media negotiate meanings of gender constructs.

Intuition is also historically situated in Westerfelhaus and Combs’ article “Criminal Investigations and Spiritual Quests.” They identify *The X-Files* (FOX 1993-2002) as a site of tension between Western science and non-scientific ways of knowing. Westerfelhaus and Combs trace the “dialectic between these two alternate ways of knowing and coping with the world...back more than two and a half millennia to ancient Greece, where Western science first took root” (206). As such, *The X-Files*, as well as the media texts in this investigation, reflect contemporary political, ecological, gender and social concerns. Similarly to *The X-Files*’ motto “The truth is out there,” the protagonists also have a steadfast loyalty to the truth, wherever it may take them.

Part of the difference between the female sleuth and the male sleuth is presented as being the personal connection and emotional investment female sleuths make with the victims of a crime, their families, and with people in general. Once again, this is often pegged as a gender difference, in the sense that women are depicted as having mothering tendencies that emotionally bond them to others generally, and those who have been victimized specifically. Often, it’s precisely the sleuth’s closeness to a crime and its

victims that prompt their intuition, creating a sense that intuition—direct knowledge—originates similarly to emotions. This is very different approach from the male sleuth tradition, as detailed by Maureen Reddy in *Sisters in Crime*. Reddy write that male sleuth characters still often follow “the tenets set down by the Detection Club in Britain in the 1930s, which in turn followed Ronald Knox’s ‘Ten Commandments of Detection’ in requiring members to abjure ‘Divine Revelation, Feminine Intuition, Mumbo-Jumbo, Jiggery-Pokery, Coincidence or the Act of God’” and to solve their crimes through a strict and scientific process of deduction (3). Reddy writes that the emphasis for those sleuths who follow the sleuthing tenets is on a body of evidence and the focus is on “the process of solving the puzzle, with character and personal relationships largely extraneous to the plot” (3). It is exactly such blasphemous personal involvement with the mystery or crime that allows the female sleuth to solve the crime. Once again, this harkens back to Bordo’s analysis that science is often set apart from intuition or other such direct connections with the world, including an emotional connection. In other words, according to the Detection Club, unless sleuthing is completely rational it is not considered sleuthing.

Intuition is defined as the primary feminine mode of knowing being analyzed in this research. For research purposes and to encompass a wide array of experiences and understanding, intuition is defined through a broad range of abilities and phenomena, although all with similarities strong enough to unite them under the common term “intuition.” This range includes the ability to visualize or imagine a different perspective from one’s own, or empathically intuit another’s feelings. Such empathy sometimes surfaces overtly in a supernatural form experienced sensually through psychic

communication, speaking to ghosts or spirits, and dreams. At other times intuition takes the forms of a less literal “hunch,” or “gut feeling.”

It would be counterproductive for this analysis to view feminine intuition as a trait solely possessed by women, however. As Walters points out:

Femininity is not interchangeable with women, although it is clearly a part of the construction of female identity...evoking ‘femininity’ as an all-encompassing, transhistorical quality...avoids a more nuanced and detailed discussion of different femininities. (148)

This investigation includes various media texts, such as *Monk* and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* where men predominantly exhibit the type of understanding Susan Bordo would classify as feminine knowing. What this research undertakes, then, is to analyze the way these men and women use, cope with, feel about and otherwise live with feminine intuition and how such feminine modes of knowing manifest themselves in the first place. This study also looks at the construction of a greater social narrative surrounding the male and female characters, as well as the way various paratexts filter feminine intuition as displayed by male and female sleuths.

In *Hardboiled and High-heeled*, Linda Mizejewski credits intuition for the success rates of some of the female sleuths on the best-seller’s list. Patricia Cornwell’s popular mystery series featuring medical examiner Kay Scarpetta is similar to many of the protagonists being analyzed in this investigation. As Mizejewski points out, Scarpetta possesses a particular brand of knowing—intuition—that sets her apart from her colleagues. Generally, “Scarpetta’s legal and forensic colleagues neglect ‘the facts’ she believes are important” (43). These facts are not always scientific, however. As with

many of the heroines being analyzed, Scarpetta feels a moral obligation to the victims she encounters in her morgue, and the investigation always takes on a personal and passionate tone (48).

In some instances, intuition sometimes takes the form of the supernatural. In *Giving Up the Ghost*, Katherine Fowkes provides insight into spirits, ghosts and angels in film, some of which can be paralleled in the sleuth characters who display intuition through direct communication with such apparitions. One of the useful definitions provided is of a ghost itself as a character who has died but appears visibly or aurally as a character in the narrative with some purpose, such as righting a wrong or performing a good deed. Fowkes describes the other characteristics of a ghost, including invisibility, disconnection of voice from body, tendency to reveal itself to some and not others, ability to move through solid objects, ability to float or fly, ability to manipulate solid objects, physically similar to itself before death and the ability to enter other bodies (15). The ghosts that some of the sleuth characters in this research communicate with have some or all of these characteristics. However, one of the ways in which ghosts manipulate the physical world is through their influence on the sleuth characters they communicate with—particularly in their dreams.

One of the additional variations this study makes in regard to Fowkes' text is to focus less on the agency of the ghost and more on the medium who communicates with the ghost. While ghosts do have certain power and agency in the television series they inhabit, the cast of ghostly characters is rarely recurring. There are only a handful of instances where a ghost character carries over into a second episode, let alone recurs

throughout a season. Structurally, this takes the focus off any specific ghost or spirit and places the emphasis on the person communicating with them.

Another interesting application of Fowkes analysis of ghost comedy films is her analysis of ghosts and gender identification. Primarily, Fowkes theorizes that while male characters generally exhibit independence, agency, control and power when alive, as ghosts all characters are feminized (12). That is to say, they undergo a change that renders them voiceless, powerless and only able to communicate through others—most often a woman's voice. Narratively, this means the male character loses his maleness through the loss of his body, and only regains his voice through a woman. In instances of female ghosts, the woman gains a voice she may never have had during her life. Therefore, the female sleuth characters that communicate with ghosts give a voice to all characters regardless of gender, but the effect that voice has on male and female ghosts is simultaneously emasculating and empowering. Basically, this means all ghosts become feminized—it's just the male ghosts who stand to lose certain privileges their gender may have enabled during their lives.

This places the sleuth character in an interesting position, and perhaps even a feminizing one. As Fowkes points out, ghosts experience several different rebirths. First, in the mere fact they are able to be seen after their death. Also, in both ghost films and television shows featuring ghosts, they tend to depart the world of the living once their purpose has been fulfilled, thereby undergoing their real death (75). This positions the sleuth character as a mother-figure—the one helps them cope with the world, cares for them and often does their bidding. In some instances, the sleuth even begins to act like the archetypal mother—protective and defensive.

Although perhaps feminized by acting as a mother-figure, the sleuth is simultaneously empowered by acting as the actual agent through which the ghosts communicate with the living world. As Fowkes points out, the main impetus for many of the plots in both ghost films and television series featuring ghosts is the need to communicate some important information. That is, inherently the plot focuses on the miscommunication or lack of communication that occurred during the ghost's life and the need to amend the situation before moving on. Fowkes applies Mary Ann Doane's idea of the "melodramatic too-late," the tragic mistiming that often occurs during the ghosts' lives (29). Fowkes writes that the tragedy "resides not exclusively in death per se but in the fact that death prevents the expression of crucial information that would set the story straight and provide happy resolution" (37). It is then up to the sleuth character to speak the unspoken, right the wrong, and communicate the mis/uncommunicated.

The Warrior Women of Television by Dawn Heinecken analyzes programs such as *La Femme Nikita* (USA 1997-2001), *Aeon Flux* (MTV 1991-1995) and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (WB/UPN 1997-2003). The work deals primarily with body politics, important to the sleuth genre that heavily relies on the dead body as the beginning of the mystery adventure. Heinecken also discusses areas such as sexuality and victimization, the valorization of the feminine, and power and desire. All of these areas are of analytical importance to this investigation, particularly for textual analysis. The book also provides an interesting context for my analysis, such as placing the female hero in larger cultural contexts, which is relevant to the study of the television female sleuth genre.

Research Procedures and Methodology

The research for this investigation primarily involves textual analysis of the television series *Medium* (NBC 2005-present), *Crossing Jordan* (NBC 2000-2007), *Law and Order: Criminal Intent* (NBC 2001-present), *Veronica Mars* (CW 2004-2007), *Monk* (USA 2004-present), *The Profiler* (NBC 1996-2000) and *True Calling* (FOX 2003-2005). Although heavy reliance on textual analysis is often cited as a failure of media studies, as Elizabeth Traube defends, textual analysis is equally important and complementary to audience analysis in analyzing meaning because it's important to examine "textual pressure or constraints on receiving audiences" (Heinecken 17). Current episodes, episodes in syndication and DVD collections of the series are analyzed using feminist cultural studies, sociological and historical analysis of gender roles, and television and film analysis.

Framing is an important analytical tool that is used in this study. First theorized by Erving Goffman in 1974, frames are cognitive structures that guide perceptions of reality. In media studies, framing analysis is used to analyze the influence of an individual's perception of meaning. Often frames manifest themselves as a collection of stereotypes or assumptions, for example. For this analysis, the television programs are viewed critically in order to define the categories into which intuition and the feminine experience is framed. Four frames are being posited for this analysis, all of which attempt to downplay, co-opt or otherwise discredit feminine knowing. Potential oppositional readings are also be explored in response to these categories and can be seen as an important way to read opposition into a mainstream ideology. Kimberly Dilley states:

Alternative visions of reality can “leak” out from the dominant ideology. “Leaks” produce alternative definitions of cultural artifacts...Cultural definitions are, to a certain degree, fluid and changeable. What begins as “alternative” is often worked into mainstream society. The “leaks” provide avenues for resistance and the possibilities for change. (145)

One important methodological resource is Christine Scodari and Becky Mulvaney article “Nothing’s Gonna Give,” which uses paratextual evidence such as screen reviews and movie posters as an important part of the textual analysis. They use Genette’s notion of “paratexts,” referring to literary artifacts beyond mere text, such as book jackets or covers, cover notes, typesets, and front matter (3). Generally, these “paratexts” contextualize literature within larger cultural conventions and attempt to filter the reading experience. This research includes analysis of reviews, television, internet and print advertisements, network websites, actor interviews and other media interpretations. Suzanna Walters considers paratext as an integral part of a cultural text, or event:

We cannot simply ‘read’ these events as discrete texts of culture, as many formalist critics so elegantly do. The meaning of these narratives exists not only in the actual narrative moment of the cultural articulation, but in the vast and complex circuit of articulations that both preceded and follow the localized event. (14)

As a popular mass medium, television viewing is often mediated through the use of these paratexts and therefore merits consideration.

Summary

This investigation addresses how people know and understand the world. The ways the characters in question come to understand themselves, those around them and social relationships directly relates to *how* they get such knowledge. More specifically, this investigation addresses a type of knowing, identified as feminine intuition. Embodied by both male and female characters in the aforementioned television programs, feminine intuition provides these characters a very different way of understanding themselves and the world than its constructed binary—science and empirical knowing. It is also important to read meaning into these texts as both producers and consumers, so as to explore the range of representation available in the text. As Kimberly Dilley theorizes, “Each new women’s detective novel [and television program] and academic critique expands the number of voices participating in the creation of possible women’s narratives” (144).

That being said, there are several inevitable drawbacks to this study, one being an absence of racial and ethnic analysis. Though the media texts are varied across gender lines, all the male and female characters are white. Also, sexuality and socioeconomic status are also fairly traditional. The characters are almost all (except for a few episodic instances) heterosexual, and all fall within the mid-to-upper socioeconomic class.

Another area that is not explored is qualitative audience analysis. Future studies in the area of feminine intuition and television sleuths could expand to audience analysis and include participant observation, online focus groups or other such technique to explore audience interpretations.

Ironically, however oppositional feminine intuition may be and despite the vision-ability the protagonists exhibit, these television programs are encompassed within the structural hegemony of television. As Linda Mizejewski points out, the woman detective on television—who does the looking while being the object of the viewer’s gaze—is a “sharp, bittersweet metaphor” for what she can see and who can see her (112). Ultimately, this is the crux of feminism. As Suzanna Walters paraphrases Teresa De Lauretis, the feminist critique has a unique place as simultaneously within and from without culture, as women are both in the cinema (and television) as representation and outside the cinema as “subjects of practices” (24).

II. ANALYSIS

Using Erving Goffman's notion of framing, which can be understood as a bundle of cultural definitions, this analysis chapter identifies four frames that are used to contextualize these characters and intuition more generally. The first frame involves difficulties the heroines face when trying to balance their domestic and professional lives. The construct portrayed in this frame ultimately leads to a negative view of the heroines' lives as chaotic and unfulfilling. Frame two presents the father figure as a guide for the heroines. This frame assumes that the sleuth's disorder and unruliness must be reprimanded, tamed, and consoled by a better-rounded, balanced individual, who is usually male. Frame three presents the idea of intuition and functional romantic relationships as being mutually exclusive. The heroines are faced with unsurpassable obstacles in their relationships, usually caused by their relentless quest for justice and disregard for protocol. Frame four presents the absent mother and all the ramifications this absence has on the lives of the sleuthing protagonists. Among the consequences is a heightened sense of responsibility for others and a preoccupation with replacing the mother figure in the domestic sphere.

Lives in Context: Framing the Female Experience

Frame 1: Domestic (Private) Versus Professional (Public)

Contextualization of the protagonists' lives in this frame involves constant and detrimental imbalance between the domestic and professional. Despite the freedom of

movement given to women in this context, such freedom comes by sacrificing their personal and public lives. The women in this context choose to have families in which they are heavily involved while pursuing a career or other form of life outside of the home. For these women, who opt for both private and public lives, the perception is that they are not able to fully commit themselves physically, mentally, emotionally, or even psychically to just one sphere. The ensuing chaos and guilt is often portrayed as punishment for wanting to do it all. Historian Glenna Matthews explains that such a representation that has been customary in depicting women who choose to leave the domestic haven for the public world. The men portrayed in this context, however, do not suffer the same punishment. Male characters are often presented as the well-adjusted counterpoint to the frazzled, frustrated and indecisive women, and are able to keep their public and private lives in seeming balance.

In the series *Medium* (NBC 2005-present), young thirty-something Allison Dubois (Patricia Arquette) struggles to balance her life as a wife and mother with her professional aspirations to be a lawyer. Additionally, she struggles to balance her public and domestic lives with her psychic visions and dreams. Allison's domestic life is portrayed often more than her public role, where she aids the District Attorney's office solve crimes and mysteries using her abilities to communicate with the dead and see visions of the past, present, and future. Her visions occur almost exclusively at her home, generally when she is in bed with her husband. Allison struggles to maintain balance between the often-violent nature of her visions and her professional role with the raising of her three young daughters that she tries to shelter from such harsh realities.

Meanwhile, Allison's husband Joe (Jake Weber) seems to enjoy a much more balanced existence, over which Allison expresses envy. Particularly in regard to Joe's relationship with their daughters, Allison seems jealous that Joe's relationship is uncomplicated by visions about their lives, or disturbing images from which she wants to distance them. Joe, on the other hand, is able to leave his mathematical work at the office and devote his time at home to his family. Additionally, Allison is burdened with keeping her abilities as private as possible. She and Joe fear that her secret threatens the family's safety, and that if her abilities are revealed, they would all become targets for the media, criminals, scientists, and others.

In the series *True Calling* (Fox 2003-2005), the protagonist is Tru Davies (Eliza Dushku), a young woman in her early twenties who works at a morgue and makes numerous attempts, all in vain, to be admitted to medical school. Tru struggles with her gift, which manifests itself in the form of reanimation. At the request of the dead bodies in her morgue, Tru must relive a day over and over again in an attempt to change the fate of the deceased and correct injustice. Tru is therefore, quite literally, stuck in a limbo and tasked with changing the fate of strangers while unsuccessfully trying to right the wrongs of her drug-addicted sister, gambling-addicted brother and absent father. Further punctuating Tru's domestic instability, late in the series she learns that her father commissioned her mother's murder—the mother from whom she inherited her ability to communicate with the dead. What's more, Tru learns that her father has sabotaged her work, which he deems to be meddling and unnatural.

Tru's meddling, however, often affects the fate of her family in addition to that of the strangers in the morgue—further tying her private and public lives. Her domestic life

just won't stay private, and repeatedly throughout the series she must choose between helping one of her family members or a stranger. Tru does have minor success in helping her otherwise hopelessly addicted siblings, such as warning her sister of an upcoming surprise drug test at her office, or warning her brother not to place a specific bet because she knows he will lose all his savings. However, attempts to help them on a grander scale always result in personal tragedy for Tru. In one poignant episode, Tru learns her brother's life is in danger. However, in preventing his death she enacts a series of events that lead to the death of her boyfriend. In effect, Tru's private and professional lives cannot coexist because as long as she acts guided by her intuition; her personal life will be in turmoil.

A similar protagonist to Tru Davies can be found in *Veronica Mars* (CW 2004-2007). The series' namesake (Kristin Bell) is a high school junior who struggles to keep her professional life as a private investigator from spilling over into her private life. The irony here is evident, particularly as the viewer learns that Veronica's biggest case as a PI is her own family history—thus, her private life becomes her professional life. Interestingly, her father is the sheriff of her community. The justice that Veronica seeks privately and professionally is often at odds with her father's institutional stance. Interestingly, Veronica rejects traditional domesticity, evident in an episode where she and boyfriend Duncan have to take care of an infant doll. However, she has no objections to standing in as a pseudo-housewife and minding all the domestic details of the home she shares with her father.

Crossing Jordan (NBC 2001-2007) introduces another such conflicted heroine—thirty-something Dr. Jordan Cavanaugh (Jill Hennessy). Jordan is an unmarried,

unattached medical examiner who has an unmasked fear of commitment. Jordan's intuition is in her control and involves imagining scenarios, which is in turn presented visually to the audience. Where science is inconclusive, Jordan's intuition often provides the missing link to solving the crime. Jordan's professional life often collides with her with some aspect of her private life, sometimes with the life of her father the policeman. In most episodes of *Crossing Jordan*, she is portrayed as fighting to protect her father from his past, a past which is murky even to Jordan. Her search for the truth about her mother's death, which was deemed a suicide, also intersects with (and runs into) her professional work as well. She has even been suspended or otherwise forced into absence from her work numerous times, usually to sort out personal issues that interfere or endanger her work.

The Profiler (NBC 1996-2000) features female protagonist Dr. Samantha Waters (Ally Walker). Sam, as she is called in the series, is in her thirties and is a forensic psychologist, or profiler, with the fictional Violent Crimes Task Force. She also has the unique ability to intuit people's feelings, as well as envision a crime from multiple perspectives (shown as still or moving images to the viewer). Although not explicitly referred to as paranormal, Sam's abilities are certainly unique and other-worldly in nature. In this series perhaps more than the others referenced in this analysis, Sam is determined to keep her professional work as a profiler apart from her private life as a mother. This manifests itself physically in her fortified home (a former firefighter station), complete with complex security system, barred doors and windows, multiple padlocks and weapons. Despite the precautions, however, Sam is unable to keep the two realms separate. The mytharc, or central storyline, of the series hinges on a serial killer's

dangerous obsession with Sam. Throughout the series, the so-called Jack-of-all-Trades stalks and taunts Sam. Jack purposefully blurs the line between Sam's personal and public lives in order to disorient and terrify her. He kills both her husband and (later) longtime boyfriend, and even kidnaps her daughter Chloe (Evan Rachel Wood) and psychologically manipulates her into turning on Sam.

Frame 2: The Father Figure

Within this frame, feminine intuition is recognized—even by the female sleuths themselves—as disruptive, counterproductive, dangerous and otherwise unruly. The women who possess such intuition are thus characterized in the same negative, albeit powerful, way. The unruly female thus requires a stable, rational and reasonable chaperone and mentor to reign in the chaotic feminine power. This male counter figure is manifested as a father figure, whose characteristics include honor, selflessness, discipline and generosity. These traits often come into play in the father figure's complicated and ambiguous relationship with the heroine. Often, the father figure exhibits a proclivity for authoritarianism, taking on the role of the disciplining parent. Walton and Jones have noted the “father and daughter” relationship in the sleuthing genre as well, and such a relationship is punctuated by an “overly sensitive, tentative and vulnerable” heroine who typically needs rescuing by the father figure (234). However, at other times the father figure is a consoling friend and gentle advisor. In all respects, the father figure's rationality and composure stands in stark contrast to the disorderly image of feminine intuition.

In *True Calling*, the death-obsessed and socially awkward character of Davis (Zack Galifianakis) is the rational, patient and wise paternal figure that grounds an

otherwise flighty, temperamental and emotional protagonist. Although oddly suited for the role because of his young age and uncomfortable demeanor, Davis has authority over Tru as her employer and moral advisor. Davis constantly warns Tru against rash actions, albeit mildly and seldom to any avail. Davis plays the role of the father-who-needs-looking-after, which plays to Tru's needs in the absence of her biological father. Ultimately, Davis provides the physical and emotional stability that Tru fails to cultivate in her personal life.

Crossing Jordan creates an interesting situation, because although Jordan Cavanaugh's biological father is alive, he is absent from much of the series and most of her life. Interestingly, Jordan's father is who taught her to hone her intuition in the first place, and they often perform visualizations together to solve mysteries. Thus, he possesses the same type of feminine intuition as Jordan and is just as unruly and mysterious. Instead, Jordan looks to Garrett Macy (Miguel Ferrer), her boss, for stability and support. Garrett plays many roles in Jordan's life—friend, confidant, advisor, disciplinarian, counselor and voice of reason.

In *Veronica Mars*, the protagonist's father figure is actually her biological father. As a police officer, Keith Mars (Enrico Colantoni) serves as the obvious disciplinarian for Veronica's often rash, emotional reactions. However, Veronica looks to her father as an external conscience, and wants more than anything for him to be proud of her. She also does the impossible to make sure he feels taken care of, including making dinner for him every night and helping him with his fledgling private investigation business. Veronica also tries to shield her father from being emotionally injured by the truth of her mother's infidelity.

In the series *Medium*, Allison Dubois's father figure is actually her husband Joe. Joe is an aerospace engineer and is depicted as the paragon of wisdom, virtue and level headedness. In the series, Joe is repeatedly depicted as superior to Allison, either in his ability to remain calm and rational under pressure or sometimes even physically above Allison, such as in all the pictures provided on the NBC website. Joe is often Allison's discipliner, constantly questioning Allison's abilities and the accuracy of her visions. He even treats Allison as a child sometimes, such as when he expresses frustration at being woken up by Allison's nightmares or his anger and resentment at her neglect of domestic duties when preoccupied by a difficult case. Interestingly, Joe also serves as the chronicler of Allison's dreams, writing down the details of her visions so he can later dissect them. This can also be interpreted as an attempt to document and empiricize Allison's intuitive knowledge. A few excerpts from Allison's dream journals, as written by Joe, appear on the NBC website as well. The dreams are all written from third person perspective, and Joe even interjects small comments where he feels appropriate to explain or amend her dreams. In effect, Joe is attempting to appropriate Allison's dreams and filter them using his knowledge and experience, mirroring the way the paratext is filtering masculine (Joe's) and feminine (Allison's) knowing. Joe's actions and attitude towards Allison's abilities are often portrayed as the more normal of the two, and Allison's self doubt and emotional instability ultimately come across as highly volatile in comparison with Joe's steady, rational state of mind. This paratext heightens the sense that Allison is emotionally and mentally unstable and potentially incompetent, while Joe is portrayed as the pillar of the family.

In *The Profiler*, Sam Waters mentor and father figure is also her boss and mentor, Bailey Malone (Robert Davi). In fact, it is Bailey that brings her back to her work as a profiler after she goes into seclusion for three years following her shooting of a notorious serial killer. Sam is portrayed as sensible, astute and devoted to her career. Despite her professional success, however, she becomes increasingly unstable, emotionally and mentally, as Jack the serial killer continues to torment and violate her privacy. Although her husband and subsequent boyfriend are killed, the two men left in her life represent the dueling forces in her mind. On the one hand is Bailey Malone who is austere, kind and straight-laced. On the other hand is Jack, who represents anarchy, chaos and freedom from the rules. In order to understand the criminal mind, Sam must go to the brink of Jack's mind. Ultimately, it is Bailey whose stability brings her back, as evidenced in the season four finale, where the last two people standing after Jack dies are Sam and Bailey.

Frame 3: Feminine Intuition Versus Functional Romantic Relationships

Contextualization in this frame sets feminine intuition in opposition to romantic involvement, as if the choice to use intuition for the good of others must be punished in the heroine's private life. Loneliness is the most common form of dysfunction, with the heroines constantly expressing the feeling of not being understood by anyone. Frequently within this frame, men reject the heroine's complexity, despite the selfless work these women do for others. As Kimberly Dilley summarizes, female sleuths have difficulty maintaining romantic relationships by virtue of their focus on justice:

Most people do not understand her job, her unpredictable hours, and, more important for a prospective boyfriend, her inability to focus all her attentions on the other person. Once involved in a committed relationship, the woman is

“supposed” devote her life to the other: making him happy, making him comfortable, and making his priorities her own. (28)

However, the priority remains truth and justice. The price for having such an understanding of the world is of biblical proportions—utter rejection and exclusion. The result is that the protagonist pays a steep price for her knowledge. This frame can be found in the female detective literary genre as well. Detailed by Linda Mizejewski, novels by Patricia Cornwell and Sue Grafton generally feature heroines who are unwilling and unable to commit to any long-term, functional relationships.

Tru Davies, the heroine of *True Calling*, barely has time for romantic relationships between her moral obligation to help the dead find justice, helping her dysfunctional siblings avoid trouble and later, medical school. In the four instances where Tru does have time to date, it is predictably interrupted by her supernatural obligations. In all these cases, the men end up dying. Although she helps three of their corpses relive the day and stay alive, she is unable to save her true love. In this instance, it is actually Tru’s father who manipulates the situation and has her boyfriend Luc (Matthew Bomer) killed in order to teach Tru a lesson about interfering with destiny.

Jordan Cavanaugh, the protagonist of *Crossing Jordan*, has similar issues. The name of the series itself seems to have multiple meanings. The moniker can mean crossing Jordan, as in making her angry—which happens often. It can also mean crossing, or traversing Jordan, which can be understood as a type of understanding of Jordan. Finally, the biblical significance of the crossing of the river Jordan cannot be ignored, as the Jordan was a river said to be where people transcend to the afterlife, and

its waters also perform miracles and heal people. Quite directly, this can refer to Jordan's intuition and the ability she has to right injustice.

Jordan's sexuality is constantly brought to the forefront of the series, even in the network commercial for the series where Jordan states, "it's all about the body," while standing over a dead body. She has a series of torrid affairs with different men, whom she ultimately rejects when they start getting serious about their relationship. One of Jordan's longer relationships is with police detective Woody Hoyt (Jerry O'Connell). However, his frustration with her fear of commitment and her frustration with his need for commitment leads to arguments, misunderstandings and overall dysfunction. Jordan's other long-term romantic relationship is with reporter J.D. Pollack (Charles Mesure), which gets to the point where Pollack considers proposing to her. Their relationship ends when Jordan sleeps with Woody, but they begin to reconcile when she wakes up in a hotel room and finds Pollack dead. Worse yet, Jordan is the primary suspect in the murder until an investigation proves otherwise. These episodes not only show Jordan questioning her trust of those around her, but also questioning her own sanity and violent tendencies.

Sam Waters, the heroine of *The Profiler*, understandably has deeply seated trust issues, as the series begins shortly after the murder of her husband. Her lack of trust can be read as a natural consequence of being stalked by a serial killer. However, the power struggle with Jack the serial killer takes its psychological toll on Sam. Ultimately, Jack disguises himself as a psychologist who interviews Sam's daughter Chloe at Sam's workplace. This represents the most aggressive violation Jack perpetrates, metaphorically forcing himself into Sam's life and abducting her daughter. Then, through heavy

psychological manipulation, he turns Chloe against Sam by leading her to think that Sam is at fault for all their problems because of her career choice. This final episode may be one of the most honest in terms of what the preferred reading is of the series. Throughout the series, Sam's carries guilt and self doubt over the burdens of her career, only to be externalized through Jack's manipulation of Chloe. Sam ends up killing Jack, a point on which Jack underestimates her. However, the damage is done. A killer has been caught, but at the sacrifice of Sam and her family—and the audience is not reassured that the cost was worth the benefit.

In *Veronica Mars*, the protagonist's first mystery to solve is if she was the victim of incestuous rape after being drugged at a party. She then forms a relationship with Duncan (Teddy Dunn), the accused, after he is cleared of wrongdoing and of being her half-brother. Additionally, Duncan is the brother of her murdered best friend, Lilly. She later forms a relationship with Logan (Jason Dohring), Lilly's ex-boyfriend, who is a womanizer that refuses to commit. She ends up bouncing between the two men for the entire span of the series. Once she goes to college, Veronica is attacked by a man she knows, making her a victim of misplaced trust yet again. One of the interesting points in *Veronica Mars* is that discovering secrets is what the heroine does, professionally and privately. However, this is a point of turmoil for Veronica, because although she is compelled to discover the truth about people and their histories, she often expresses regret and disappointment when the truth is something personally painful. The interpretation here is that her desire to know and understand everything is more of a curse than a gift, because she is doomed to be unhappy and alone for as long as she is determined to unearth the truth.

Frame 4: The Absent Mother

The presence of a strong father figure, as described in frame two, serves to underscore the absence of a mother figure. This seems to be a common theme among sleuth figures, and is often offered as a reason for instability and imbalance. Maureen Reddy has noted a similar theme in female detective novels:

The family is, of course, often the locus of women's oppression, with the traditional family arrangements mirroring social arrangements under patriarchy and making the continuation of those social arrangements possible. Nancy Chodorow, Dorothy Dinnerstein, and Adrienne Rich, in now widely available books, have analyzed the psychological effects on both sexes of traditional family arrangements in which the mother is the primary caretaker and the father the link to the public world. Chodorow's theory...posits that whereas boys learn to define themselves in opposition to the mother, with separation and individuation central tasks, girls' identities develop in terms of identification and symbiosis with the mother. (104)

Reddy continues that it is therefore not a simple task for women to develop such separateness, particularly not functionally. For the female sleuths in this investigation, this has been already decided for them. As such, the reason for the mother's absence often acts as a catalyst for the heroine's journey for truth and engagement with the public world.

In the television program *Medium*, Allison Dubois's mother has passed away long before the series picks up. Throughout the course of the series, it is revealed that she spent her childhood desperately seeking the approval of a mother who did not believe she

possessed any special gifts. Allison was overlooked, ridiculed and never fully accepted by her mother, despite that her mother may have possessed the same abilities. Allison's mother seems to have learned to ignore and ultimately repress her visions, and during Allison's childhood resented Allison for reminding her of that repressed power. This lack of acceptance is revealed as the reason why Allison resists her abilities early on in the series, and why she has alcoholic tendencies in order to avoid the visions altogether. However, Allison's grandmother was accepting of her power, encouraging her to talk about her visions and communicate with the ghosts that visited her. This is later disclosed as having been a major point of contention between Allison's mother and grandmother. As a result, Allison is determined to treat her daughters' visions with seriousness and acceptance. Another interesting relationship is that of Allison with her mother-in-law, who makes a few appearances on the series. At first, their relationship is tense because Allison feels her mother-in-law judges her parenting, which she does. However, they later come to understand and respect each other.

In the series *Crossing Jordan*, the protagonist's entire life trajectory is influenced by the death of her mother at an early age. Jordan's mentally ill mother is murdered when she is ten years old, traumatizing her and forever changing her trust in other people. However, Jordan never accepts the mystery of her mother's death, and suspects that her father and half-brother are both somehow involved, along with the man she had an affair with and who was involved with the Irish mob. As a result, Jordan's entire life is devoted to the search for truth and justice, as well as fighting against anyone who wants to "protect" her from the truth. Jordan also expresses deep empathy for other victims whose mothers are deceased, and is often critical of other mothers that may cross her path (either

victim or criminal). Jordan also attempts to find out the truth behind her mother's death, which leads her to discover other family secrets, such as her mother's affair with her father's police partner, their involvement with the Irish mob, and her criminally insane half-brother.

In the series *Veronica Mars*, the heroine's mother develops a drinking problem early on in the first season and mysteriously leaves her and her father. Throughout the first two seasons, and periodically thereafter Veronica struggles to understand her mother's motives and locate her. In the meantime, she takes the place of her mother as the main caretaker of domestic affairs. Veronica also deals with a lot of frustration and confusion in her romantic relationships, partially blamed on the lack of female influence in her life, which her father directly references in several episodes.

Tru Davies, the protagonist of the series *True Calling*, has similarly taken over the responsibilities of a mother, taking care of her drug-addicted sister and gambling brother since their mother death. Only twelve years old at the time, Tru is actually the one who finds her mother's body when she is murdered. This puts a great strain on Tru's personal life, because juggling between keeping her siblings out of trouble and helping the spirits who contact her does not allow her time for much else. Tru later finds the father that abandoned her and her younger siblings, who she discovers has been working against her abilities because he feels that she is interfering with destiny. She also learns that it was her father who commissioned her mother's death because she had the same abilities as Tru.

In *The Profiler*, Sam Waters lives completely without family. It is later revealed that her mother died when she was ten and that her parents were estranged. From that

moment on, her family consists of her best friend and best friends' mother, who raise her and later help her raise her own daughter Chloe. Sam struggles to maintain her small family ties, and often laments the fact that she missed out on having a mother from which to learn. Sam also worries that Chloe is too isolated from other people, since her interactions occur with so few people. However, Samantha struggles in this regard, because she has implicit distrust of strangers. Sam struggles with these conflicting priorities, but ultimately chooses to protect her daughter at any cost.

Lives Out of Context: Potential Oppositional Readings

All four frames attempt to place feminine intuition and feminine knowing within a context that undermines its power. The women within these contexts are portrayed as being conflicted, unbalanced, unruly, lonely, dangerous and unhappy. Despite their achievements, these intuitive women are dubious role models at best. However, although preferred readings may contextualize intuition in negative ways, there are opportunities for heroines and their circumstances to be read oppositionally.

The first frame places feminine intuition as blurring the division between public and private life. However, that both the domestic and professional worlds are shown at all can be read oppositionally. While this reading assumes that the domestic world is primarily feminine, this is the reading popular media promotes. As such, then the representation of domestic life, often as having priority over the professional world, can be read oppositionally as redistributing power to the feminine realm. Danae Clark considers such a seamless transition between the public and private to be empowering in the sense that women are given decision-making power both within and without the home. Kimberly Dilley posits that by definition, a female sleuth calls attention to what

needs to be reordered and then does it. Furthermore, intuition serves to bridge the two spheres by virtue of being a private manifestation of something external, and often public. More simply, intuition happens in the mind of the individual, and is a way of processing the external world to glean some form of knowledge not apparent to others. Another way intuition connects the public and the private is because in the series mentioned in this research, the intuitive moments, psychic or not, generally occur in the domestic sphere. This effectively blurs the line between the professional and domestic life even further, because there is not a clear line of demarcation as to where one ends and the other begins. Dilley positions this new female sleuth heroine as having a unique vantage point, socially, as being from inside the ideology:

The woman amateur sleuth works to find a place for the “feminine” within masculine dominated society. She illustrates how it is possible to protest against gender stereotypes and constraints while remaining part of the community. She illustrates for the reader many of women’s shared experiences and concerns, as well as the strains of juxtaposing expectations of career, marriage, and motherhood with life’s realities. (96)

The second frame presents the father figure as the model of stability and patience—everything the heroine is not. However, it is still the flawed heroine who solves the crime, rights the injustice, or otherwise discovers the important truth(s). Also, it is the women who possess primary agency while the father figures wait on the sidelines. It becomes apparent, when compared to such one-dimensional characters as the father figures often are, that it is the intuitive women who think, act, adapt and change. The father figure is a resource for analysis and guidance, but is a character much more

traditional and less willing to evolve than the heroine. Interestingly, the father figures in this analysis all seemed to have suffered some kind of personal tragedy or shortcoming. In *Veronica Mars*, Keith Mars is crippled with self-doubt after his wife leaves him. In *True Calling*, Davis experiences the tragic loss of his young wife in a car accident, and mourns her death indefinitely. Garrett Macy experiences a nasty divorce, and has to learn to deal with a drug addicted and highly rebellious daughter. Similarly, Bailey Malone has experiences a divorce that leaves him estranged from his entire family. In this regard, it would seem the father figures do not exercise superiority over the heroines, merely act as mentors and guides. Kimberly Dilley describes the father daughter relationship in the sleuth genre as paternal but benign:

Including a “father figure” in the life of the woman PI goes beyond the stereotypical assumption that women need, and seek out, a protective father...Their roles do not however, include authority, superior knowledge, or control over the women. Each party works to maintain a relationship based on respect, privacy, care and concern. (32)

Frame three holds powerful opportunity for oppositional reading in the heroine’s refusal to adhere to the traditional gender roles implied in romantic relationships as portrayed by popular media. By rejecting the traditional domestic role of women, the heroines’ resistance to serious romantic involvement can also be read as resistance to traditional heterosexuality. Maureen Reddy regards romantic relationships for the female sleuth to be a perpetual and unresolved quest:

The female hero is shown to both relish her independence and to seek intimate connections with others; however, for that cherished independence to be

preserved, the connections must fall outside the boundaries of these socially sanctioned relationships that have defined and oppressed women. Unsurprisingly, each of the heroes experiences the greatest difficulty in breaking free of the codes governing heterosexual relationships, with sexual involvement with a man always posing a threat to her independence. (105)

The issue in all these romantic relationships is control. Men ultimately see the heroine's work and her intuition as an obstacle to be overcome, and express frustration at their lack of control over these women.

The "Absent Mother" frame can be interpreted as a freeing of the female sleuth, and of feminine intuition, from any grounding in the traditional female roles and feminine sphere. Rather than becoming leading complacent domestic lives, these heroines strike out on their own to learn about the world and discover truth, often as a direct result of their mothers having departed from their lives. Acting as a catalyst for action, the absent mother allows for the heroines to discover who they truly are and connect to a broader intuitive understanding of the world and of femininity.

It's also important to note the similarities between these series, as well as the assumptions they share. One common thread is that the men almost always represent some manifestation of science, the law, discipline and death. This is usually explicit, by virtue of profession and personality. Also, all of the female protagonists' work, to varying degrees, deals with violence and death. These two commonalities amongst the series can be read oppositionally as well. Both can be read as building on the idea that intuition serves as a link, or liminal area, between otherwise conflicting spheres: home and work; spiritual and science; disorder and order; peace and violence; life and death. The power

of intuition can be seen as the ability to blur any divisions that are created and call into question whether or not such divisions are natural or artificial.

Paratext and Intuition

Aside from the common frames that have been identified and analyzed in this investigation, there are many other attempts in the series in question to discredit feminine intuition. Paratextual analysis of network websites, actor interviews and program advertising also goes a long way to contextualize feminine intuition and the experience of feminine knowing. Another interesting interpretation of intuition occurs in series where the intuitive protagonist is male.

Using Genette's notion of paratext, a paratext is produced by the same media networks that produce the television series and strongly favors a preferred or hegemonic reading of the media text. On the NBC website for the series *Medium*, many instances of paratexts can be found, all of which reinforce the hegemonic reading of the main text. Mirroring the program, where Allison is shown in many different domestic scenarios, the website depicts her almost primarily at home. In the character biography, Allison Dubois is described as a "dedicated wife and mother, who also happens to be a gifted psychic able to communicate with the dead." This description makes her intuition seem ephemeral, as if by chance, rather than an important ability that has proven its usefulness to Allison time and again. Stylistically, the *Medium* website references the home as well, featuring photographs of Allison, her husband and three children in full color, with their blurry, monochromatic blue living room behind them. Interestingly, this can be seen as representing the cohesiveness and stability of the family unit amidst an unstable, uncertain world.

The opening sequence of the television series *Medium* involves similarly surreal and abstract representations of interpretive seeing, including images of eyes, images resembling Rorschach ink blots, psychedelic colors, abstract shapes, and whispering voices. Accompanied by instrumental music, these images create an otherworldly, or occult atmosphere. Another interpretation of the opening sequence is that the images focus not only on seeing (the eye) but also on the many different interpretations available to an onlooker, as represented by the ink blots, abstract shapes, and whispering voices. Essentially, the opening sequence can be read oppositionally. Rather than representing the occult, it can serve to prime the viewer to be open to interpretation and different ways of knowing and understanding the world, while gently reminding the viewer that all “truths” have multiple explanations.

Another paratext involving *Medium* that attempts to contextualize Allison’s abilities was featured in the popular publication *TV Guide*. Three months after the premier of the series, *TV Guide* ran a cover story about *Medium*, with the title “She’s a psychic soccer mom.” Up until this point, the series has been advertised as a detective drama. However, *TV Guide* chose to portray Allison using the noun “soccer mom,” described by the adjective psychic, as if to say being a psychic is Allison’s quirky side effect, not her state of being. Additionally, Allison’s psychic visions in *Medium* perform an important public function meant to correct injustices, solve crimes and catch violent criminals. By describing her as a psychic soccer mom, it would seem as if her psychic visions relate solely to her private, domestic life rather than her professional work.

Critical review of *Medium* follows analogous focus on Allison as a mother and wife, rather than on her role as a sleuth. Alessandra Stanley’s review in *The New York*

Times highlights Allison's departure from the typical female sleuth, such as in *Crossing Jordan*, who tend to be single professionals. However, Stanley chooses to focus on Allison's position as a mother who happens to help the police solve crimes, just as the NBC website does, "She has the full, sturdy figure of a woman who has given birth to children." While the body politics implied here can be read as empowering to real women who cannot relate to the lithe figures of typical television heroines, Stanley's main criticism of the series is the lack of doubt. According to Stanley, that Allison's intuitive abilities are accepted seem to be less a credit to her intuition and more to culture that has accepted the paranormal as commonplace. This mirrors the typically male perspective described by Susan Bordo, which values empirical (male) knowledge over any other way of knowing. However, if such lack of doubt is accurate, then the acceptance of Allison's abilities can be seen as an important step in the acceptance of feminine intuition in society.

An *Entertainment Weekly* review of *Crossing Jordan* written by Ken Tucker reveals a similar uncertainty as to the validity of the heroine's knowledge. Once again, the article chooses to focus on the heroine's appearance, linking her rebelliousness to her disheveled appearance. Tucker then goes on to discuss Jordan's method for resolving a crime, linking Jordan's appearance to her intuitive ability by virtue of proximity in description. Tucker goes on to describe the role-playing game Jordan plays with her father, where they each talk out the events leading up to crime from the perspective of the victim and the perpetrator. In this instance, Tucker criticizes what he perceives to be Jordan's gusto for assuming the victim's role. However, this can be read oppositionally

because it is precisely the empathy that Jordan has for victims that allows her to be successful at solving crimes and achieving justice for the victims.

An interesting point of comparison and contrast is to analyze male television sleuths who possess intuition. One such series is *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* (NBC 2001-present), where the work of the fictional New York City Major Case Squad is depicted. Of particular interest is the original pair of detectives, Robert Goren (Vincent D'Onofrio) and Alexandra Eames (Kathryn Erbe). The NBC website describes the pair:

In true Sherlock Holmes-fashion, D'Onofrio ("Men in Black") stars as Detective Goren, and exceptionally bright homicide investigator with well-honed instincts that match up favorably with his criminal quarry. Likewise, his partner, Detective Eames (Erbe "Oz"), brings an independence and stylish edge to her work that meshes well with Goren.

The differences in approach between Goren and Eames become increasingly apparent in the series. In the series, Eames is depicted as the senior officer; however Detective Goren completely overshadows his female partner Eames in stature, leadership and intuitive ability. Goren constantly relies on his intuition and instincts to solve crimes, while Eames' credibility is based on her experience as an undercover officer for six years, referenced in several episodes of *Law & Order: CI*. Another interesting difference is how the NBC website characterizes Jordan Cavanaugh as a "sexy, smart and fearless medical examiner with a checkered past...Jordan's unorthodox methods constantly test her professional and personal relationships." As described by the actress who plays Jordan, Jill Hennessy says, "Jordan is used to living on the edge and not censoring herself. She immediately lets people know what's on her mind." Once again, the difference between

how Robert Goren from *Law & Order: CI* and Jordan Cavanaugh from *Crossing Jordan* are described in these paratexts cannot be overlooked. One of the main differences is that the series titles themselves begin to contextualize the characters. Whereas *Law & Order: CI* is seemingly about the legal system and judicial process, *Crossing Jordan* centers on an individual. However, in watching the programs, both deal with the individuals and the institution. In the character biographies, the focus of Goren's description is his work, and sheds a positive light on his "well-honed instincts," which can be interpreted to mean his use of intuition. However, Jordan is described as "sexy" and "unorthodox," which completely disregards her professional capacity, characterizes her as unruly and highlights her sexuality.

There are many opportunities for potential oppositional readings of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. The series offers a portrayal of male intuition through the character of thirty-something Robert Goren, who fits into many of the frames previously established in this study, with a few exceptions. Frame one, which places the domestic and professional at odds, can be identified in Goren's inability to keep his mother's schizophrenia and brother's drug addiction from spilling into his professional life. In reference to frame two, interestingly, it is Goren who often plays the father figure to both victims and criminals, often in order to elicit valuable information from them. Goren rarely confides or seeks advice from anyone else, though Eames' stability does seem to be comforting to him. The difference between Goren and the female protagonists, however, is that Goren has the freedom to play the father figure when he chooses to, which is not something the heroine is often allowed to do.

Frame three might be the most relevant here, as Goren is shown as being practically married to his career. Even in instances when Goren does form a relationship, it always manifests itself as an intense connection with someone who ends up being criminally insane. For example, one of the long-term relationships he has is with serial killer Nicole Wallace (Olivia d'Abo). Their admiration of each other's intelligence is apparent, and the two share an intense bond, though never romantic. In the season seven finale, which aired August 24, 2008, Nicole is murdered, her heart cut out of her body and gift-wrapped for Goren to find. Ultimately, it is revealed that Goren's mentor Declan Gage (John Glover) has concocted an elaborate scenario in an effort to "free" Goren from his painful past and start anew. It is also revealed that upon her death-bed, Nicole asks Declan to "Tell Bobby he was the only man I ever loved." In one episode, both Goren's mentor and intellectual soulmate (albeit both criminal) are lost to him, in addition to his brother (whom Nicole kills in the same episode) and his mother, who recently passed away. This magnitude of tragedy may be the worst string of losses suffered by any of the protagonists analyzed in this investigation.

One of the main ways Goren abilities are contextualized is the connection that is made between his intuitive understanding of the world (ability of recognize patterns, knowledge of mathematics, recall of obscure geographical and other facts, etc) and his mother's mental illness—which can also be seen as an extension of the "Absent Mother" frame. One of the things Goren constantly worries about is if he has inherited the schizophrenia that plagues his mother and possibly his brother. This concern is only augmented when he learns that his father is infamous serial killer Mark Ford Brady. During many psychologically intense cases, Goren is portrayed as slipping into mental

illness, and his partner Eames and police captains express concern as well. However, it is this same mind frame that allows Goren to understand the worst of human nature and discover the truth. In effect, it would seem Goren is contextualized in the same way intuitive female characters are depicted—the punishment for knowing too much is losing everything they care about, be it family, lovers, or their sanity.

Similarly, forty-something Adrian Monk (Tony Shalhoub) of the series *Monk* (USA 2002-present) explores the liminality that exists between intuition and mental illness. This instance of liminality can be understood as an extension of frame one, because Monk struggles to keep his private neuroses from crossing over into his professional work, and his professional concerns from seeping into and augmenting his fears. Diagnosed with obsessive-compulsive disorder since the murder of his wife, Monk was forced to take a leave of absence to deal with her death. The series deals with his work with the police as a consultant as he struggles to become a functional member of society through heavy psychotherapy. The USA website for *Monk* describes the protagonist in a comical way:

Adrian Monk was once a rising star with the San Francisco Police Department, legendary for using unconventional means to solve the department's most baffling cases. But after the tragic (and still unsolved) murder of his wife Trudy, Monk developed an extreme case of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Now consumed by peculiar obsessions and wracked with hundreds of phobias (including but certainly not limited to germs, heights, and even milk), Monk has lost his badge and struggles with the simplest everyday tasks...Now working as a private consultant, Monk continues to investigate cases in the most unconventional ways.

Like Robert Goren of *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, Adrian Monk's intuition comes with a hefty price. In this case, Monk suffers from extreme trust issues and paralyzing fears. However, in spite of the mental illness, and perhaps because of it, he is able to solve cases that baffle the police by noticing minute details and processing the world differently than others. Interestingly, Monk can also be identified by frame two. He has had two "father figures" since the program began. Though both of Monk's assistants have been women, they guide him on a daily basis, and serve as the disciplining figure in his otherwise chaotic life, thus serving a nearly identical role as the father figures for the female protagonists. Frame three can be understood as Monk's unwillingness to let go of his wife, despite that she has been dead for five years at the premier of the series. On more than one occasion, Monk states that he does not expect to ever be happy again without his wife Trudy. Interestingly, Monk strays from frame four. In Monk's case, his overprotective mother raises him in the absence of his estranged father. However, Monk's father returns later in the series and seems interested in making up for lost time with his son.

III. CONCLUSION

This chapter revisits the previously research questions posed in the introduction and summarize the findings of the investigation in this regard. In addition, scholarly and societal implications of the findings are explored, as well as future research trajectories.

Research Questions Revisited

This research has sought to explore preferred and oppositional readings of intuition and feminine modes of knowing represented in the crime sleuth genre, as well as identify and analyze the ways paratexts contextualize intuition. In addition, a secondary inquiry was posed regarding the available meanings of the public (masculine, professional) and private (feminine, domestic) with regards to intuition as represented in the television sleuth genre. Finally, series that feature intuitive male protagonists were analyzed using the same conceptual framework to identify the similarities and/or differences between men that have intuition and intuitive women.

The data set was defined as the following programs: *Medium*, *Crossing Jordan*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, *Veronica Mars*, *Monk*, *The Profiler* and *True Calling*. The programs are can be seen on major network and cable channels, including NBC, CBS, ABC, Fox, CW and USA, and all are aired in syndication and available on DVD.

The research questions are all addressed in the identification of four common frames that many of the series use to contextualize intuition—the struggle to balance the domestic and the professional; the father figure as naturalized mentor; the conflict

between a functional romantic life and feminine intuition; and the absent mother. All four frames group certain assumptions and conventions into neat packages for audience consumption, and all place the heroine and intuition as abnormal and outlandish.

Female Sleuths and Intuition

The series *Medium* is contextualized primarily in frames one, two and four, dealing with the public/private, the father figure and the absent mother. In the series, the protagonist Allison struggles to keep her violent dreams and contact with the dead away from her children and separate from her domestic life. Her work is certainly a major part of her marriage, as she generally has all her visions while asleep next to her husband. As such, Allison inevitably introduces instability into her domestic life via her professional work solving crimes at the district attorney's office. On the NBC website for *Medium*, Allison is similarly portrayed, as a conflicted housewife with troublesome psychic and medium abilities. Other paratexts, such as *TV Guide*, try to contextualize her in the same way, primarily as a mother and housewife and secondarily as a medium that solves crimes and searches for the truth. Frame two becomes relevant in this light, as it is the protagonists' husband Joe who then becomes her father figure, scolding her for neglecting the home, injecting narrative voice into her visions by keeping a dream journal for her and constantly attempting to restrain and control her. Frame four becomes apparent as Allison struggles first to accept her own abilities, stemming from mother's denial of her power. Allison even displays alcoholic tendencies in an attempt to escape her fate. She also has trouble dealing with Joe's mother because she does not fully understand the concept of what a mother is and should be.

All four frames can be identified in *Crossing Jordan*. Frame one becomes evident in Jordan's complete absorption with her work, leaving little time for a separate private life. In addition, Jordan's past is checkered with a mother who commits suicide, a mysterious absent father, and a series of unsuccessful, tumultuous friendships and romantic relationships. As Jordan tries to solve the mysteries she encounters in the morgue as well as in her own past, her disdain for protocol leads to her dismissal and forced absence from work on numerous occasions. Frame two is evident in Jordan's relationship with her boss, Garrett Macy. Garrett plays the role of confidant, advisor, drinking buddy, stern father, conscience, and authoritarian. Jordan looks to him to provide the stability she does not possess and cannot seem to find in her life. Frame three becomes evident as Jordan's sexuality is made evident throughout the series. Jordan is unable and unwilling to maintain any romantic relationship because of her outspoken fear of commitment. Even the NBC website and television advertisements seem to focus more on her sexuality and complicated past than her important work as a medical examiner. Her only two long-term relationships are both riddled with issues. Her relationship with journalist J.D. Pollack ends with his murder, in which she is a prime suspect—though ultimately cleared. Her other significant relationship is with Detective Woody Hoyt. Though the series ended with Jordan's declaration of love for Woody, she is unable to commit to him throughout the seven years their relationship develops. Finally, Jordan struggles for several seasons to unravel the mystery of her mother's death when she was ten years old. This is a major impetus for Jordan to become a medical examiner and seek justice for others, as well as for herself.

Sam, the heroine in the series *The Profiler*, is similarly contextualized in all four frames. As identified in frame one, Sam is unable to functionally separate her professional and domestic lives. She puts up as many physical barriers around her home as possible, from iron bars to guns, but is still unable to keep the violent nature of her work away from her daughter. This manifests itself physically in the form of a serial killer that stalks her, kills her husband and later boyfriend, and abducts her daughter. Sam's boss Bailey Malone is the father figure she goes to for stability and to bring her back from the brink of sanity, particularly as the violence Jack-of-All-Trades aims at Sam escalates. It is actually Bailey who is left to console Sam in the final scene of the series finale, after she has shot Jack in order to get her abducted daughter back safely. Sam is also unable to have a functional romantic relationship. Jack kills her first husband, and then later her long-term boyfriend. Ironically, Sam's longest relationship is with Jack. Though not explicitly romantic, it is certainly intimate and intense and Jack holds power over her through his threats against anyone close to her. The fourth frame is evident in Sam's attempts at making Chloe's childhood everything hers was not—stable and secure. Her mother having died at ten, Sam was raised by her best friend's mother and considers them her family. However, she still longs to recall her childhood, which she is unable to do with any clarity.

Tru Davies, the heroine of *True Calling*, is framed in the same ways. Stuck in a veritable state of purgatory, Tru struggles between helping the dead who request her hand of justice and helping her living, dysfunctional family. Ultimately, Tru's personal life and public work end up colliding when she realizes that her father has been secretly working against her and had her mother murdered because she had the same ability as Tru. In

addition, Tru constantly has to weigh the benefits and risks in choosing whether to help the dead or her family and friends, because helping one usually has a catastrophic effect on the other. Tru also looks to a father figure for stability and moral direction. Her boss Davis, though not older than Tru, serves as her mentor and conscience. Tru also fails to maintain any functional romantic relationships because she is unwilling to trust anyone with the secret of her ability. At one point, she does have a long-term boyfriend. However, he is killed because Tru makes the difficult decision to save her brother's life instead. Additionally, Tru lost her mother at twelve years old, at which point she is the one who finds her mother's murdered body. She then takes over the care of her two siblings, which she continues to do well into adulthood.

Veronica Mars goes through parallel experiences with regard to separating her public and private lives. Like Tru, she becomes her own case as she struggles to find out the truth about her mother's disappearance and the death of her best friend. However, the more truth she discovers, the more difficult it is to distinguish between Veronica's private life and her work as a private investigator. In effect, as a private eye who looks at others and looks for the truth, her biggest case requires looking inward into her own life to find her truth. Her father figure is her sheriff father, who serves as her advisor and moral compass and whom she looks after like a stand-in housewife. Like most of the other heroines in this study, Veronica's efforts to have normal romantic relationships generally end in disappointment. During the course of the series, she dates her dead best friend Lilly's brother and later dates Lilly's ex-boyfriend, and is attacked by another man she is dating when the series follows Veronica to college. In this series, Veronica's mother is absent by choice, leaving Veronica and her father suddenly and mysteriously early on in

the series. Veronica struggles to find her mother and bring her back home, and takes care of domestic duties in her stead.

All these portrayals of intuition offer opportunities for oppositional reading, however. The four frames identified in this analysis all try to place intuition and the women that possess it into contexts that undermine their power. These women are portrayed as conflicted, unstable, unruly, lonely and unhappy as a result of the work they do using intuition. Frame one contextualizes the intuitive experience as a disruption of the separation between the public and private—to the detriment of both spheres. However, intuition can be seen as calling attention to what is often an artificial separation between the traditionally domestic/female and public/male. By blurring the line dividing these spheres and occupying the uncomfortable threshold between them, intuition serves as a source of liminal power, serving to call attention to the hegemonic framing at work. Frame two presents the image of the father figure as a counterpoint to the heroine. As such, the father figure represents everything the heroine is not—stable, patient, reasonable and wise. However, this can be read oppositionally, because it is the heroine who has primary agency while the father figure sits on the sidelines. Also, the father figures are generally presented with some mitigating factor, such as lack of agency or personal turmoil. Frame three holds powerful oppositional reading into the heroines' resistance to traditional gender roles and heterosexuality. Frame four can be read oppositionally as allowing a chance for the protagonists to separate from the domestic ties that are often represented by the mother figure. The absent mother also generally serves as the impetus behind the protagonists' drive for justice and truth.

Male Sleuths and Intuition

There are many television programs in which the protagonist who possesses intuition is male. This research undertakes analysis of two such series, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Monk*, in order to explore how intuition is contextualized and can be interpreted in male characters. With little exception and despite some deviation from the four frames, men with intuition seem to suffer similar fates to the heroines.

From its title, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* is framed as being different other programs. Whereas other titles, such as *True Calling*, *Veronica Mars* or *Crossing Jordan* indicate in some way that the series is about one particular protagonist, *Law & Order: CI* immediately makes it known that this is a program based on procedure in a professional setting. However, with a recurring set of characters and particular focus on one set of police officers in particular, the title can be seen as misleading. On *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*, Detective Robert Goren overshadows his diminutive female partner Alexandra Eames in every way, and he has a type of intuition that borders on a savant-like understanding of the world. The NBC website describes Goren as a brilliant detective with good instincts for understanding the criminal mind, which is a very different context than the descriptions of Allison Dubois of *Medium* and Jordan Cavanaugh of *Crossing Jordan*. However, in the series his intuition is portrayed very similarly to aforementioned heroines. Goren is unable to keep his family's dysfunction from spilling over into his work, and he constantly worries about his mother's schizophrenia and brother's drug addiction. Another way in which his public and private lives overlap is his fear that he has inherited his mother's mental illness, although Goren's brilliance can be seen as stemming from a mind that is anything but ordinary. In other words, it may be that Goren

has inherited his mother's illness, but it is this illness that allows him to understand the world in a different way and understand criminals so thoroughly. Frame two may be one of the only exceptions, because Goren does not have a father figure in the same way the female protagonists do. While he relies on his partner for stability and reason, he is often shown playing the father figure to his brother and mother, or as a way of getting criminals and victims to trust him in order to better understand a crime. As far as romantic relationships are concerned, Goren has an almost non-existent romantic life. Instances where he does form relationships are with criminals, the most significant of which is a serial killer who is later sacrificed by his mentor. Although physically present, Goren's mother can be considered to be absent because of her schizophrenia, which forces Goren to be her caretaker as well as parent to his younger, drug-addicted brother.

While Goren struggles to understand and overcome any traces of mental illness, Adrian Monk is a clinically diagnosed obsessive-compulsive sleuth. Monk is contextualized in three frames, and takes an interesting departure in the fourth frame. As a result of his obsessive need to understand and solve criminal cases, Monk is unable to stop working and there is little to no separation between his public and private lives. Because of his crippling fears, he is also a fairly helpless individual and relies on his assistant for stability and strength, in a way seeing her as a guiding force in the same way the female protagonists view their father figures. However, in this instance the female assistant has more freedom and agency than Monk does, because of his paralyzing mental illness. Because of his mental illness Monk is unable to let go of the unsolved murder of his wife Trudy, and sometimes even acts as if she is still alive. This can be seen as the height of romantic dysfunction, because Monk maintains an active relationship with a

person who is no longer living. With frame four, Monk takes a departure from the rest of the series. It turns out that Monk's mother was highly overprotective in his youth, leading to his mental illness, and it was his father who was absent following his mother's death. Although Monk's other was not absent, the relationship was still a dysfunctional one that created persistent issues for Monk, similarly to the other protagonists. It must be noted that in Monk's case, although it is his mental illness that cripples him socially, it is the same illness that results in his understanding the world in a different way—a way that allows him to solve the most complex of crimes. In a critical review of Monk written on the website PopMatters in 2006, author Michael Abernethy discusses the novelty of Monk's obsessive-compulsive personality. However, Abernethy's major complaint in the preview of season four of the series is that all story arcs have been exhausted and Monk's quirks alone cannot carry the program. The most interesting point the article makes at this point is the mention that the new season has several instances of logical inconsistencies in the script. Abernethy goes on to say that Monk solves crimes using logic and that such inconsistencies serve to highlight the flaws in the writing. This misses the major issue here—that nothing about Monk is rational, such as his phobia of milk. Therefore, it could be understood that Monk's ability to solve crimes is closely linked to his mental illness and his alternative perspective on the world, which in turn is an oppositional way to understand mental illness and ways of knowing.

Paratext and Intuition

Although Robert Goren's and Monk's lives are portrayed ambivalently, paratextual evidence often casts their intuition in a more positive light than their female counterparts. With the focus of *Law & Order: CI* being on the legal and penal process,

paratext regarding Robert Goren's character in particular is more positive than most others because he is highly successful at solving crimes and serving justice. Unlike paratext that highlights Jordan Cavanaugh's unusual methods and sexy appearance or Allison Dubois's matronly body and mothering abilities, paratext filters Goren's abilities as unorthodox and inefficient, but highly successful. Adrian Monk, on the other hand, provides an interesting case. *Monk* portrays the life of an individual who happens to work as a crime-solver. Monk suffers from severe mental illness, and although he does solve mysteries, paratextual analysis reveals a focus on his dysfunctional and unfulfilling life—similar to the paratexts relating to female sleuths.

Societal and Scholarly Implications

This analysis is important because it looks at a popular medium to understand the meanings available in the audience. As a medium that reaches millions of viewers every day and a genre that has grown in popularity and viewership, the television sleuth has seen a rise in production and audience and is ripe for analysis.

This study plays an important role in further understanding intuition as it is represented in popular media, which Linda Mizejewski understands as a repository for a culture's assumptions and an important site for analysis. Detailed by Susan Bordo, intuition is a way of knowing that is more strongly linked to the feminine than the masculine. As such, this investigation has undertaken the exploration of feminine intuition in a genre where intuition is central—the sleuth genre. Hegemonic understanding of intuition places it in a precarious position, socially. The characters who display intuition act as truth-seekers who look to find justice in their own lives and the world around them. However, intuition is accompanied by a range of unfortunate

circumstances and consequences, including but not limited to loneliness, ostracism, rejection, mental illness, death of loved ones and violence. Preferred reading would make it seem as if this is the normal price to pay for intuitive knowledge. This is not a new idea, as a similar context is enacted in the Biblical story of Eve's desire for knowledge and the consequence of seeking it. For the viewing audience of the television series that contextualize intuition in a similar manner, intuition and the desire for knowledge and justice seem to come at too hefty a cost to be worth it. However, there are many opportunities for oppositional reading of intuition and intuitive characters, all of which are empowering. Ultimately, intuition plays an indispensable role in spite of the consequences. Also empowering, the characters that possess intuition reject hegemonic constraints and choose to lead their lives according to their own tenets.

Paratextual analysis of the representation of intuition in the television sleuth genre yields interesting results. The series websites tend to provide strict hegemonic readings of the texts, relegating intuition to a second-tier occurrence in the programs. However, upon further analysis, the paratexts themselves can be read oppositionally, particularly when reading audience into the texts. As such, the texts are discovered to be replete with gender assumptions, often falling into familiar frames themselves. This can lead one to the conclusion that media frames tend to cross-pollinate one another. Web or print reviews of television don't necessarily seek to deconstruct television series, but rather work within the hegemonic framework to make meaning. More generally, this points to the need for paratexts to be considered an important source and object of study.

Academically, this analysis plays an important role in further understanding how intuition is understood, hegemonically, and for potential oppositionality. Eileen Meehan

considers textual analysis to be the cornerstone of cultural studies, and using Stuart Hall's theory of encoding and decoding, this study identified potential ways a cultural producer creates meaning, as well as the way audiences can read these texts and create separate meanings that are relevant to their lives. The issue of liminality is also academically important, as this intersection in meaning-making is a critical site for cultural critique. By also understanding intuition as a site of liminality, this allows for analysis of the attention to the artificial separation between good and bad knowledge and how meaning can be assigned to such a representation.

Future Research Trajectories

There are several possibilities available for future research relating to or expanding upon this investigation. Methodologically, it would be important to conduct a qualitative analysis on audience interpretation of intuition in the television sleuth genre. This could include participant observation methods such as creating an internet message board in order to collect asynchronous postings or establishing an internet chat room to collect synchronous postings. Another approach would involve the creation of face-to-face groups which could watch the series and discuss intuition or be surveyed about it.

Future areas of research take several different approaches. The data set can certainly be expanded to include other programs, such as *Battlestar Gallactica*, *Dead Zone*, *The Mentalist*, *Psyche*, *Life*, *The 4400*, *The Ghost Whisperer* and other programs that incorporate sleuthing as a main activity. Beyond simply expanding the data set, additional questions can include looking further into male intuition to understand the issues surrounding male identity and the acquisition of knowledge. Additional research

and analysis can also be done on how the public and the private are constructed in the television sleuth genre, particularly in regard to gender and sexuality.

It would also be important to look at the ways gendered knowing is framed and negotiated differently in racial and ethnic settings as well. Studies can be done exploring intuition and gender in Latin television, as well as African American representation or other racial or ethnic groups. Paratextual and qualitative audience analysis of these groups would also be a vital part of this project in order to determine the ways meanings are produced in these different communities, as well as in relation to how other communities create meaning with regard to intuition. Interestingly, there are few television examples of racial or ethnically diverse female sleuths, and a study of why this is the case through institutional, political economic analysis is warranted.

Another interesting area to investigate is the notion of masquerade as it applies to the television sleuth genre. Specifically, masquerade of gender as a means to gain knowledge. One specific episode of *Veronica Mars* encapsulates the trajectory of this inquiry. In an episode where Veronica must gain access to someone's home in order to hack into his computer, Veronica learns of the man's penchant for young, sexy women. She then devises and executes a plan in which she appears at his door claiming to have car trouble, dressed as a cheerleader and acting like the stereotypical blonde bimbo. She gains access to his home and computer, and is able to deflect his advances. This is the type of gender masquerade that Kathleen Rowe discusses, and provides opportunity to discuss gender and knowledge in a different way. Audience reception analysis would be critical in this case.

Summary

The gendering of knowledge and spheres of knowledge has important societal and academic ramifications. This investigation has explored the subjectivities of gendered knowledge as represented in the television sleuth genre. Primary texts include the television series *Medium*, *Crossing Jordan*, *True Calling*, *The Profiler*, *Veronica Mars*, *Law & Order: Criminal Intent* and *Monk*, and paratexts such as actor interviews, series and network websites and critical reviews were also analyzed. Ultimately, intuition is understood as dangerous, outlandish, empowering and unpredictable. The characters that possess intuition are complex, and preferred reading would often have these characters feel guilty for their knowledge and their refusal to adhere to hegemonic gender roles. However, oppositional readings are possible which understand these characters as not having anything for which to apologize.

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