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The "Other" Woman in Contemporary Television Drama: Analyzing Intersectional Representation on *Bones*

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Abstract This essay theorizes intersectional representation as a strategic device used in twenty-first century television narrative by examining the generically "Other" woman in television drama. This character is often racially, ethnically, economically and sexually "othered". She appears on numerous broadcast television programs, and yet remains relatively invisible in cultural discourses of television. I offer a critical reading of the intersectional representation used on FOX's series *Bones* as a means of exposing how intersectional imagery functions to re-center identity politics on White, heteronormative, middle-class values. That these images remain largely invisible in academic discussions of race, ethnicity, sexuality and class on television while appearing frequently in the most economically successful television narratives speaks to the complexity of intersectional identity politics in contemporary media studies.

Keywords Bones · Intersectional representation · Television narrative · Identity politics · Intersectionality · Race · Ethnicity · Sexuality · Bisexuality · Class · Television industry · Television drama · Television representation

Introduction

Television scholarship in the communication discipline tends to analyze character representations through single identity categories. For example, scholars primarily foreground gender (e.g., Agirre 2012; Cuklanz and Moorti 2006; Randell-Moon 2012; Stabile 2009; Van Damme 2010), race (e.g., Chidester 2012; Dennis 2009; Esposito 2009; Fitzgerald 2010; Watts and Orbe 2002), sexuality (Arthurs 2003; Dhaenens 2012, 2013; McLaughlin 1991; Meyer 2003; Westerfelhaus and Lacroix

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2006), and class (Butsch 1992; Gray 1989; Livingstone 2011; Reser 2005; Stern 2012) to make larger arguments about how television representations of these specific identity categories influence cultural discourses. While these approaches are certainly useful for understanding specific visual articulations of identity politics, contemporary television representation has shifted to accommodate increased diversity among viewing audiences (Muller and Hermes 2010; Wenger and Nicholson 2004), as well as lucrative trans-national and global markets (Ashuri 2010; Waisbord 2004).

In this essay, I theorize intersectional representation as a strategic device used by television narrative in the twenty-first century. Intersectional representation is a single visual image that contains multiple discourses of identity politics, deployed by television industry as a means of appeasing audiences sensitive to diversity issues. The increased use of this type of representation, particularly in broadcast television, re-centers White, heteronormative, middle-class values in television narrative, and illustrates larger cultural and political struggles related to identity politics in the twenty-first century. This cultural process is certainly not new, as decades of television research establishes identity politics and representation as problematic. What has yet to be outlined though is "the possibility of a politics of invisibility" (Sloop 2006, p. 329). In other words, the primary purpose of most media scholarship interrogating identity politics is to examine representations (or lack thereof) for their implied cultural discourses of identity, ultimately suggesting that visibility is a crucial component for contemporary identity politics. Intersectional representation allows television narratives to establish a logic whereby certain types of representations are ubiquitous yet surprisingly invisible simultaneously. Thus, the (visible) invisibility of identity politics maps a cultural landscape of post-difference onto the visual cultural terrain of popular media.

In order to critique a landscape of post-difference, I interrogate a particular pattern of intersectional representation: the "Other" woman who is revealed to be bisexual and/or queer, often dealing with class disparity. The appearance of this particular type of character crosses numerous broadcast networks: Angela Montenegro on *Bones* (FOX, 2005—Present); Anna Tagaro on *One Tree Hill* (WB/CW, 2003–2012); Callie Torres on *Grey's Anatomy* (ABC, 2005—Present), Emily Fields on *Pretty Little Liars* (ABC, 2010—Present), Kalinda Sharma on *The Good Wife* (CBS, 2009—Present), Mulan on *Once Upon a Time* (2011—Present) and Santana Lopez on *Glee* (FOX, 2009—2015). Despite the commonality of these representations, they remain relatively unnoticed in cultural discourses of television and are largely under-theorized in academic discussions of television representation. To explore why, I first situate my discussion in literature on hybridity and intersectionality as it relates to television representation to establish intersectional representation as a unique pattern of television image. I then offer a close critical reading of FOX's series *Bones* to illustrate in depth how intersectional representation functions to normalize and eradicate difference through an assimilationist discourse. As a result of this process, I theorize what this particular image offers broadcast markets, and ultimately, interrogate the simultaneous visibility/invisibility of these women.

Hybridity, Intersectionality and Television Representation

Scholarship on television representation frequently employs hybridity as a framework for critical examination of media texts. This research uses the term "hybridity" in a number of different ways, but typically references a cultural borrowing and fusion of two distinct cultural practices/ideologies/identities. Kraidy (2005) traces several historical uses including miscegenation (racial mixing and "contamination"), syncretism (religious borrowing and blending), and mastizaje (legitimating cultural mixing for the purpose of nation building). Molina Guzman and Valdivia (2004) further explain that when hybridity occurs, it is a "space where bodies and identity resist stable categories, and meaning is ambivalent, contradictory and historically shifting" (pp. 213–214). With respect to television images then, hybridity is used to interrogate representations that challenge traditional identity politics. According to Kraidy, hybridity is "the cultural logic of globalization" which allows cultures to capitalize and commodify images by "offering foreign media and marketers transcultural wedges for forgoing affective links between their commodities and local communities" (p. 148). In American television markets, miscegenation and syncretism are common strategies because hybridity sells to an increasingly diverse television audience nationally (Cragin 2010; Kedong and Hui 2011; Steeves 2008) and is also profitable globally (Bore 2009; Kuipers 2012; Wood 2004). As Hall (1977) reminds us, "media serve, in societies like ours, ceaselessly to perform the critical ideological work of 'classifying out the world' within the discourses of the dominant ideology" (p. 346).

At the turn of the century, hybridity became particularly important in terms of television casting choices. Decades of research in ethnicity, race, and feminist media studies illustrates that television narrative often racializes, genderizes and sexualizes media representations (see D'Acci 1994; Dow 1996; Faludi 1991; Rodriguez 1997; Shohat and Stam 1994, Shome and Hegde 2002a, b). Throughout the 1990s, television networks began targeting narrower audience segments through casting choices that encouraged viewership from "hip, sophisticated, urban-minded, white, college-educated, upscale 18–49 years olds with liberal attitudes, disposable income, and a distinctively edgy and ironic sensibility" (Becker 2004, p. 391). Part of this targeting involved broadening the racial and ethnic dimensions of casts beyond Black and White leading to increases in Asian (Pham 2004) and Latino/a representation (Molina Guzman and Valdivia 2004). This scholarship examines hybridity as an attempt to situate representations that are not White or Black within complex cultural discourses of race and ethnicity. For example, Shugart (2007) analyzes public discourse surrounding Jennifer Lopez as an attempt to culturally locate her between Black and White culture. She argues that hybridity presents a cultural threat to Whiteness "when otherness is not so clearly defined, and the boundary between the two is easily and frequently traversed and thus transgressed" (p. 119). Similarly, Jiwani (2005) explains that Asian actors exist as hybrids because, "Asians" are seen as "a monolithic or homogenous category" despite "wide differences within Asia as a continent and within the communities that are typified and categorized as 'Asian" (p. 183). Meyer and Stern (2007) apply this

observation to television by critiquing the series *Lost*. Despite accolades the show received for "diverse casting", Asian characters Sun and Jin were generally ignored by their White counterparts, and did not occupy central storylines. Thus, hybridity research tends to focus primarily on ethnic/racial difference to the exclusion of other types of difference.

In contrast to the plethora of television scholarship employing the term "hybridity", "intersectionality" is rarely used to interrogate television representation. Crenshaw (1989/1993) is credited with originating the term intersectionality, but many scholars in the twentieth century proclaimed that analyzing race, gender or sexuality as a primary category of identity, difference, or disadvantage singularly limited our understanding of cultural discourses of oppression (e.g., Campbell 1982; Davis 1987; Hill Collins 1990; Hurtado 1989). Crenshaw explains that a "single-axis framework" for understanding identity focuses on the experiences of the most privileged members of subordinate groups. She observes three possible articulations of intersectionality—it can occur as similar experiences between individuals, as an experience of additive or multiplicative effects (i.e., double discrimination or double jeopardy), or as experiences that are specific to the identity categories of the individual (i.e., gay men, Black women). Understanding images as intersectional warrants that, "gender, race, class, and sexuality simultaneously affect the perceptions, experiences, and opportunities of everyone living in a society stratified along these dimensions" and that focusing on a single marginalizing factor "in the service of parsimony is a kind of false economy" (Cole 2009, p. 179). In other words, examining these images as representative of a single identity category (or even a fusion of two identity categories) limits our understanding of the complicated cultural structure from which they operate.

Scholarship that does interrogate intersectionality as part of television representation has revealed that the identity politics of images often function to stimulate discourses of "Otherness" and re-center Whiteness, heterosexuality, and middle-class values as social norms. Meyers (2004) provides an intersectional analysis of television news coverage of sexual assault, illustrating that Black women's narratives of assault were framed through the intersection of gender, race, and class. She eloquently argues for more nuanced analyses of media representations by exposing the limitations of traditional identity politics:

> To say that gender, class and race are linked in social consciousness and popular imagery, and must be understood and analyzed as such, is not to deny that commonalities exist among those within a particular race, class or gender. However, the meaning and representation of class status is both gendered and racialized: racialized through historical background, and gendered within a system of male supremacy and female subordination (p. 113).

Despite this call for increased attention to intersectionality, few studies of television representation examine images intersectionally. Meyer (2009) conducts an intersectional reading of the character Anna Tagaro on *One Tree Hill*, illustrating how her existence as the only Latina character in addition to her representation as the only bisexual/queer character on the series opens the door for White characters to interact with marginality in "progressive and accepting" ways (p. 248). Cragin

(2010) examines television talk shows, particularly the *Jerry Springer Show*, for its use of intersectionality, observing that the use of transvestite characters plays upon audience assumptions about gender, race, and class as part of fixed identity characteristics, ultimately steering audiences to see these representations as abnormal or "Other" (p. 165). Stern (2012) analyzes the popular series *Gilmore Girls*, arguing that the show's juxtaposition of gender, race and class produces a "heteronormative utopian village" (p. 167). Despite critical acclaim for representing a single-mother family, Stern notes that Lorilai's single-mom status is buttressed by wealthy parents and a well-intentioned community that takes care of her. As a result, the series ignores the fact that, "most single working mothers do not have the luxury of affluent parents, nor a fairy godmother at a country inn to provide a job and discounted living space when sacrifice is not enough" (p. 177).

Together, these academic discussions are more interested in intersectionality as *methodology* (a way of critically examining a single television text for its representation of identity politics) rather than intersectionality as *representation* (the presence of identity politics manifested in the visual depiction of a character and/or story arc across multiple texts). Intersectional representation is, thus, a specific type of representation where multiple positionalities of identity politics (race, ethnicity, sexuality, class, etc.) manifest in a single visual image. These images contain multiplicative "Otherness" within television narrative, revealing a multiple-axis modality of oppression whereby White, heteronormative, middle-class norms are reified, all while appeasing a diverse audience demographic. These images primarily function as an erasure of difference, establishing a cultural discourse for standardizing discussions of post-difference (post-racism, post-sexism, post-classism, post-sexuality). Through their use, "Otherness" is layered to produce a commdifiable image that is both economically profitable and exploitative through its erasure of difference, and by implication, identity.

Bones as a Case Study of Intersectional Representation

The women of *Bones* offer an especially intriguing case study for culturally critiquing intersectional representation in television narrative. *Bones* premiered in 2005 on the FOX television network. Its appearance was no surprise as broadcast television in America at the turn of the century was riddled with crime drama procedurals such as *CSI* (and its spin offs, *CSI: Miami* and *CSI: New York*), *Cold Case*, *NCIS*, *Without a Trace*, *Criminal Minds*, and *Numb3rs*. Like many of these narratives, *Bones* is based in forensic science, with each episode focusing on an FBI case file concerning human remains—typically decomposed, hence the title, *Bones*. The series will enter its 11th season in the fall of 2015, averaging between eight and ten million viewers per week, and has over 200 episodes to date (Porter 2010). *Bones* consistently scores highly in ratings among adults aged 18–34 and has proven to be a powerhouse series for the FOX network (Gorman 2010). While *Bones* is part of a larger genre of crime drama narratives, it is unique in that it features three female leads: Brennan, Angela and Cam. Most similar series offer only one female

lead whose presence among male-dominated criminal justice industries becomes a central storyline for her narrative.

The series establishes Brennan (Bones), played by White actress Emily Deschanel, as a world-renowned forensic anthropologist who helped sort through the remains of those killed on 9/11 as well as traveled to Sudan, El Salvador, Rwanda, Guatemala, and Tibet, where she trekked through the mountains to avoid the Chinese Army. Her work as a forensic anthropologist influences her interpersonal interactions. She values logic and rationality over emotional connection, and her unlikely partnership with FBI Agent Seeley Booth exposes this tension. She is frequently represented in lab attire, either professional, conservative dress, or wearing a lab coat. Cam, played by African-American actress Tamara Taylor, is Brennan's immediate superior overseeing the Foresnic Anthropology Department at the Jeffersonian. She specializes in cases where the bones still have flesh, offering a counterpoint to Brennan's expertise. Prior to working at the Jeffersonian, she served as the Chief Coroner of New York for 2 years and Assistant Federal Coroner before that. She mostly serves as an administrator, but she often gets involved in the cases that come through the lab. Cam is always pristinely dressed in form-fitting attire, usually tailored dresses, which are reminiscent of a runway model. Bohemian and expressive Angela "Pearly Gates" Montenegro, played by Chinese-American actress Michaela Conlin, is the Jeffersonian's resident forensic artist working with Brennan's team creating facial reconstructions. She invented the "Angelator"—a holographic device used to create 3D images of the people being reconstructed, as well as projecting potential death scenarios to help scientists understand how the bones ended up in the lab. She is adept at computer programming and uses intuition in equal measure to her artistic computer skills. Angela is almost always dressed in flowy, traditionally feminine fabrics, and her representation is much less professional in terms of dress.

Angela as the "Other" Woman on *Bones*

One of the primary features of intersectional representation is the way Otherness is inscribed through multiplicity, or what Hill Collins (1990) would call the "matrix of domination". Within the first few episodes of the series, Angela's visual racial/ethnic Otherness is articulated through her sexual prowess and confidence. When referencing Brennan's recent crime novel, Angela comments that Brennan's lead character in the novel reminds her of her new partner Booth, who "I for one would love to tap" (S1, Ep. 1). Angela is also represented as the most "worldly" of the associates in the lab. For example, when Angela finds Zack and Hodgins racing beetles, Hodgins asks her to "get in on the action", but she declines saying, "No, thank you. I'm going to go have sex" (S1, Ep. 7). Her knowledge of sex and sexuality make her the point person for assisting others in the lab with their love lives. Zack asks Angela for help when he's interested in a classmate, Naomi. Angela says:

Angela: Alright, I'm going to let you in on a secret. This is a female secret. Go to Naomi and tell her you don't know anything about lovemaking; you're a blank slate. You'll do anything she wants if she just introduces you to the secrets of love. She'll be more interested in that than if you were the most imaginative lover on the planet.
Zach: That is totally counterintuitive.
Angela: Just do it Z-man. Reap the benefits of my sexual wisdom (S1, Ep. 3).

Later in the fifth season, Brennan is enjoying the success of her most recent novel and a reporter from Japan interviews her (S5, Ep. 15). The reporter asks a plethora of questions about the interpersonal relationships between the characters in her novel and little about the actual forensic science behind the plot. Brennan takes offense, telling the reporter that the value of the book is in the science. When the reporter continues her lines of questioning, Brennan realizes that the interpersonal relationships between the characters make the book popular (in particular, a series of passionate sex scenes). She then cedes some of her royalties to Angela, who advised Brennan on how to write the sex scenes once she finished the scientific part of the story. Brennan is depicted as humbly providing this large sum of money to Angela, while Angela is framed as the "starving artist" who must accept the handout. Ultimately, Brennan's creative capital (her novels) in combination with her job position her as quite well off, where Angela's artistic talent was not economically marketable until she landed the position at the Jeffersonian.

In fact, Angela's actions exist in sharp contrast to Brennan and Cam's expectations about relationships. Both Brennan and Cam express restraint—but in different ways: Brennan exercises emotional restraint while still engaging in physical sex acts, while Cam realizes her inability to remain emotionally neutral, thus limits her access to sexual partners for the good of her job. As a result, Brennan's attempts to discuss sexuality are generally met with unease by the other characters, particularly Booth. Brennan often uses sexual disclosure and language (in a scientific manner) as a way to interact with Booth, which makes him highly uncomfortable. In season one, Brennan responds to a question from Booth by saying, "You probably think I get some kind of rush when I work, that I'm somehow titillated", to which Booth grimaces, and scolds her, "Choice of words, Bones! Choice of words!" (S1, Ep. 18). This continues for the duration of the first two seasons, with Brennan eventually realizing Booth's uneasiness in season two where she acknowledges, "Sorry. I'm sorry. I forgot how self-conscious you are talking about sex" (S2, Ep. 10). The constant policing and subsequent apologetic behavior displayed by the characters demonstrates how "hypermasculine traits are far less legitimate in someone with a vagina instead of a penis" (Campbell 2014, p. 184).

On the other hand, Booth frequently responds to Angela's sexual comments, and shows little discomfort engaging them. On one occasion, Angela and Booth express discomfort with how they were represented in Brennan's most recent book:

Angela: Such as artists are doomed to a life of loneliness because they are unable to think beyond instant gratification.

Booth: Such as, you know, FBI guys are hot and Angela here wants to have sex with me.
Angela: (looking Booth up and down) *Yeah!* (S1, Ep. 12).

Angela's sexual desire is easily and readily expressed without retribution or social taming. Her views of sex and sexuality are incredibly liberal, from her first marriage which she categorizes as "I jumped over a broomstick with a guy" (S2, Ep. 21) to lamenting about her lack of sex in a six-week period as "the longest I've gone without since I lost my virginity at age 16" (S4, Ep. 8). While Brennan tries to engage in similar sexual small talk, her social awkwardness leads to constant monitoring and disapproval by the other characters. In fact, Angela often helps Brennan rephrase or restate her responses so they are more aligned with social and emotional norms.

Similarly, Cam's preference for emotional restraint is positioned against Angela's whimsical approach to relationships. When Angela and Hodgins begin a romantic relationship, their sexuality is ever-present in the workplace. They are frequently depicted having sex in the Jeffersonian during the work day. At one point Cam walks in on them kissing, and yelps "Oh good Lord, you have to stop mounting each other in the office!" Angela dismisses Cam's concern saying, "We were working", to which Cam retorts, "You were working *it*. A little professionalism would be nice, people!" (S2, Ep. 20). Throughout the second season, Cam and Booth are engaged in a sexual relationship, but only outside of the confines of the office. Moreover, they agree to end their relationship as it might impact their working relationship (S2, Ep. 12). Angela debates the same issue with Hodgins, and even agrees not to pursue a relationship with him, but her emotional attachment and view of relationships leads to a long and complicated affair. Angela's relationship with Hodgins serves as a mecca of sexual wisdom for Brennan, who seeks her advice often. For example, Brennan discusses her reticence to escalate a relationship with Sully:

Brennan: Most relationships end badly. I just think it's important to be reasonable. To stay in control.
Angela: Don't use your brain so much, sweetie. You have other organs that can give you far more pleasure.
Brennan: I'm just saying that the odds are not in favor of lasting relationships.
Angela: Look. It might end with Sully. Sure. But I don't think you want to rush the process. Look at Hodgins and I. We're running on sex and laughing. The only thought comes when we order take out in bed.
Brennan: And you're happy?
Angela: Hey, we did it in the storage locker an hour ago—I am thrilled! (S2, Ep. 15).

Despite Angela's advice to follow her heart and embrace the uncertainty of relationships, Brennan breaks off her relationship with Sully when he asks for a more serious commitment. She then engages in a series of romantic engagements that have little emotional depth, aligning with her view that "humans act upon a hierarchy of needs, and sex is very highly ranked. It's an anthropological

inevitability" (S2, Ep. 5). Likewise, Cam is not shown with any sexual partners after calling off her relationship with Booth, and even adopts the teenage daughter of a former fiancé when he is found brutally murdered (S4, Ep. 18). She only begins dating again in season five, after adjusting to her new role as a mother, and even then, she insists on taking the relationship with her new beau slowly (S5, Ep. 19).

Additionally, Angela's sexual identity is called into question in season four when an old girlfriend, Roxie, becomes a murder suspect in the investigation of a famous artist's death. Booth's interrogation uncovers Roxie's sexuality, and since she and Angela attended college together, Booth and Brennan assume that Angela will have more information:

Angela: Yes, Roxie is gay. At least she was when we were together
Booth: In school?
Angela: Yes
Booth: Oh, you heard rumors
Angela: No, I have firsthand knowledge
Booth: Oh, you walked in on her, that's awkward
Angela: (stopping, turning to address Booth) No, we were *together*, for over a year
Booth: Wow. You and, uh, Roxie? …
Brennan: Women tend not to be as rigid in their sexual identities as men (S4, Ep. 8).

As a result of Angela's disclosure, the case takes a more personal turn, and Angela realizes she still has feelings for Roxie. She discloses this to Brennan, who laments, "it's too bad there isn't a way to experiment with sexuality", to which Angela replies, "that's how I got into this whole mess in the first place" (S4, Ep. 8). When Roxie's name is cleared, Angela decides to re-enter a relationship with her, which lasts for several months until Angela's "free spirit" and lack of planning for a tangible future with a partner upsets Roxie. Roxie laments, "Ange, you live in the moment, I know that, but moments are fleeting. They pass". They cannot reconcile their differences, and break off the relationship (S4, Ep. 17). Following their breakup, Angela goes back to dating men, but her sexual identity remains a liminal space for other characters on the series. In particular, it takes Hodgins some time to readjust to his continued feelings for Angela, which are ultimately addressed by their impromptu marriage at the end of season five. The marriage helps secure economic stability for Angela, as Hodgins is a wealthy only child who works for "fun" rather than to support himself.

Later seasons represent Angela as a maternal figure, literally through her pregnancy story-arc, and figuratively through her nurturing advice to other characters. The first episode of season six reveals that Angela became pregnant on her honeymoon with Hodgins, which lays the foundation for an entire season-long narrative of pregnancy. Angela and Hodgins navigate the possibility that their child may contract a rare genetic disorder that causes blindness (S6, Ep. 16), a tenuous relationship with her drifter father (S6, Ep. 15), and Angela's feelings of being "smothered" by marriage and pregnancy (S6, Ep. 20). Meanwhile, Angela spends a great deal of time during the season offering Cam advice on how to parent

Michelle, suggesting that Cam let Michelle make her own decisions about college (even if it means following a boy there) (S6, Ep. 7) and admonishing Cam for submitting Michelle's application to Columbia for her (S6, Ep. 17). As season seven begins, Angela has assumed the role of new parent, represented as part of a happy nuclear family (S7, Ep. 1), working for hours to put together a new toy for her son (S7, Ep. 3), drinking coffee and coming up with ideas/tricks to get the baby to sleep (S7, Ep. 5), and hiding her son in her office during the day because she misses him, despite Cam's "no baby" policy in the workplace (S7, Ep. 8). Cracks in this happy narrative appear in season eight, when Angela meets a street artist named Zed. Intrigued by his artistic talent, Angela kisses him, only to have him compliment her artistic "technique", which functions as an admonishment for wasting her artistic talent working at the Jeffersonian and being tied to a baby/marriage (S8, Ep. 8). This increases Angela's frustrations with work, and she ultimately cuts back on her hours because she "doesn't feel like an artist any more" (S8, Ep. 10). This again draws attention to her position in terms of class, as Brennan can accomplish her creative endeavors as a writer and balance her career at the Jeffersonian, while Angela is depicted as unable to truly create while performing her job function.

Critical Implications of Intersectional Representation on *Bones*

The use of intersectional representation through Angela's character on *Bones* foregrounds a number of critical implications. Within American culture, the mind/body binary is signified by the higher intellectual functions of the mind while nature is signified by the lower biological functions of the body. Given that the narrative of the series rests on Brennan's work as a cultural anthropologist, the tensions between mind/body, logic/emotion, and reason/desire are frequently articulated and debated. Culturally, Whiteness tends to be associated with the more rational discourses of the mind, while cultural "Others" are associated with the body. As Molina Guzman and Valdivia (2004) observe, "Whiteness is associated with a disembodied intellectual tradition free from the everyday desires of the body, and non-Whiteness is associated with nature and the everyday needs of the body to consume food, excrete waste, and reproduce sexually" (p. 211). Through positioning Brennan's logic and rationality against Angela's emotional empathy, the series constantly positions Whiteness as central to cultural discourse. This is further reinforced by Cam's representation—where more attention is drawn to her body through suggestive clothing, and her complicated desires to keep her emotional attachments from entering her work life limit her commitment to the life of the mind. In a sense, Cam has not "evolved" to the same degree of emotional detachment as Brennan, though they share similar career fields, making her professional connection to the *flesh* rather than just *bones* imbued with meaning. Brennan speaks as the authority on all issues related to science and rationality in the series. This can be read as re-centering Whiteness as the cultural norm, a norm to which Cam and Angela should aspire. On the other hand, Brennan's "social awkwardness" could be read as a re-positioning of Whiteness as awkward, a-cultural, and ultimately lacking in understanding the depths of humanity. Both

Cam and Angela (and to a large extent Booth) readily point out the ways in which Brennan fails to adhere to contemporary social norms of politeness, tact, and empathy. While she is certainly not challenged in terms of her intellectual abilities, she is called into question when dealing with others and maintaining relationships. Given the discourses of globalization post-September 11th, it should be no surprise that Whiteness (particularly within an American context) can be discursively questioned for its inability to understand "Otherness". Brennan's emotional growth throughout the series, including her sustained relationships with others, can ultimately be read as Whiteness learning to adapt to a globalized world where clear scientific divisions between cultures and anthropologies have blurred.

Moreover, Angela's (hyper)sexuality functions to expose dominate ideologies associated with sexual behavior, appropriateness and relational maintenance. In essence, she engages what Westerfelhaus and Lacroix (2006) call "the strategic rhetoric of heteronormativity", or a discourse that naturalizes heterosexuality in our cultural understanding of sexual identity. In a sense, Angela's sexual fluidity distinguishes her from Cam and Brennan as more interested in sexual and emotional pleasure than relational stability and support. The introduction of Angela's former girlfriend offered narrative potential to debate sexual ambiguity. Yet, the narrative opted to introduce the information and quickly dismiss it—Roxie's departure lays the groundwork for a reuniting and eventual marriage to Hodgins. The taming of Angela through marriage and childbirth in later seasons also exposes an ideological preference for pronatalist, mainstream heterosexuality. Given Brennan's representation as detached from the flesh, and Angela's continued connection to it, the story arcs of their two pregnancies represent White heterosexuality in conjunction with "Other" (hyper)sexuality. Within the narrative, Angela's pregnancy was planned—Michaela Conlin was not actually pregnant, and writers created the narrative specifically for Angela. She is represented numerous times throughout the series as having sex with multiple partners, and it is no surprise to her colleagues when she becomes pregnant. Brennan's pregnancy, on the other hand, was unplanned by the writers. Emily Deschanel was actually pregnant, giving writers little time to plan a narrative around her conception. In fact, Brennan and Booth were represented comforting each other (fully clothed) in bed after the murder of one of their friends in the lab. Two episodes later, Brennan tells Booth that she is pregnant. No discussion of the act of sex takes place, and in many ways, the pregnancy appears magically in the narrative. Despite the challenges for writing around real life events, the ultimate narrative suggests that pregnancy and motherhood come more easily to Angela than to Brennan, connecting again to an identity politics of the body. Angela's representation functions to re-center Whiteness in *Bones*, while simultaneously serving as social commentary on globalization and ethnic/racial diversity. In addition, her ambiguous sexuality positions her in liminal space that is eventually tamed and controlled through heteronormative discourse. Issues of identity politics are swept aside, difference is eradicated. Ultimately, Angela is "one of us" at the Jeffersonian, and this identity becomes the only important one to discuss in the narrative.

Intersectional Representation as Twenty-First Century Television Strategy

Through an analysis of intersectional representation on *Bones*, I have illustrated one specific type of intersectional television representation: the "Other" woman who is revealed to be bisexual and/or queer, often dealing with class disparity. This image centralizes issues of race, ethnicity, sexuality and class within a narrative to one character, ultimately "positioning that character as a token representative for *all* discourses of cultural struggle" (Meyer 2010, p. 381).

These women serve an important feature in these narratives as they counsel/guide the White protagonists, ultimately streamlining discussions of identity politics. As Jiwani (2005) so eloquently notes, containing difference through representational strategies in media images promotes an "underlying message of assimilation, the lack of cultural ties and identity, and the emphasis on individual skills" that specifically promotes "the ideological narrative that underlies the American Dream of upward mobility" (p. 189). Intersectional representation then is a specific and purposeful ideological strategy of television narrative to frame discussions of identity politics in terms of post-difference.

What is fascinating about this type of representation is its ubiquity in contemporary television programming, particularly within dramatic hour-long television narratives. This assimilationist approach to "multiple-marginality" via gender, sexuality, class and ethnicity/race produces a number of troublesome consequences as a cultural practice. First, its ubiquity is most certainly tied to archetypical typecasting employed by television industries. Containing discourses of "Otherness" in one character makes it easier to "check all the boxes" of identity politics and appease the most number of identity constituents in a given audience. As market demands increase, and niche television expands, these types of characters may exist as an attempt to recognize and appease diverse television viewing markets, while at the same time function to keep cast size small and economically manageable. At the same time, however, these images represent larger cultural struggles over the centrality of White, heteronormative, middle-class values to television narrative. These women are not the protagonists of television drama—they function on the margin, as wise counsel and comedic foil to the (strong) White female lead. Thus, while the emergence of this specific character type seems, on the surface, quite progressive it operates in a cultural landscape where its cultural function is rather repressive.

In fact, it is likely no accident that this particular type of intersectional representation appears almost exclusively in economically successful television narratives. These women occupy the most popular stories offered on broadcast television—FOX's *Bones* and *Glee* are two of its most successful series, *One Tree Hill* ran for nine seasons while *Grey's Anatomy* just finished its 11th season, and newer shows like *The Good Wife, Once Upon a Time* and *Pretty Little Liars* have strong, loyal audiences. Yet, popular discourse on television representation and identity politics fails to recognize, or even acknowledge, these women. For example, Apuy (2013) lauds recent television shows *The Newsroom*, *Go On*, and

The Mindy Project for their progressive representations of Asian women, but it is striking that all of these "edgier" more "progressive" representations appear in narratives that are less economically successful than those that contain the intersectional representations. The women who occupy intersectional space are not part of this discussion, perhaps because their queerness renders them outside of the typical discourses of racial/ethnic representation. Yet, queer television critics also fail to include these women as part of their commentary. In a particularly telling example, Banks (2013) laments that "primetime television is looking less gay", particularly in the wake of the cancelation of shows like *The New Normal*, *Smash*, and *Happy Endings*. These series offered less stereotypical queer representation, but were ultimately rendered economically unsuccessful. And again, these intersectional women are not perceived as important to sexuality identity politics in television representation.

Thus, while these characters are visible—profoundly visible in a sense through their ubiquity—they are at the same time quite invisible: invisible as a point of discussion for identity politics in racial/ethnic representation, invisible to discussions of queer representation in the sense that they are not the right kind of queer, particularly in how they are framed conventionally in ways that can be read as heterosexual. As a result, they blend seamlessly into narratives that more commonly reify the status quo, while at the same time allow those narratives to appear, at least on the surface, progressive in their identity politics. That these narratives are more economically successful than those lauded as more progressive for individual identity politics speaks to our cultural willingness to accept this (in)visibility of intersetionality. They are appealing to everyone because they are essentially no one, culturally erased into a discourse of post-difference where any aspect of identity politics (race, ethnicity, class, sexuality) is essentially and functionally not important in contemporary culture.

In this essay, I theorized intersectional representation as a twenty-first century television strategy and offered a critical reading of *Bones* to illustrate the stakes associated with one specific intersectional representation: the "Other" woman in contemporary television drama. Future critical media scholarship should interrogate other specific texts where this image occurs, as well as attempt to map larger patterns of representation across texts. There are, most likely, other types of intersectional representation occurring, as the cultural force of a post-difference discourse permeates the rhetorical framing of identity politics in the twenty-first century. Identifying these troublesome patterns of representation helps trace our cultural history through media narratives, and is important work for expanding our understanding of contemporary television.

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