JYVÄSKYLÄ STUDIES IN HUMANITIES
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Aino-Kaisa Koistinen

The Human Question in Science Fiction Television

(Re)Imagining Humanity in *Battlestar Galactica, Bionic Woman* and *V*

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

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Esitetään Jyväskylän yliopiston humanistisen tiedekunnan suostumuksella
julkisesti tarkastettavaksi yliopiston vanhassa juhlasalissa S212
huhtikuun 11. päivänä 2015 kello 12.

Academic dissertation to be publicly discussed, by permission of
the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Jyväskylä,
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UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

JYVÄSKYLÄ 2015

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Publishing Unit, University Library of Jyväskylä

Jyväskylä Studies in Humanities
Editorial Board

URN:ISBN:978-951-39-6147-3
ISBN 978-951-39-6147-3 (PDF)
ISSN 1459-4331

ISBN 978-951-39-6146-6 (nid.)
ISSN 1459-4323

Jyväskylä University Printing House, Jyväskylä 2015

ABSTRACT

Koistinen, Aino-Kaisa
The Human Question in Science Fiction Television: (Re)Imagining Humanity in *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*
Jyväskylä: University of Jyväskylä, 2015, 80 p.
(Jyväskylä Studies in Humanities
ISSN 1459-4323; 248)
ISBN 978-951-39-6146-6 (nid.)
ISBN 978-951-39-6147-3 (PDF)

This doctoral dissertation investigates 'the human question' in science fiction television. More specifically, it examines how 'humanity' is represented and (re)imagined in the original and remade (or *re-imagined)* versions of three North American science fiction television series: *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*. As the re-imagined series have previously not been compared to their original versions in detail, the dissertation produces new information about the series and their complex cultural, ethical and political implications. I discuss, firstly, how the understandings or boundaries of humanity are drawn in these series. Secondly, I examine what connections can be found between the series, the cultural and historical discussions and contexts surrounding their production and reception, and feminist and posthumanist theory. The contexts found particularly relevant are: science fiction television, the Cold War, the War on Terror, and certain discussions on the definition of humanity in the Euro-American, humanist tradition. All the series include some sort of non-human characters in their narratives. The dissertation therefore focuses on how humanity is constructed alongside with the representations of the non-human. The questions asked are: What kind of bodies are represented as human and non-human and how do these representations participate in the construction of the cultural-historical, political and ethical understandings of humanity? What kinds of developments or changes, considering the norms and conditions of humanity, are found when comparing the re-imagined series to their original versions? Special attention is paid on the problematic, strange or queer occasions inherent in the norms and conditions, or definitions, of humanity. Key concepts are *performativity, passing for human*, *grievable/ungrievable life, livable life*, *the cyborg figuration* and *feminist posthumanism*. The dissertation suggests that all the studied series pose, in one way or another, 'the human question' and that this question is connected to complex cultural, political and ethical debates considering 'livable' lives and human–non-human relations. These debates are deeply intertwined with, questions of, for instance, ethnicity and gender.

Keywords: science fiction television, feminist theory, gender, ethnicity, posthumanist ethics, feminist posthumanism, passing for human, performativity, livable lives

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At the conclusion of my dissertation work, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported me when I worked on this project. Initially, I began the project in fall 2009 as a doctoral student of literature at the University of Oulu, Finland. I wish to thank my colleagues in Oulu for their support in the early stages of this challenging project. In 2012, I was invited to join the *Abusive Sexuality and Sexual Violence in Contemporary Culture* project. This eventually led to my academic relocation to the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, where I finished my project as a doctoral student of contemporary culture. I am grateful for my colleagues at the Department of Arts and Culture Studies in Jyväskylä for making me feel welcome at the time of transition – and for never failing to make me feel a part of their community, even though I have largely worked from my home in Oulu. I have been fortunate to have two encouraging supervisors helping me throughout my project. I want to express my gratitude to Professor Sanna Karkulehto of my home department in Jyväskylä for giving me invaluable guidance throughout this project. I am grateful for her critical observations and suggestions, but also for her tireless support and positive attitude that have always restored my confidence in my project when my own optimism has failed. I am equally indebted to Professor Susanna Paasonen from the Department of Media Studies at the University of Turku, Finland for sharing her critical insights with me and for always encouraging me to go a little bit further in my scholarly investigations.

My sincere thanks go to Associate Professor Cecilia Åsberg from the University of Linköping, Sweden, and Professor Kaarina Nikunen from the University of Tampere, Finland, for helping me as the external readers of this dissertation. I also thank Cecilia Åsberg for agreeing to be my opponent. I am thankful for all the commentators, reviewers and editors whose suggestions and advice have contributed to the current form of the four original articles included in this dissertation. I also wish to thank Professor Raine Koskimaa for his comments on the final draft of my thesis. Furthermore, my thanks go to Markku Nivalainen and Antti Autio for their help with the nuances of academic English. Thanks are also due for Essi Rahja and Niina Hampinen for proof-reading the parts of this thesis that are written in Finnish. I also thank my colleagues Satu Koho, Leena-Maija Rossi and Myry Voipio for the engrossing discussions and fruitful collaboration in the *Abusive Sexuality and Sexual Violence in Contemporary Culture* project (2012–2014), headed by Professor Karkulehto.

I thank everyone at the Gender Studies Doctoral Programme directed by Academy Professor Tuija Pulkkinen at the University of Helsinki, Finland for their insightful comments and suggestions. I am truly grateful for the opportunity to be an affiliate member of the programme in 2012–2015. I want to thank the wonderful people at the annual meetings of researchers organised by the Finnish Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy Research for the great discussions, helpful comments and companionship that they have given me in all stages of my work. I am also thankful to everyone I have met at conferences and

seminars over the years for the countless interesting conversations and inspirations. I especially wish to thank everyone at the International Conference of the Fantastic in the Arts, Florida, US (2011 and 2012) and the Visions of Humanity in Cyberculture, Cyberspace and Science Fiction conference at the Mansfield College, Oxford (2012). My gratitude also goes to the staff of the Posthumanities Hub at the Department of Gender Studies, University of Linköping, Sweden, for welcoming me as a visiting doctoral student in spring 2014. I am eagerly looking forward to our continued collaboration in the future. I would also like to express my thanks to Professor Rosemary Hennessy from Rice University, Texas, US, for our long and insightful conversations considering the television series *V* in summer 2014.

My project was made possible by funding I have received from different sources. I express my deepest gratitude to Kone Foundation, the Finnish Cultural Foundation, the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Oulu, Anna Vuorio Foundation and the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Jyväskylä for making my work possible in financial terms. I also received financial support for travel expenses and other costs from several sources. I wish to thank the Finnish Union of University Researchers and Teachers in Jyväskylä, the Gender Studies Doctoral Programme, the University of Oulu Academics, the University of Oulu Graduate School and the Department of Humanities at the University of Jyväskylä for their support. Although I have mostly been working from my home in Oulu, I am also grateful for the facilities and services that the University of Jyväskylä has offered for me, such as the comprehensive services of the university library.

Last but not least, I thank my family and friends for getting me through this project. I am thankful for my parents and my brothers for always supporting me in all my life choices. I am especially grateful to my mother, who passed her love for the arts and culture onto me when I was growing up – without it, I doubt I would be completing a doctoral project in contemporary culture today. Special thanks are also due for my brother Juho for introducing me to science fiction and thus also igniting the spark for this dissertation. Furthermore, my thanks and my love go to my partner Tero who not only endured the stress of me writing this dissertation at home in our crowded apartment, but has always supported me and given me many useful comments and suggestions considering my work – and spent countless hours watching science fiction television series and films with me during my project. Finally, I dedicate this thesis to my grandmother Raili who passed away in November 2014. *I miss you.*

Oulu, 29 January, 2015

Aino-Kaisa Koistinen

FIGURES

LIST OF ORIGINAL ARTICLES:

I Sukupuolijoustoa ja ihmisen kaltaisia koneita – Sukupuolen ja ihmisyyden kytköksiä *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* -televisiosarjoissa [Flexible gender identities and human-like machines: Intersections of gender and humanity in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*]. *Lähikuva*, 2011, 24 (2), 24-37.

II Passing for human in science fiction: Comparing the TV Series *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*. *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research*, 2011, 19 (4), 249-263. Available at (published online 31 Oct 2011): http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08038740.2011.621898.

III 'The Machine is nothing without the woman': Gender, humanity and the cyborg body in the original and reimagined *Bionic Woman*. *Science Fiction Film and Television,* 2015, 8 (1), 53-74.

IV Science fiction television and the frames of war: Analysing war and human–non-human relations in the original and re-imagined *V*. Submitted to *Television & New Media.*

CONTENTS

1 ASKING THE HUMAN QUESTION

1.1 Points of departure

According to Brian Attebery (2002, 15), science fiction 'can offer important insights into *the limits of the imaginable* and the ways those limits are changing' (my italics). This doctoral dissertation examines these limits of the imaginable by analysing how 'humanity' – or 'humanness' – is represented [1] and (re)imagined in the original and remade, or *re-imagined*[2], versions of three North American science fiction television series: *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*. The aim of the dissertation is to investigate, *firstly*, how the understandings, or boundaries, of humanity are constructed and drawn in these series and what kind of norms, conditions and ideals are represented as 'human' or 'humane'. In other words, I investigate how the series take part in the negotiation of 'the human question', the changing understandings and meanings of being human. *Secondly*, I examine what kind of connections can be found between the analysed series, feminist and posthumanist theory, and the specific cultural and historical discussions and contexts of their production and reception. These contexts are: science fiction television, the Cold War and the War on Terror, as well as certain discussions considering the definition of humanity, or humanness, in the Euro-American, humanist tradition. This dissertation

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1 Representation, at its simplest, can be understood as a meaning-making process through which we assign certain meanings to images, objects and people and, while doing so, give meaning to the world we live in. It is a basic concept in cultural studies that representations do not only reflect but they also construct the world in which they are created, which links them to the cultural-historical discussions relevant at the time of their production. (See e.g. Graham 2002, 20-37; Hall 1997; Kellner 1995.)

2 The term 're-imagination' is commonly used to describe the new *Battlestar Galactica* and to highlight the differences between the original and the new version. Jo Storm (2007) has defined the term as 'similar to what is known as a "reboot" in the comic book world: it means that issues of continuity written before the reboot are considered to not have happened – the story starts over from scratch' (5). I also use the term in relation to the new versions of *V* and *Bionic Woman*. However, I will additionally use the term to emphasise the process of constant new imaginations circulated in cultural discussions, such as in the science fiction genre.

consists of four original articles and an introduction. Some of these contexts, such as science fiction television, are mainly discussed in this introduction, whereas the original articles are more preoccupied with analysing the series in conversation with feminist and posthumanist theory and in relation to different cultural phenomena.

The original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* all include some sort of aliens, machines or cyborgs (i.e. cybernetic organisms) in their narratives. I thus focus on how humanity is reflected, (re)imagined and constructed against (or alongside with) the representations of the non-human. *The questions asked are:* What kind of bodies are represented as human and non-human in these series and how are these representations, in their part, constructing the cultural-historical, political and ethical understandings of humanity? What kinds of developments or changes, considering the norms and conditions, or boundaries, of humanity, are found when comparing the re-imagined series to their original counterparts? I argue that all the series I study pose, in some sense, what I call 'the human question' and that this question is connected to complex cultural, political and ethical debates.

Science fiction as a genre has proven to be a valid medium for analysing the connections between representations and their cultural implications. As science fiction is not committed to a 'mimetic faithfulness to the world as it is' (Jackson 1995, 95; quoted in Larbalestier 2002, 8), it is possible to imagine worlds, cultures and futures that differ from our lived realities and nevertheless comment on the culture within which they are born (see also Larbalestier 2002, 8-9). The study is therefore based on the premise that popular fictional genres, such as science fiction, have an important role in the construction process of the cultural understandings and definitions of humanity and the ethical questions inherent to them (cf. Pearson 2010b). I trace the ambivalent meaning-making processes which construct the understandings of what it means to be human by studying the representations in popular science fiction television in relation to various theories, concepts and contexts. These representations shape what kind of beings are understood as human or non-human in our societies, which is why it is important to study how humanity is represented in fictional narratives.

Key concepts for the study are *performativity* and *passing for human*, *grievable/ungrievable* or *livable life*, *the cyborg figuration* and *feminist posthumanism*. In *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler (1990, e.g. 16-17, 111) famously argues that gender is performatively produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence, and that being recognised as an 'intelligible' gendered person contributes to the person's recognition as an intelligible human being. Drawing on Butler, I demonstrate that what constitutes as humanity, or humanness, in the studied series is performatively produced and interconnected with the performatives of gender coherence. In addition to gender, I investigate whether identity categories, such as 'race', ethnicity and sexuality, can also be seen as performative in the context of the series and how these categories are used to negotiate humanity in their narratives (cf. Butler 2004, 1-16; 2007, xvi-xvii; 2011, xxv-xxvi). I also examine how performativity is connected to the process of

passing for human. Passing has been theorised as passing for, for example, a member of the dominant 'race', class, gender or sexuality (e.g. Robinson 1994), but my analysis shows that it is also possible to pass, attempt to pass or fail to pass for a member of the dominant category of humanity (cf. Butler 2011, 122-138; Graham 2002, 139-143; Pearson 2010a, 20-23). I study how the process of passing for human is connected to the normative notions of humanity both in the series under analysis and in the cultural-historical contexts of their production. By analysing the series in different contexts, I explore how the series take part in re-imagining certain cultural-historical understandings of the norms, conditions and boundaries of humanity (cf. Butler 2004, 3-4, 9-10).

In the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*, the encounters between humans and non-humans are often violent and can take place in the setting of war. My analysis connects these series to theoretical debates that consider the problematics of encountering 'others'[3] during times of war. According to Butler (2006, 28-39; 2010, xix, xxix-xxx, 15), lives in war are divided into 'grievable' (i.e. worthy of grief and loss) and 'ungrievable' ones, which has an effect on which lives are considered 'livable' (i.e. worthy of life). When analysing grievable lives and the encounters between humans and non-humans, I also refer to Sara Ahmed's (2000; 2004) theorisations of identity formation and the ethics of encountering 'others'. I argue that the series I analyse constantly negotiate the boundaries between grievable and ungrievable or livable and unlivable lives and by doing so, challenge the viewers to rethink and (re)imagine their attitudes and prejudices towards the conceptions of 'otherness' not just in the fictional worlds of science fiction but also in their everyday lives[4].

As my study is preoccupied with the relations between humans and non-humans, I draw on Donna Haraway's work on human relations to nature and the ethics of living with non-human species. I find Haraway's most known theoretical term, the cyborg figuration (1985), useful. The term cyborg refers to a hybrid of technology and organism. Haraway (1991, 163, 177), however, envisioned the cyborg as a feminist figuration that questions dualistic divisions such as mind/body, self/other, nature/culture, human/animal, organism/machine and male/female[5]. I study the non-human characters in the original and re-

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3 By 'other' I refer to beings that are somehow rendered different, strange or non-human in comparison to human beings in specific contexts. These 'others' can be members of a different culture, 'race' or sexuality. In the context of the science fiction television series studied in this dissertation, they are aliens and machines that are somehow ontologically different from the humans – or they can be cyborgs whose human ontology has been 'compromised' by technology.

4 Ahmed (2000, 1-2) also notes that the aliens of science fiction can serve as allegories for our encounters with 'alien-ness' in our everyday lives.

5 Haraway introduced the cyborg figuration in her influential article 'A Manifesto for cyborgs: Science, technology, and socialist feminism in the 1980s'. *Socialist Review* 80 (1985): 65-108. Reprinted in *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (1991) as 'A Cyborg manifesto: Science, technology and socialist-feminism in the late twentieth century' (New York: Routledge, 149-181). In this study, I refer to this later version. On the term 'cyborg', see further Åsberg (2009, 24-26), Balsamo (2000, 148-149), Haraway (1991, 149-151) and Paasonen (2005, 11-19).

imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* in dialogue with the cyborg figuration and ask how these characters negotiate dualisms such as human/animal, male/female and human/machine. I also use Haraway's (2003; 2008) more recent work on meeting non-human species ethically to examine how the boundaries of human and non-human lives are drawn in these series.

The focus on human–non-human relations also connects this dissertation to 'the posthuman(ist) turn' in feminist thinking (see Åsberg, Koobak & Johnson 2011, 226; Åsberg 2013, 7). In my understanding, posthumanism calls for questioning the tradition of anthropocentric and androcentric humanism which separates the human from all those considered non-human (see also Åsberg, Koobak & Johnson 2011, 224-5, 227; Åsberg 2013; Braidotti 2013). This sort of tradition places humans as masters of nature, associates men with culture and the mastery of nature while aligning women with 'malleable' nature and non-human 'others' (see e.g. Kirkup 2000, 4). According to Cecilia Åsberg (2013, 7-8), the 'posthuman, or material or ontological turn' in feminism could also be called an ethical turn since our entanglements with the material world always include an ethics (cf. Alaimo 2011; Braidotti 2013). I argue that a prevailing sense of ethics, of finding ethical ways of living for humans and for non-humans alike, connects the theories used in this dissertation.

The first section of this introduction introduces the research materials and objectives of the study in more detail and situates it in the context of earlier research. The second section discusses the context of science fiction television, drawing connections between certain developments in television as a medium, the science fiction genre, and specific socio-historical phenomena in the United States. It also offers a general outlook on how the human question has been investigated in science fiction television. The third section presents the theoretical and methodological framework of my study, after which section four offers summaries of the original articles that constitute the main analytical content of this dissertation. The original articles are to be found at the end of the study. Section five presents the conclusions of this PhD project. I draw together the key findings on how humanity is represented or (re)imagined in the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman and V* and what should we, in the end, make of these representations.

1.2 Research materials

Before going any further, I will briefly introduce the primary research materials in more detail. To limit the context of the study, I have chosen to focus on North American science fiction television series, therefore leaving out, for instance, the enormously popular *Doctor Who* series (UK 1963–1989; UK/Canada 2005–present)[6]. Science fiction television has also long been dominated by American

[6] The original *Doctor Who*, aired in 1963–1989, is in fact the longest continually running science fiction television series ever (Booker 2004, 30). It should be noted that the new

productions (Geraghty 2009, 2), making the impact of North American series powerful within the genre. Thus, when discussing the themes and developments of science fiction television, my focus is on US television[7].

The original *Battlestar Galactica* (US 1978–1979[8]) begins when a robotic race called 'the Cylons' attacks human colonies, forcing the human survivors to flee into space in search of a new home, the mythical planet called Earth. Led by the 'battlestar' (i.e. a space ship) called Galactica, they fight the Cylons who follow them on their journey. In the late 1970s, the original *Battlestar Galactica* presented the audience with more spectacular special effects than science fiction television had ever offered before. At the beginning, this earned the series a fairly large audience. The success of the original *Battlestar Galactica*, however, did not last; the series was cancelled in 1979.[9] The effort to resurrect the series in *Galactica 1980* (US 1980) was anything but successful and only ten episodes of the new series were made (Booker 2004, 89; Storm 2007, 3). *Galactica 1980* takes place a generation later with the Earth already found and the first 'Galacticans' set out to explore it. The series focuses more on the relations between the human Galacticans and the humans of the Earth than the relations between humans and Cylons. Despite these early cancellations, the original *Battlestar Galactica* has maintained a cult following (Storm 2007, 3). Speaking of the original *Battlestar Galactica,* I refer to both the *Battlestar Galactica* of 1978–1979 and *Galactica 1980* and separate the two by name only when it is necessary to pinpoint essential differences.

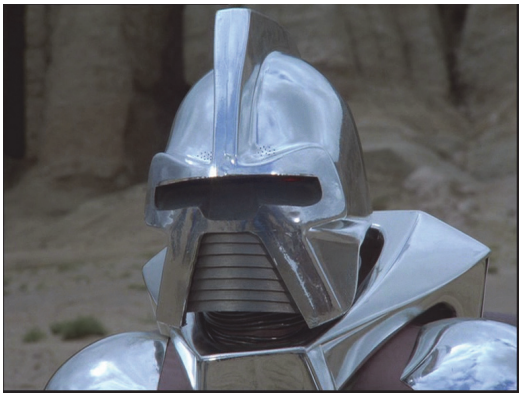

FIGURE 1 A Cylon in *Galactica 1980.* Universal Studios.

In the re-imagined version of *Battlestar Galactica* (US/UK 2004–2009), the narrative, again, starts with a Cylon attack on human colonies that forces the survi-

Doctor Who is, however, not a re-imagination, or a remake, *per se* as it continues the storyline of the previous *Doctor Who* more than it remakes or re-imagines the series.

7 On science fiction television in the UK, see Booker (2004) and Bould (2003; 2008).

8 All the production information of the audio-visual productions mentioned in the thesis is obtained from the Internet Movie Database.

9 For more on the *Battlestar Galactica* series of 1978–1979, see Booker (2004, 89), Storm (2007, 1-10) and Telotte (2008, 18; 2014, 32-33).

vors to escape into space in search of a new home. The most striking difference between the original and re-imagined series is that in the latter version, many of the Cylons are indistinguishable from humans in appearance and have already infiltrated human society. The problem of distinguishing humans from Cylons is therefore one of the main themes of the series. The re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* turned out to be a success. The miniseries (US/Canada 2003) that started the re-imagined series was the highest rated cable miniseries of 2003, and the continuous series that begun in 2004 received many prices and nominations and appraisal from critics (Storm 2007, 9; Stoy 2010). The success of the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* may have contributed to the creation of the other re-imagined series I study. One of the producers of the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, David Eick, even went to produce the re-imagined *Bionic Woman*. Speaking of the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica,* I refer to the whole re-imagined saga, including the miniseries[10].

FIGURE 2 The Cylons re-imagined. Universal Studios.

The original *V* started with the miniseries *V* in 1983 (US). In the series, humanoid aliens called 'the Visitors' arrive on Earth. The Visitors claim to have come in peace, but it is soon discovered that they are in fact masked lizard-like beings who plan to use humans for food and to exploit Earth's natural resources. A human resistance movement is quickly established and the narrative follows the conflicts between the resistance and the Visitors. The 1983 miniseries was followed by a six-hour sequel, *V: The Final Battle* (US 1984). These series attracted a huge amount of viewers and were then followed by a continuous series titled *V* (US 1984–1985). This series, however, did not live up to the ratings success or production values of the two miniseries and only lasted for nineteen episodes. (See Booker 2004, 91-93; Geraghty 2009, 82-83.) The series, nevertheless, was able to finish its story arc in these nineteen episodes. Speaking about the

10 The short spin off *Battlestar Galactica: Razor* (US 2007) and certain webisodes are also analysed (and mentioned separately) in the study. The story arc of the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* also includes other spin offs, such as *Battlestar Galactica: The Plan* (US 2009), but I focus on the productions mentioned above.

original *V*, I refer to all the productions mentioned above (*V: The Original Mini Series*, *V: The Final Battle* and *V*) and separate them by name only when it is necessary.

FIGURE 3 A Visitor in *V: The Final Battle*. Warner Bros.

The short-lived re-imagination of *V* follows on the same lines as the original *V* saga. The Visitors arrive on Earth with supposedly good intentions and yet again they plan to use the Earth and its inhabitants for their own benefit. Unlike in the original series (yet not unlike in the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*) some of the Visitors have arrived before the others and infiltrated human communities. Again, there is a human resistance movement that tries to prevent the Visitors from realising their plans. The re-imagined *V* was cancelled after its second season, probably due to poor ratings[11].

FIGURE 4 A Visitor re-imagined. Warner Bros.

The original *Bionic Woman* series (US) was first seen in 1976–1978. Jaime Sommers (Lindsay Wagner), the bionic woman, was nevertheless introduced already in *The Six Million Dollar Man* series (US 1974–1978) as the love interest of

11 See 'V canceled, no season three', TV Series Finale.

the bionic man, Colonel Steve Austin (Lee Majors). In *The Six Million Dollar Man*, Jaime suffers a skydiving accident after which Steve convinces her employers, the OSI (Office of Scientific Intelligence), to save her life by turning her into a half-machine cyborg. This makes Jaime television's first female cyborg (Sharp 2007, 507). However, Jaime's body starts to reject her bionics, which leads to her death. Pressure from viewers, nevertheless, led to her resurrection with the use of revolutionary new technology. A new television series focusing solely on her, *The Bionic Woman*, was launched and became one of the most popular television shows in its debut year 1976, inspiring a generation of young girls – and the production of a huge amount of merchandise. (See e.g. Inness 1999, 45-6; Sharp 2007.)

FIGURE 5 'Bionics' in the original *Bionic Woman.* Universal Studios.

In the re-imagined *Bionic Woman* Jaime (now played by Michelle Ryan) again suffers a near fatal accident. After this, her fiancé Will (Chris Bowers), who works for a militaristic private organisation called the Berkut group, saves her life by turning her into a cyborg. The re-imagined *Bionic Woman* did not live up to the success of its predecessor and was cancelled after only eight episodes. Different reasons have been presented to explain the cancellation: a strike of the Writer's Guild of America may have interfered with the show's writers' ability to finish scripts on time (Knight 2010, 2). In addition, the ratings had dropped and the series was very expensive to make (Coleman 2008).

FIGURE 6 'Bionics' re-imagined. Universal Studios.

Despite the premature cancellation of many of these narratives, I claim that analysed through feminist and posthumanist theory, all these series raise thought-provoking questions regarding the boundaries of humanity that comment on cultural discussions relevant at the time of their production.

1.3 Objectives and previous research

As J. P. Telotte (2014, 1, 18-20) notes, speculative television is currently more popular than ever before, which makes science fiction television a timely object of study. In the early phases of this PhD project, my objective was to focus on the representations of gender in science fiction television. The re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* was chosen for analysis as I felt that the series brought something new to the previous action-filled science fiction television series by introducing a variety of active and complex female characters. The re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* had, nevertheless, quickly inspired a variety of scholarly work and I had to find a way to situate my study in, and also to differentiate it from, the context of already existing studies. I soon noticed that these earlier studies tended to overlook the original series or only mention it briefly. Therefore, I decided to analyse both the original and re-imagined versions together. An examination of the differing production contexts of the series would enable me to bring new perspectives to the academic discussions on the *Battlestar Galactica* narratives. The original and re-imagined versions of *V* and *Bionic Woman* were then chosen to be studied alongside these *Battlestar Galactica* series in order to provide a broader set of materials – thereby enabling the making of multifaceted conclusions and comparisons between the original and re-imagined narratives and their cultural contexts. Although there are other original and re-imagined series that I could have chosen for analysis, the *Bionic Woman* and *V* narratives were selected because they share similar themes with the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, such as the non-human.

During the careful analysis of all the series, the constant negotiation between humanity and non-human 'otherness' was, indeed, identified as the most important theme raised in the material. This led to the realisation that it would not be sufficient to focus on the representations of gender, but the broader negotiations of the norms, conditions and definitions of humanity would prove a more relevant research topic. This resonates with Cecilia Åsberg's, Redi Koobak's and Ericka Johnson's (2011, 224-225, 227) notion that after the material or posthumanist turn in feminist thinking, it is no longer adequate to define gender as the only object of feminist research. They point out that feminist research has developed into a heterogeneous field that is sensitive to a wide range of power relations considering not only androcentrism but anthropocentrism as well.

Certain cultural contexts and anxieties, such as war, also emerged as significant themes in all the series. The objective of the study, thus, developed from studying the representations of gender to exploring how the representations found in the research material in question take part in the production of the cultural and historical understandings of humanity, how they can be analysed in conversation with feminist and posthumanist theory – and what kind of ethical implications these representations have. According to Telotte (2008, 4-5; 2014, 4-8), it is typical for science fiction television to address cultural anxieties. By exploring the original and re-imagined versions of *Bionic Woman, Battlestar Galactica* and *V*, one objective therefore is to grasp what kind of changes and developments (and also similarities) in certain cultural anxieties considering the definitions of humanity and human–non-human relations are found between the originals and their re-imaginations. Situated in the context of cultural-historical and industrial phenomena, developments in genre and certain theoretical frameworks, media texts can elaborate on these cultural anxieties and discussions. In turn, these discussions and developments can help us to understand media texts and the way that they are shaped by certain cultural-historical phenomena as well as the demands, possibilities, limitations and expectations outlined by their medium and genre.

The shift in focus from the representations of gender to the more complex negotiations of human–non-human relations can also be explained by earlier research. Whereas gender in science fiction has already been widely studied, the interconnectedness of gender and humanity has not yet drawn as much attention, at least not in the studies on science fiction television[12]. According to Elizabeth Anne Leonard (2003, 253), despite the genre's tendency to portray aliens, criticism has paid far less attention to issues considering 'race' and ethnicity than to the questions of gender. My analysis of the alien, machine and

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12 The representations of gender in science fiction television have also received less attention than those found in literature and film. On gender in science fiction literature, see for instance Attebery (2000; 2002), Barr (2000), Hollinger (2003), Larbalestier (2002), Pearson (2003) and Roberts (1993). For studies on gender in science fiction film, see Conrad (2011), George (2009) and Penley et al. (1991). On gender in science fiction television, see for example Battis (2007), Ginn (2005), Helford (2000a) and Lucas (2009).

cyborg characters therefore concentrates not only on gender but also on other norms and conditions of humanity such as 'race' and ethnicity. Many studies on gender in science fiction tend to focus on female gender[13]. In the series chosen for analysis, the interplay between the definitions of gender and humanity is also more visible in the representations of female characters. I have nevertheless attempted to discuss gender in a broader manner, without focusing only on female gender[14].

The studies considering posthumanism or human–non-human relations in science fiction often concentrate on literature or film[15]. My study therefore contributes to the earlier research by focusing on television narratives. While doing so, it complements existing research on science fiction television, a relatively new field of research. Science fiction television started to attract broader interest in the academia only in the 2000s (see Telotte 2008, 32; Johnson-Smith 2005, 1) and an academic journal focusing on science fiction television and film, *Science Fiction Film and Television* (Liverpool University Press), was launched in 2008. The interest towards posthumanism is also growing amongst Finnish scholars (see Lummaa & Rojola 2014a, 8), which makes my analysis timely considering the Finnish context[16].

Previous studies on the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* have some intersections with the present dissertation. A significant amount of scholars have studied gender and sexuality in the series and racial issues and colonialism have raised some interest[17]. Connections to the post 9/11 culture have also been well established and some scholars have analysed the series together with Haraway's cyborg theory[18]. None of these scholars have, however, compared the

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13 On studies focusing on female gender in science fiction, see e.g. Barr (2000), Ginn (2005), Helford (2000a), Reid (2009) and Roberts (1993).

14 Science fiction television's possibilities to represent 'other', non-antrophomorphic genders and sexualities are also briefly touched upon.

15 On posthumanism and science fiction literature, see Gomel (2014), Graham (2002) and Vint (2007; 2014); cf. Haraway (1991). Neil Badmington (2004) has devoted a book on posthumanism in science fiction film that also considers television, Elaine L. Graham (2002) has discussed posthumanism in film and television, Linda Badley (2000) has analysed posthumanism in *The X-Files* (US/Canada 1993–2002), and Susanna Paasonen (2005, 24-27) has discussed television's bionic characters and their connections to cyborg theory and cybernetics.

16 The dissertation also joins the growing field of science fiction and fantasy studies in Finland. In 2013 the Finnish Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy Research (FINFAR) was established to complement the annual scholarly meetings focusing on science fiction and fantasy research. *Fafnir – Nordic Journal for Science Fiction and Fantasy Research* was established by FINFAR in the same year and saw the publication of its first issue in 2014.

17 On gender and/or sexuality in the series, see for example Burrows (2010), Chess (2008), Conly (2008), George (2008), Harwood-Smith (2008), Hellstrand (2009; 2011), Jones (2010), Jowett (2010), Kirkland (2008), Kungl (2008), Leaver (2008), Silvio and Johnston (2008) and Stoy (2010). On 'race', ethnicity and/or colonialism, see for example Bennett (2012), Deis (2008), Knight (2012), Rennes (2008) and Sharp (2010).

18 On 9/11 and the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica,* see e.g. Dillon (2012), Dinello (2008), Geraghty (2009), Johnson-Lewis (2008), Mulligan (2008), Ott (2008), Pinedo (2008) and Rawle (2010). On cyborg theory and the series, see Bennett (2012), George (2008), Gumpert (2008) and Heinricy (2008).

original and re-imagined versions as comprehensively as I do in this study[19]. Although some studies have previously analysed the original *Battlestar Galactica* in the context of imperialism, racism and the Cold War[20], the feminist and posthumanist framework differentiates my analysis from these studies. The representations of gender in the original series have also often been interpreted as stereotypical (Booker 2004, 89; Helford 2000b, 4). I however claim that when investigated within their cultural contexts, these representations should not be dismissed as merely stereotypical (cf. Knight 2012, 47-48). In comparison to earlier studies, I thus examine the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* within a broader context, including the context of science fiction television, cultural phenomena, feminist and posthumanist theory and the other original and re-imagined series chosen for analysis.

Like the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman* series have usually been studied separately (cf. Knight 2010) with most studies focusing on the original series. Although scholars consider the contradictions of feminism and femininity in *Bionic Woman*, the representation of the cyborg woman has mostly been interpreted as conforming to certain notions of societal control over technology and women as well as, more or less, conforming to traditional gender norms in both the original and re-imagined series[21]. I nevertheless argue that the two *Bionic Woman* series offer possibilities for different kinds of interpretations and analytical outcomes, considering how the boundaries of humanity are drawn. For instance, the issues of control in the two series are not only related to gender, but, when studied in a posthumanist framework, articulate complex matters of control in human–non-human relations.

The original or the re-imagined *V* has not attracted much scholarly interest (cf. Booker 2004, 91-93; Geraghty 2009, 82-83; Johnson-Smith 2005, 120-121). In fact, I have not encountered any studies on the re-imagined version. In my analysis of the series, I establish that both the original and re-imagined *V* are nevertheless complex, ambivalent cultural texts that take part in cultural-historical negotiations of the ethics of war and the boundaries of humanity. To conclude, the re-imaginations of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* have all tended to be studied separately from their original counterparts, which means that my analysis provides a new approach to the series, thereby produc-

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19 Several anthologies considering *Battlestar Galactica* have been published, but they mainly concentrate on the re-imagined version. These anthologies include Eberl (2008), Kaveney and Stoy (2010), Potter and Marshall (2008) and Steiff and Tamplin (2008). Storm (2007) discusses both the original and re-imagined versions. An anonymously published article 'The real war between *Battlestar Galactica*s' (2008) investigates religion in the original and re-imagined series. In 2012, *Science Fiction Film and Television* devoted a whole issue to *Battlestar Galactica*, with only one article analysing the original and re-imagined series together (see Dillon 2012). The article nevertheless focuses more on the original version.

20 On the original series in its cultural context, see Dillon (2012), Muir (2005; 2008) and Geraghty (2009, 65); cf. Iaccino (1998).

21 For studies on gender in the original *Bionic Woman*, see Inness (1999), Jenkins (2011), Sharp (2007) and White (2006); cf. Paasonen (2005, 26-30). On the re-imagined version, see Johnson (2013) and Quinlan and Bates (2009).

ing new knowledge of them – and the cultural, historical and material conditions of their production.

2 SCIENCE FICTION TELEVISION

2.1 Science fiction: Definitions and origins

At this point it is necessary to offer some sort of definition of the science fiction genre as well as to discuss briefly the genre's literary and filmic origins that have influenced science fiction television. There is no consensus on the definition of 'science fiction' (see e.g. Johnson-Smith 2005, 15-38; Roberts 2007, 2). I will thus offer only a few descriptions that hopefully make it easier to understand the television series chosen for my analysis. Attebery (2002, 2) describes the genre as 'a system for generating and interpreting narratives that reflect insights derived from, technological offshoots of, and attitudes toward science'. A key element of science fiction narratives is that they represent and (re)imagine something strange, thereby evoking the 'sense of wonder' (ibid., 4-5). Jan Johnson-Smith (2005, 19) writes that science fiction must always create a plausible reality that is nevertheless distinguishable from 'the realities of our everyday world'. These 'alternative realities are created both in and through visual or verbal language' (ibid.). Adam Roberts (2007, 2) also notes that science fiction 'involves a world-view differentiated in one way or another from the actual world in which its readers live'. According to Darko Suvin (1988, 37), a defining characteristic of science fiction is the 'novum' (i.e. the new thing) (see also Roberts 2007, 1, viii). Suvin (1979, 7-8) describes science fiction's relation to reality as 'cognitive estrangement', which means that science fiction is a genre

> whose necessary and sufficient conditions are the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition, and whose main formal device is an imaginative alternative to the author's empirical experience (quoted in Johnson-Smith 2005, 21).

The aliens, cyborgs and machines represented in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* are all part of (or the very basis of) the novum, or the sense of wonder, which the series are building.

To put it simply, what differentiates science fiction from other speculative genres, such as fantasy, is that in science fiction narratives the fantastic or

strange elements are explained (and often created) by science and technology instead of magic (see e.g. Roberts 2007, x-xi; cf. Attebery 2002, 4-5; Johnson-Smith 2005, 15-28). Some reoccurring themes of the genre have been identified as (heroic) travels and epic explorations; technology, science and knowledge; and extraordinary encounters (Johnson-Smith 2005, 25-28, 34-36; Roberts 2007, 1-19; Telotte 2014, 26-27). Travel is central to the narrative of the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* as the humans set to travel in space in order to find a new home. The Cylons in the series are also obvious manifestations of technology, which connects the narratives to the themes of technology and science. The two *Bionic Woman* series deal with technology and science through the imagery of the cyborg, whereas the *V* narratives present the Visitors as having superior technological and scientific knowledge in comparison to humans. The Visitors' ability to pass for human also depends on their technologically constructed human-like appearance. The aliens, machines and cyborgs in all of these series are also representatives of the theme of encounters with something that is extraordinary or strange – be it space aliens or potentially dangerous, human-made technology.

According to Roberts (2007, vii), the roots of science fiction stretch as far back as the Ancient Greek epics of travel and adventure that often include fantastic interludes. During the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, science fiction narratives gained new popularity, as thinkers such as René Descartes emphasised the importance of rationality and science, thereby creating a suitable atmosphere for the reception of the genre (ibid., ix). It is therefore interesting that although science fiction is firmly linked with this humanist, Cartesian tradition that places emphasis on rationality, the productions of the genre often highlight the dangers of rationality, science and technology taken too far. Of all the series I study, these threats are specifically negotiated in the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman* as well as in the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*.

Despite the genre's lengthy history, science fiction as a community and a publishing category began in the United States in the 1920s with the establishment of pulp magazines dealing with stories considering science (Larbalestier 2002, 15-21). The term 'pulps' refers to particular kind of stories 'printed on cheap pulp paper and published for a small market of loyal readers' (Geraghty 2009, 8). Pulps were successful roughly from the 1920s to the 1950s (ibid.). Pulp narratives were influential for science fiction television, as the origins of early science fiction television can be traced back to science fiction film. Early science fiction television productions were often adaptations of film serials of the 1930s, like *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers*, which themselves were adapted from comic strips and pulp fiction stories. (Duchovnay 2008, 69.) Thus, both literature and film have influenced science fiction television, particularly in its early years.

2.2 Science fiction television in the US

Science fiction has been part of broadcast television from the late 1940s and early 1950s onwards; that is almost from the beginning of the medium (Johnson-Smith 2005, 1; Telotte 2008, 1, 4; 2014, 21-22). This section sheds light on how science fiction television has, despite its origins in film and literature, developed its own 'identity', affected by television's industrial demands. I focus on the industrial and narrative developments of science fiction television in the United States that have shaped the production of the series I study. The original versions of *Battlestar Galactica* (ABC) and *The Bionic Woman* (ABC/NBC) were produced in the 1970s when the 'classic network system' functioned as a closed oligopoly in the United States. The 'big three networks' NBC (National Broadcasting Company), CBS (Columbia Broadcasting System) and ABC (American Broadcasting Company) dominated television. This domination lasted throughout the 1950s, 60s and 70s and was maintained by restricting competition and avoiding risks. (See e.g. Edgerton 2007, 76, 178, 243, 294-300; Kellner 1981; Mittell 2003, 44-49.)

According to Elana Levine (2003, 89-94), in the 1970s and 1980s the competition between the three dominant networks was high, which means that instead of maintaining culturally educating programming, the networks strived to attract mass audiences. In the 1970s, the production of science fiction television was relatively low in the United States. The most popular new science fiction series were *The Six Million Dollar Man* and the original *Bionic Woman*, but they relied more on action-adventure plots typical for Cold War spy dramas than on science fiction. (Booker 2004, 67-68.) Whereas films in the 1970s presented the audiences with dystopian visions, the bionic characters continued in line with science fiction and fantasy narratives' previous superheroes Flash Gordon, Buck Rogers, Superman and Wonder Woman in offering positive role models for young Americans. They were also able to draw large audiences. (Cf. Geraghty 2009, 62; Mittell 2003, 48; Sharp 2007.) The competition between the big three networks also led to the production of programmes with more sexually provocative content (Levine 2003, 91). Although the original *Bionic Woman* is a family show (Sharp 2007, 507-509), its beautiful female protagonist has been connected to the ABC's attempt to attract audiences by providing them sexually appealing action-adventure heroines, such as in *Charlie's Angels* (US 1976–1981) (Mittell 2003, 48; see also Levine 2003, 93; White 2006).

In the 1970s, film continued to influence science fiction television and many science fiction television series were adaptations of films (Geraghty 2009, 60-61; Telotte 2014, 32). One film had a particularly significant influence. After the leaner years of production in the 1970s, the success of *Star Wars* (George Lucas, US 1977) led to the relative revival of American science fiction television with the creation of the original *Battlestar Galactica* and *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* (US 1979–1981). Following the success of *Star Wars*, science fiction television also started to focus on visual spectacles. *Battlestar Galactica*, with its nar-

rative of humans fighting robotic Cylons, that uncannily resemble the Storm troopers of *Star Wars,* so clearly rests its visual and thematic outlook on the film that it even triggered a law suit. The Cylons may, nevertheless, also have been influenced by the robotic Cybermen in the British *Doctor Who*. (Cf. Booker 2004, 68, 88-89; Storm 2007, 1-4; Telotte 2008, 18.)

The original version of *V* was produced in the 1980s when the classic network system started to erode as the development of cable television gave birth to new television networks. This also meant more choice for the viewers. (Mittell 2003, 44, 47, 49; cf. Edgerton 2007, 300-322.) Unlike the classic network system, cable networks were not necessarily dependent on advertisers but were funded by fares collected from the viewers (Hilmes 2003, 62-69; cf. Edgerton 2007, 301). Television services in the United States, therefore, started to change as networks adopted the idea of 'narrowcasting': providing programmes for narrower audiences (Perren 2003, 107; cf. Johnson-Smith 2005, 71-73). The 1980s and 1990s also saw an increase in experimentation in televisual techniques. By the 1990s television in the US had mastered its unique 'televisual form', which led to the production of so-called quality dramas, such as *ER* (US, NBC 1994–2009), *Sex and the City* (US, HBO 1998–2004) and *The Sopranos* (US, HBO 1999–2007). (Feuer 2003, 98-102; cf. Hodges 2008, 236; Johnson-Smith 2005, 62-69.) The original *V* saga was nevertheless not broadcast on cable but on one of the 'big networks', NBC. As Johnson-Smith (2005, 120, 273n1) notes, the miniseries *V* and *V: The Final Battle* did, however, introduce to their viewers visual effects that were quite shocking in the 1980s, including scenes where the Visitors open their huge gaping mouths and consume entire live rodents. She thus claims that these series led the way for more visually striking science fiction television.

The re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica* (Sci-Fi Channel), *Bionic Woman* (NBC) and *V* (ABC), created between the years 2003 and 2011, were produced during a different media environment and were influenced by different developments in television and in the science fiction genre. As M. Keith Booker (2004, 2, 108-111) points out, science fiction narratives have significantly benefitted from the creation of cable television and narrowcasting; in the 1990s, science fiction fans were even presented with the Sci-Fi Channel (now called SyFy) that focuses on speculative fiction[22]. Alisa Perren (2003, 109) also notes that the development of quality drama is closely connected to the development of cable television, as cable channels were able to broadcast shows traditional networks did not (or could not) air, because they 'featured explicit language, sexuality and violence that wouldn't get past the networks' Standards and Practices divisions'. It therefore comes as no surprise that the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* is the most creative of the series I study in terms of narrative complexity, as it is the only series originally created for cable television (cf. Geraghty 2009, 118-120; Tryon 2008, 305-308). In fact, *Battlestar Galactica* is the only one of the re-imagined series that got to complete its story arc. In comparison, both the

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22 For more on cable TV and science fiction television, see Geraghty (2009, 82, 96) and Telotte (2008, 23; 2014, 35).

new *Bionic Woman* and the new *V* were cancelled after only a short run. One cannot help but wonder if these series had survived better on cable channels.

Since the 1980s and 1990s, computer generated special effects have continued to develop rapidly, allowing science fiction television to create more and more spectacular visual effects (Johnson-Smith 2005, 3-8, 56-73; Telotte 2008, 6). Comparing the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*, the developments in special effects between the 1970s and 1980s and the 2000s becomes obvious. Whereas in the original *Battlestar Galactica* the robotic Cylons were basically actors dressed in robot outfits, the re-imagined series presents the viewer with much more credible, computer generated robotics; in addition to the humanoid Cylons, the series includes machine-like robots called 'Centurions'. In the original *Bionic Woman*, Jaime's special powers are indicated by cartoonish sound effects, but in the re-imagination we are actually shown how the bionics work inside Jaime's body, such as, inside her ear, which is reminiscent of the imagery of the many popular *CSI* series. Regardless of the fact that the original Visitors represented cutting-edge special effects in the 1980s, today's viewer is bound to find them clumsier than the sly reptiles of the re-imagined version. Thus, the developments of special effects have enabled science fiction television to create more and more striking visual imagery of non-human 'others', allowing for more complex negotiations of human–non-human relations (cf. Johnson-Smith 2005, 3-4, 60-73; Telotte 2014, 38-39).

In addition to the use of increasingly sophisticated computer generated imagery, the re-imagined series continue another trend in science fiction television, as they take their inspiration from other television narratives instead of films. According to Telotte (2008, 21-23; 2014, 34-5), *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (US 1987–1994) started a new era in science fiction television as it relied on the narrative of an earlier television series, the original *Star Trek* (US 1966–1969), instead of on film for an inspiration. Science fiction television would thereafter develop more independently from film. Booker (2004, 192) also claims that in the 2000s, science fiction television took a nostalgic turn. He argues that this can be seen, for instance, in the trend of remaking old classics and can be explained through cultural events such as the collapse of the stock market, 9/11 and negative attitudes towards the idea of progress. In fact, after 9/11 many remakes of old science fiction films, and some of television series, were produced in the United States (Geraghty 2009, 17; cf. Stoy 2010, 10-11). According to Lincoln Geraghty (2009, 103-104, 107-113, 119), these film remakes often focus on elaborate special effects, dropping the political and social messages of the original versions (cf. Stoy 2010, 10-11). The re-imaginations of *Battlestar Galactica, Bionic Woman* and *V* are all part of this 'remake phenomenon' of science fiction film and television. All of the re-imagined series, however, include political content and deal with contemporary issues that are relevant in the 'post 9/11' world, such as terrorism and war (cf. e.g. Johnson-Lewis 2008; Leaver 2008; Ott 2008). It thus seems that television remakes have been more daring in their political content than film remakes. I therefore claim that the re-imagined science fiction television narratives I study do not just partake in 'the nostalgic turn' of science

fiction but they also re-imagine the narratives of the original versions in a manner that comments on contemporary cultural phenomena. (Cf. Geraghty 2009, 18, 103-104, 116; Stoy 2010, 10-11.)

The re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* can be connected to yet another 'turn' in science fiction television, which Booker (2004, 147) describes as the 'trend toward darker visions'. During the 1990s many dystopic series such as *Babylon 5* (US 1994–1998) and *The X-Files* (US/Canada 1993–2002) were made. Even the generally positive Star Trek franchise took part in this turn with *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (US 1993–1999). (See Booker 2004, 146-147; Geraghty 2009, 85, 98-100, 141-121; Hodges 2008, 232.) Series like *Babylon 5* and *Farscape* (Australia/US 1999–2003) also introduced more complex characters than the viewers were accustomed to seeing in science fiction television (Booker 2004, 130-133, 162; see also Vint 2008). The re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* offer the viewers 'darker' narratives than their original counterparts and their characters are also less heroic and more complex than the characters found in the original versions.

In this section, I have demonstrated how the series I study have been shaped by certain narrative and industrial developments such as the big three networks' demands for large audiences in the 1970s, the developments of special effects and the birth of cable television. I also find it important to point out that the form of *series television* has affected how the examined series have been able to address cultural issues – such as ask the human question. In the original articles, I claim that both the original and re-imagined series under analysis are connected to complex cultural discussions. According to Telotte (2008, 1, 4; 2014, 16-17), the continuity of series television makes it possible for science fiction television series to take part in ongoing cultural negotiations and debates. Johnson-Smith (2005, 133) also argues that continuing narratives enable television to discuss a traumatic event, such as war, in depth, while Geraghty (2009, 125-126) points out that a continuous television series allows for the viewers 'to become emotionally attached to characters with whom they are familiar'. The series format is further discussed in the fourth original article of this thesis, where I argue that the continuous narratives of the *V* series invite the viewers to create strong emotional responses to the representations of war and violence.[23]

The *long form* of series television has also further distanced science fiction television from the shorter narrative form of film (Telotte 2014, 11-12). Thus, although the roots of science fiction television are in literature and film, it has become clear that science fiction television can support itself independent from other mediums. The re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman*

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[23] Science fiction television series started to turn from episodic structure to continuous and epic plot arcs in the 1990s (see e.g. Booker 2004, 142; Johnson-Smith 2005, 64-73, 185-249; Telotte 2014, 11-12; Tryon 2008, 306; Vint 2008, 247-148), but some narrative continuity can also be seen in the original series I study. In the research material, the epic story arc of the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* is the best example of this development towards increasing narrative continuity (cf. Telotte 2014, 38), but I would argue that the re-imagined *Bionic Woman* and *V* also strive for more continuous story arcs than their original counterparts.

and *V* highlight this as they are re-imaginations of previous television narratives instead of literature or film. Science fiction television has, in fact, also become a source of adaptations[24] that convert popular science fiction television series to other mediums. Later developments in science fiction television include the welcoming of new media as a part of providing the viewers expanded relations to their favourite television narratives: more and more blogs, fan texts, pod casts and Internet based 'webisodes' are created around science fiction television series, of which the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* is a good example. Science fiction television has therefore been able to fit well within the changing boundaries of television as a medium[25].

2.3 The human question: Gender, 'race' and alien 'others'

Scholars such as Helen Merrick (2003, 242; 2010) and Bruce L. Rockwood (2008) identify the exploration of the future of humanity as one of the key themes of science fiction. Merrick (2003, 242) also sees a connection between these explorations of the human question and the questions of gender, arguing that science fiction's

> central question 'what if?' ultimately cannot escape the analogous question 'what, then, becomes of us?' In what ways can we *(re)imagine* 'humanity' [my italics]? Science fiction authors have employed a number of strategies to answer this question, in the process sometimes revealing, destabilizing or subverting normative understandings of gender.

All the series I study are thus connected to a long tradition of (re)imagining the boundaries of humanity in science fiction. In this section, I situate the series in the tradition of asking the human question particularly in science fiction *television*. In addition to the ways how the interconnectedness of the categories of gender and humanity has been negotiated, I focus on science fiction television's possibilities to discuss 'race', ethnicity and non-human 'otherness'.

In the late 1970s, when the original versions of *Battlestar Galactica* and *Bionic Woman* were first seen in the United States, many genre shows incorporated the figure of the female action-adventure hero in their narratives in order to, amongst other reasons, attract female viewers informed by women's liberation and second wave feminism (see e.g. Levine 2003, 93-94; Sharp 2007; White 2006). The original *Bionic Woman* and *Wonder Woman* (US 1975–1979) introduced female characters that occupy more active and central roles than women had

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24 Following Linda Hutcheon (2006), the re-imagined series analysed in this study could also be called adaptations. According to Hutcheon, all remakes 'are invariably adaptations because of changes in context', which means that 'not all adaptations necessarily involve a shift of medium or mode of engagement' (170). I nevertheless find the term 're-imagination' to be more descriptive of the research material of this study.

25 For more on how science fiction has both adapted and contributed to the changes in television as a medium, see Telotte (2008, 31; 2014, 1-20, 40-41); also Geraghty (2009, 118-126), Johnson-Smith (2005, 71-73) and Tryon (2008).

occupied in science fiction television, or in television in general, before them (Helford 2000b, 3; Lucas 2009, 135-141)[26]. Although some 'science-fictional' anthology shows dealt with the norms and conditions of humanity, such as gender and 'race', already in the 1950s (Booker 2004, 13-15, 23-24; Telotte 2014, 27), most early space operas present their human protagonists as heroes that are masculine, American and male, and battle aliens that are visually and aurally coded as Middle Eastern, Eastern European or Asian (Dixon 2008, 100; see also Bould 2003, 88)[27]. Women often serve as the love interests/side-kicks or evil antagonists of male heroes (Dixon 2008, 95; cf. Telotte 2014, 89). Elyce Rae Helford (2000b, 2) also observes that women were mostly represented as wives and mothers in science fiction and fantasy television up until the 1960s and 1970s – that is, when women's roles started to change not only in fiction but in the American society as a whole.

In this sense, the human hero in the early space operas is reminiscent of the heroes in the pulp era science fiction. During that time, science fiction was commonly thought of as the genre for intelligent men and 'the mind' which women – culturally associated with sexuality and the body – would contaminate. The intelligent male was seen as the pinnacle of human evolution which the more 'bodily' woman could not match. The male hero, then, was not only a superman but a superhuman. (See Merrick 2003, 242-243; also Attebery 2000, 134-135; Larbalestier 2002, 104-106.) By the 1960s and 1970s, science fiction literature had, however, already started to address societal issues such as normative gender roles, sexuality, class, 'race', and xenophobia in far more radical manner than science fiction television (or film), which led to the birth of feminist science fiction[28]. Merrick (2003, 246) even claims, that during the 1960s and 1970s, female characters emerged in science fiction literature as 'fully "human" rather than "female men", or complementary adjuncts to, or reflections of, the masculine'. From the 1960s and 1970s onwards, science fiction has, in fact, been intertwined with feminist theory, although this mostly concerns science fiction literature (and film) instead of television[29]. Theorists such as Haraway have used science fiction to 'criticize and explain traditional science' (Roberts 1993, 4) and

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26 The British series *Space: 1999* (UK/Italy 1975–1977) had a female medical officer, which could have influenced these American series (cf. Lucas 2009, 135-141).

27 The early science fiction television narratives of the 1950s were generally formulaic space operas that focused on the exploration of space and technology and were aimed at children (Booker 2004, 5; Geraghty 2009, 26-29; Telotte 2014, 22). The anthology format differentiated itself from the space operas as it allowed for different ideas to be explored in different episodes, which then enabled a wide range of cultural commentary (Telotte 2014, 23, 27).

28 It could nevertheless be claimed that gender issues have always been present in science fiction, but they only became more visible in the 1960s and 1970s (cf. Attebery 2002, 13; Hollinger 2003, 128; Larbalestier 2002; Latham 2010; Merrick 2003; Pearson 2003, 150; Roberts 1993). Important (feminist) science fiction authors, to name but a few, are Joanna Russ, Samuel R. Delany, Ursula K. Le Guin, Octavia E. Butler, Marge Piercy, Marion Zimmer Bradley, James Triptee Jr. and Eleanor Arnason (cf. Hollinger 2003; Pearson 2003, 151; 2010a, 17-18).

29 On feminist theory and science fiction literature, see Hollinger (2000; 2003) and Pearson, Hollinger and Gordon (2010); and film, see Penley et al. (1991).

'feminist theory continues to influence the development of the new worlds and futures of the genre' (Hollinger 2003, 129).

In my analysis of the *Bionic Woman* series, I consider the original *Bionic Woman* in the context of second wave feminism and women's liberation. In contrast to the critiques of the female characters in the original *Battlestar Galactica* as 'hardly memorable' (Helford 2000b, 4), I also connect that series to the women's liberation. Helford (2000b, 2) notes, that in the 1960s and 1970s television, women's new roles were often addressed by linking female empowerment with speculative elements. This is evident in the original *Bionic Woman* as Jaime's technologically augmented body enables her to gain new powers and positions. Before the original versions of *Battlestar Galactica* and *Bionic Woman*, series such as *Bewitched* (US 1964–1972) and *I Dream of Jeannie* (US 1965–1970) dealt with women's desires to be more than just wives and mothers. These series discuss female empowerment by giving their protagonists supernatural powers, although the women of the series do not work outside the domestic sphere (Helford 2000b, 2-3; Lucas 2009, 2; Spigel 1991, 216, 224-229). Lynn Spigel (1991, e.g. 224-225) argues that these 'fantastic sit-coms' play with the conventional considerations of femininity and masculinity by inverting the two and placing women in positions of power. Most of all, they make suburban life seem strange by connecting it to fantastic elements, which questions 'the "naturalness" of middle-class existence', such as 'the classist, racist, and sexist premises of suburban life' of the 1960s (ibid., 219).

To summarise, television series of the 1960s and 1970s used science fiction's speculative elements to explore the norms and conditions, or boundaries, of humanity, such as gender roles. One very influential series that negotiated the human question during the 1960s, however, yet remains to be mentioned. The original *Star Trek* was progressive in terms of representing gender, ethnicity and non-human 'otherness' on television. It, for instance, represented an African-American woman Uhura (Nichelle Nichols) as a communications officer, indicating that women of colour were to be included in the future of the human race. (Cf. Booker 2008, 206; Bould 2003, 90; Geraghty 2009, 42-45.) Indeed, the original *Star Trek* included not only a multiracial but a *multispecies* crew and commented on American racial issues by allegorically projecting them onto alien bodies (Geraghty 2009, 43-44; cf. Johnson-Smith 2005, 86-93). *Star Trek's* multiracial crew probably influenced the original *Battlestar Galactica* as the series includes two quite central African-American characters. Furthermore, I would argue that the legacy of the original *Star Trek* is visible in the studied series in their tendency to comment on cultural issues and the way they often project their investigations of gendered and racialised humanity onto the figure of the alien, the cyborg or the machine (cf. Telotte 2014, 29, 38)[30]. Leonard (2003, 256-

[30] It could be argued that science fiction television has always commented on cultural issues and *Star Trek* only made these discussions more visible (see Dixon 2008, 93-94). Although the space operas of the 1950s were aimed at children, they nevertheless tapped into the nation's attitudes towards technology; both the fear of nuclear devastation and the fascination with new domestic appliances and rocket technology (Booker 2004, 5-7; cf. Dixon 2008; Geraghty 2009, 26-29; Telotte 2014, 21-22, 42-51).

258) argues that aliens serve as the perfect tools for negotiating issues of 'race' and ethnicity in science fiction, including the way other 'races' and cultures have often been considered as non-human – how, for example, African-Americans have sometimes not been perceived as humans by white Americans. The stories of aliens therefore make visible the cultural considerations of 'race' and ethnicity. Leonard thus claims that by metaphorically projecting cultural concerns of 'race' to aliens, science fiction can fight racism. (Cf. Kilgore 2010.)

Narratives of alien encounters in science fiction television often deal with invasion and war (Johnson-Smith 2005, 120; see also Booker 2008, 195; cf. Gomel 2014, 28-29). It has been interpreted that the atmosphere of the Cold War has influenced the way aliens have been represented in science fiction television (Hill 2008, 117). For instance, during the 1950s it was typical for science fiction film and television to portray easy and simplistic representations of the invading aliens as a malevolent, monstrous threat (Geraghty 2009, 69; Hill 2008, 117). The original versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* all tap into the anxieties caused by the Cold War, but they are most strikingly negotiated in the original *V*. The series uses aliens to comment on complex cultural discussions considering class, American 'race' relations and immigration by projecting these questions onto the alien characters (see also Geraghty 2009, 82; cf. Booker 2004, 91-93). By doing so, the original *V* negotiates complex discussions considering the human question. The series also took part in the trend of increasingly representing aliens as both evil and benevolent; a phenomenon that gained popularity during the 1980s in film and television (Geraghty 2009, 15-16, 69-84; Telotte 2008, 19-21; cf. Badmington 2004, 1-33). This trend continues in the re-imagined *V*.

War is, thus, a typical theme in science fiction television and also prominent in all the series I study. Johnson-Smith (2005, 125) claims that regardless of the theme of war, science fiction television is not overtly militaristic but rather focuses on individual triumphs, generally portraying the military institution in a negative light. Indeed, the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* raises questions of the ethical consequences of actions conducted by military personnel, whereas the *V* narratives clearly focus on the actions of individuals, instead of the military, during war. The theme of war can also affect the way gender roles are portrayed. Nickianne Moody (2002, 51) notes that the setting of war enables the placing of women in active roles in science fiction television. This is also visible in the series I study. For example in the original *Battlestar Galactica*, women have to train themselves as fighter pilots because of the shortage of male pilots. In the original *V*, war forces a young, female student to become a resistance leader. Militaristic organisations also allow for the bionic women to gain their

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Winston Wheeler Dixon (2008, 93-94) also notes that space operas often comment on the Cold War and the role of the United States in the Space Race (see also Geraghty 2009, 27). Later in the 1950s, anthology shows targeted a more adult audience and dealt with serious cultural issues. Most notably, the *Twilight Zone* (US 1959–1964) discusses questions of 'race', ethnicity, gender and 'otherness' – and often projects them to the figure of the alien. (Cf. Booker 2004, 5-6, 8-16; Geraghty 2009, 26-50; Hill 2008, 111-118, 121-124; Telotte 2008, 11-12; 2014, 23, 27, 73-82, 89.)

new superhuman powers in both the original and re-imagined series. Thus, science fiction television's settings of war enable complex investigations on the norms, conditions and boundaries of humanity – such as the questions of 'race' and gender.

When the re-imagined narratives of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* were created in the 2000s, a range of other science fiction television series had already engaged in the negotiations of gendered and racialised humanity. For example, *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, *Babylon 5*, *The X-Files*, *Star Trek: Voyager* (US 1995–2001), *Space: Above and Beyond* (US 1995–1996) and *Farscape* have women as active, independent and central characters[31]. These series were, in turn, influenced by the *Alien* and *Terminator* films of the late 1970s and the 1980s that have active, strong and independent female protagonists[32]. These films had a huge impact on how female characters were represented in the media in the years to come. (Cf. Conrad 2011, 89-92; George 2009, 120-122.) Some 1990s series also introduced the viewers to a sort of reversal of female and male gender roles by exploring how the boundaries of gendered humanity are drawn. For instance, in *The X-Files* the emotional male protagonist Fox Mulder (David Duchovny) is accompanied by a rational female scientist Dana Scully (Gillian Anderson) (see also Ginn 2005, 50; Hodges 2008, 240; Telotte 2014, 90). The male protagonist of *Farscape,* John Crichton (Ben Browder), is also continuously overpowered by the strong female soldier Aeryn Sun (Claudia Black) (see also Battis 2007, 7-8; Christopher 2004). *Lexx* (Canada/Germany/UK/US 1997–2002) also represents its male protagonist Stanley (Brian Downey) as an anti-hero that does not fit in the category of science fiction's traditional, masculine heroes. Of the three re-imagined series under analysis, *Battlestar Galactica* in particular includes male characters that are represented as anti-heroes.

Other series have striven to create complex representations of alien 'otherness' by offering compelling narratives of human encounters with different species. These encounters can be linked to racial and class issues but also to our real life encounters with other species. For instance, the way *Babylon 5* succeeds in representing non-human aliens as believable and complex characters has received praise (Booker 2004, 136; cf. Vint 2008, 257). In the 1990s, *Star Trek: Deep Space 9* also introduced the first African-American lead captain ever to be seen in the franchise. These series thus paved the way for the active female characters seen in each of the re-imagined series, as well as for their complex negotiations of 'otherness' made visible in the encounters between humans and aliens or humans and machines.

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31 For more on active and central female characters in science fiction television from the 1990s onwards, see e.g. Battis (2007, 9), Conrad (2011, 96), Ginn (2005), Helford (2000a), Koistinen (2015), Lucas (2009) and Moody (2002). On active women in the 1990s and early 2000s in the media in general, see Helford (2000c), Inness (1999; 2004), Paasonen (2004) and Pakkanen (2004).

32 For example, *Alien* (Ridley Scott, US/UK 1979), *Aliens* (James Cameron, US/UK 1986), *The Terminator* (James Cameron, UK/US 1984), *Terminator 2: Judgement Day* (James Cameron, US 1991).

Despite the fact that science fiction's speculative elements make the investigations of the norms and conditions of humanity possible, one norm has remained remarkably strong in science fiction television: heterosexuality. Although series such as *Lexx* and *Farscape* explore both human and non-human sexuality, sometimes imagining different, non-anthropomorphic bodies, genders and sexualities (cf. Battis 2007, e.g. 5-6; Booker 2004, 150-162), non-normative sexualities remain in the margins of much science fiction television, including the series I study.[33] This is noteworthy, as mainstream television has increasingly incorporated gay characters at least from the 1990s onwards (see also Pearson 2010a, 14-15; Stoy 2010, 14)[34]. Of the series I investigate, the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* (the only one that originally aired on cable) includes gay, lesbian and bisexual characters, but non-normative sexuality nevertheless remains in the margins of the series (cf. Burrows 2010; Jones 2010, 166-171; Stoy 2010, 14). This section has, however, elaborated that the speculative elements of science fiction enable the speculation of the questions of gender, 'race', ethnicity and human–non-human relations – and I claim that these speculative elements also make the heteronormativity of the series I analyse seem unstable. As heterosexual relationships are formed between humans and non-humans, even machines, these relationships make the ideals of 'natural', human heterosexuality appear strange or, perhaps, queer[35].

2.4 The human question and technology

Since both *Bionic Woman* series and the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* represent technologically constructed or altered bodies, and the passing for human of the alien characters in the *V* narratives is also reliant of technology, it is necessary to address how humanity's relations to technology have been represented in science fiction. As stated before, the explorations of technology

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33 Veronica Hollinger (2000, 198-199; 2003, 126) claims that science fiction literature, too, tended to be a heterosexual discourse before the birth of feminist science fiction (cf. Latham 2010, 53-55, 66, 70). Many authors have since then explored different sexualities (and also issues like gender and 'race') by imagining different kinds of aliens and alien worlds. Samuel R. Delany, Ursula K. Le Guin and Octavia E. Butler have been influential in this sense. For more on aliens and sexuality, see Pearson (2010a).

34 *Babylon 5*, however, represents a sexual relationship between two bisexual women and *Orphan Black* (Canada/US 2013–present) has a central gay character. A British series *Torchwood* (UK/Canada 2006–2011) is also worth mentioning as its main character is a bisexual male alien. The original *V* also suggests the possibility of lesbian sexuality as it represents a female alien flirting with a human woman. Although connecting lesbian sexuality to 'alienness' can be interpreted as making it seem threatening and 'alien', I would rather see it as a way to employ science fiction's speculative elements in order to explore questions of gender and sexuality.

35 By 'queer' I am referring to the destabilising of normative notions considering gender and sexuality – and humanity (see also Pearson, Hollinger & Gordon 2010; Pearson 2010b).

and science are common tropes in science fiction[36]. These explorations may be represented as positive, but they are often also threatening, for instance when humans lose control over their scientific, technological inventions (cf. Sardar 2002, 3-5). The augmenting of human bodies with technology or the creation of artificial 'human beings' are typical kinds of scientific exploration (Graham 2002, 11-16, 84-108; see also Attebery 2002, 28; Hollinger 2010, 144). The artificial human is famously discussed already in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus* (1818), often thought of as the first science fiction novel (cf. Aldiss & Wingrove 1986, 25-35; Attebery 2002, 12).

According to Geraghty (2009, 76), the fear of technology or of automated beings has nevertheless been commonly understood as 'an inherently American phenomenon'. In the 1970s, when the cyborg narrative of the original *Bionic Woman* was created, cyborgs were a topical issue in the United States. Booker (2004, 39-40) notes that narratives of human-like machines produced during that time were used to negotiate the fears of communist infiltration and control. In the original *Bionic Woman*, this kind of threat is projected onto evil machines called 'fembots' that fight the bionic woman who always remains only half-machine. During the 1970s, cyborgs were also considered as possible assets in the Cold War (Jenkins 2011, 95-96, 110; Paasonen 2005, 21-22, 30-31). In addition, scientists had by then produced first real prostheses (Geraghty 2009, 63; Telotte 2008, 17; 2014, 32).

Humanoid machines and cyborgs have also been used to explore gender issues (e.g. Hollinger 2003; 2010; Merrick 2003, 245-246). The cyborgs of science fiction, especially those seen in film and television, have, nevertheless, been chided for upholding traditional gender stereotypes of sexualised and/or sexually exploited women and armoured and hyper-masculine men (Balsamo 2000, 155-156; Graham 2002, 108-110; Kakoudaki 2000, 166). One famous example of the sexualised female machine is Hel (Brigitte Helm) in Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis* (Germany 1927). In the film, Hel embodies both the threat of technological development as well as that of female sexuality. (See also Graham 2002, 180-181.) Of the series I study, the connections between threatening technology and threatening female sexuality are clearly present in the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* in which the Cylon women seduce human men and use them to help the Cylons execute their plans (see also George 2008). The original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman* discuss the dangers of connecting women and technology, but the threat is less connected to sexuality. I nevertheless claim that the characters of these series, and science fiction's gendered cyborgs and machines in general, should not be dismissed as mere stereotypes.[37]

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[36] For more on the trope of technology in science fiction, see Johnson-Smith (2005, 24-25, 34-36), Roberts (2007, viii, x, 9-15) and Telotte (2014, 14, 20, 26-27).

[37] There is a long tradition of projecting questions of gender and sexuality onto the figure of the female 'other' (such as aliens and cyborgs) in science fiction (see e.g. Creed 2000; Deery 2000, 96; Merrick 2003, 243; Roberts 1993, 1-13). Perhaps, because of this, the most thought-provoking gendered 'others' that I analyse are also female.

The machines of science fiction can also be used to investigate the questions of human embodiment[38] in an even broader sense. The most visible dichotomy made between humans and machines in science fiction narratives is that of the organic/inorganic, but humans are generally also set apart from machines in terms of their individuality, rationality and their capacity for emotion (Balsamo 2000, 149; Booker 2004, 39-40, 95-96; Paasonen 2005, 27, 32). The capacity for emotion, friendship and love is also underlined in the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* as important criteria for being human. Emotions have been used to make classic characters such as the android Data (Brent Spiner) in *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and the cyborg Seven of Nine (Jeri Ryan) in *Star Trek: Voyager* appear more human[39]. Elaine L. Graham (2002, 137-153) notes that the Star Trek franchise uses both Data and Seven of Nine to speculate whether humanity can be learned and performed instead of being based on some essential human ontology. The film *Blade Runner* (Scott, US/ Hong Kong/ UK 1982), based on Phil K. Dick's novel *Do Android's Dream of Electric Sheep* (1968), has also influenced many representations of humanoid machines in science fiction television (see e.g. Geraghty 2009, 16). The humanoid machines, 'replicants', in *Blade Runner* serve as an example of human performativity as these machines are represented as either passing or failing to pass for human[40], making them important predecessors for the cyborgs and machines represented in the re-imagined series I study.

By placing emphasis on both emotionality and rationality, science fiction narratives take part in complex and often contradictory ongoing cultural negotiations of humanity and human(ist) ideals (cf. Graham 2002, 11-19). As Catherine Lutz (1986, 288-301) notes, the dominant view in Euro-American culture is to understand emotions in a Cartesian manner as being inferior to reason – something animal-like and potentially dangerous that must be controlled by rational thinking. According to Hollinger (2003, 125-126), since the Enlightenment, women have been thought of as emoting bodies in contrast to the reasoning minds of men and they have thus represented nature to the 'male' culture. Lutz (1986, 288-301), nevertheless, points out that there is a contesting tradition in the Euro-American culture that emphasises the capacity for emotion as an important and valued aspect in a human being. In this view, emotionality signi-

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38 By 'human embodiment' I am referring to humans as bodily creatures whose 'intelligibility' as humans is affected by societal norms considering what constitutes a 'normal' human body (see also Butler 1990, 16-17, 111; 2004, 11; 2011, xi-xxx, 7).

39 Human emotionality can also be mirrored against unemotional aliens, such as Spock (Leonard Nimoy) in the original *Star Trek*. For more on emotions in science fiction television, see Booker (2004, 59, 95-96, 114-129, 183-185; 2008, 201) and Ginn (2005, 120-122).

40 The novel, in particular, highlights empathy as the most important human factor that supposedly distinguishes humans from machines, but then presents the reader with androids that can feel empathy and humans that seemingly are devoid of it (Hayles 1999, 162, 191; Hollinger 2010, 147-149). By representing humans as lacking empathy and androids as capable of feeling it, Dick's novel suggest that humanity is something that can be performed 'through an individual's ongoing ethical behaviour' (Hollinger 2010, 149). The importance of ethical behaviour in defining humanity, or humanness, is negotiated in the second and fourth original article of this study.

fies individuality, spirituality and virtue and the emotional female is considered as the ideal human being. Of the series I analyse, these contesting ideals are prominent especially in the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman*, as the bionic woman Jaime must constantly negotiate the boundaries between rational/emotional, human/animal in order to remain within the category of legitimate humanity.

The machines and cyborgs of science fiction television, such as the characters I analyse, thus prove to be suitable tools for studying the human question and the complex cultural and historical negotiations to which it is connected. Contrary to Geraghty's (2009, 76) critique that 'television appears to lack the narrative space to [...] investigate the cyborg as a postmodernist subject', I therefore argue that television can (re)imagine complex representations of cyborgs and other machines that comment on timely cultural discussions. As Telotte (2014, 20, 100-106) observes, science fiction television has, in fact, always tapped into the fears and hopes raised by scientific and technological developments and their relation to humanist ideals of rationality and the nature of humanity. I claim that given the increasing continuity of televisual narratives which allows in-depth discussions of cultural issues and the developments of special effects that enable visually striking imagery, there really is no reason why television should lack the narrative space for representing cyborgs, machines and human encounters with technology (cf. Telotte 2014, 11-12, 38-39). The re-imagined versions of *Bionic Woman* and *Battlestar Galactica* as well as other series such as *Terminator: The Sarah Connor Chronicles* (US 2008–2009) and *Dollhouse* (US 2009–2010) attest to this.

3 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

My analysis of the specific North American science fiction narratives is situated in the interconnected fields of cultural studies, representation studies, media studies and feminist and posthumanist theory, making it an interdisciplinary effort to understand and analyse the human question from media representations. The following section considers the theoretical and methodological framework relevant for this dissertation. It demonstrates that by investigating fictional narratives within feminist and posthumanist theoretical frameworks and taking into account the ambivalent nature of media representations, I am able to grasp a broad spectrum of cultural discussions and meaning-making processes that shape the way humans and non-humans are defined in the studied series. As Hollinger (2003, 127) points out, science fiction is of interest to feminism as it has the 'potential for imaginative re-presentations of the gendered subject, […] difference and diversity'. She goes on to remind us that, according to Teresa de Lauretis (1986, 11), telling new stories is a crucial facet of the feminist project (Hollinger 2003, 127-128). This same potential makes the genre a valid tool for posthumanist imaginative projects as well (cf. Haraway 1991; 2011; Vint 2007; 2014).

3.1 Human performativity

The most thought-provoking non-human 'others' I analyse appear human, at least on the outside. Therefore, certain behaviour that is understood as 'human' or humane becomes essential for distinguishing between humans and non-humans, or passing for human. I argue that performativity has an important role in defining humanity or humanness in the research material in question (cf. Chess 2008; Harwood-Smith 2008; Hellstrand 2009). According to Butler (1990, e.g. 33, 140-141), gender is a constant performance, tenuously constituted in time, instituted through a stylised repetition of acts, gestures, movements and

styles. As gender is produced and compelled by the regulatory practices of gender coherence, the bodies that fail to be recognisable as male or female are not understood as coherent genders or intelligible persons (Butler 1990, 16-17, 111; 2007, xxiii-xxv). Thus, intelligible gender seems to be one of the conditions of intelligible humanity. This links gender performativity to the performative aspects of humanity, or to the process of passing for human (see Butler 2004, 1-16; 2011, 122-138). Although the regulatory practices of gender coherence have an effect on gender performativity, Butler (1990, 141, 146-149; 2007, xxii-xxv) argues that there are possibilities for subversive performances within the failure of intelligibility. Performing gender in a manner that leaves it open or hard to recognise as male or female questions 'the naturalized knowledge of gender' (Butler 2007, xxiv). Analysing the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*, I focus on how the characters of the series perform and also, occasionally, 'fail' to perform the norms and conditions of humanity, such as gender, 'race' and sexuality.

Butler's theory of gender performativity has been criticised of arguing that gender can be performed 'onto' the surface of the body, which disregards the role of the body in performativity. Butler has, however, refined her theory and claimed that the regulatory practices considering gender performativity also affect the way bodies materialise as intelligible human beings. As there is no pure human body to refer to, materialisation is a process produced by the materialising cultural norms. (Butler 2011, i-x, xvii-xix.) In the series I study, the humanness of the human-like 'others' is constructed by taking part in certain performatives, but also by inhabiting the right kind of 'human' body, making the process of passing a construction on a material-social level. The question of passing is discussed specifically in the first and second original article. Whereas the first one focuses on the process of passing for a gendered human being, the second one is preoccupied with the racialised aspects of passing for human.

Other scholars have also noted the possibilities that Butler's work (and queer theory in general) and the idea of 'passing' offer for examining science fiction narratives. For instance, Wendy Gay Pearson, Veronica Hollinger and Joan Gordon (2010, 3-4) suggest that the novum, or cognitive estrangement, that Suvin (1979, 18; see also Pearson 2010a, 14) has identified as the key element of science fiction resonates with Foucault's (1986, 9) call to queer thought (or thinking differently). Therefore, 'science fiction cannot help but be a little queer' (Pearson, Hollinger & Gordon 2010, 4). Pearson (2003, 157) claims that science fiction is a powerful tool for imagining worlds and futures where identities are represented as fluid instead of rigid categories based on the 'binarisms which automatically value white over black, male over female and straight over gay'. In other words, science fiction has the potential to imagine different futures and parallel worlds that invite us to rethink the ideas of 'normal' or 'natural' in our everyday lives, thereby resonating with the political aims of queer theory.

The scholars that have connected science fiction and queer theory have mostly concentrated on literature. I nevertheless demonstrate that science fiction television also proves an intriguing and important object of research in

considering the norms and conditions that shape the understandings of intelligible human bodies. My analysis of the machines and cyborgs represented in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* raises questions considering the fluidity of binary categories, such as male/female and human/non-human, used in drawing the boundaries of the category of the human. The constructed nature of the humanness of the non-human characters I study highlights the performative aspects of categories such as gender, 'race' and ethnicity and their interconnectedness to human intelligibility. Thus, instead of relying on some kind of 'natural' human origins or ontological hygiene, they place emphasis on the construction process of humanity (cf. Graham 2002, 33-35), which makes these representations potentially queer.

According to Butler (2007, vii-xxviii), her work has always been concerned with the possibilities for livable lives. She argues that the normative conceptions of gender can, in fact, undo one's personhood and undermine the capacity to have a livable life (Butler 2004, 1-2). Science fiction's aliens, machines and cyborgs that pass or fail to pass for human exemplify the norms and conditions behind living livable lives in human societies. (See also Pearson 2010b, 76.) By doing so, science fiction narratives such as the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* engage in important cultural discussions on what kinds of lives are considered livable, not only in the fictional worlds of science fiction but also in our lived, everyday realities.

3.2 Negotiating livability during times of war

The question of livable lives is developed further in Butler's more recent work considering the ethics of war. Butler (2006, 28-39; 2010, xviii-xix, 1-32) claims that in the War on Terror that was launched after 9/11, lives are divided into those that are considered grievable (i.e. the Americans) and those that are considered as ungrievable (i.e. 'the terrorists'). This distinction is necessary for the justification of the American war effort, making it appear as recovery from terrorism rather than a repetition of terror (ibid.). Although my analysis of the *Bionic Woman* series raises questions considering what kinds of lives are defined as worthy of living, my investigation of the definitions of grievable and ungrievable lives focuses on the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*. Especially the re-imagined versions of these series include striking scenes of human–non-human encounters that resonate with Butler's ethical considerations of war. The encounters between humans and non-humans can be painful and dehumanising but they can also be loving and humanising. I argue that in these encounters, the distinction between grievable ('us') and ungrievable ('the others') lives is questioned.

This creates an interesting connection with Ahmed's (2000, 7) work, as she suggests that identities are constructed in encounters with 'others': the formation of identity is never over, but can be understood as sliding across subjects in these encounters. Ahmed (2004, 130) also discusses which lives are con-

sidered as 'liveable' or 'loveable'. She develops on Butler's notions of grievable lives and asks (ibid., 192):

> What happens when those who have been designated as ungrievable are grieved, and when their loss is not only felt as loss, but becomes a symbol of the injustice of loss?

Ahmed also argues that bodies and worlds materialise through sensations, such as pain. Subjects are shaped by emotions and sensations in the body and on its surface, the skin. Emotions shape the very surfaces of bodies, creating borders against some 'others' as well as connecting us to 'other others'. (Ibid., e.g. 4, 10, 12, 24-25.) In science fiction narratives, skin can shape one's humanness in a very literal way, as humanoid machines or aliens must acquire a human-like skin in order to pass for human (see also Kakoudaki 2000, 165-166; Paasonen 2005, 27; Wertheim 2002). The role of skin is discussed especially in the second original article of this dissertation. In the article, I also use Ahmed's (2004, 89-92) terms to analyse how the signs of humanness and inhumanness 'stick' and 'slide' between humans and non-humans in the painful and loving encounters represented in the studied series. Ahmed (2004, 66-67, 89-91) has claimed that some words stick to others, forming chains of association, such as 'negro', 'animal', 'bad' and 'ugly'. In the series I study, derogatory words can seriously affect the non-human characters' ability to pass for human, but the use of these words can also serve to highlight the inconsistencies in these chains of association.

The original and re-imagined *V* are also analysed in conversation with Butler's ideas of the frames of war. Butler (2010, ix-xii, 10) claims that the media participate in the process of the circulation and maintenance of the imagery of war and, by doing so, create a frame in which the war is or can be understood. The frame delimits public discourse considering war, 'selectively producing and enforcing what will count as reality' (ibid., xiii). It is therefore important to investigate what kind of imagery of the war the media circulate. Butler (2010, 10-12) also notes that during this process of circulation, the frames tend to break within themselves. I thus analyse, how the frames of war are established, maintained and broken in the original and re-imagined *V* and in what kind of cultural, historical and industrial framework they were created. These different frameworks shape the way the *V* narratives are interpreted. I claim that the 'speculative frames' of science fiction and the framework of television as a medium work together in creating frames of war that call for powerful affective responses. These responses can affect the ways war is perceived as justified or unjustified and how certain kinds of lives emerge as grievable and livable or ungrievable and unlivable during times of war.

3.3 The human, the posthuman and the non-human

As my analysis of human performativity, ungrievable and grievable or livable lives raises questions of human ontology and the definitions of both human and non-human lives, Butler's and Ahmed's theories are complemented with a posthumanist framework that is preoccupied with the relations between humans and that which is understood as non-human. My approach to posthumanism is informed by feminist negotiations on posthumanist ethics as envisioned by Haraway (1991; 2003; 2008) and others. According to Åsberg (2013, 9),

> The term *posthuman* has come to designate a very loosely related set of recent attempts to reconceptualise the relationship between the rapidly changing field of technology and the conditions of human embodiment.

Posthumanism, or feminist posthumanities, can, however, be combined under the notion of re-negotiating and re-thinking the human in a manner that takes into account the materiality and vulnerability of human existence and raises questions considering the ethics of human–non-human relations[41]. Although Haraway (2008, 16-19, 164) has distanced herself from posthumanism, her work has clear connections to feminist posthumanism, as it is concerned with the ethical encounters between humans and non-humans.

My understanding of posthumanism is also informed by theorists such as Neil Badmington and Cary Wolfe. Badmington (2004, 118, 150-151) argues that the task for posthumanism is not so much to reject humanism, but to investigate the inconsistencies in certain humanist ideals. Wolfe (2010, xv) also notes that 'post' in posthumanism does not necessarily refer to transcending humanity, but posthumanism

> comes both before and after humanism: before in the sense that it names the embodiment and embeddedness of the human being in not just its biological but also its technological world, the prosthetic coevolution of the human animal with the technicity of tools and external archival mechanisms (such as language and culture) […] But it comes after in the sense that posthumanism names a historical moment in which the decentering of the human by its imbrication in technical, medical, informatic, and economic networks is increasingly impossible to ignore.

Therefore, the agenda of posthumanism 'is not to reject humanism *tout court*' as many values and aspirations in humanism remain admirable today, but to 'show how those aspirations are undercut by the philosophical and ethical frameworks used to conceptualize them' (ibid., xvi). Thus, I understand posthumanism as an attempt to investigate the inconsistencies in humanist thought and to find ways to define the human – or, indeed, to live as human

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41 On feminist posthumanism, or posthumanities, see for example Alaimo (2011), Åsberg, Koobak and Johnson (2011), Åsberg (2013) and Braidotti (2013).

beings – without placing the human in direct dichotomy with, or above of, all that is considered non-human (see also Lummaa & Rojola 2014b, 14).[42]

Many feminist, posthumanist or new-materialist theorists have turned to science fiction for its potential to imagine possible worlds and futures and different kinds of non-human creatures that enable wide investigations on the relations between humans and non-humans[43]. For instance, Sherryl Vint (2007, 189) points out that the genre's 'generic conventions provide a space for narrating agency for non-human subjects'. In other words, the (re)imaginations presented by science fiction narratives have the potential to stretch our understandings of what kind of embodiments are considered real, acceptable and human[44]. Especially the representation of the cyborg, a common trope on science fiction, has been used as a figure that combines science fiction and posthumanist theory. For Haraway (1991, 151-154), cyborgs are, on one hand, the illegitimate offspring of militarism and patriarchal capitalism and the ultimate symbols of human control over our planet. On the other hand, they can be hybrid figures that show us the fluidity of supposedly fixed boundaries between humans, animals and machines.[45] According to Haraway (2011), science fiction's potential lies in the genre's imaginative world-makings, which she calls 'practices of worlding' (10) that continue to imagine how we the humans can live 'response-able lives' with the non-humans we inhabit the world with (14-15).

Haraway's cyborg figuration has been an important vehicle not only for scholars analysing science fiction narratives but for posthumanist thinking as a whole. It also serves as an important tool for my investigation of the human–non-human relations in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*. In both the original and re-imagined versions of *Bionic Woman*, a woman is literally turned into a cyborg that is partly a machine. In addition to her physical transformation, she is metaphorically (re)aligned with animals and machines. I argue that the bionic women of the original and re-imagined series must carefully balance between the borderlines of human, animal and machine in order to maintain their humanity. This makes their humanity fluid and negotiable. In the original and re-imagined version of *V*, the Visitors call into question the clear-cut division into non-human animals and

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42 On the origins and definitions of posthumanism, see Åsberg, Koobak and Johnson (2011), Åsberg (2013), Badmington (2000; 2004), Braidotti (2013), Lummaa and Rojola (2014a; 2014b) and Wolfe (2010).

43 See Badmington (2004, 13-15), Braidotti (2002, 182-184, 203-204), Gomel (2014), Graham (2002), Haraway (1991; 2008, 217; 2011) and Vint (2007; 2014).

44 Marleen S. Barr (1992) has called these kinds of (re)imaginations in science fiction 'fabulations' (see also Graham 2002, 55-59; Haraway 2011).

45 The cyborg figuration has developed a life of its own in theoretical and philosophical fields. This has sometimes led to the glorification or fetishising of the posthuman, like in the transhumanist movement that is dedicated to the enhancement of human capabilities and the human life-span and the eradication of disease and suffering. Transhumanism has been interpreted as an extension of liberal humanist ideals of the Enlightenment (and before) of rationality and agency, which differentiates it from Haraway's cyborg figuration. (Cf. Åsberg 2013, 9; Graham 2002, 154-175; Lummaa & Rojola 2014b, 18-19; Vint 2007, 176-182; Wolfe 2010, xiii.)

human beings, as they are lizard-like creatures who can nevertheless mask themselves as human and, thus, even pass for human. In the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, the humanoid machines, Cylons, question the boundary between humans and machines with their ability to pass for human. All of these characters are therefore studied as cyborgs similar to Haraway's configuration of the word since they transgress the boundaries of human and animal and/or human and machine.

In my analysis, I elaborate how the aliens, cyborgs and humanoid machines that stretch the boundaries of humanity raise important ethical considerations of the livability of those considered 'the others of Man' in Euro-American cultures – for instance, animals, enemies at war, women, 'other races' and those that are not intelligible as acceptable genders (cf. Butler 2004, e.g. 1-4; Wolfe 2003a, 6-8). In this sense, Haraway's cyborg figuration has clear connections with Butler's and Ahmed's work, or queer theory in general[46]. In her more recent work, Haraway (2003, 4) argues that we should try to find ways for creating more '*livable* naturecultures' (my italics) with our companion species alongside whom humanity has developed and continues to develop. She asks, how can we decide which lives (and which species) are rendered killable (Haraway 2008, 80, 82), creating further connections with the ethical considerations raised by Butler and Ahmed. Thus, examined within a posthumanist framework, the science fiction television series under analysis exemplify not only the norms and conditions of livable human lives, but also their complex connections to the ethics of meeting with other species or non-human nature.

3.4 Methods and approaches

One of the basic conceptions of media studies, and this study, is that media texts are inherently polysemic and do not advocate a single meaning. The norms and conditions, or boundaries, of humanity negotiated in the research material in question are nevertheless culturally and historically specific. In other words, the representations of humanity in the analysed series are connected to different cultural, historical and political contexts. Studies of representation have, indeed, become an integral part of cultural studies. (Cf. Graham 2002, 25-33; Paasonen 2010, 45-48; van Zoonen 1994, 149.) It is well established in media and cultural studies that representations take part in the meaning-making processes which construct our understandings of the very society we live in (e.g. Hall 1997; 2000; Kellner 1995, 1-11). In other words, representations not only represent but (re)construct our reality. Stuart Hall (2000, 704-706, 714) notes that representations influence the formation process of identities as they offer subjects different positions that they can relate to. Therefore, representations of

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46 On the interconnections of the terms 'posthuman' and 'queer', see Halberstam and Livinsgston (1995, 1-19).

human-like aliens, machines and cyborgs can affect how we understand humanity and how we, in turn, become understood as intelligible human beings.

The polysemic meanings and cultural connections of media representations have also affected my choice of methods. I have already mentioned thematic, contextual analysis as a method and I will now elaborate on my analytical process. All of the television series chosen for analysis were first viewed once; during the initial viewing reoccurring themes in each series were identified and recorded[47]. After this, Butler's theory of gender performativity was chosen as the first analytical tool for analysing the series, which were thus examined in the context of science fiction television and Butler's theory. After the first thematic and theoretical analysis, all the series were viewed for the second time and compared to one another. Certain themes that were present in all series, such as violence and human–non-human relations, surfaced. Connections between these themes and certain cultural phenomena were also found. This led to the broadening of the theoretical framework to include Butler's more recent work, Ahmed's and Haraway's theories and the posthumanist framework, as well as to the clarification and specification of research questions and objectives. Certain episodes that contain intriguing explorations of the themes relevant to my analysis were selected for closer study and viewed several times. These episodes are subjected to in-depth analyses in the original articles.

Another method, which I call *critical-reparative analysis*, has also shaped my analysis. According to Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (1997, 17-19), cultural studies have too often been pervaded by the attitude of paranoia. For Sedgwick, the problem of a 'paranoid reading' is that it is always anticipatory of 'the detection of hidden patterns of violence and their exposure' (19). Sedgwick therefore calls for a 'reparative reading' that is open for surprise and contains the hope of finding possible futures that differ from the past (22). Drawing on Sedgwick's (2003) later reprisal of the idea of reparative reading, De Witt Douglas Kilgore (2010, 235) claims that reparative reading is especially relevant for scholars studying science fiction, as it is a key element of science fiction to create new worlds and futures that will surprise the readers.

As some of the series I study have previously been analysed in a more or less paranoid manner, 'moving away' from paranoia enables me to provide new knowledge of the material. Science fiction television, and popular culture in general, has often been criticised of, for instance, representing female characters in traditionally feminine roles or as erotic spectacles (e.g. Helford 2000b; Inness 1999, 31-49; Johnson-Smith 2005, 80). For example, the cyborg women in the *Bionic Woman* series have been critiqued of stereotypical representations of fem-

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47 The series were viewed from the following DVD releases: *Battlestar Galactica: Complete Series* (2009), *Battlestar Galactica: 1980* (2008), *Battlestar Galactica*: S*eason One* (2006), *Battlestar Galactica: Season Two* (2007), *Battlestar Galactica: Season Three* (2008), *Battlestar Galactica: Season Four* (2009), *Bionic Woman: The Complete Series* (2008), *The Bionic Woman: The Complete Season One* (2005), *The Bionic Woman: The Complete Season Two* (2006), *La Donna Bionica: Stagione Tre* (2008), *V: The Complete Collection* (2008), *V: The Complete First Season* (2011) and *V: The Complete Second Season* (2011).

ininity and male dominance over women[48]. Indeed, Haraway's cyborg figuration has also been criticised of failing to take into account the way the representations of cyborgs are often stereotypically gendered (Balsamo 2000, 155-156; Graham 2002, 200-220). Following Sedgwick, these studies can be called paranoid readings that posit certain problems of normativity (cf. Paasonen 2010, 44). As van Zoonen (1994, 31) puts it,

> there is no reference point as to what the true human, male or female identity consists of, and hence there is no criterion as to what exactly the media should represent. Human identity and gender are thought to be socially constructed, in other words products of circumstances, opportunities and limitations.

Contrary to the critiques on Haraway's cyborg metaphor and the *Bionic Woman* series, I thus argue that the cyborgs of the two *Bionic Woman* series should not be dismissed as representations of stereotypical femininity or male dominance over women. Analysed in dialogue with Haraway's cyborg figuration the series serve as examples of the continuous interplay between the norms and conditions of gender and the cultural discussions considering the boundaries of humanity. Instead of examining what the media *should* represent, I investigate *how* certain representations in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* are constructed. What kind of (cultural, historical and political) frameworks can they be connected to and what kind of cultural consequences might they have?

Robyn Wiegman (2014, e.g. 18-19), however, claims that there is space for a more 'paranoid' or critical analysis in feminist theory (cf. Lewis 2014; Hemmings 2014; Stacey 2014). Sasha Roseneil (2011, 130) also argues for feminist research that 'operates in a register of criticality, with an ear to the past, and an eye to the future, and attention to the multiplicity of ways of inhabiting the present'. She suggests that critical readings should not forget the power of normative practices, such as heteronormativity, but to focus on the 'discontinuities, challenges, and transformations' in these practices (ibid.). Roseneil (2011, 130) writes that:

> Giving analytical time and space to counter-normative practices – at the same time as casting an old-fashioned critical lens to normativities and dominant practices and discourses – is vital […] to opening up of possible alternative futures. At the same time, this opening up of possible alternative futures requires acknowledgement of the suffering and oppressions, the troubles, and pains – social and psychic – which coexist with, are part and parcel of, these counternormative practices and new ways of living.

Following Sedgwick and Roseneil, I engage in a 'move' towards what I would like to call critical-reparative analysis. This kind of analysis is concerned with the *ambivalence* (cf. Stacey 2014) inherent in media texts that opens them up for polysemic interpretations that may, then, produce reparative results without losing sight of critical perspectives.

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48 On these critiques, see Inness (1999, 31-49), Jenkins (2011, 103-111), Johnson (2013, 120-121), Quinlan and Bates (2009, 54-55), Sharp (2007, 508, 516-522) and White (2006, 171, 181-182).

In other words, I am using a critical-reparative analysis as a heuristic tool to examine the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*. Although Roseneil's concept of criticality includes a reparative aspect, I wish to highlight the importance of both critical and reparative approaches in my analysis, thus the name 'critical-reparative'. I am not interested in engaging in a critique of the ways the series reinforce certain cultural stereotypes and dichotomies, but I focus instead on the problematic, strange or queer occasions of these stereotypes and dichotomies. One must nevertheless find out how the stereotypes and dichotomies work, before one can analyse their problematic nature (cf. Roseneil 2011, 130). For instance, in the fourth original article, I investigate how the frames of war are created, maintained and broken in the original and re-imagined *V*. Following Butler (2010, 10-12), I claim that there are breaks within these frames that question their coherence, and by doing so, set the frames into motion. These breaks call for affective responses to violence – which may inspire the viewers to consider the way they encounter 'otherness' in their daily lives. I would call this sort of analysis reparative. However, in order to study when and how the frames break, one must first understand how they are created and maintained, which calls for a more critical approach. A critical-reparative analysis must therefore remain open to criticality, as well. Therefore, rather than trying to 'expose' the shortcomings of the series I focus both on their potential and their limitations in asking the human question and on the various contexts that have affected them.

4 SUMMARIES OF THE ARTICLES

The following section summarises the contents and key findings of the four original articles that comprise this dissertation. The articles are presented in chronological order according to the time of their writing and publication. During this PhD project, my engagement with theory, the examined series and other scholars has shaped my analytical thinking considering the human question. This has led to certain developments in my analysis of the representations or (re)imaginations of humanity and their cultural, political and ethical connections and implications. A chronological order will thus make visible the evolution of the thesis as well as my personal growth as a scholar. The human question nevertheless remains visible in each article. Whereas the first and third article explore this question by focusing on gendered embodiment, the second and fourth article concentrate on violence and the ethical problems of war. Because of their shared thematic focus on the human question, the articles contain some theoretical overlap. I however suggest that this overlap should be read as a dialogue between the articles; approached from slightly different angles and situated in different contexts, the same theoretical framework produces different conclusions in each article nevertheless complementing on the conclusions of the other articles.

4.1 Gender flexibility and human-like machines: Article I

The first original article is entitled 'Sukupuolijoustoa ja ihmisen kaltaisia koneita – Sukupuolen ja ihmisyyden kytköksiä *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* –televisiosarjoissa' [Flexible gender identities and human-like machines – Intersections of gender and humanity in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*]. It was published in *Lähikuva* (a Finnish journal focusing on audio-visual culture) in 2011 (volume 24, issue 2). The article examines how gender and humanity are represented, reproduced and performed in the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* by using Butler's (1990) theory of gender

performativity as a starting point. The question asked is how – and what kind of – gendered humanity is produced and reproduced in the analysed series. This is examined by analysing both the human and machine characters, the Cylons. The series are also investigated in the context of the science fiction genre and certain cultural phenomena.

I argue that in the context of the series, performances that fail to uphold certain gender coherence produce a level of 'gender flexibility' (see Rossi 2003, 57) that reshapes the dichotomous categories of male and female. In comparison to the original *Battlestar Galactica*, the re-imagined series represents more flexible gender categories, which is most visible in the inclusion of active and central female characters. This creates a connection to the rise in media representations of active women in the 1990s and early 2000s as well as to societal changes in gender politics. The representations of gender in the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* are, nevertheless, not utopian in the sense of gender equality, but the series raises questions regarding prostitution, the commodification of female bodies and the right to abortion. The series, therefore, takes part in complex contemporary discussions on gendered humanity. This sort of narrative complexity is typical for science fiction television series produced in the 2000s.

Gendered humanity is most visibly negotiated in the representations of the humanoid Cylons in the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*. Whereas in the original series the Cylons were mostly distinguishable from humans, in the re-imagined version they can pass for human. By doing so, the Cylons make visible the performative aspects of humanity and the role of gender in these performatives. Contrary to the critiques that the human-like machines of science fiction adhere to gender stereotypes of powerful males and erotic females, I argue that the humanoid Cylons cannot be reduced to these stereotypes. It is therefore not sufficient to analyse them only in relation to these stereotypes, but the focus of analysis needs to shift from analysing gender alone to how the representations of gender are interconnected with the very understandings of humanity. My analysis demonstrates that passing for gender, such as heterosexuality and heterosexual reproduction, has an important role for the humanoid Cylons' passing for human. I, however, conclude that as the heterosexuality of the Cylons does not have 'natural' origins but is technologically constructed and performatively reproduced, heterosexuality appears as complex and performative – making the process of passing for human potentially queer.

4.2 Passing for human: Article II

The second original article, 'Passing for human in science fiction: Comparing the TV series *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*', was published in *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* in 2011 (volume 19, issue 4). In the article, I examine the construction processes of humanity and 'passing for human' in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*. The theoretical framework of the article consists of Butler's work on gender performativity

(1990) and grievable and ungrievable lives (2006). I also analyse the series through Ahmed's (2000; 2004) work on the formation of identity and the ethics of encountering 'otherness' as well as Haraway's (1991) cyborg figuration. I examine how the process of passing for human is constructed in the series through encounters between humans and their 'others' (i.e. the Cylons and the Visitors). The series are also situated in the context of the Cold War and the War on Terror.

I claim, firstly, that humanity is negotiated in the series through inhabiting 'the right kind' of body; and secondly, it is constructed by taking part in certain performatives. This can be seen in the representations of humanoid machines or aliens that are able to pass for human and infiltrate human societies. These negotiations make visible the signifying practices that mark what is considered human and non-human. By doing so, they raise questions about the power structures behind the process of passing and the constructions of humanity. I argue that gender, sexuality and 'race' play a part in the process of passing for human. The type of body that passes for human is mostly represented as heterosexual and white. However, as the 'right kind of body' can literally be constructed in the context of the series, these representations question the 'naturalness' of these power structures by emphasising their constructed nature. I argue that the machines (the Cylons) and the lizard-like aliens (the Visitors) that can pass for human also destabilise boundaries such as animal/human, machine/human and us/them, which makes them hybrid cyborg figures.

I also situate all the series within science fiction's tradition of projecting humanity's failings onto the representations of 'others'. This is most clearly seen in the re-imagined series, where signs of humanness and inhumanness slide between the humans and their alien 'others' in both painful and loving encounters (cf. Ahmed 2004, 89–92). In these scenes, both humans and non-humans engage in acts that are considered ethically human(e) or inhuman(e), which problematises the distinctions between grievable and ungrievable, or 'liveable' and 'loveable' (see Ahmed 2004, 130) lives. This evokes associations to the ethics of torture and violence in times of war in our human societies, but, by questioning the moral superiority of humans, the series also open up our imagination for a critique of humanist values and ideals. If humans are not superior to the 'others' after all, how should we treat the 'others' we encounter in our daily lives? For today's viewer, the discussions of 'otherness' prevalent in each of these series may also resonate with expanding contemporary global phenomena such as terrorism, hate speech, and xenophobia.

4.3 Gender and the posthuman: Article III

The third article, entitled '"The machine is nothing without the woman": Gender, humanity and the cyborg body in the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman*', was published in *Science Fiction Film and Television* in 2015 (volume 8, issue 1). Inspired by Haraway's cyborg figuration, I investigate the representa-

tions of cyborg women in the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman* within a posthumanist framework. By analysing the series in the light of humanist and posthumanist discussions, I establish that the two *Bionic Woman* series provide examples of how questions concerning the meanings of gender are irrevocably intertwined with the meanings of humanity – and how the boundaries of gender and humanity are constantly negotiated and drawn.

The article claims that both the original and re-imagined versions of *Bionic Woman* emphasise the importance of recognisable gender as a criterion for being considered human. For the bionic woman, Jaime, this means femininity, which in both series is constructed as heterosexual desirability and 'feminine', nurturing emotionality. I argue that the way the bionic woman's gender is represented in each series creates connections to the different cultural and historical contexts of the two series. In the re-imagined version Jaime embodies more conventionally 'masculine' qualities than her original counterpart. Unlike in the original series, she shows aggression, her powers are not contrasted to an even more powerful bionic man and her being a 'special lady' is not underlined. These factors highlight the changes in the cultural expectations of intelligible gendered humanity within the feminine/masculine dichotomy.

The two *Bionic Woman* series do not merely articulate the connection between the capacity for emotion and femininity but also the connection between emotions and humanity. This makes science fiction's emphasis on the sphere of emotions as the criteria for humanity a part of both series. The series also construct humanity along the lines of liberal humanist ideals of freedom and individuality. They therefore negotiate two Euro-American traditions considering the understandings of humanity: the Cartesian liberal humanist tradition that considers the rational male as the ideal human subject as opposed to the contesting tradition that understands the capacity for emotion as a human virtue typical for women. In this sense, the bionic women negotiate persistent cultural dichotomies such as nature/culture, male/female, mind/body, human/machine and human/animal. By doing so, they become representatives of a hybrid humanity. Studied within a posthumanist framework, both *Bionic Woman* series also raise questions of cultural hierarchies and human control over all that is designated non-human. This is especially negotiated in the re-imagined version. I argue that the issues of control in the two series also comment on cultural phenomena that were prevalent during the time of production of the two series – such as the anxieties toward communism during the Cold War and the increasing technological surveillance caused by the threat of terrorism after 9/11.

4.4 Framing war and human–non-human relations: Article IV

The fourth article, 'Science fiction television and the frames of war: Analysing war and human–non-human relations in the original and re-imagined *V*' (submitted to *Television & New Media*), explores the representation of war between

humans and non-human aliens in the original and re-imagined *V*. Influenced by Butler's (2010) idea of the 'frames of war' and feminist posthumanism, I analyse how war is framed in the series and what kinds of lives emerge as grievable and livable within these frames. Analysing the frames of war, I also investigate what kinds of contexts and frameworks they are connected to. The article builds upon the notion that the 'speculative frames' of science fiction enable the creation of imaginative ways to represent (or frame) war and violence – and for the creation of thought-provoking cultural allegories. I analyse how the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version both use these speculative frames to establish their frames of war. Doing so, they produce complex narratives that create allegories to historical events: such as the Cold War and the Second World War in the original *V* and the War on Terror in the re-imagined series.

I argue that the *V* narratives create certain frames of war that establish the Visitors as evil attackers, which, in the context of the series, justifies the human war effort against the non-human 'others'. There are, nevertheless, breaks in these frames, which are most strikingly negotiated in affective scenes of torture and violence that invite the viewer to consider the non-humans as more than enemies, as lives that may be grievable after all. Acknowledging the Visitors as grievable lives is nevertheless problematic. In fact, in both the original *V* saga and the re-imagined version it is easier to frame the aliens as grievable or livable when they seem human and are understood as 'moral' and good by humanist standards. I would nevertheless conclude that the human–non-human encounters in the *V* narratives leave a lingering suspicion regarding the ontological purity of humanity and the logic behind humanist ideals. In the series, war against the 'others' is justified on the grounds of difference, but simultaneously, the ethics of war are justified by virtue of similarity; the very assumption is that the enemy can be judged by human standards. But if the 'others' are truly non-human, *what happens then*? On what grounds can we judge their actions? The humanist frames, and the frames of war, thus, emerge as incoherent, unstable and ambivalent. Analysed in this manner, the instability of humanism in the *V* narratives can even inspire the viewers to reconsider how they respond to the 'others' they meet in their daily lives – such as animals, women, or 'other races' that are considered to be 'the others of Man' in Euro-American cultures.

5 CODA: (RE)IMAGINING LIVABLE LIVES

This final section presents the conclusions of the study. However, I also wish to reflect back on this particular research process and its limits and problems as well as look beyond this dissertation to speculate further on the human question in popular science fiction television and its ethical and political connections as well as its constraints. Throughout this dissertation, I have examined how specific North American science fiction television series negotiate 'the limits of the imaginable' in terms of asking the human question. More specifically, I have analysed how the boundaries of humanity are (re)negotiated, (re)imagined and (re)drawn, and how certain norms, conditions and ideals are represented as 'human' or humane in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*. My focus has been on the negotiations of gender, 'race' and ethnicity – as well as certain human(ist) ideals that are used to define humanity against the so called non-human 'others'. Special attention has been paid on the problematic, strange or queer occasions inherent in the norms and conditions of humanity. I have investigated the series in question in conversation with feminist and posthumanist theory and in the context of specific cultural-historical discussions and contexts. *The questions asked were:* What kind of bodies are represented as human and non-human in the studied series and how are these series, in their part, constructing the cultural-historical, political and ethical understandings of humanity? What kinds of developments or changes, considering the norms and conditions, or boundaries, of humanity, are found when comparing the re-imagined series to their original counterparts?

One of the points of departure was that by imagining different worlds and cultures, science fiction narratives offer us insight to the limits of the imaginable and can therefore act as important tools for feminist and posthumanist imaginative projects. Another premise was that science fiction television narratives, as representations in general, are linked to complex and contradictory cultural discussions and contexts. Thus, the hypothesis was that by studying these specific science fiction television series in conversation with posthumanist and feminist theory as well as by situating them in different contexts, such as the science fic-

tion genre, television as a medium and specific cultural phenomena, I would be able to grasp a wide range of discussions considering the human question.

As the re-imagined series have not previously been comprehensively compared to their original versions, the study at hand has produced new knowledge considering the analysed series and the temporal and contextual aspects of their production. During the research process, I discovered that in order to fit the category of human, the characters in the series have to 'fulfil' certain material-social norms and conditions. *Firstly*, their bodies have to appear human, which, in the context of these series, mostly means inhabiting a recognisably gendered body with a white skin. In the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica* and *V* this is investigated by representing humanoid machines or aliens that are able to 'pass for human'. In the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman*, a human woman is turned into a half-machine cyborg, which compromises her human, bodily integrity. *Secondly,* the characters I analysed have to engage in 'human' or humane performatives and have certain capacities that are considered human. This makes visible the norms and conditions of humanity and the humanist ideals that shape the very understandings of intelligible humanity. In my analysis, these performatives and capacities emerge as slightly different in each series and more detailed conclusions can be found in each of the original articles. They nevertheless include heterosexuality, the capability to feel love and pain, individuality and rationality and certain ethical and moral acts such as acting compassionately or showing empathy.

It was also discovered that comparing the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* to their original counterparts highlights certain changes in the norms, conditions and boundaries of humanity, for example, considering gendered performatives. These changes in gendered performatives are most visible in the representations of female gender. The original series feature some active and independent female characters; *The Bionic Woman* even has an active female protagonists. In the late 1970s, it was typical for genre television to incorporate the figure of the female action-adventure hero. This was mostly done to attract female viewers informed by second wave feminism and the women's liberation movement. (E.g. Levine 2003, 93-94; Sharp 2007; White 2006.) In all the re-imagined series there are even more active, aggressive, independent and powerful women. These factors are telling of the changes in the cultural expectations of intelligible femininity. The re-imagined versions thus resonate with the fact that since the 1970s and 1980s, when the original series were produced, women have increasingly integrated into society and political decision-making. In addition, the aggressive and active women of the re-imagined series were partly made possible by the representations of violent female characters in literature, film, computer games and television that became increasingly popular in the late 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s (cf. e.g. Inness 2004).

In addition to the changes in representing gender, there are also differences in the way humanity is defined against the non-human in the original and re-imagined versions of the series. The original series discuss Cold War anxieties, such as control, paranoia and war, by projecting them onto the non-human

'others'. In the original versions of *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*, humans are attacked by the deceitful 'others' that are represented as an outside threat, thereby commenting on the communist threat and the Cold War. The original *V* also situates its narrative of alien invasion in complex cultural discussions considering the Second World War and the persecution of Jews (cf. Booker 2004, 91-93; Johnson-Smith 2005, 121) and comments on cultural discussions considering immigration, torture and human rights in the 1980s. The original *Bionic Woman* includes controllable female robots that are contradicted to the independent bionic woman, which comments on the threat communism was seen to pose to American individualist ideals (cf. Booker 2004, 39-40). The re-imagined series tend to discuss the human question in even more complex ways. The re-imagined *Bionic Woman* explores questions of control and surveillance in a more visible manner than its original version, asking what happens to the conditions of human life, such as freedom, individuality and gender, when a human being is technologically altered. As our cultures are more and more pervaded by technology, these questions are timely and relevant. The re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* and *V* negotiate issues such as terrorism, violence, torture and hate speech. Unlike their original version, the Cylons and the Visitors have already infiltrated human societies in a way that resembles terrorist infiltration. In both versions the terrorist threat is nevertheless rendered more complex as some of the 'others' are represented as benevolent and humans are portrayed as using ethically questionable tactics in war.

I therefore conclude that all the re-imagined series under analysis negotiate concerns relevant to the post 9/11 culture, making them important, speculative narratives of their time. After 9/11 many science fiction films and some science fiction television productions turned to the past for inspiration, which led to several remakes of popular old narratives. The re-imagined series I have analysed take part in this trend of remaking old science fiction narratives. Film remakes have often relied on elaborate special effects, dropping the political and social messages of the original versions. The re-imaginations of *Battlestar Galactica, Bionic Woman* and *V*, on the contrary, re-imagine the narratives of the original versions in a manner that comments on contemporary cultural phenomena. (Cf. Geraghty 2009, 18, 103-119; Stoy 2010, 10-11.) To be more precise, the political content of the original versions is not abandoned but rather re-imagined in order to address the fears and hopes of the contemporary viewer – including anxieties relating to the human question.

One key finding was that all the series I studied deal with the definitions of humanity in a manner that somehow makes the 'shifting' and 'sliding' (see Ahmed 2004, 89-92) status of humanity, or humanist ideals, visible. This raises questions such as: What happens to the ontological purity of humanity if a non-human 'other' can fit into the category of the human, or if humans themselves do not measure up to humanist ideals? The non-human or part-human characters that cannot necessarily be distinguished from human beings thus make humanity seem unstable, negotiated and, perhaps, queer. This connects the series to important political and ethical questions raised by feminist and posthu-

manist scholars. The machines, aliens and cyborgs of the series exemplify Butler's (1990) theory of gender performativity as they underline that what we consider as a human being is a complex, socio-cultural and material construction deeply connected to the understandings of gender intelligibility – and other norms considering, for instance, 'race' and ethnicity. Furthermore, in their negotiations on the bodily imagery and performativity of humanness, the human-like machines, aliens and cyborgs occupy the borderlines between dichotomies such as human/machine and human/animal and open up a range of questions concerning human and non-human embodiment (cf. Haraway 1991, 163, 177).

These boundaries are most notably investigated in the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman*, as the cyborg women of the series must constantly balance on the borderlines between human and animal and human and machine. By doing so, they also negotiate other persistent cultural dichotomies such as nature/culture, male/female and mind/body. Moreover, the two series (re)imagine humanity in the lines of emotionality and rationality. This brings science fiction's emphasis on the sphere of emotions as the criterion for humanity a part of both series. The two series, nevertheless, also highlight freedom and individuality as defining characteristics of humanity. They therefore resonate with two Euro-American traditions considering the understandings of humanity: the Cartesian liberal humanist tradition that considers the rational male as the ideal human subject, and the contesting tradition that understands the capacity for emotion as a human virtue typically found in women. In this sense, the bionic women (re)negotiate cultural discussions and hierarchies related to the definitions of humanity and the role of gender in these definitions. This connects the series to posthumanism in the sense of Badmington (2004, 118, 150-151) who considers it an examination of the inconsistencies of humanist ideals, thereby making these ideals, in a sense, already posthumanist.

The contesting of boundaries such as human/animal and human/machine has important political and ethical implications. As the binary opposition between human and non-human becomes unstable in the studied series, gender and other differences located in the body are brought into question. This can have crucial consequences on the grievability or livability (see Butler 2006; 2010) of both human and non-human lives, connecting the series under analysis to the feminist and posthumanist discussions concerned with meeting 'others' ethically. In the fourth original article I argue, that science fiction works within certain speculative frames that allow the genre's narratives to be used for speculating on the possibilities of different kinds of livable lives. All the series I studied include scenes where the definitions of humanity, based on differentiation from 'the other', are somehow questioned. The question of grievability or livability becomes most drastically negotiated in the violent encounters between humans and non-humans, such as torture, that raise important moral and ethical concerns. This is negotiated especially in the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* and *V* and their affective imagery of war and torture. In these scenes, both humans and non-humans engage in acts that are considered ethically human(e) or inhuman(e), which problematises the distinctions

between 'us' and 'the non-human enemies' and leads to the re-evaluation of which lives are considered grievable and livable or liveable and loveable (cf. Ahmed 2004, 130). In the context of war and violent encounters, the series under analysis thus challenge the viewer to consider what kinds of lives are considered worthy of life – which can also affect the way the viewers encounter 'otherness' in their everyday lives.[49]

I therefore conclude that the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* as well as the theoretical framework used in this study can be drawn together under the idea of livable lives and connected to a broad range of contemporary cultural discussions. For instance, Haraway's (2008) work on which species are considered killable and which ones livable resonates with Butler's (2006; 2010) theories considering grievable, ungrievable or livable lives and Ahmed's (2004) notions of liveable and loveable lives. Thus, in their own ways, the series under analysis and the theories used to analyse them all investigate the norms, conditions and boundaries of livable lives. What kind of lives count as livable in our cultural negotiations and how do boundaries of gender, sexuality, 'race' or species affect the ways lives emerge as livable or unlivable? These questions are currently particularly relevant and timely as they are raised by, for instance, the surge of xenophobia all over the world, (illegal) immigration, global warming and species extinction, environmental catastrophes, wars and new technologically operated warfare, the problems with nuclear power plants, cloning and the patenting of life (such as animals and plants) (cf. Braidotti 2013; Lummaa & Rojola 2014b, 13-29). The fact that the re-imagined series are even more conscious about how they negotiate the definitions of the human and the non-human highlights these cultural concerns. The investigations of the human question in the re-imagined series can also be connected to the so called crisis of humanism (cf. Badmington 2004; Braidotti 2013); as the definitions of humanity have become more and more unstable in natural sciences and philosophical debates, these science fiction narratives tap into the ensuing anxieties.

Against this background it becomes evident that, examined though a critical-reparative analysis, the (re)imaginations of humanity in the original and re-imagined versions of *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* are linked to complex discussions on the definitions of humanity and human–non-human relations as well as their ethical and political implications. I would also like to suggest that the theoretical framework of this study shares something in common with the method that I call 'critical-reparative analysis'. This sort of analysis argues for an analytical openness to surprise that can lead to reparative interpretations without forgetting the normative, oppressive and even painful implications that media texts can have (cf. Roseneil 2011; Sedgwick 1997). For in-

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[49] The depictions of violence in these series may naturally evoke different interpretations. It might, for instance, be argued that their violent scenes glorify war and violence. I have nevertheless focused on the potential that violent narratives have for addressing complex ethical questions that can even speak against violence. The different interpretations, reactions and responses provoked by violent narratives are, in fact, something that I find fascinating in terms of future research.

stance, Haraway (2008, 245, 226, 301) claims that certain openness and curiosity towards the world and the critters inhabiting it is required so that we can learn to create more livable lives with our companion species. Butler (2004, 228) also argues for openness for other ways 'of knowing and living in the world to expand our capacity to imagine the human'.

Analysing these specific science fiction television series with openness to surprise does not, however, mean turning a blind eye to the limitations that popular science fiction television has in terms of addressing the human question. In other words, a critical-reparative analysis of representations must be open to the ambivalence inherent in these representations and to the possibilities as well as the limitations they might contain. I would, thus, like to address some of the possibilities and constraints of (re)imagining the human question in science fiction television – as well as the limitations of my dissertation – in a manner not taken up in the original articles. Science fiction television is, of course, not the only (nor necessarily the best) platform to (re)imagine and (re)configure the norms, conditions and definitions of humanity. As Åsberg (2013, 10) writes, the materialist, posthumanist or ethical turn has inspired many different scholarly fields, not only feminist scholarship, that are concerned with the materiality of the world:

> Transgender thinkers, eco-critiques, crip theorizers and disability scholars have, like feminist body studies or health scholars, tried to incorporate the body as agential materiality, and scholars working within science and technology studies (STS) are reiterating the multiplicity of bodies and other materialities as they are known and performed in, for instance, medical practice.

Animal ethics scholars have also raised questions considering the anthropocentrist, humanist ideals that place humans 'above' non-human animals (Wolfe 2003a; 2003b; 2010; see also Twine 2010, 175-177, 184-186). Furthermore, the questions of materiality, the boundaries of nature and culture and humanist ideals have been (re)imagined and reinvented in the field of natural sciences that have demonstrated us that our bodies are accompanied by bacteria that exceeds the number of our 'human' bodily cells and we therefore have never been 'pure' humans in the humanist sense (Haraway 2008, 3-4, 165). Materiality has also been reconfigured by the human genome project, in-vitro meat and other scientific developments, such as custom-made pharmacology, that are symptomatic of 'the *post-natural orders*' of today (Åsberg 2013, 10; cf. Twine 2010). Scholars have also placed emphasis on the materiality of our encounters with art and the media, questioning the status of representation in cultural studies (e.g. Hongisto & Kurikka 2013; Liljeström & Paasonen 2010, 1-2; Paasonen 2011, 1-29).

In this study, I have analysed how the boundaries of humanity are negotiated in cultural productions. In this sense, my work has remained within the confinements of human culture and focused on cultural imagery instead of the more material aspects of human–non-human relations. To broaden the scope of representation studies to questions usually considered posthumanist, I have nevertheless set representation studies and feminist posthumanism in dialogue

in order to investigate the definitions, or boundaries, of humanity. This sort of analysis makes visible how media representations contribute to our understandings of humanity and human–non-human relations.[50] I thus feel that the questions of meaning-making, representation and 'the limits of the imaginable' cannot be overlooked in studies of television imagery. As Susanna Paasonen (2011, 10) puts it, 'images are of the world and the human activity of communicating, making sense of the world, and imagining how things are or how they might be'. In the increasingly visualised and globalised world, the impact of popular culture's representations has, indeed, become remarkably strong. They participate 'in constructing world-views which shape political, ethical and technoscientific priorities' (Graham 2002, 222-223; cf. Kellner 1995, 1-11) and take part in the formation of the 'subject positions' and 'possible models for identification' available for us (Vint 2007, 20; see also Hall 1997).

The human-like 'others' represented in the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V*, thus, take part in the production of the signifying practices that mark what is to be regarded as human and non-human, and as such provide tell-tale sign-posts for identity formation in our collective social imagination. This is why it is important to study the representations of what counts, or does not count, as human in these series. The re-invention of humanity also firmly connects the representations found in science fiction to science fact. The scientific developments and discoveries made in, for example, the human genome project speak of our human fascination in defining, (re)imagining and (re)working the human body; also a common trope in science fiction. As Constance Penley (1997) points out, science fiction narratives have often influenced the imaginations of scientists, guiding them towards discoveries as well as helping them to sell their ideas to the general public. Recently, as Telotte (2014, 186-187) notes, the Intel Corporation has incorporated science fiction into its 'Tomorrow Project' that seeks to find ways to build a better future for the human race. Quite frankly, the scientists and technicians are asked to read science fiction and become inspired by the genre's ideas (ibid.). The possibility of engineering 'bionic' prostheses reminiscent of the ones received by the original bionic woman is also currently explored[51]. Therefore, although there are other platforms that might have even more significant consequences for (re)imagining the human question than science fiction, there is no denying that the genre has an impact on the (re)imaginations of our human lives and futures – and the non-humans these futures include.

Thinking about the science fiction genre, it is perhaps literature that utilises the genre's speculative frames most efficiently in really *re*-imagining humanity and humanist ideals. In comparison to literature (and also, to some extent,

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50 The interplay between the material and representational aspects of media productions (see Paasonen 2011, 14-15) is something that I find interesting in terms of future research – in fact, in the fourth original article I already discuss the possible emotional consequences of and responses to violent imagery. Examining the materiality of television narratives (such as the affective responses evoked by violent imagery) in more depth has, however, been beyond the scope of this dissertation.

51 See for instance 'The Bionic Eye', Bionicvision Australia.

film), science fiction television faces certain limitations in the way it can investigate the human question. In audio-visual fiction, the 'sense of wonder' of science fiction has to be visually presented to the viewer, which posits certain difficulties. For instance, in thinking about human–non-human relations, it might be expensive to represent non-humans as visually non-anthropomorphic, especially on a weekly basis, and keep them from becoming too human-like and familiar to the viewers (cf. Johnson-Smith 2005, 49). Thus, it may be easier and less expensive to cast human actors to play alien 'others' than to create them using computer generated imagery[52]. Many science fiction television narratives therefore represent the aliens as humanoids. The reduced costs of computer generated imagery may, nevertheless, today enable representing the alien 'others' in more imaginative ways (cf. Johnson-Smith 2005, 3-4, 60-73; Telotte 2014, 38-39).

Regardless of this, science fiction television narratives are often inherently humanist in their content (cf. Booker 2004, 136-138, 166). For instance, Vint (2008, 257) notes that science fiction in general could be criticised of human exceptionalism as it often represent humans as special beings that have something significant to give to the 'other' races that occupy the universe. Gomel (2014, 2) even claims that as science fiction film and television aim to gain large audiences and appeal to the average tastes, their representations of aliens are 'squeezed […] into simple moral judgment'. I would, nevertheless, like to point out that with the invention of cable channels which target niche audiences, the strategy of appealing to mainstream audiences is not necessarily true in case of all science fiction television. Also, the fact that film and television reach broad audiences only makes them, in my opinion, important objects of study. Science fiction television, in particular, has the potential to reach large audiences as these popular, cultural texts are increasingly recycled on different channels and platforms; they get DVD and Blu-ray releases and can be viewed on different portable devices and on the Internet. Thus, the audiences that science fiction television reaches may be broader than those of literature or film. It seems that science fiction television, which is now more popular than ever, is a vital part of popular culture and contributes to our joined cultural (re)imaginations (see also Telotte 2014, 1-20).

I also argue that with their different contexts of war, the series I have analysed create compelling narratives that do not simply squeeze their alien, machine and cyborg 'others' into simple moral judgements. It is, however, true that these series do express certain anthropocentric ideals. They are, indeed, mainly concerned with the *human* question and the definitions and conditions of humanity rather than investigating the conditions of livable *non-human* life. Nevertheless, as I have demonstrated, studied using a critical-reparative analysis, the humanism of the series seems to inherit a sort of 'queerness', an instability that reminds the viewers that the boundaries between humans and non-humans are never stable and fixed but under constant negotiation. I would therefore call this anthropocentrism, or humanism, of the series 'imaginative

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52 See '*Battlestar Galactica*: The series lowdown' (2006).

humanism' that takes part in complex discussions regarding the drawing of the material-social conditions of both human and non-human lives – and even the 'living' conditions of those non-human entities that are not considered as 'alive'. As humanism continues to influence our human societies, we can benefit from these imaginative humanisms that help us imagine further what kinds of (post)humanisms we might need in the future.

Finally, there are some things that I would do differently were I to rewrite this thesis. I would, firstly, choose to write the first original article in English and to publish it in an international journal. Even though I do consider it important to publish in my native language, an international article would have enabled me to contribute to the international, academic discussions considering science fiction television and gendered embodiment; especially as the re-imagined version of *Battlestar Galactica* analysed in the first article attracted an amount of scholarly work around the time my article was published. Secondly, there are some minor changes and corrections that I would now make to some of the articles and one slightly more important revision required by the second original article. I conclude in the article that as both humans and non-humans are represented as capable of humane and inhumane acts, the series in question open up possibilities for contesting human supremacy in human–non-human relations. There is, however, a problem of anthropocentrism inherent in this conclusion as in the series both the humans and their non-human 'others' are judged as either humane or inhumane by human standards. This begs the question, should humans judge non-humans by humanist moral standards and can we, in fact, (re)imagine livable lives for non-humans who demand to be judged by different standards. Were I to write the article again, I would pay attention to this problem of anthropocentrism. Nevertheless, as I was able to take up this problem in the fourth original article, these two articles, with their slightly different conclusions, can be considered to highlight the developments in my analytical thinking during this scholarly journey.

Moreover, in terms of the structure of the thesis, perhaps it would have been more appropriate to devote one article for investigating each of the original-re-imagined-pairings, as now the *Battlestar Galactica* and *V* narratives receive a bit more attention than the original and re-imagined *Bionic Woman*. This does not mean that the *Bionic Woman* series are less significant than the other studied series. The structure is the result of the fact that my decision to write a compilation of articles instead of a monograph was made only after the publication of the second original article. Devoting an article on each pairing might also have provided a more balanced compilation of articles in terms of the themes discussed in each of them. That said, I would have liked to devote one article on the possibilities and limitations of science fiction television in representing and (re)imagining human, non-human or posthuman embodiments. Interesting questions would have been, for instance: How do the series use narrative continuity to (re)imagine human, non-human and posthuman characters? How did the original and re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica*, *Bionic Woman* and *V* utilise the means of science fiction television, such as special effects, available to

them during the time of their production, to create their sense of wonder and to investigate the human question? Even though I have discussed some of those possibilities and limitations, a more comprehensive study will have to wait. Perhaps, it is a task for another scholar and another dissertation.

YHTEENVETO

Tarkastelen väitöskirjatutkimuksessani ihmisyyden rajoja, normeja ja määrittelyjä tieteisfiktio-lajityyppiin kuuluvien pohjoisamerikkalaisten televisiosarjojen *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* (Battlestar Galactica), *Bionic Woman* ja *V* alkuperäisissä ja uudelleen tuotetuissa, tai *uudelleen kuvitelluissa* (re-imagined), versioissa. Sarjojen niin kutsutut alkuperäisversiot tuotettiin 1970–80-luvulla, kun taas uusia sarjoja esitettiin 2000–2010-luvulla. Tutkin, miten ja millaisia ihmisyyden representaatioita sarjoissa tuotetaan, millaisia rajoja, normeja ja ihanteita ihmisyydelle asetetaan sekä millaisia yhteyksiä voidaan löytää näiden ihmisyyden representaatioiden, feinististen ja posthumanististen keskustelujen sekä sarjojen kulttuuristen tuotantokontekstien välillä. Tarkastelemiini konteksteihin kuuluvat tieteisfiktio-lajityyppi, televisio mediana, yhteiskunnalliset tapahtumat, kuten kylmä sota ja terrorismin vastainen sota, sekä tietyt ihmisyyttä ja ei-inhimillisyyttä koskevat kulttuuriset keskustelut.

Tieteisfiktio ei ole rajoittunut kuvailemaan maailmaa mimeettisesti sellaisena kuin se meille näyttäytyy, minkä takia lajityypin piirissä on mahdollista luoda uudenlaisia kuvitelmia esimerkiksi erilaisista kulttuureista ja maailmoista – ja vaikkapa ihmisyydestä. Tutkimukseni peruspremissi onkin, että populaarilla fiktiolla, kuten tieteisfiktiolla, on tärkeä rooli kulttuurisissa keskusteluissa esimerkiksi siitä, minkä miellämme inhimilliseksi tai ei-inhimilliseksi. Kaikissa tutkimissani sarjoissa nähdään erilaisia ei-inhimillisiä olentoja, kuten koneihmisiä, avaruusolentoja tai *kyborgeja* (eli teknologian ja biologisen materian risteymiä). Tämän takia keskityn siihen, miten sarjoissa rakennetaan ja kuvitellaan ihmisyyttä suhteessa ei-ihmillisiin olentoihin. Tutkimuskysymyksiä ovat: miten inhimillisyyttä ja ei-inhimillisyyttä representoidaan sarjojen kontekstissa? Miten nämä representaatiot ottavat osaa kulttuurisiin, eettisiin ja poliittisiin keskusteluihin oikeanlaisesta ihmisyydestä? Millaisia muutoksia, eroja ja yhtäläisyyksiä ihmisyyttä koskevissa normeissa ja ihanteissa on nähtävissä vanhojen ja uusien sarjojen välillä?

Tutkimukseni koostuu neljästä itsenäisestä vertaisarvioidusta tieteellisestä artikkelista sekä johdannosta ja johtopäätöksistä. Johdanto- ja johtopäätösosan tarkoituksena on tukea ja syventää artikkeleissa käytyä keskustelua. Se toimii johdatuksena tutkimukseni aihepiiriin, aiempaan tutkimukseen, teoreettisiin ja metodologisiin lähtökohtiin sekä tutkimieni sarjojen kulttuurisiin ja industriaalisiin konteksteihin. Osan lopuksi kokoan yhteen tutkimukseni keskeisiä johtopäätöksiä sekä pohdiskelen tutkimusprosessissa esiin nousseita ongelmia ja jatkotutkimuksen mahdollisuuksia. Väitöskirjani teoreettinen perusta on yhdistelmä kulttuurintutkimusta, mediatutkimusta sekä feinististä ja posthumanistista teoriaa, mikä mahdollistaa tutkiemieni sarjojen tarkastelun monitieteellisestä näkökulmasta. Metodologisesti tutkimukseni kiinnittyy temaattiseen ja kontekstuaaliseen analyysiin, joka pyrkii ottamaan huomioon representaatioiden moninaiset ja ristiriitaiset merkitykset, mahdollisuudet, rajoitukset ja kontekstit. Kutsun metodiani Eve Kosofsky Sedgwickiä ja Sasha Roseneilia mukaillen "kriittis-korjaavaksi analyysiksi" (critical-reparative analysis). Tällä tarkoi-

tan sitä, että analyysini pyrkii tunnistamaan ne kohdat tutkimissani sarjoissa, joissa ihmisyyden ja ei-inhimillisyyden merkit, merkitykset ja normit hämärtyvät tai tulevat määritellyiksi "oudolla" tai "pervolla" (queer) tavalla. Tästä huolimatta analyysin tarkoitus ei ole unohtaa kriittistä otetta, joka nostaa esiin kohdat, joissa ihmisyyttä toistetaan totuttujen normien mukaisesti.

Väitöskirjaani sisältyvät tieteelliset artikkelit lähestyvät ihmisyyden määrittelyjä hieman eri käsittein, hieman eri näkökulmista. Keskeisiä tutkimuskäsitteitä ovat performatiivisuus, ihmisestä (ja sukupuolesta tai "rodusta") käyminen, kyborgi, feministinen posthumanismi, "suremisen arvoinen elämä" (grievable/ungrievable life) ja "elämisen arvoinen elämä" (livable life). Ensimmäinen artikkeli tarkastelee ihmisyyden performatiivisuutta sekä uudessa että vanhassa *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* -sarjassa Judith Butlerin performatiivisuuskäsitteen avulla. Tutkin, millaisena sukupuolitettu ihmisyys näyttäytyy sarjoissa, millaisiin kulttuurisiin konteksteihin se voidaan liittää sekä miten sukupuolesta käyminen vaikuttaa ihmisyyteen ja ihmisestä käymiseen sarjojen konteksteissa. Esitän, että verrattuna vanhempaan versioon uusi *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* rikkoo jakoa feminiinisiin naisiin ja maskuliinisiin miehiin, rakentaen tällä tavoin joustavampia sukupuolitetun ihmisyyden esityksiä. Yksi huomattava muutos sarjojen välillä on se, miten uudessa versiossa naisia nähdään huomattavasti toiminnallisemmissa ja keskeisimmissä rooleissa kuin vanhassa sarjassa. Yhdistän tämän esimerkiksi naissankareiden representaatioiden kasvavaan määrään mediassa 1990–2000-luvulla sekä yhteiskunnallisiin muutoksiin naisten asemassa. Uudessa sarjassa ihmisyyden merkkejä ja merkityksiä myös rakennetaan ja puretaan vanhaa sarjaa enemmän suhteessa koneisiin, *cyloneihin*. Siinä missä vanhan sarjan koneet olivat lähinnä laatikkomaisia robotteja, ovat uuden sarjan cylonit ihmisen kaltaisia olentoja, jotka voivat käydä ihmisestä. Huolimatta siitä, että uusi sarja rakentaa vanhaa versiota joustavampia sukupuolen representaatioita esittämällä esimerkiksi naisia maskuliinisissa ja miehiä feminiinisissä rooleissa, koneihmisten ihmisestä käyminen on tiukasti kiinni heidän sukupuolestaan. Heteroseksuaalisuudesta, etenkin heteroseksuaalisesta lisääntymisestä, tulee sarjassa tärkeä ihmisyyden performanssi, johon sekä koneiden että ihmisten on otettava osaa. Lisääntyminen koneen kanssa kuitenkin kyseenalaistaa heteroseksuaalisuuden ja lisääntymisen "biologisen luonnollisuuden", mikä tekee siitä potentiaalisesti pervon (queer) performanssin. Onhan koneen sukupuoli aina kirjaimellisesti rakennettu.

Toisessa artikkelissa käsittelen ihmisestä käymistä sekä ihmisten ja ei-inhimillisten "toisten" välistä kanssakäymistä tiettyjen inhimillisten ja "ei-inhimillisten" tekojen kautta. Tarkastelun kohteena ovat *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* ja *V:n* uudet ja vanhat versiot. Artikkelin keskiöön nousevat sota, etnisyys ja "toiseuden" kohtaamisen etiikka. Väitän, että ihmisestä käyminen nojaa sarjoissa yhtäältä ihmisen kaltaisen kehon, toisaalta tiettyjen tekojen varaan. Artikkelin teoreettinen kehys rakentuu Butlerin ja Sara Ahmedin sotaa ja "toisten" kohtaamista käsittelevien tekstien sekä Donna Harawayn kyborgiteorian pohjalle. Tarkastelen, millaiset kehot näyttäytyvät sarjoissa inhimillisinä ja ei-inhimillisinä sekä millaiset teot näyttäytyvät sekä eettisesti "inhimillisinä" että

ihmisille tyypillisinä tai sallittuina. Artikkelini osoittaa, että ihmisestä käyvät ei-inhimilliset olennot ovat sarjoissa yleensä valkoihoisia ja heteroseksuaalisia. Tämä nostaa esiin ihmisyyden sisäisiä valta-asemia. Samalla ihmisestä käyvät "toiset" kuitenkin tuovat esiin näiden valta-asemien keinotekoisuuden ja rakentuneisuuden. Osoitan myös, että sarjojen ihmisestä käyvät ei-inhimilliset olennot rikkovat jakoja ihmiseen ja koneeseen tai ihmiseen ja eläimeen ja näyttäytyvät näin Harawayn kyborgin kaltaisina hybridihahmoina. Tutkin myös, millaiset olennot rakentuvat sarjoissa suremisen arvoisiksi eli olennoiksi, joita kohtaan suoritettu väkivalta ei ole eettisesti tai moraalisesti hyväksyttävää. Esitän, että sarjoissa rakennetaan ihmisyyttä sekä rakastavien että kivuliaiden kohtaamisten kautta, ja että näissä kohtaamisissa ihmisyyden merkit ja merkitykset liukuvat ihmisten ja ei-inhimillisten "toisten" välillä, mikä horjuttaa ihmisyyden ontologista perustaa. Tutkin niin ikään sarjojen tapaa rakentaa, mutta myös purkaa, ihmisten ja "toisten" välisiä raja-aitoja suhteessa kylmään sotaan ja terrorismin vastaiseen sotaan. Siinä missä vanhat sarjat esittävät koneihmiset tai avaruusolennot ulkoapäin tulevana uhkana kylmän sodan tunnelmia mukaillen, ovat uusien sarjojen ei-inhimilliset "toiset" jo soluttautuneet ihmisten joukkoon, minkä luo allegorian ajankohtaisiin pelkoihin terroristien soluttautumisesta.

Kolmas artikkeli lähestyy uutta ja vanhaa *Bionic Woman* -sarjaa posthumanistisesta näkökulmasta, Harawayn kyborgista inspiroituneena. Väitän, että posthumanistisen teoriakehyksen kautta *Bionic Woman* -sarjoissa käytävä neuvottelu sukupuolen ja ihmisyyden merkityksistä ja määritelmistä sekä niiden kulttuurisista yhteyksistä tulee näkyväksi. Näin analyysini nostaa esille sen, miten sekä sukupuoli että ihmisyys ovat jatkuvan neuvottelun kohteina; ei ainoastaan *Bionic Woman* -sarjoissa, vaan myös laajemmin länsimaisissa euroamerikkaisissa keskusteluissa. Sekä uudessa että vanhassa versiossa kyborginaisten ihmisyys asetetaan kyseenalaiseksi, kun heihin liitetään teknologisia osia, minkä takia heidän ihmisyyttään ja naiseuttaan korostetaan sarjoissa. Heteroseksuaalisuuden viehättävyyden, hoivaavuuden ja "feminiinisen emotionaalisuuden" kautta kyborginaiset tulevat tunnistetuiksi naisiksi mutta myös ihmisiksi. Sukupuolen ja ihmisyyden esittämisessä on kuitenkin eroja sarjojen välillä. Toisin kuin vanhassa versiossa, uudessa sarjassa kyborginaiselle sallitaan esimerkiksi aggressiivisuutta, mikä kytkee sen mediassa 1990–2000-luvulla nähtyjen aggressiivisten naissankarien jatkumoon. Emotionaalisuuden ja ihmisyyden kytkös liittää molemmat versiot myös tieteisfiktion perinteeseen, jossa tunteet nousevat tärkeäksi ihmisyyden merkitsijäksi. Tunteiden lisäksi *Bionic Woman* -sarjat korostavat rationaalisuutta ihmisyyden määrittäjänä. Osoitan, että painottamalla yhtäältä tunteiden mutta toisaalta myös järjen merkitystä ihmisyyden määrittelyissä, sarjat ottavat osaa kahteen ihmisyyttä koskevaan, euroamerikkalaiseen keskusteluun: rationaalisuutta korostavaan liberaaliin humanismiin sekä sitä haastavaan perinteeseen, joka korostaa emootioiden tärkeyttä ihmisyyden merkkinä. Todennan, että *Bionic Woman* -sarjojen naiset käyvät jatkuvaa neuvottelua vastaparien, kuten maskuliininen/feminiininen, mies/nainen, ihminen/kone ja ihminen/eläin, välillä, mikä tekee sarjojen kybroginaisista hybridejä hahmoja. Sarjojen kyborgihahmot nostavat myös esiin teknologiaa koh-

taan suunnattuja kulttuurisia toiveita ja pelkoja. Siinä missä vanhan sarjan kyborgit kytkeytyvät muun muassa 1970-luvun kylmän sodan kyborgikokeiluihin, luo uusi sarja mielleyhtymiä terrorismin vastaisen sodan jälkeiseen teknologiseen kontrolliin.

Neljännessä artikkelissa tarkastelen uutta ja vanhaa *V*-sarjaa posthumanistisesta näkökulmasta. Artikkeli jatkaa toisen tutkimusartikkelini teemoja, tutkien sitä, miten ihmisten ja ei-inhimillisten "toisten" väliset suhteet rakentuvat väkivaltaisissa kohtaamisissa ja miten nämä suhteet voidaan kytkeä monimuotoisiin kulttuurisiin ilmiöihin ja keskusteluihin. Sovellan Butlerin ajatusta "sodan kehyksistä" posthumanistiseen teoriakehykseen ja kysyn, miten ihmisyys ja ei-inhimillisyys rakentuvat tiettyjen kehysten sisällä. Mitkä ovat tieteisfiktion kehykset, entä sarjojen kulttuuriset kehykset? Ketkä ovat suremisen ja elämisen arvoisia olentoja näiden kehysten sisällä? Artikkelissa havainnollistan, miten *V*-sarjat rakentavat sodan kehyksiä, joissa ei-inhimilliset olennot (avaruusolennot) rakentuvat vaarallisiksi "toisiksi", joita kohtaan suoritettu väkivalta on oikeutettua. Sarjat kuitenkin myös purkavat näitä kehyksiä ja nostavat esiin kysymyksen, ovatko "toiset" sittenkin suremisen (ja elämän) arvoisia. Toisin sanoen sarjoissa nähdään väkivaltaisia kohtauksia, joissa jako ihmisiin ja avaruusolentoihin hämärtyy, mikä tekee ihmisyyden määrittelystä vasten "toisia" ongelmallista. Esitän, että tieteisfiktio toimii sarjoissa *spekulatiivisena kehyksenä*, joka mahdollistaa ihmisten ja ei-inhimillisten "toisten" kohtaamisen käsittelyn ja vaikuttavien kulttuuristen allegorioiden luomisen. Vanha sarja luo selkeitä yhteyksiä avaruusolentojen ja natsismin välille, ja sen totalitarianismia vastustava narratiivi luo myös mielleyhtymiä kylmään sotaan. Uudessa sarjassa avaruusolennot sen sijaan rinnastetaan selkeästi terroristeihin. Molemmat sarjat kuitenkin purkavat näitä rinnastuksia, kun myös ihmiset suorittavat esimerkiksi natsismiin tai terrorismiin yhdistettäviä tekoja. Väitän, että kyseenalaistaessaan inhimillisen ja ei-inhimillisen välisiä raja-aitoja, joihin sodan oikeuttaminen näyttää perustuvan, *V*-sarjat käyvät keskustelua siitä, miten väkivaltaa oikeutetaan "toiseuttamalla" viholliset ja herättävät kysymyksiä ihmisten ja ei-inhimillisten olentojen suhteista sekä niihin liittyvistä eettisistä ongelmista.

Taisteluplaneetta Galactican, Bionic Womanin ja *V:n* uusia versioita ei ole juurikaan tutkittu suhteessa niiden vanhoihin versioihin, joten tutkimukseni tuottaa uutta tietoa sarjoista sekä "ihmisyyden kuvittelun" mahdollisuuksista erilaisissa tuotantokonteksteista. Tutkimukseni tekee näkyväksi, miten kulttuuriset ilmiöt, lajityyppi sekä industriaaliset muutokset vaikuttavat sarjojen tuotantoon: siihen, millaisia kuvitelmia ihmisyydestä luodaan ja miten niitä voidaan tulkita ja ymmärtää. Sarjojen analyysi feministisen ja posthumanistisen teorian kautta kytkee ne niin ikään monimuotoisiin kulttuurisiin, eettisiin ja poliittisiin keskusteluihin ihmisyydestä sekä sitä määrittävistä tekijöistä, kuten sukupuolesta ja etnisyydestä sekä inhimillisen ja ei-inhimillisen välisistä suhteista. Tämä tekee tutkimistani sarjoista, kuten myös tutkimuksestani, ajankohtaisen. Tutkimukseni osoittaa, että tänä päivänä, jolloin vihapuhe, rasismi, sodat ja erinäiset ympäristöongelmat ovat jatkuvan keskustelun aiheina, (tieteis)fiktio voi auttaa meitä ymmärtämään suhteitamme niihin "toisiin", joita kohtaamme jokapäiväi-

sessä elämässämme – kuvittelemaan, miten nämä suhteet voisivat kenties rakentua aivan toisin.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES

I

SUKUPUOLIJOUSTOA JA IHMISEN KALTAISIA KONEITA – SUKUPUOLEN JA IHMISYYDEN KYTKÖKSIÄ *TAISTELUPLANEETTA GALACTICA* -TELEVISIOSARJOISSA

by

Aino-Kaisa Koistinen, 2011

In *Lähikuva* 24 (2), 24–37.

Aino-Kaisa Koistinen

SUKUPUOLIJOUSTOA JA IHMISEN KALTAISIA KONEITA: Sukupuolen ja ihmisyyden kytköksiä *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* -televisiosarjoissa

Scifi-sarja Taisteluplaneetta Galactica (Battlestar Galactica, USA 1978–1979) ja sen spin-off Galactica 1980 (USA 1980) saivat 2000-luvulla seuraajansa. Uusi Taisteluplaneetta Galactica (USA/UK 2003–2009) eroaa edeltäjistään muun muassa tavassaan esittää sukupuolia ja ihmisten ja koneiden välisiä suhteita. Artikkelissa tarkastellaan sukupuolen ja ihmisyyden kytköksiä uudessa sarjassa suhteessa 1970- ja 1980-lukujen versioihin sekä sarjojen kulttuurisiin taustoihin.

Alkuperäinen *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica*[1] alkaa, kun cyloneiksi kutsutut koneet hyökkäävät ihmisten asuttamaan kahteentoista siirtokuntaan ja eloonjääneet pakenevat avaruuteen Galactica-aluksen[2] johtamina. Paenneiden ihmisten tavoitteena on löytää uusi koti myyttiseltä kolmanneltatoista siirtokunnalta, Maa-planeetalta, joka on historiankirjojen mukaan ihmisten alkukoti. Tarina seuraa ihmisten laivueen pakoa ja taistelua cylonien kanssa. 1980-luvulla sarjaa seurasi lyhyeksi jäänyt spin-off *Galactica 1980*, joka sijoittuu aikaan, jolloin Maa on löydetty. Sarja keskittyy lähinnä Maan ihmisten ja ”galacticalaisten” välisiin yhteentörmäyksiin. Uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* tarina alkaa, kun toinen koneiden ja ihmisten välinen sota puhkeaa. Ensimmäinen sota syttyi aikoinaan, kun ihmisten orjikseen kehittämät robotit kääntyivät luojiaan vastaan. 40 vuoden rauhan jälkeen cylonit palaavat ihmisten asuttamaan kahteentoista siirtokuntaan tarkoituksenaan tuhota ihmisrotu lopullisesti.

Uusi sarja ei ole varsinaisesti jatkoa edeltäjilleen, vaikka se sisältää-

[1] Viittaan vuosien 1978–79 sarjaan nimellä ”alkuperäinen *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica*” ja vuoden 1980 sarjaan nimellä ”*Galactica 1980*”. Sarjat mielletään usein yhdeksi sarjaksi, mutta erotan ne toisistaan, koska ne eroavat muun muassa tavassaan esittää sukupuolia. Vuosien 2003–2009 sarjaan viittaan nimellä ”uusi *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica*”.

[2] Sarjojen suomenkieliset nimet ovat harhaanjohtavia, sillä Galactica on alus eikä planeetta.

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kin viittauksia niihin. Myös uudessa sarjassa cylonien hyökkäyksestä selvinneet ihmiset pakenevat Galactican – joka on tällä kertaa vanha museoalus – johtamina. Tavoitteena pelastuneilla on jälleen myyttisen kolmannentoista siirtokunnan, Maan, löytäminen. Cylonit ovat kuitenkin muuttuneet vanhojen sarjojen robottimaisista koneista ihmisten kaltaisiksi. Koneet näyttävät, tuntuvat ja kuulostavat ihmisiltä – osa niistä on jopa ohjelmoitu luulemaan itseään ihmisiksi. Sukupuoli vaikuttaa koneiden mahdollisuuksiin jäljitellä ihmisyyden merkityksiä eli käydä ihmisestä. Ihmisestä käyvät ne, jotka kykenevät imitoimaan, jäljittelemään ja toistamaan ihmisyyden merkkejä uskottavasti, ja tämä uskottavuus rakentuu usein sukupuolen ympärille. Artikkelissani tarkastelen sitä, miten sukupuolta ja ihmisyyttä esitetään ja jäljitellään eli miten ja millaisin toistoin niitä tehdään. Kysyn, millaiselle ihmisyydelle sarjoissa tuotetaan tilaa sekä cylonien että ihmishahmojen kautta.

Uusi *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* kytkeytyy moniin ajankohtaisiin yhteiskunnan ja median ilmiöihin. Sarjassa käsitellään esimerkiksi vaalipetoksia, sotatilalakeja, kidutusta, raiskauksia, prostituutiota, aborttia ja rasismia. Sitä on myös pidetty Yhdysvaltojen terrorisminvastaisen sodan ja niin sanotun ”post 9/11 -maailman” allegoriana (ks. Johnson-Lewis 2008; Mulligan 2008; Ott 2008; Stoy 2010, 7–8). Viime vuosina useat suuren budjetin scifi-sarjat, kuten esimerkiksi *Heroes* (USA 2006–2010) ja *Lost* (USA 2004–2010), ovat olleet suosittuja sekä Yhdysvalloissa että Euroopassa. Näille sarjoille on tyypillistä narratiivinen ristiriitaisuus ja monimuotoisuus, mikä näkyy niin ikään selkeästi uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa*. (Tryon 2008, mm. 305–308; Geraghty 2009, 118–120.) Jennifer Stoyn (2010, 31) mukaan kriitikkojen suosiossa ollut *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* on lieventänyt ennakkoluuloja genrefiktiota kohtaan. Uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* jälkeen, ehkä juuri sen saaman suosiollisen kritiikin takia, muun muassa sarjoista *Bionic Woman* (USA 1976–1978, 2007) ja *V* (USA 1983–1985, 2009–2011) on tuotettu uudet versiot. Lincoln Geraghtyn (2009, 107–113) mukaan kaksoistornien iskujen jälkeen science fiction -genre on usein ammentanut ideoita aiemmista tuotannoista. Voidaankin puhua “remake-ilmiöstä” (Stoy 2010, 10–11). Uutta *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticaa* on jonkin verran tutkittu suhteessa aikaisempiin sarjoihin (ks. esim. Berger 2008; Kungl 2008; Mulligan 2008; Lucas 2009, 145–6). Artikkelissani tarkastelen edellä mainittuja tutkimuksia laajemmin uutta *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticaa* suhteessa alkuperäisen sarjaan ja *Galactica 1980:een* keskittyen sukupuolen representaatioihin sekä sukupuoleen ihmisyyden osatekijänä, tuottajana ja merkitsijänä. Kytken analyysini scifi-genreen sekä sarjojen kulttuurisiin taustoihin, kuten niiden syntyaikojen sukupuolipoliittisiin ilmapiireihin.

Taistelevat naiset ja tunteelliset miehet sukupuolta merkitsemässä

Tunnistamme perinteisesti naiset feminiinisten ja miehet maskuliinisten ulkoisten merkkien avulla. Merkkien sekoittuminen sukupuolissa häivyttää sukupuolten oletettuja eroja. Judith Butlerin (1990) mukaan sukupuoli on performatiivista, eli se rakentuu toistuvien eleiden, liikkeiden ja tyylien kautta. Butlerille sukupuolen performatiivisuus

herättää kysymyksiä vallasta – siitä, mitä pidetään kulttuurisesti hyväksyttynä ”oikeana sukupuolena” ja millainen tai millä tavalla tuotettu sukupuoli kelpuutetaan normaaliksi, luonnolliseksi ja inhimilliseksi. Oletukset oikeanlaisesta sukupuolesta siis kehystävät koko ihmisyyttä. Butlerin mukaan toimimme sukupuolitettuina tiettyjen kulttuuristen pakkojen sanelemana ja toistamme, ilman itsenäisen valinnan mahdollisuutta, ”oikeanlaisiin” sukupuoliin liitettyjä eleitä, liikkeitä ja tyylejä. Näiden ”oikeanlaisten” sukupuolten toistaminen on kuitenkin aina vain toistamista, toisin sanoen jäljittelyä, jolloin sukupuolen toistamiseen liittyy yhtäältä vaaroja toistaa malleja ja ihanteita ”väärin” ja toisaalta myös toisin toistamisen mahdollisuuksia. (Butler 1990, esim. 22–24, 111, 128–141; Karkulehto 2007, 63–69.) Sukupuolen toisin toistamista voi kutsua myös sukupuolijoustoksi (Rossi 2003, 56–57). Sukupuolijouston avulla voidaan purkaa sukupuolten kahtiajakoon ja heteronormatiivisuuteen nojaavaa ihmiskuvaa, jolloin myös oletukset oikeanlaisesta ihmisyydestä muuttuvat joustavammiksi.

Uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* huomio kiinnittyy sarjassa esitettyyn sukupuolineutraaliuteen: armeijan miehet ja naiset pukeutuvat työajallaan identtisesti, toimivat samankaltaisissa tehtävissä, nukkuvat samoissa tiloissa ja käyttävät unisex-wc-tiloja. Laivueen paras taistelulentäjä ja presidentti ovat naisia. Vaikuttaa siis siltä, ettei niin sanottuja oikeanlaisia sukupuolia rakenneta toisilleen vastakkaisin merkein ja merkityksin eikä oikeanlainen ihmisyys, ainakaan sarjan ihmishahmojen representaatioissa, näytä palautuvan sukupuolten kahtiajakoon. Yksi uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* selkeimmistä eroista suhteessa alkuperäiseen sarjaan ja *Galactican 1980:een* on juuri toiminnallisten naisten määrä. Uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* huomiota on herättänyt erityisesti miessankari Starbuckin muuttuminen naiseksi, naismaskuliiniseksi[3] tulkittavissa olevaksi Kara ”Starbuck” Thraceksi (Katee Sackhoff). Vaikka ”vahvoja” naisia on nähty scifi-sarjoissa ennenkin, Carla Kungl huomauttaa, että Starbuckin hahmossa on uutta juuri tietyn miesroolin esittäminen. Naispuolinen Starbuck herätti kiivasta keskustelua vanhan sarjan fanien piirissä, ja myös alkuperäistä Starbuckia näytellyt Dirk Benedict kritisoi vahvasti naisen valintaa rooliin.[4] (Kungl 2008, 198–202.) Butleria mukaillen Starbuckin muuttumista naiseksi voidaan pitää vanhan miessankarihahmon representaation, sekä sitä kautta totuttujen sankaruuteen ja maskuliinisuuteen liittyvien konventioiden, toisin toistamisena.[5]

1990–2000-lukujen taitteessa seksikkäät ja toiminnalliset naiset ovat vallanneet populaarikulttuurin kuvastot (Inness 1999; Inness 2004; Paasonen 2004; Pakkanen 2004; Ylipulli 2008). Tämän voi tulkita kertovan muutoksesta sukupuolinormatiivisuuden viitekehyksen sisällä (Paasonen 2004, 123).[6] Esimerkiksi kauneuskäsitykset ovat 1980-luvulta lähtien alkaneet muuttua, ja pehmeän naisvartalon ihanteen on korvannut kiinteä, treenattu vartalo (Schulze 1986, 37–38; Tasker 1993, 141; Inness 2004, 3–4). Toiminnallisten naisten representaatioita on kuitenkin kritisoitu konventionaalisten kauneuskäsitysten vahvistamisesta ja erotisoinnista (ks. Inness 1999, 179; Helford 2000b, 293–296). Uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* naishahmoista suurin osa ei ole perinteisellä tavalla erotisoituja. Sotilaina toimivilla naisilla ei nähdä esimerkiksi huomattavaa ehostusta. Scifi-genren piirissä sarjan maskuliinisille

[3] *Naismaskuliinisuudella* tarkoitan, ettei maskuliinisuus aina palaudu miessukupuoleen. Maskuliinisina pidettyjä merkkejä voi yhtä lailla näkyä naisruumiissa. (Halberstam 1998; Rossi 2003, 58–62.)

[4] Dirk Benedict Central: http://www.dirkbenedictcentral.com/home/articles-readarticle.php?nid=5 (linkki tarkistettu 7.6.2011).

[5] Uutta Starbuckia ovat tutkineet mm. Conly 2008; Kirkland 2008; Kungl 2008; Jones 2010; Sharp 2010.

[6] Vaikka 1990–2000-luvuilla toimintasankarittarien määrä on kasvanut, eivät toiminnallisten naisten representaatiot mediassa ole vain viime vuosien ilmiö; esimerkiksi melodraama-, kauhu-, exploitaatio- ja film noir -elokuvissa on nähty muun muassa aggressiivisia tai juonittelevia naisia jo aikaisemmin (Inness 1999; Inness 2004, 2–3; Paasonen 2004, 121–122; Pakkanen 2004, 233).

naisille ovat auranneet tietä jo muun muassa 1980- ja 1990-lukujen *Alien*- ja *Terminator*-elokuvat[7] (ks. Helford 2000a, 4) sekä 1990–2000-luvun scifi-sarjat, kuten *Star Trek: Voyager* (USA 1995–2001), *Babylon 5* (USA 1993–1998), *Space: Above and Beyond* (USA 1995–1996), *Farscape* (Australia/USA 1999–2003) ja *Firefly* (USA 2002–2003). Scifi genrenä sisältääkin erityispiirteitä, kuten sotien ja katastrofien kuvaaminen, jotka mahdollistavat esimerkiksi toiminnallisten naisten representaatiot, sillä heidät on helppo sijoittaa katsojille valmiiksi tuttuihin toiminnallisiin juonenkäänteisiin (ks. Ylipulli 2008, 125–126). Kuvaavasti uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* presidentti Laura Roslin (Mary McDonnell) nousee asemaansa hallituksen muiden jäsenten kuoltua sodassa.[8] Myös naisten kasvavan osallisuuden nyky-yhteiskuntien armeijoissa ja sodissa on tulkittu vaikuttaneen sarjan naissotilaiden määrään (Lucas 2009, 146; vrt. Mulligan 2008, 57–58). Alkuperäisen *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* naissotilaat on koodattu mieslentäjiä feminiinisemmiksi esimerkiksi hiuksilla, ehostuksella ja pukeutumisella. Sukupuoli vaikuttaa myös miesten ja naisten tehtäviin. Naisia ei kouluteta sarjassa taistelulentäjiksi, vaan he ajautuvat taisteluihin mieslentäjien puutteen vuoksi. Poikkeuksena tästä on kapteeni Sheba (Anne Lockhart), jonka asema voi selittyä sillä, että hän työskentelee isänsä, legendaarisen komentaja Cainin (Lloyd Bridges) alaisena.[9] Barbara Lynn Lucas on yhdistänyt Sheban hahmon 1970-luvun töissä käyviin naisiin (Lucas 2009, 145). 1960- ja 1970-luvuilla naisten tila yhdysvaltalaisessa kulttuurissa alkoi laajentua kodin ulkopuolelle, mikä näkyi myös televisiosarjoissa (Helford 2000a, 2–3). Myös Apollon (Richard Hatch) sisarta, komentaja Adaman (Lorne Greene) tytärtä Athenaa (Maren Johnson) kutsutaan soturiksi, vaikka hänet nähdään useimmiten vain komentosillalla. Apollo myös vastustaa vaimonsa

Alkuperäinen Starbuck (Dirk Benedict) yläkuvassa.

Uusi Starbuck (Katee Sackhoff) alakuvassa.

[7] Mm. *Alien – kahdeksan matkustaja* (*Alien*, Ridley Scott USA/UK 1979), Aliens – paluu (*Aliens*, James Cameron, USA/UK 1986) ja *Terminator 2 – tuomion päivä* (*Terminator 2: Judgement Day*, James Cameron, USA 1991).

[8] Roslinin nousua presidentiksi ilman demokraattisia vaaleja on tulkittu viittaukseksi George Bushin vuoden 2000 presidentinvaalivoittoon (ks. esim. Ott 2008, 22).

[9] Taskerin (1993, 20) mukaan fiktion toimintasankarittaret usein seuraavat isänsä jalanjäljillä. Isän menetys, minkä Sheba kokee, on tyypillistä. Sheba ei tosin Taskerin mainitsemien naisten tavoin havittele isänsä roolia, vaan työskentelee jo pilottina tämän kuollessa.

Serinan (Jane Seymour) sotilasuraa. *Galactica 1980:stä* Athena ja Sheba on yhdessä monen muun hahmon kanssa poistettu, joten naisia näkyy entistä vähemmän. Sarjan keskeisin naishahmo, reportteri Jamie Hamilton (Robyn Douglass) toimii suuren osan ajasta lähinnä galacticalaisten lasten kaitsijana. Elyce Rae Helfordin (2000a, 4) mukaan 1980-luvun Yhdysvallat ei juuri tuottanut scifi-sarjoja, jotka sisältäisivät merkittäviä, toiminnallisia naishahmoja – lukuun ottamatta *Star Trek: The Next Generationia* (USA 1987–1994), jossa nähtiin muun muassa nainen turvallisuuspäällikkönä.

Helford (2000a, 4) ei pidä myöskään 1970- ja 1980-luvun taitteeseen sijoittuvan alkuperäisen *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* naishahmoja merkittävinä. On totta, etteivät sarjan naishahmot ole kovin merkittäviä, kun ottaa huomioon, että samoihin aikoihin esimerkiksi scifi-/fantasia-tv-sarjat *The Bionic Woman* (USA 1976–1978) ja *Wonder Woman* (USA 1975–1979) keskittyivät nimenomaan naisten seikkailuihin (Helford 2000a, 4). Nostaisin alkuperäisestä *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticasta* kuitenkin esiin älykkään ja itsenäisen prostituoidun, Cassiopeian (Laurette Spang), jonka hahmon liitän naisten kasvaviin työmahdollisuuksiin ja itsenäisyyteen 1960- ja 1970-luvulla. Itsenäisen Cassiopeian hahmo on mielenkiintoinen myös siksi, että uudessakin *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* nähdään naisprostituoituja. Carl Silvion ja Elizabeth Johnstonin mukaan sukupuolten näennäinen tasa-arvo nojaa uudessa sarjassa siihen, että miehille on tarjolla laillisesti toimivia prostituoituja, jotka toimittavat fantasiaobjektin virkaa muiden naisten puolesta. Prostituoitujen seksuaalisuus on vain hyväksikäytettyä kauppatavaraa. (Silvio & Johnston 2008, 49.) Prostituution kautta sarjoissa tuotetaan sukupuolta eri tavoilla. Jos naisen seksuaalisuus on kauppatavaraa, alkuperäisen sarjan Cassiopeia kauppaa sitä omilla ehdoillaan. Uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* prostituoidut puolestaan elävät laitonta kauppaa hallitsevien miesten armoilla. Sarjan tuottaja Roger D. Moore on maininnut, että uuden sarjan prostituoitujen on tarkoitus muistuttaa prostituutiosta alkuperäisessä sarjassa.[10] Tämä herättää kysymyksen, miksi juuri prostituutiosta halutaan muistuttaa ja miksi prostituoitujen olot ovat sarjoissa niin erilaiset. Prostituutio on joka tapauksessa molemmissa sarjoissa sukupuolittunut tehtävä, naisten muttei miesten ammatti, mikä rikkoo uuden sarjan sukupuolineutraaliutta.

Uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* naishahmoilla on enemmän liikkumavaraa feminiinisyyden ja maskuliinisuuden välillä kuin aiemmissa sarjoissa, sillä sarjan maskuliinisia naisia nähdään välillä myös perinteisempinä ja feminiinisempinä (ks. myös Kungl 2008, 199, 203–207). Myös sarjan miehillä on enemmän joustoa osoittaa kulttuurisesti feminiinisiksi tulkittuja tunteita. Muun muassa tohtori Baltar (James Callis), jonka hahmo eroaa melkoisesti alkuperäisen sarjan cylonien kanssa vehkeilleestä Baltarista (John Colicos), esittää perinteisesti feminiinisinä pidettyjä tunteita, kuten heikkoutta. Baltarin hahmon kautta pohditaan ihmisyyttä ja inhimillisyyttä. Opportunistinen Baltar on monimutkainen hahmo, joka edustaa ihmisyyden vähemmän sankarillisia puolia, ylimielisyyttä ja pelkuruutta (Koepsell 2008, 242). Myös Amiraali Adama (Edward James Olmos) ja eversti Tigh (Michael Hogan) ovat uudessa sarjassa edeltäjiään (Tigh'ta näytteli Terry Carter) emotionaalisempia. Tunteita tosin näytetään jo alkuperäisessä sarjassa;

[10] "Black Market" -jakson podcast: http://www.syfy.com/battlestar/downloads/podcast.php?seas=2 (linkki tarkistettu 1.6.2011).

alkuperäinen Apollo on emotionaalinen ja hoivaava hahmo, joka jää yksinhuoltajaksi vaimonsa kuoltua. Uudessa sarjassa Helolla (Tahmoh Penikett) on hoivaavan isän rooli. Aikaisemmista scifi-sarjoista esimerkiksi *Farscape* ja *Lexx* (Kanada/Saksa/USA/UK 1996–2002) ovat leikitelleet miesten ja maskuliinisuuksien representaatioilla. Uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* feminiinisempiä mieshahmoja on kuitenkin tulkittu rangaistavan vääränlaisesta maskuliinisuudesta, koska esimerkiksi Baltarin hahmossa feminiinisyys assosioituu petturuuteen (Jones 2010, 160, 172). Miesten feminisoituminen ei olekaan sarjassa yhtä vahvaa kuin naisten maskulinisoituminen, ja sarjaa on kritisoitu maskuliinisuuden ihannoinnista (Kirkland 2008, 342–343; Jones 2010, 172–178). Toisaalta sarjaa on kritisoitu myös siitä, miten useat naishahmoista kuolevat sarjan edetessä ja parhaiten näyttävät selviytyvän konventionaalisiin feminiinisiin rooleihin sopivat naiset (Stoy 2010, 12–14).

Alkuperäisessä *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* miehillä oli selkeästi naisia keskeisempi funktio. Sukupuolen ja tätä kautta ihmisyyden representaatiot nojasivat uutta sarjaa selkeämmin erontekoon sukupuolten välillä, mitä merkittiin esimerkiksi samankaltaisissa tehtävissä työskentelevien sotilaiden sukupuolittuneella pukeutumisella, kuten naispilottien korkokengillä. Kuitenkin naisten kasvava asema yhteiskunnassa heijastui siihen, että myös naisia nähtiin itsenäisinä ammatinharjoittajina, kuten taistelulentäjinä – ammatti, joka ei reaalimaailmassa vielä ollut naisille mahdollinen (Mulligan 2008, 57–58; Herbert 1998, 3–7). Alkuperäisen sarjan voisi karkeasti yhdistää 1960–1970-luvun feminismin nousuun, kun taas *Galactica 1980:n*, josta naishahmot liki kokonaan puuttuvat, voi liittää feminismin takaiskuun 1980-luvulla (vrt. Helford 2000a). Naisten kasvavat tasa-arvovaatimukset sekä naisten integroituminen työelämään, yhteiskunnallisiin päätöksentekoelimiin ja armeijaan heijastuvat siihen, että naisia ja miehiä nähdään uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* samankaltaisissa rooleissa. Sarjoissa nähtävä sukupuolijousto mukailee siis kulttuurisia sukupuolipoliittisia kehityslinjoja (ks. myös Kirkland 2008, 347). Uudessa sarjassa tuotetaan myös sukupuolittuneita ja alistavia käytäntöjä, kuten prostituutio sekä raiskaukset tai raiskausyritykset, joiden kohteina nähdään sekä ihmis- että cylon-naisia. Silviota ja Johnstonia mukaillen tämän voi tulkita mahdollistavan sarjan sukupuolineutraaliuden ja kyseenalaistavan sitä, mutta myös muistuttavan katsojaa edelleen ajankohtaisista yhteiskunnallisista epäkohdista.

Merkilliset koneihmiset

Yksi huomattava muutos uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* ja alkuperäisen sarjan sekä *Galactica 1980:n* välillä liittyy koneihmisten esityksiin. Alkuperäisessä sarjassa sekä *Galactica 1980:ss*ä koneet on rakentanut Cylon-planeetalla asunut matelijarotu. Uudessa sarjassa ihmisillä sen sijaan on vastuu koneiden rakentamista ja cyloneihin viitataan usein ihmiskunnan lapsina. Uuden sarjan cylonit ovat ihmisen kaltaisia ja toimivat utopistisena – tai dystooppisena – esimerkkinä butlerilaisesta performatiivisuudesta (ks. Chess 2008; Harwood-Smith

2008; Hellstrand 2009): he tuovat rinnasteisesti nähtäväksi sen, miten sukupuolta ja ihmisyyttä tehdään. Koska cylonit ovat ihmisen kaltaisia, uuden sarjan tekijät ovat joutuneet eksplisiittisesti tuottamaan esiin sitä, mikä tekee ihmisestä ihmisen ja ei-ihmisestä (lähes) ihmisen kaltaisen. Sarjan kontekstissa sukupuolella on suuri merkitys ihmisestä käymiseen, kun cylonit rakentavat identiteettejään sukupuolitetuissa suhteissa ihmisten kanssa. Vaikka sarjan maailma vaikuttaa ensi katsomalta suhteellisen sukupuolineutraalilta, koneihmisten esityksissä sukupuolen rooli nousee uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticass*a huomattavasti keskeisemmäksi kuin alkuperäisessä sarjassa ja *Galactica 1980:ssä*. Ihmisen kaltaiset koneet eivät pääse pakoon sukupuolen merkkejä ja merkityksiä (ks. Kakoudaki 2000, 167). Käsitys kahdesta vastakkaisesta, biologiaan pohjaavasta sukupuolesta on niin juurtunut, että myös biologiaan nojaamaton ruumis joutuu rakentumaan jompaakumpaa vallitsevaa sukupuolen kategoriaa mukaillen voidakseen tulla hyväksytyksi inhimillisenä. On myös olemassa oletus siitä, että nämä kaksi sukupuolta, mies ja nainen, tuntevat ”luonnollisesti” halua toisiaan kohtaan (Butler 1990, esim. 22–23). Käydessään niin sanotusta luonnollisesta sukupuolesta koneihminen tekee näkyväksi tämän luonnollisuuden keinotekoisuuden (ks. Hollinger 2000, 202–207). Ihmisen kaltaisia cyloneita nähdään lähinnä uudessa sarjassa.[11] *Galactica 1980* -sarjan loppupuolella tosin on ihmisen kaltaisia ”humanoideja”. Humanoidit ovat mekaanisia eivätkä koe tunteita, kun taas uuden sarjan cylonit ovat tunteellisia ja edustavat jonkinlaista orgaanista teknologiaa. Uusia cyloneita on kaksitoista ihmisen kaltaista mallia, joista suurimmasta osasta on useita kopioita. *Galactica 1980:n* humanoidit ovat miehiä, mutta uudessa sarjassa cylonit ovat sekä naisiksi että miehiksi rakennettuja. Myös cylonien representaatioissa naisten määrä on siis kasvanut.

Koneihmisten representaatioita on usein kritisoitu ennalta arvattavista sukupuolikuvastoista: mieskyborgeja on kuvattu panssaroituina

Robotti-cylon ja humanoidi Andromus (Roger Davies) *Galactica 1980* -sarjassa.

[11] Alkuperäisessä sarjassa nähdään myös humanoideja robottimaisempia mutta ihmistä muistuttavia androideja ja uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* on robottimaisia cyloneita. Uudessa sarjassa myös cylonien taistelualukset ovat eläviä olentoja, ja heidän emäaluksiaan ohjaa ihmisen kaltainen hybridi (Tiffany Lyndall-Knight). Käsittelen vain kahteentoista malliin kuuluvia cyloneita, koska heillä on sarjassa keskeisempi rooli.

ja maskuliinisina (esim. *RoboCop*, UK/USA 1987 ja *Terminator – tuhoaja*, *The Terminator*, USA 1984), kun taas naiskyborgeja on erotisoitu ja fetisoitu (Balsamo 2000, 150–151; Kakoudaki 2000, 166; ks. myös Cranny-Francis 2000, 155–156). Uuden *Taisteluplaneetta Galactican* cylon-naisista Caprica kuusi (Tricia Helfer) vastaa ulkoisesti eniten stereotyyppisen konenaisen määritelmää: hän on konventionaalisen kaunis ja pukeutuu paljastavasti. Caprica kuuden korostetun seksuaalisuuden voi kuitenkin tulkita *masqueradeksi* eli naiseksi naamioitumiseksi (Rivieré 1986). *Masqueraden* tietoinen huomioiminen kääntää naisellisuuden ironiseksi toiminnaksi näyttäen naiseuden rakennetun luonteen (Hollinger 2000, 202). Sarjassa nähdään esimerkiksi kohtaus, jossa erään numero kuusi -malliin[12] kuuluvan cylon-naisen seksuaalisuus on liian korostettua. Cylon-nainen yrittää vietellä komentaja Adamaa näytellen yksinäisen ja haavoittuvan naisen roolia, mutta saa tämän vain epäilemään viettelijättären ihmisyyttä. Susan A. Georgen mukaan cylonin sukupuoli on kohtauksessa niin hyvin esitettyä, ettei se ole enää uskottavaa (George 2008, 169–170). Haavoittuvana esitetyn sukupuolen voi tulkita toiminnallisten naisten täyttämän sarjan kontekstissa myös väärin esitetyksi tai konenaisten seksualisointia parodioivaksi.

[12] Caprica kuuluu cylonien kuudenteen malliin.

Caprica kuusi ja Gaius Baltar.

Silvio ja Johnston pitävät Capricaa *femme fatalena*, jonka seksuaalisuus on kauppatavaraa (ks. myös Hellstrand 2009, 25; Jowett 2010, 73). Cylonit siis käyttävät ”naistensa” seksuaalisuutta hyväkseen lahjoittamalla kauniin naisen käytettäväksi vastineeksi yhteistyöstä. (Silvio & Johnston 2008, 46–47.) Caprica kuitenkin nauttii seksuaalisuudestaan, ja siihen liittyy myös vallankäyttöä. Mikäli hänen seksuaalisuutensa on kauppatavaraa, kauppaa käydään pitkälti hänen omilla ehdoillaan, aivan kuten Cassiopeian tapauksessa. Georgen mukaan Caprica on yhtä aikaa sekä eroottinen että sadistinen. Hän leikittelee miehillä ja nauttii väkivallasta. (George 2008, 166–167.) Caprica käyttää seksuaalista väkivaltaa etenkin tiedemies Gaius Baltariin. Hän pääsee tämän

avulla käsiksi ihmisten puolustusjärjestelmään, mikä mahdollistaa cylonien hyökkäyksen ihmisten siirtokuntiin. Caprica kuitenkin rakastuu Gaiusiin ja pelastaa tämän hyökkäyksestä, mikä inhimillistää Capricaan henkilöhahmoa. Pelastuttuaan Gaius alkaa nähdä jonkinlaisen Capricaan "kuvajaisen", jota kukaan muu ei pysty näkemään. Vaikka Caprica nähdään tiedemiehen katseen kautta, hän ei ole pelkästään miehisen katseen kautta näytetty fantasiaobjekti, vaan aktiivinen seksuaalinen toimija, jolla on valtaa Baltariin. Hän esimerkiksi koskettelee tätä seksuaalisesti "sopimattomissa" tilanteissa. (Ks. myös George 2008, 166; Stoy 2010, 10.) Väkivaltaisen seksuaalisuuden takia myös George pitää Capricaa *femme fatalena*, teknologisena versiona film noir -elokuvien tuhoavasta naisesta, johon projisoidaan pelko teknologiaa ja naisen seksuaalisuutta kohtaan. Tästä huolimatta Caprica muodostaa perinteistä *femme fatalea* monimuotoisemman kuvan seksuaalisesta naisesta, koska häntä ei vangita tai tapeta. (George 2008, 166–167.)[13] Film noirin kultakauden jälkeen suhtautuminen naisen seksuaalisuuteen on muuttunut sallivammaksi.

[13] Georgen artikkelin julkaisemisen jälkeen ilmestyneellä tuotantokaudella Caprica tosin vangitaan väliaikaisesti.

"Don't make me angry, Gaius!" Caprica kuusi ja vallankäyttö.

Cylonit eivät tunnu sopivan kyborgikuvastojen aikaisempiin kritiikkeihin. Vaikka cylonien, aivan kuten ihmisten, sukupuolen on sarjan kontekstissa oltava tunnistettavissa mieheksi tai naiseksi ja osa cylon-naisista on ulkoisilta merkeiltään suurinta osaa ihmisnaisia sukupuolitetumpia, saattaa liioitellun sukupuolen esittäminen häiritä cylonin ihmisestä käymistä. Kaikkia konenaisia ei myöskään erotisoida, ja esimerkiksi Capricaan eroottisuuteen liittyy toimijuus, joka ei tyhjenny syytöksiin naisten objektivoinnista. (Vrt. George 2008; Hellstrand 2009.) Konemiehiin uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* liitetään tunteellisuutta ja heikkoutta, eivätkä he vertaudu "terminatorhahmoihin". Cylonit voivat olla myös ikääntyneitä tai uskonnollisia. Koska ihmisten representaatioissa on sukupuolijoustoa, pitää myös koneihmisten esittämisen, ja tätä kautta ihmisestä käymisen performanssin, muuttua joustavammaksi.

Lisääntymisen problematiikkaa

Cylonien tuhotessa suuren osan ihmiskunnasta lisääntymisestä tulee tärkeä edellytys ihmisten selviytymiselle. Tämä johtaa siihen, että presidentti Roslin kieltää abortin, missä on nähty yhtymäkohtia Yhdysvaltojen aborttikeskusteluun (Dzialo 2008, 176; Leaver 2008, 139, 141).[14] Lisääntyminen on ongelmallista myös koneihmisillä. Cylonit pitävät ”biologista” lisääntymistä jumalan tahtona, mutteivät kykene siihen keskenään.[15] He uskovat tämän johtuvan rakkauden puutteesta ja rakkauteen tarvittavan ihmisiä. Niinpä heidän tavoitteenaan on luoda ihmisten ja cylonien hybridirotu. Cylonit ovat alun perin kuolemattomia, sillä kuollessaan heidän tietoisuutensa siirtyy uuteen ruumiiseen. He kuitenkin luopuvat ”ylösnousemuksesta”, joten heteroseksuaalisesta lisääntymisestä tulee ainoa keino lisääntyä. Cylon-nainen Sharonin (Grace Park), myöhemmin kutsumanimeltään Athena, tehtäväksi tulee hybridirodun aloittaminen ihmismies Helon kanssa. Kun Helo saa selville, että Athena on cylon, hän ei halua olla missään tekemisissä tämän kanssa. Raskaus tekee Athenasta Helon silmissä kuitenkin jälleen naisen – ihmisen tai miltei ihmisen. Raskaus, ja myöhemmin äitiys, siis inhimillistää Athenaa ja auttaa häntä saavuttamaan paikan ihmisten laivueessa (ks. Moore 2008, 107–113; Hellstrand 2009, 29; Hawk 2011, 12). Alkuperäisessä *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* lisääntymistä pohditaan orjiksi kehitettyjen kloonien kautta. Kloonit vapautuvat orjuudesta ja heidät hyväksytään ”oikeiksi” ihmisiksi, kun käy ilmi, että he pystyvät lisääntymään keskenään. Heteroseksuaalinen lisääntyminen on ihmisyyden merkki sekä klooneilla että uusilla cyloneilla.

Uudessa sarjassa lisääntyminen voi myös toimia ihmisyyttä rajoittavana: cylonit kytkevät ihmisnaisia synnytyskoneisiin tehdessään kokeiluja hybridirodun mahdollisuuksista ja abortin kieltäminen rajoittaa itsemääräämisoikeutta. Tama Leaverin mukaan sekä cylonit että ihmiset vaikuttavat suhtautuvan naisiin toisinaan ensisijaisesti lisääntymisvälineinä, toissijaisesti yksilöinä (Leaver 2008, 138–139; ks. myös Silvio & Johnston 2008, 48–50; Jones 2010, 179; Jowett 2010; Hellstrand 2011). Athena tosin ei ole pelkkä lisääntymisväline, vaan hän toistuvasti valitsee roolinsa äitinä ja vaimona (Moore 2008, 107–113). Athenan on myös tulkittu käyttävän seksuaalista valtaa Heloon, jota voi pitää pelkkänä lisääntymisvälineenä cylonien suunnitelmissa (George 2008, 173; Goulart & Joe 2008, 193). Seksuaalinen hyväksikäyttö lisääntymistarkoituksessa ei siis rajoitu vain naisiin. George tosin on huomauttanut, ettei Helon osa ole yhtä synkkä kuin synnytyskoneisiin kytkettyjen naisten, jotka ovat täysin vailla autonomiaa (George 2008, 173–174). Lisääntymiseen on scifissä usein liitetty hirviömäisyyttä ja kauhua, mikä Mary Anne Doanen mukaan johtuu uusien lisääntymisteknologioiden nostattamista peloista äitiyden debiologisoitumista ja ihmisen lähtökohtien kyseenalaistumista kohtaan (Doane 2000, 114–116). Athenan äitiyden voi ajatella kyseenalaistavan, tai ”pervouttavan”[16] heteroseksuaalisuuden ja lisääntymisen biologista luonnollisuutta, sillä koneen lisääntyminen ei voi olla perinteisellä tavalla luonnollista. (Vrt. Jowett 2010, 65–66.)

Heteroseksuaalisen lisääntymisellä on uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta*

[14] Roslinin päätös kumotaan myöhemmin.

[15] Cylon-nainen tulee sarjassa raskaaksi cylon-miehelle, mutta saa keskenmenon.

[16] Cycloneista ”pervoina” (queer) ks. Chess 2008.

[17] Lisääntymisestä ja heteroseksuaalisuudesta ks. myös Jones 2010, 178–180.

Galacticassa kaksinainen merkitys: se yhtäältä korostaa heteroseksuaalisuuden tärkeyttä ihmisestä käymisessä, toisaalta alleviivaa sen performatiivista ja rakennettua luonnetta (Hellstrand 2011, 20).[17] Uusi *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* eroaa alkuperäisestä ja *Galactica 1980:stä* suhtautumisessaan äitiyteen. Alkuperäisessä *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* nähdään äitisotilas, Serina, joka kuolee sarjan alkumetreillä. Tämän voi tulkita viestivän, ettei äitiyden ja sotilasuran yhdistämistä pidetty mahdollisena. Uudessa *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticassa* äitiys ja sotilasura eivät enää ole mahdoton yhtälö. Äitiys voi jopa mahdollistaa sotilasuran: koska äitiys inhimillistää Athenaa, se auttaa palauttamaan hänen asemansa sotilaana. Lisääntymisen ja toimijuuden yhdistämisen kääntöpuolena näkyy lisääntyminen pakotettuna, toimijuuden riisuvana ja jopa ihmisyyttä rajoittavana, kun naisia kytketään synnytyskoneisiin ja abortti kielletään. Jossain määrin tämä näkyy myös Helon osassa lapsentekokoneena.

Joustava sukupuoli – joustava ihmisyys?

Kun uutta *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticaa* tarkastelee rinnakkain alkuperäisen sarjan ja *Galactica 1980:n* kanssa, ovat erot sukupuolen esityksissä silmiinpistäviä. Uusi *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* vaikuttaa tarjoavan jopa utopistisen tasa-arvoisen maailman (ks. Moore 2008, 110; vrt. Jowett 2010, 60), jossa miehet ja naiset toimivat samankaltaisissa tehtävissä ja muun muassa presidentti sekä laivueen paras taistelulentäjä ovat naisia. Vaikka alkuperäisessä sarjassa nähdään naispilotteja, vanhemmat sarjat nojaavat enemmän sukupuolen kahtiajakoon. Vaikuttaisi siis, että uudessa sarjassa rakennetaan ihmiskuvaa, joka ei nojaa yhtä voimakkaasti sukupuolten väliseen eroon. Tarinan edetessä sukupuolten esitykset kuitenkin muuttuvat ristiriitaisemmiksi ja sukupuolijoustolle asetetaan myös rajoja: naishahmoista suuren osan kohtalona tuntuu olevan kuolema ja parhaiten selviytyvät perinteisempään naisen rooliin mahtuvat hahmot. Naisten itsemääräämisoikeutta niin ikään rajoitetaan raiskauksilla, abortin kieltämisellä sekä prostituutiolla. Perinteisestä maskuliinisuudesta poikkeavia miehiä voi myös tulkita rangaistavan ”vääränlaisesta” maskuliinisuudesta. Naisten maskulinisoituminen on vahvempaa kuin miesten feminisoituminen, minkä voi tulkita maskuliinisuuden ihannoinniksi. Uudelle *Taisteluplaneetta Galacticalle* tyypillinen narratiivinen ristiriitaisuus näkyy siis sukupuolen ja ihmisyyden representaatioissa, ja tätä ristiriitaisuutta voidaan pitää jopa sarjan ansiona. Uusi *Taisteluplaneetta Galactica* ei lopulta tarjoa utopistista kuvaa sukupuolten tasa-arvosta tai ihmisyydestä, vaan leikittelee totutuilla valta-asetelmilla, butlerilaisittain toistaen ja toisin toistaen niitä, ja nostaa näin esiin ajankohtaisia yhteiskunnallisia ilmiöitä ja epäkohtia.

Alkuperäisessä sarjassa ihmiset ja koneet erosivat toisistaan selkeästi; cylonit olivat laatikkomaisia robotteja, jotka eivät käyneet ihmisestä. Vaikka *Galactica 1980:ssä* nähtiin ihmisen kaltaisia humanoideja, ihmisyyttä ei pohdittu cylonien kautta samalla tapaa kuin uudessa sarjassa, jossa koneet rakentavat identiteettejään sukupuolittuneissa suhteissa ihmisten kanssa. Vaikka osa cylon-naisista on suurinta osaa

ihmisnaisia sukupuolitetumpia ja sukupuolella ja seksuaalisuuudella on suuri rooli etenkin cylon-naisten ihmisestä käymisessä, ei uuden sarjan ihmisten kaltaisten cylonien representaatioita voi ainakaan tyhjentävästi selittää artikkelissani esiin nostamilla koneihmisiä koskevilla yleistyksillä ja kritiikeillä. Tästä johtuen analyysin painopisteiden ja lähtöoletusten pitää tästä muuttua. Sen sijaan, että koneihmisten representaatioista etsisi stereotyyppisiä feminiinisyyden ja maskuliinisuuden merkkejä ja merkityksiä, on mielenkiintoisempaa tutkia, mitä koneihmiset kertovat ihmisyydestä ja ihmisyyden normatiivisuudesta. Heteroseksuaalinen lisääntyminen nousee sarjassa tärkeäksi ihmisyyttä normittavaksi performanssiksi. Ihmisyydelle sallitaan liikkumatilaa feminiinisyyksien ja maskuliinisuuksien välillä, kunhan lopulta palataan lisääntymiseen tähtäävään heteroseksuaalisuuteen. Lisääntyminen koneen, jonka sukupuoli on kirjaimellisesti rakennettua, kanssa kuitenkin kyseenalaistaa heteroseksuaalisuuden ja lisääntymisen ”biologisen luonnollisuuden” tehden siitä potentiaalisesti pervon (queer) performanssin.

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II

PASSING FOR HUMAN IN SCIENCE FICTION: COMPARING THE TV SERIES *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA* AND *V*

by

Aino-Kaisa Koistinen, 2011

In *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research* 19 (4), 249–263.

Passing for Human in Science Fiction: Comparing the TV series *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*

This is an Accepted Manuscript of an article published by Taylor & Francis in NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminist and Gender Research on 31 Oct 2011, available online: http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08038740.2011.621898.

Abstract: This article discusses passing for human and constructions of humanity in the original and re-imagined versions of science fiction television series *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*. On the one hand, humanity is negotiated in the series through inhabiting "the right kind" of body; on the other hand, it is constructed by taking part in certain performances. The article examines the role that gender, sexuality and race play in the process of passing for human, and how they *intersect* in constructing the signifying practices that mark what is human and non-human. These intersections are connected to cultural and political dynamics current at the time of the series' creation. By drawing on Judith Butler's work on gender performativity and Sara Ahmed's work on sensations, emotions and encounters, the text establishes how humanity is constructed in the series through encounters with others, and how signs of humanness and inhumanness *stick* and *slide* between humans and "the others" in these encounters.

The re-imagination[1] of the science fiction television series *Battlestar Galactica* (henceforth *BSG*, US/UK 2003–2009) has inspired numerous fans, critics and scholars.[2] Issues concerning race, gender, torture and humanity in the series have been widely

discussed (e.g. Deis 2008; Johnson-Lewis 2008; Leaver 2008; Ott 2008), but research tends to focus on the re-imagined series and the original series, for the most part, remains out of the scope of research. This article studies constructions of humanity in the re-imagined *BSG* in relation to the original series, *Battlestar Galactica* (US 1978–1979) and its spin-off *Galactica 1980* (US 1980).[3] The two series are analyzed together with another re-imagined science fiction series, *V* (US 2009–2011) and its original version, which consists of *V: The Original Miniseries* (US 1983), *V: The Final Battle* (US 1984) and *V: The Series* (US 1984–1985).[4] The originals and remakes of *BSG* and *V* all feature a non-human race. Some of these "aliens" have a human appearance and can therefore *pass for human*[5]. The humanoid aliens are able to imitate, reproduce and perform humanity in such believable ways that they question the very uniqueness of the human race. What all these series have in common at the narrative level is the questioning of the human as defined and fundamentally constituted by a non-human other: if humanity cannot be defined against the other, as different from the other, how then can it be defined?

The article discusses how humanity is negotiated through inhabiting the right kind of body and the right kind of skin, and by taking part in certain performances[6], such as acting out "the right kind" of gender. How, then, does gender intersect[7] with sexuality, "race", class and, for instance, occupation in the process of constructing humanity? What are the processes that enable the passing for human? The series are also situated in the context of the science fiction genre and the cultural and political dynamics of their time, such as the Cold War for example. Although the original *BSG* and *V* might seem out-

dated and campy to today's audience (cf. Muir 2008), I will establish how all of the series, old and new, invite complex readings that connect them to xenophobia and normative notions of humanity that are relentlessly related to cultural constructions of, for example, race, gender and sexuality.

Constructing Humanity in Encounters with Others

Representations both reflect and construct the world they are produced in (see e.g. Kellner 1995: 1–11) and the human-like others in *BSG* and *V* take part in the production of the signifying practices that mark what is to be regarded as human and non-human, and as such provide tell-tale signposts for identity formation in our collective social imagination. This is also why it is important to study representations of what gets to count as human, or not, in fiction – it is also telling of lived identities that are made possible in everyday life. My analysis connects the series to theoretical debates that consider the construction processes of gender, sexuality and humanity, as put forward in the work of Judith Butler and Sara Ahmed. Butler has famously argued that gender is a set of repeated acts, a repeated stylization of the body that produces the appearance of a natural sort of being (Butler 1990: 33). As the process of passing for human in *BSG* and *V* requires participation in certain performances, including performing gender, Butler's notion of performativity is useful for my analysis. Butler writes that:

> The mark of gender appears to "qualify" bodies as human bodies; the moment in which an infant becomes humanised is when the question, "is it

> a boy or a girl?" is answered. Those bodily figures who do not fit into either gender fall outside the human, indeed, constitute the domain of the dehumanised and the abject against which the human itself is constituted. (Butler 1990: 111)

Language, then, affects bodies in a material way (e.g. Butler 1997: 4–5; Ahmed 2004: 59): the gendered pronoun "he" or "she" is attached to a child after birth and the child must learn to act in a way befitting that pronoun. Passing for "the right kind" of gender becomes the prerequisite for passing for human (see Butler 1993: 8). In this article, I argue that in the context of *BSG* and *V* both gender and humanity can, in some ways, be seen as performative.

By using Butler's term "materialisation" – "the effect of boundary, fixity and surface" – (Butler 1993: 9), Sara Ahmed argues that bodies and worlds materialize through sensations, such as pain, which produces the effect of boundary or fixity (Ahmed 2004: 24). Subjects are shaped by emotions and sensations in the body and on its surface, the skin. We become aware of our skin as a surface and acknowledge that it is there (that our bodies are there) in encounters with others. Emotions shape the very surfaces of bodies, creating borders against some others as well as connecting us to other others (2004: 4, 10, 12, 24–25). According to Ahmed, identities are constructed in encounters with others. The formation of identity is never over, but can be understood as sliding across subjects in these encounters (Ahmed 2000: 7). Here, I establish how skin, emotions and sensations

play an important role in the constructions of humanity, which creates interesting connections between Ahmed's work and the series studied.

Butler's performative theory and Ahmed's theory on sensations can be connected through the notion of performativity. In encounters with others, *performances take place* and the emotions felt in these encounters *performatively* affect bodies (see Ahmed 2004: 92–94). I focus here on two kinds of emotional encounters: love and torture. As humane and inhumane acts are performed in these painful or loving encounters, signs of humanness and inhumanness slide between and "stick" (Ahmed 2004: 89–92) to both humans and their alien others. In their negotiations between the bodily imagery and performance of humanness, *BSG* and *V* undercut dichotomies such as us/them, human/machine and human/animal (see Haraway 1991) and open up a range of questions concerning human and non-human embodiment, which makes it meaningful to study the series within a feminist framework where the Others of Man (nature, woman, native, animal) are accounted for. As the binary opposition between human/non-human is questioned, gender and other differences located in the body are brought into question. Thus these series can be examined in dialogue with feminist research.

Encountering *Battlestar Galactica* and *V*

Human-like creatures and other aliens have long been established as a reoccurring trope in science fiction narratives (see Attebery 2002: 17–38, 62–81, 173). Ziauddin Sardar interprets the genre's fascination with "the other" as symptomatic of Western culture.

The others echo the history of colonization and the conquering of the American West, making the space frontier resemble the Western frontier in a symbolic way (Sardar 2002: 6–10).[8] The space travel narrative of the original *BSG* has also been connected to this tradition (Booker 2004: 88). According to Ahmed, narratives can work through othering, by inviting the reader to take a certain position that sets her against the other. That is to say, othering creates a place for "us" and a place for those who are "not us" (Ahmed 2004: 1–2). Science fiction's aliens often highlight the differences between "us" and "the others": aliens represent what is not human in order to exemplify that which is human (Sardar 2002: 6). However, the genre also undercuts these differences, as the competing tradition has been to use aliens to hold up a mirror to humanity by highlighting the corruption of Western society (2002: 11).

The originals and re-imaginations of *BSG* and *V* negotiate these tropes in different ways. The original *BSG* starts with an attack by a robotic race called Cylons on human colonies, which forces the human survivors to flee into space in search of a new home, Earth. Led by the Battlestar named Galactica, they fight the Cylons that follow them on their journey. The narrative of *Galactica 1980* is set a generation later when Earth has been found. The series focuses more on the relations between the "Galacticans" and the humans than the relations between humans and machines. The re-imagination of *Battlestar Galactica* has retained the same basic composition: the series starts with a Cylon attack on human colonies that forces the survivors to escape into space in search of a new home, the mythical Earth. The most striking difference between the re-imagination and the original series is that now the Cylons can pass for human and have infiltrated

human society; in *Galactica 1980*, two Cylons who appear human are seen ("The Night the Cylons Landed 1–2"), but both of these humanoids are quickly destroyed. In the re-imagined series there are twelve models of human-like Cylons and each model has several copies.[9] The infiltrating Cylons have been seen to reflect and comment on certain anxieties in post 9/11 American culture (e.g. Johnson-Lewis 2008; Mulligan 2008; Ott 2008), whereas the Cylons in the original series represent different cultural issues. These Cylons symbolize an outside threat that can be connected to the anxieties posed by the Cold War. The series presents the Cylons, for instance, lying in peace negotiations, which has been seen as reflecting the attitudes towards peace negotiations at that particular time. The U.S. Congress heralded the year 1978, when the original BSG started, as "The Year of the Coalition of Peace through Strength." This philosophy of "Peace through Strength", which also boosted Ronald Reagan's presidential campaign, meant that military power was viewed as a necessary prerequisite of peace, peace negotiations were treated suspiciously and a harder line against Communism was established (Muir 2008: 236–237). Another difference concerns the centrality of female characters: in the new *BSG* there are more female characters and some of the original male characters are re-imagined as females. Unlike in the original series, women are seen in positions of power; the president, for example, is a woman (Laura Roslin played by Mary McDonnell).

The original *V* starts when human-like aliens called the Visitors arrive on Earth. They make no immediate attack but claim that they come in peace. Very soon, however, it is found that the Visitors are actually lizard-like beings only masked as humans. They are planning to use humans as food and to exploit Earth's natural resources. The short-lived

re-imagination follows the same lines. The Visitors arrive on Earth with their declaration, "We are of peace, always"; yet again their plans are not as benevolent as they claim. Unlike in the original series, some of the Visitors have arrived before the others and infiltrated human communities. As in the original *BSG*, the original *V* and its deceptive aliens can be seen as reflecting and commenting on the atmosphere of the Cold War and the suspicions directed towards peace negotiations (Muir 2008: 236–237). Similarly to the new *BSG*, the intruding aliens of the re-imagined *V* resonate with the anxieties of the post 9/11 world and its fear of terrorist infiltration.

One noticeable difference between the original and re-imagination of *V* involves the Visitor leadership. In the original *V* the Visitors' highest in command was male, but in the re-imagination the Visitors are led by a beautiful Queen, Anna (Morena Baccarin). The viewer of today does not expect leadership to exclude women, and both re-imaginations take this into account.

The Role of Skin in Constructing Humanity

The importance of skin in passing for human becomes visible in science fiction's representations of human-like creatures, especially the cyborgs (*cybernetic organisms*; see, e.g. Balsamo 2000; Paasonen 2005). Skin enables passing for human, for instance, in the classic film *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, Germany 1927) and the series of *Terminator* films (e.g. *The Terminator*, James Cameron, US/UK 1984) (see Kakoudaki 2000: 167–171). Despina Kakoudaki differentiates cyborgs from other human-like machines by this

very ability to pass for human. According to her: "Cyborgs mark the arrival of artificial intelligence into gender and sexuality, which is registered by the acquisition of human skin and the narrative of 'passing for human'" (Kakoudaki 2000: 165–166). Since the cyborg often has a human body, it cannot escape the problems of the visual representation of race and gender (2000: 183). It is forced to encounter the presuppositions and prejudices directed towards that body.

Skin not only enables cyborgs to appear human, but organic skin allows them to feel sensations. This is clearly depicted in *Star Trek: First Contact* (Jonathan Frakes, US 1996) when the android Data (Brent Spiner) is given organic skin. Data already appears human – he has inorganic skin – but *organic* skin enables him *to feel* (see Wertheimer 2002). In *BSG* and *V*, skin and emotions play an important role in the construction of humanity. Although the Cylons and the Visitors are not cyborgs in the traditional science-fiction sense of the term, they can be seen as cyborgs of the kind outlined in feminist discourse. In science fiction a cyborg is traditionally a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of technology and flesh (see, e.g. Balsamo 2000: 148–149). As a feminist metaphor and figuration, the cyborg questions dualistic divisions such as self/other, nature/culture, reality/appearance, human/animal, organism/machine and male/female (Haraway 1991: e.g. 163, 173–181). The human-like Cylons can be seen as transgressing the boundary of the human and the machine, similarly to the cyborg metaphor (see Gumpert 2008: 146–151; Heinricy 2008; Leaver 2008: 134–135). The Visitors, on the other hand, blur the boundaries between human and animal. In the re-imagined version of *V*, skin clearly affects the Visitors' ability to pass for human, which further aligns them with the cyborg

metaphor: the Visitors become more human-like and emotional the longer they wear their human skin.

When skin provides the sameness that enables the machine to pass for human, the cyborg's differences usually lie under the skin. When skin is removed, technology is revealed (Paasonen 2005: 29). The humanoid Cylons in *Galactica 1980* are clearly machines under their skin. The re-imagined Cylons, however, are constructed as organic technology with blood, veins and muscles under their skin. It is this sameness with humans that makes the Cylons uncanny and horrifying (Peirse 2008: 118; Hellstrand 2009: 20–21; see also Rennes 2008). The real problem of differentiation, then, is not distance but proximity (Bhabha 1996: 63; Skeggs 2004: 96). According to Kakoudaki, cyborgs that look like their master and can therefore pass for human are threatening because they can replace the master and gain entrance to the master's class (Kakoudaki 2000: 170). This can also be applied to science fiction's other human-like creatures. Artificial and alien creatures passing for human threaten to take the place of the human and, by doing so, reveal the vulnerable and shifting ontological status of human beings.

If what is under the Cylons' skin signifies their similarity with humans, what lies under the Visitors' skin makes them more other, more different. The Visitors wear their human skin more like a mask than the Cylons, paving the way for dramatic scenes where human-like skin is ripped off and the Visitor's "true nature" revealed. Under the mask there is a second, lizard-like skin, which in the original series bleeds green when torn. According to Ahmed, the other's skin, its "alien slime", may be a source of disgust (Ahmed 2000: 2–

3). The green blood and lizard-like skin are literal representations of such "slimy" otherness. The importance of skin in the process of passing for human makes the material level of humanity visible. One must appear human in order to be accepted as human or human-like. However, since the human appearance of the Cylons and Visitors is literally manufactured, they underline the constructed nature of humanity and the deceptiveness of appearances.

Does Skin Equal White Skin? Racial Passing

The question of skin as a sign of humanity leads to another question: what colour is the skin that passes for human? Of the twelve new Cylon models from the new *BSG* only three do not have white skin. This dynamic repeats itself in the human fleet, since most of the main human characters also have white skin. This feature of the TV series has left it open to criticism and to the problem of focusing solely on the differences between humans and Cylons while leaving out questions of race and ethnicity in the human community (cf. Deis 2008: 157, 167). The re-imagined *V* also tends to portray mostly white skin. The Visitors have landed in different countries and are passing for citizens of that particular country. Nevertheless, when Anna summons the head officers of all the Visitor ships located around the world almost all of them seem to be white. All of them are male (episode "Red Rain"). Most of the human-like Visitors roaming the Visitor spaceships seem to have white skin as well.

In the original *BSG* and *V*, most of the characters, humans as well as the human-like others, also have white skin. However, these original series do represent some racial issues in the human communities. *Galactica 1980*, for instance, briefly discussed the oppression of Latin-Americans by white landowners: it featured an episode where a white landowner cut off a Latin-American family's water supply. The original *V*, however, interestingly tackles racial issues in a clear allegory to the Holocaust (see Johnson-Smith 2005: 121; Booker 2004: 91). The series also incorporates some African-American, Asian-American and Latin-American characters. In *V: The Original Miniseries* the Visitors start eliminating scientists who could reveal their "true nature", and Jewish neighbours help one scientist and his family. The Jewish parents hesitate about hiding the family, but the grandfather Abraham (Leonardo Cimino), declares: "They have to stay or else we haven't learned a thing." The trope "if we do this, we will be no better than the others", also present in the re-imaginations of both *BSG* and *V*, shows how humanity must be strengthened by humane acts. During the 1970s and '80s many Holocaust narratives were produced (Elsaesser 1996), and *V* clearly took part in that discourse.[10] The references to Nazism remind us of events in human history when the "Aryan race" was considered to be "the right kind of race", and passing for "the right kind of race" was the precondition for "the right kind of humanity".

Skin is often perceived as the key signifier of cultural and racial difference (e.g. Fanon 1991/1952; Bhabha 2004/1994: 117; see also Ahmed 2000: 128–131; Ahmed 2004: 42–54). The fact that most of the human-like Cylons and Visitors are white implies that it is easier to pass for human if one has white skin. Whiteness can therefore be seen as a

power strategy, suggesting that it is easier to gain access to certain positions when one has white skin. Nevertheless, race does not prevent the others who do not have white skin – such as the Visitor Ryan (Morris Chestnut) in the new *V*, masked in black skin, or the Cylon Sharon in the re-imagined *BSG* (played by Asian-Canadian actress Grace Park) – from passing for human.

Keeping in mind the threat created by proximity, the Cylons and the Visitors become repulsive because they cannot be recognized as the other within a mostly white community. This can be read as expressing fears about racial passing (see Deis 2008: 157) and, for example, terrorist infiltration. Ahmed writes that "the figure of the terrorists gets associated with some bodies (and not others), at the same time the terrorists 'could be' anyone or everywhere" (Ahmed 2004: 15; see also Gumpert 2008: 143). The threat, then, is that the terrorist may pass us by unnoticed (Ahmed 2004: 79). If one cannot distinguish the other, how can one distinguish the enemy, the terrorist? According to Butler, Butler, in the War on Terror, lives are divided into the distinction between those that are grievable (i.e. the Americans) and those that are ungrievable (i.e. "the terrorists") lives is necessary in the War on Terror. This It "justifies" the war, making it a recovery from terrorism rather than a repetition of terror (Butler 2006/2004 : e.g. 28–39; see also Ahmed 2004: 191) The whiteness of the Visitors and the Cylons can be understood as problematizing the use of stereotypical racial imagery in connection with terrorism by sticking the sign "terrorist" to mostly white bodies. As the others cannot be distinguished in appearance, the distinction between grievable and ungrievable lives cannot be made on the grounds of appearance. In *BSG* the Cylon models are revealed, which then enables the

non-human yet human-like otherness to be located in certain bodies (the twelve models). Differentiating the Visitors from humans is in some ways more problematic. In the original series the Visitors had characteristics that distinguished them from humans. They wore sunglasses because their eyes could not adjust to sunlight and at the beginning of the series their voices echoed with a snakelike slither. In the re-imagination there are no such differences. One must, then, look deeper than appearance, deeper than skin, to find out who is a Visitor and who is not.

It is typical of science fiction to create narratives where racial differences between human societies are superseded for the common good when facing disaster. Christopher Deis has connected the new *BSG* to this tradition (Deis 2008: 157–160). The original *BSG* and the new *V* can also be situated within this tradition. However, by its references to the Holocaust, the original *V* – at least *V: The Original Miniseries* and *V: The Final Battle* – dealt with racial issues quite directly. As Deis notes, racial issues are still important in the new *BSG*, since the Cylons echo long-held fears of white societies about racial passing (Deis 2008: 157). The same can be said about both *V* series. Because the humans and their threatening racial others are mostly white, they problematize the assumption that race can be distinguished by skin colour or other physical characteristics (see also Rennes 2008: e.g. 69–71). They also call into question the way in which the signs "other" or "terrorist" are connected to certain bodies only because they have a certain appearance.

"Skin Jobs" – Encountering Others in Language

In the re-imagined *BSG* torture is used to explore the ethics of torturing a machine and the question of whether a machine can feel pain (see Johnson-Lewis 2008; Leaver 2008; Ott 2008; Pinedo 2008). In the new *V* the ethics of torture is connected to the Visitors' likeness to reptiles. In both re-imagined series the Cylons and Visitors are first encoded as others in language and then tortured. In the re-make of *BSG* the Cylons are encoded as the other by calling them "skin jobs", as in *Blade Runner* (Ridley Scott, US/ Hong Kong 1982) or "toasters". In the original series they are called "tin cans". Similarly, in both *V* series, the Visitors are called "lizards" to emphasize their alien and reptile-like origins. Names such as "toasters" and "lizards" are what Ahmed calls sticky signs, meaning that some words stick to others, forming chains of association, such as "negro", "animal", "bad" and "ugly" (Ahmed 2004: 66–67, 89–91). Therefore "toaster", "skin job" and "tin can" stick to "machine", "fake", "unnatural" and "non-human ". "Lizard" sticks to "animal" and "non-human".

Brian L. Ott has drawn connections between the derogatory language used in the re-imagined *BSG* and the language used in times of war. According to Ott, the road to torture starts before the actual acts of torture when the other is categorized as other in language. Torture is made "acceptable" by dehumanizing the enemy (Ott 2008: 17–19). As Erika Johnson-Lewis writes, it is easier to kill the terrorists if they are not actually people (Johnson-Lewis 2008: 30; see also Butler 2006/2004: e.g. 72–99; Sontag 2004). According to Butler, this kind of hate speech can work to restrict the ways in which the others perform their identity and to constitute the subject in a subordinate position (Butler 1997: 18–19). Hate speech is, therefore, a powerful method of othering. Going back to

Butler's notion of grievable and ungrievablelives, hate speech also encodes the others as ungrievable, not deserving of humane treatment or empathy. Drawing on Butler, Ahmed asks: "What happens when those who have been designated as ungrievable are grieved, and when their loss is not only felt as loss, but becomes a symbol of the injustice of loss?" (Ahmed 2004: 192). In their representations of torture, the re-imagined versions of *BSG* and *V* both address this question, which situates them within science fiction's tradition of mirroring humanity's failings in the representations of alien others. The human characters in all the *BSG* and *V* series use this kind of hate speech to create differences between the humans and the alien others and uphold the binary oppositions between "us" and "them". However, when the others are able to pass for human and, thus, cannot be distinguished from humans, hate speech only underlines the constructed nature of those very binary oppositions that it tries to uphold.

Painful Encounters

The role of humane and inhumane acts in the processes of constructing humanity is most clearly discussed in the representations of torture and violence in the re-imagined *BSG* and *V*. Scholars have analyzed torture in one particular episode of the new *BSG*, "Flesh and Bone" (e.g. Johnson-Lewis 2008: 34–35; Leaver 2008: 133–134; Ott 2008: 18). In this episode, Kara "Starbuck" Thrace (Katee Sackhoff) interrogates and tortures the Cylon Leoben (Callum Keith Rennie), who is encoded as the other by calling him "it" instead of "him", "machine" instead of "human/subject" (Ott 2008: 18). Johnson-Lewis has drawn connections between Leoben's torture and Elaine Scarry's work considering

pain. According to Scarry, even though pain is an instance of certainty for the one who feels it, hearing of the pain of others is an instance of doubt. Pain is unsharable because it resists language (Scarry 1985: 4, 7). Drawing on Scarry, Johnson-Lewis concludes that in the re-imagined *BSG*, humans doubt the Cylons' humanity because they do not believe in their pain. Even though Leoben appears human, Starbuck cannot believe in his pain (Johnson-Lewis 2008: 34–35). This resonates with Ahmed's notion that the assumption that we know how others feel allows us to transfer their pain to our sadness (Ahmed 2004: 31). However, as Leoben is so human-like in appearance and behaviour – he even sweats like a human while he is being interrogated – the viewer starts to doubt the ethics of Starbuck's actions. During this encounter, signs of humanness and inhumanness slide between the tortured and the torturer. As Leoben comments on his torture: "The military, they teach you to dehumanize people." The ability to torture is encoded as inhumane and it dehumanizes the torturer (see Johnson-Lewis 2008: 27–29, 34–35; Leaver 2008: 134; Ott 2008: 17–18). Gradually Starbuck does begin to question the ethics of her actions. Going back to Butler's writings on terrorism, one might say that Starbuck's perception of Leoben slides from something that is ungrievable to someone who is grievable. Although violence and torture are encoded as inhumane in the series, violence is also encoded as typical of the human race. The Cylon Caprica 6 (Tricia Helfer) even describes violence as the legacy that humans have passed on to their creation, the Cylons.

The graphic representations of torture in the re-imagined *BSG* have been studied as an allegory of the war in Iraq, especially the treatment of prisoners in Abu Ghraib and Guantanamo Bay (e.g. Mulligan 2008: 59–60; Leaver 2008: 134). The same allegory can

be read in the torture of Visitor Malik (Rekha Sharma) in the new *V*. In the episode "Laid Bare", Malik is captured by the human resistance movement. She is tied up, interrogated and used as a test subject. When Malik refuses to speak, Ryan, a Visitor working with the resistance, explains that the best way to make her speak is to peel off her human skin. This makes the role of skin different from in the original series, where it is just a mask. In the re-imagination, the human-like skin is organic, grown from human DNA onto the Visitors' skin. The skinning is extremely painful and it leads to the death of the Visitor. Since skin is crucial to passing for human, the removal of skin signals the removal of the visible, physical sign of humanity. When Malik is captured and questioned, she starts to hiss like a snake. Being treated as non-human, she reacts by acting in a non-human manner. She slides from something human-like to something alien and reptile-like in this encounter. The final decision to execute the skinning is made by Malik's former FBI partner, Erica Evans (Elizabeth Mitchell). The series does not, however, fully encode Malik as a non-human "other". Erica still calls Malik "her" instead of "it" when she orders the skinning. Similarly to the dehumanization of Starbuck, torturing Malik dehumanizes Erica. Pain and compassion are also connected to humanity when the Visitor Queen Anna makes the Visitors go through an empathy test to determine whether they have been contaminated by human emotions and have begun to feel empathy towards human suffering.

In *BSG* torture is also connected to gender, when the humans continuously rape their Cylon prisoner Gina (Tricia Helfer). Rape both humanizes and dehumanizes Gina. At the level of the narrative, the rape and suffering of Gina make her human in the sense of

being vulnerable and being gendered as a human female, while at the same time the act of raping her is intended to dehumanize, disempower and hurt her. Her rapists justify their actions by citing Gina's non-human origins (as Colonel Fisk (Graham Beckel) states: "You can't rape a machine"), but rape itself plays on her likeness to humans. Here, class, race and gender intersect: when Gina is raped she is encoded as the other – something non-human and lower than human – but also a female (see Heinricy 2008: 97; Leaver 2008: 135–137; Pinedo 2008: 181–182; Hellstrand 2009: 31). Regardless of the fact that rape is condemned in the narrative, and the rapists are, in fact, dehumanized (see Leaver: 136), Gina's rape sticks the sign "other" to the sign "woman". According to Ahmed, encounters reopen past encounters and bodies are recognized as the other in relation to other bodies (Ahmed 2000: 8). Gina's rape similarly presupposes the recognition of her body as female and the knowledge of how to encounter a female body: the torture of male Cylon Leoben is quite different, which speaks of the power relations between female and male gendered bodies. Rikk Mulligan has also interpreted rape in *BSG* as a harsh criticism of the unethical treatment of prisoners during the US occupation of Iraq (Mulligan 2008: 59–60).

The scenes depicting torture clearly situate the series within science fiction's tradition of critiquing humanity's corruption. The original versions of *BSG* and *V* also negotiated the human potential for violence by representing, for instance, humans who conspired with the others, although they dealt with humanity's corruption in less drastic ways than torture and rape. In both re-imaginations, torture and violence play a more important role: as both humans and non-humans perform inhumane and humane acts, the categories

between humans and non-humans, us and them, continuously shift and slide. The ungrievable are recognized as grievable – or, in Ahmed's terms, as liveable and loveable (Ahmed 2004: 130) – and the justification of torture that relies on the differences between "us" and "them" is questioned.

Toasters, Lizards and their Lovers – Constructing Humanity through Love

In science fiction narratives emotions are often seen as a crucial part of humanity, conventionally portrayed as superior to the cold reason of machines (Paasonen 2005: 28–29, 34). The original *BSG* follows this tradition by representing the Cylons as lacking emotion. Nevertheless, there is a budding friendship between a man and a Cylon robot in *Galactica 1980* ("Return of Starbuck"). Unfortunately, this friendship ends in the death of the Cylon. The emotional Cylons in the re-imagined *BSG* clearly question the presumption that machines cannot feel, which undercuts the division between emotion and reason, human and machine. Representing humans as emotional and the others as lacking emotion can also be connected to "others" as it is clearly seen in the new *V*: the Visitors are portrayed as a cruel, rational race that becomes less cruel by being exposed to humans. It is *human emotion*, more specifically love, that humanizes the Visitors. The Visitor Queen Anna is humanized as she begins to feel maternal love and Visitors Ryan and Lisa (Laura Vandervoot) are humanized by their heterosexual love towards humans. Although there are friendships and heterosexual relationships between Visitors and humans in the original series, love does not play a similar role in humanizing the aliens.

The importance of heterosexual love in passing for human is most clearly seen in the character of the Cylon Sharon, who later acquires the "call-sign" (a kind of nick-name given to pilots in the human fleet) Athena, in the re-imagined *BSG* (see also Jowett 2010: 66, 72–76). Even though the Cylons possess resurrection technology, which allows them to download into a new identical body after death, they believe that their God wants them to reproduce biologically. They have not been able to reproduce amongst themselves, and they have come to believe that the key to biological reproduction is love, an emotion that humans have. Athena is sent to seduce a human man, Karl "Helo" Agathon (Tahmoh Penikett). The Cylons believe that she must get him to fall in love with her in order for the reproduction to succeed. However, Athena also falls in love. When Helo finds out that Athena is a Cylon, he wants nothing more to do with her. When she reveals that she is pregnant with their child, Helo then accepts her as human or human-like. Thus, Athena's coming motherhood makes her more human-like and easier to accept (see Moore 2008: 107–113; Hellstrand 2009: 29–30, 33).

In Athena's passing for human, gender and occupation intersect. Pregnancy alone does not make her "human". She has to keep performing her gender and humanity in accepted ways. According to Ronald W. Moore, Athena maintains her personhood by acting and re-enacting three social roles: as a wife, officer and mother (Moore 2008: 113–116). Moore argues that love makes Athena a person. By noticing Helo's love for her, she differentiates herself from the other Cylons. His love therefore individualizes her. Moore points out, however, that the show does not suggest that a woman needs a man to be a person, but that people need people (2008: 109–110). Going back to Ahmed's theory that

bodies become aware of themselves through sensations, Athena's becoming a person is clearly affected by sensations and physical touch when she makes love with Helo. His touch enables Athena to differentiate her body from the bodies of other model Eights (the Cylon model she belongs to) and also to distinguish *this particular body* from all the possible bodies she could resurrect into. Pregnancy also changes Athena in a very material sense.

Loving encounters between humans and others contribute to the others' passing for human. By loving the right kind of human, that is, a member of the opposite sex, the others are expressing the right kind of emotions and taking part in the right kind of performances, such as marriage and motherhood.[11] Love, pregnancy and motherhood emphasize the intersections between emotions, embodiment and performance. It is not enough that Athena gives birth to her child, she also needs to fulfil the role of a caring mother.

Negotiating Otherness and the Norms of Humanity

Throughout this article, I have argued that the human-like others in *BSG* and *V* make the process of constructing humanity visible. The human-like Cylons and Visitors both have potential to be studied as cyborgs similar to the feminist configuration of the word, since they can be seen as transgressing boundaries such as animal/human, machine/human and us/them. The Cylons and Visitors who pass for human also raise questions about the power structures behind the process of passing and the constructions of humanity. As

bodily imagery and performance work together in constituting humanity in the series, the alien others who pass for human show us what kind of appearance and performance enable the passing for human: the type of body that passes for human is mostly represented as heterosexual and white. However, the others who pass for human make the "original", ontological nature of humanity uncertain (Ahmed 2000: 125–130). The "right kind of body" that is seen as heterosexual and white can literally be constructed in the context of the series, which questions the "naturalness" of these power structures.

The originals and re-imaginations of *BSG* and *V* also reflect and comment on cultural and political issues. Both of the original series represent aliens lying during peace negotiations, which can be linked to the fears posed by the Cold War and the suspicions directed towards peace negotiations with the Soviet Union (Muir 2008: 236–237). Because of its representations of, for instance, torture and war, the re-imagined *BSG* has been studied in connection with George W. Bush's presidency and the war in Iraq (e.g. Johnson-Lewis 2008; Mulligan 2008), and critics and bloggers have associated the re-imagined *V* with Obama's presidency. The charismatic but deceitful Visitor leader Anna, with her promises of universal healthcare, peace and change has been interpreted as a critique of Obama's politics (Gavin 2009; cf. Moran 2009). Even though the promises of universal healthcare may link the Visitors to Obama's politics, this kind of interpretation tends to simplify the series (see Moran 2009). The re-imagined as well as the original versions of *BSG* and *V* offer, in addition to entertainment, allegorical critiques of American politics. To today's viewer, the fear of otherness discussed in these series can

also resonate with broader contemporary phenomena such as terrorism, hate speech and xenophobia all around the world.

The series can also be situated within science fiction's tradition of mirroring and critiquing humanity's failings in the representations of others. This is most clearly seen in the re-imagined series, where signs of humanness and inhumanness slide between the humans and their alien others in both painful and loving encounters. However, the original versions can also be situated within this tradition. Even though the dichotomy between us and them is quite visible in the original *BSG*, where the Cylons are mostly emotionless, robotic creatures, the budding friendship between a Cylon and a man in *Galactica 1980* suggests for the first time that the Cylons are moral beings (Gray 2008: 163–164). In the original *V* there are friendships and love affairs between humans and the Visitors, which emphasizes the aliens' likeness to humans. In both original series some humans also help the others in their war against the humans, which underlines the human capability to perform inhumane acts. This problematizes distinctions between grievable and ungrievable, or liveable and loveable, lives. By questioning the moral superiority of humans, these series open up our imagination to a critique of humanist values and ideals. If humans were not considered as morally superior to other animals – or superior to machines – how would that affect the way we see the world and the way we encounter nature and all the "other creatures" that we share it with?

Notes

[1] The term "re-imagination" is commonly used instead of "remake" when discussing the new *BSG*. This underlines the creative differences between the original and re-imagined versions. I will also use the term when speaking about the new *V*.
[2] By the re-imagination I refer to the *Battlestar Galactica* (US/UK 2003) miniseries, the series *Battlestar Galactica* (US/UK 2004–2009) and the spin-offs and webisodes that aired during the years 2004–2009.
[3] I refer to both of these series as "the original *BSG*" and separate the two by name only when it is necessary to pin-point essential differences.
[4] When speaking about the original *V* I refer to all the productions mentioned and separate them by name only when it is necessary to discuss one production in particular.
[5] The term "passing" has been used to describe, for instance, racial passing, passing for "the opposite" sex, or passing for normative sexuality (Robinson 1994). On passing in the new *BSG* , see Deis 2008; Pegues 2008; Hellstrand 2009.
[6] On Cylons and performativity, see Harwood-Smith 2008; Chess 2008; Hellstrand 2009 & 2011.
[7] Intersectionality can be defined as "the relationships among multiple dimensions and modalities of social relations and subject formations" (McCall 2005: 1771).
[8] According to Sardar, science fiction is a predominantly Western genre (Sardar 2002: 2) – a notion that could be disputed. However, since I am writing about Anglo-American science fiction, I find the way in which Sardar connects the genre to Western culture useful.
[9] In the new *BSG* there are robotic Centurions and human-like Hybrids that navigate the Cylon ships. The battleships called Raiders and other Cylon ships are also living entities. In the article I focus on the twelve models, since they are the ones who can pass for human.
[10] I am indebted to Anneli Lehtisalo for alerting me to this cultural subtext.
[11] A lesbian relationship does help the Cylon Gina to infiltrate the human fleet, but her discovery as a Cylon leads to her rape and abuse.

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III

'THE MACHINE IS NOTHING WITHOUT THE WOMAN': GENDER, HUMANITY AND THE CYBORG BODY IN THE ORIGINAL AND REIMAGINED *BIONIC WOMAN*

by

Aino-Kaisa Koistinen, 2015

In *Science Fiction Film and Television*, 2015, 8 (1), 53-74.

IV

SCIENCE FICTION TELEVISION AND THE FRAMES OF WAR: ANALYSING WAR AND HUMAN–NON-HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE ORIGINAL AND RE-IMAGINED *V*

by

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Submitted to *Television & New Media*.

Science fiction television and the frames of war: Analysing war and human–non-human relations in the original and re-imagined *V*

Abstract

Inspired by Judith Butler's idea of the *frames of war* and the timely posthumanist ethical concerns dealing with our meetings with different kinds of non-humans, this article looks at how war between humans and aliens is framed in the original and the re-imagined science fiction television series *V*. I analyse how the frames of war are created, maintained but also broken in the *V* narratives and what kinds of lives emerge as *grievable* or *livable* within these frames. I claim that situated in different contexts, the *V* narratives produce ambivalent representations of war, violence, and human–non-human relations—and may even invite the viewers to reconsider their attitudes towards the *non-humans* they encounter in their everyday lives.

Science fiction narratives have always displayed representations of non-human or alien "others". Encounters between humans and non-humans might be friendly, but they can also lead to conflict and war. This article examines the representation of war between humans and aliens in the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version. The original *V* started as a miniseries (*V*) in 1983 (US). The series proved to be a success and a sequel titled *V: The Final Battle* (US 1984) was released a year later. These two series were followed by a continuous series called *V* (US 1984-1985) that did not live up to the ratings or production values of the previous miniseries and only lasted for nineteen episodes.[1] The re-imagined *V* (US) aired from 2009 to 2011.[2] Both the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version begin with the arrival of human-like aliens called *the*

Visitors on Earth. The Visitors do not immediately attack humans but claim to have come in peace. Very soon, however, it is discovered that they are planning to exploit humans and Earth's natural resources. The Visitors are thus established as an enemy of the human race, which both in the original saga and the re-imagined version leads into the forming of a resistance movement that wages war on the alien threat. It is also discovered that underneath their artificial human-like skins, the Visitors are actually lizard-like beings, which emphasizes their ontological difference from the humans—or their horrific, *alien nature*.

In *Frames of War*, Judith Butler argues that the media helps to create certain frames of war. The frames are "operations of power", as within these frames certain lives are represented as not quite alive and are therefore "never lived nor lost in the full sense" (2010, 1). In other words, these lives do not meet the conditions for a *livable life* as they are not considered *grievable* or worthy of recognition as human beings (Butler 2010, xix, 22, 41-45). The present article takes Butler's "frames of war" as the starting point for the analysis of the *V* narratives. I trace the different analytical outcomes or interpretations made possible by the *V* narratives as analysed in different cultural, industrial, and theoretical contexts and frameworks. These contexts include science fiction television, certain cultural-historical events—such as the Cold War and the War on Terror—and the theoretical framework used to examine the series. The questions asked are: what kinds of analytical interpretations and ethical considerations do these *frames* make possible; and what kinds of lives emerge as grievable or livable within them?

Although the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version stage the alien invasion in a somewhat different way, both narratives include affective scenes of violence between humans and non-humans. The original *V* saga and its re-imagined version also draw heavily on certain

cultural concerns, which supports analysing them as cultural allegories. Both versions were produced during a time when alien invasion resonated with the cultural atmosphere of the United States. According to Johnson-Smith, aliens have usually been represented as an outside threat in science fiction television (2005, 120). Whereas in the original *V* saga the alien invasion is more of an outside threat, drawing on the cultural paranoia of the Cold War era and the Soviet threat, the re-imagined version includes Visitors who have already infiltrated human societies—evoking fears of terrorist infiltration (cf. Gomel 2014, 95-6, 110; Johnson-Smith 2005, 122). These contexts have affected the way the series have been interpreted and how they can be interpreted today—but the representations of war provided by the *V* narratives also shape the understandings of the war contexts within which they were created.

Butler has claimed that the frames of war must constantly be iterated and reiterated, which means that they include "a constant breaking from context, a constant delimitation of new context". Breaks are inherent in the structure of the frames, for in order to become hegemonic, the frames must be continuously reproduced, iterated, and circulated. In other words, "the frame breaks apart every time it seeks to give definitive organization to its context". These contexts change the interpretation of the frame and: "What is taken for granted in one instance becomes thematized critically or even incredulously in another" (2010, 10). I am therefore interested not only in the ways the *V* narratives create and maintain the frames of war between humans and their non-human enemies—and how these frames can be connected to cultural-historical concerns—but also, how these frames break within themselves.

As the *V* narratives deal with the relations between humans and non-human aliens, it is not sufficient to analyse them simply as cultural allegories of war. This is why the narratives are also

discussed within a posthumanist framework. Butler's idea of the constant breaking of the frames of war resonates with Neil Badmington's definition of posthumanism. According to Badmington, the task of posthumanism is not so much to reject humanism, but to examine the inconsistencies in humanist discussions (2004, 118, 150-151). Thus, Butler and Badmington both seem to be arguing for the sensitivity to recognize not only how certain frames are created and maintained but also how they are questioned or broken—and rendered inconsistent. Butler has also argued for the "apprehension of the precarity of […] any and all living beings, implying a principle of equal vulnerability that governs all living beings" (2010, xvi). This creates a connection between Butler's work and the type of feminist posthumanism that argues for ethical meetings between humans and non-humans (on posthumanist ethics, see, for example, Åsberg 2013; Braidotti 2013, 89). Science fiction narratives—especially in literature—have also proven to be an inspirational source for negotiating encounters with different kinds of posthuman or non-human creatures, as many theorists, including Donna Haraway (2011), have noted (see also Gomel 2014; Graham 2002; Vint 2007; Vint 2014). Influenced by both Butler's idea of the frames of war and the timely posthumanist concerns of ethical meetings with non-humans, this article thus analyses the *V* narratives both as cultural allegories of particular times of war but also as narratives of meeting with "others"—or as narratives of human–non-human relations.

Framing war and aliens in science fiction television

Both the original and the re-imagined *V* narratives are a part of a long tradition of representing war and violence between humans and aliens in science fiction (on this tradition, see Gomel

2014, 28; Johnson-Smith 2005, 120). Encounters with aliens have often served as allegories for events in human societies (e.g. Sardar 2002). Thus, science fiction can be used as a tool for commenting on cultural issues, as it allows discussing them in settings that are different from our everyday reality. According to Johnson-Smith, science fiction must always establish a reality that is plausible but nevertheless distinguishable from the viewers' reality (2005, 19). Darko Suvin has described the genre's relation to reality as *cognitive estrangement*. For Suvin, science fiction is a genre that constantly works with "the presence and interaction of estrangement and cognition" and, by doing so, it creates imaginative alternatives "to the author's empirical experience" (1979, 7-8; quoted in Johnson-Smith 2005, 21).

Keeping with the idea of "frames", it could be said that that science fiction narratives work within certain *speculative frames* that enable them to use fantastic and speculative elements to comment on cultural issues. These frames distance science fiction from our everyday reality and enable the genre to address difficult cultural anxieties—such as war—in a manner unsuitable for more "realistic" genres. However, the genre retains a link to our reality and its narratives often call for the viewers to speculate whether these fantastic events could someday become their reality (see also, for example, Attebery 2002, 5; Merrick 2003, 241).

In the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version, speculative elements are utilized to create alien creatures whose difference from human beings is used to negotiate war and violence. The narratives, for instance, offer horrifying scenes in which the Visitor's humanoid skin is torn, revealing their non-human origins. Both the original *V* and the re-imagined *V* narratives also use striking special effects, which have enabled the creation of some of these affective scenes. For instance, in the original *V* saga, special effects were used to depict the Visitors eating live

rodents, which emphasized their *alienness* (see also Johnson-Smith 2005, 273n1). People who watched the series in the 1980s always tend to remember these scenes and the emotions they stirred, which is telling of their affective nature.

In addition to establishing the Visitors as the others by revealing their lizard-like skin, the *V* narratives create their frames of war by associating the Visitors with atrocities in real life human history. In the original *V* saga, the aliens are continuously aligned with tyrannical regimes, occupations, and wars. Most clearly, the Visitors are framed as the enemy by connecting them to the Second World War and the Nazi regime. They use propaganda and their symbols are reminiscent of swastikas. These references to propaganda and totalitarianism could also be interpreted as signifying the general anxieties caused by the Cold War in the United States of the 1980s (see Johnson-Smith 2005, 121). One of the most affective ways of framing war and confirming the evil nature of the Visitors is the allegory of the genocide of the Jewish people. In the original *V*, the Visitors persecute and take away scientists and their families in fear of having their lizard-like origins revealed. The connections between this and the genocide of the Jews are clearly articulated. The disappearances and killings of the scientists can also be connected to ethical discussions topical in the 1980s: in 1983 Amnesty International launched "a campaign against political killings and disappearances" (Amnesty International).[3]

In the re-imagined series, the Visitors are aligned with terrorism and the 9/11; a connection established already when the Visitors arrive in their space ships, looming ominously over the tall buildings of Manhattan. This connection is also articulated by one of the characters in the very first episode of the series. The fact that some of the Visitors have infiltrated human societies also resonates with the threat of terrorist infiltration. According to Lincoln Geraghty, after the fall of

the twin towers on 9/11, some science fiction films turned to the idea of aliens threatening human society (2009, 108). In television, the re-imagined *Battlestar Galactica* presented the viewers with a sophisticated and thought-provoking narrative including alien others (in this case, machines) that have infiltrated human societies which allegorically commented on the horrors of war and torture (see, for example, Geraghty 2009, 104, 118-119; Johnson-Lewis 2008; author 2011; Ott 2008). The re-imagined *V* thus takes part in these discussions of the "alien threat" in post 9/11 science fiction.

To summarize, the original and the re-imagined *V* narratives use science fiction's speculative elements to project the fear of war and violence onto the image of the ontologically other, the alien. The narratives frame the Visitors as the evil enemy, firstly, by revealing their non-human, lizard-like origins. This is articulated quite clearly in the original *V* by one of the main characters: "The more people know how alien they [the Visitors] are, the more they will want to fight them" (*V* 1983, pt. 2).[4] Secondly, the Visitors are associated with well-known atrocities in human history. In this sense, following Butler (2010, 42), the lives of the Visitors are not lives that should be mourned, but they represent the threat to life itself, which justifies the human war effort.

There is, however, already a break in these frames. As the events that are used to highlight the evil nature of the Visitors are actual events in human history, they remind us of the evil capacities of humanity. Furthermore, in both the original and re-imagined *V* narratives some Visitors disapprove of the war and humans and Visitors develop friendships and even romances, which complicates the initial division between "us" (the humans) and "them" (the alien enemy). In the 1980s, when the original *V* saga was produced, aliens were very popular in science fiction

television. Back then, aliens were represented as both evil and benevolent, which differentiated them from many of the earlier alien invasion narratives and their malevolent, monstrous aliens (e.g. Geraghty 2009, 69; cf. Badmington 2004, 1-33; Hill 2008). The original and re-imagined *V* thus both take part in this trend of representing aliens as both evil and benevolent in science fiction. Moreover, the Visitors of the re-imagined series can be connected to the distrust against the government of the United States and seen as a complex allegory of the war in Iraq.[5] As the Visitors are a technologically superior "super power" that attacks humanity, their invasion could be seen as an allegory of the American military attack against Iraq. Visitors are also able to monitor humans using their superior technology, evoking associations to the growing governmental surveillance and control in the post 9/11 Unites States. Their technology also includes remote-controlled drones, which connects the Visitors to the latest developments in modern warfare (cf. Braidotti, 2013, 125-7). Therefore, the alien threat in the re-imagined *V* does not only create a connection to terrorism, but the series can be connected to complex and ambivalent cultural anxieties. The original and the re-imagined *V* narratives are thus open for interpretations that acknowledge the ambivalent meanings that they produce and the inconsistencies in their frames of war, such as, in the justification of war on the grounds of differentiation.

Affective scenes, emotional responses: the frames of violence

Television as a medium and the serial mode[6] in particular also affect the way war is framed in the *V* narratives. Butler has claimed that the media shape the affective reactions or responses

available to the war by representing only certain kinds of violence and framing only certain lives as grievable or livable (2010, 34-5, 39-41). She also mentions television and argues that the medium makes its viewers the "visual consumers of" war (2010, xv). Johnson-Smith has noted that although television as a "domestic medium is arguably the least daring of any country's media", the serial mode allows for repeated, in-depth discussions of a traumatic experience such as war (2005, 133). In other words, television is able to create continuous and affective war narratives. According to Geraghty,

> Serial narrative is the key element in science fiction's treatment of history. Over the weeks, months and years, television allows a story to be created, developed and concluded (sometimes left open), which speaks to the viewers' desires to see epic vistas of alien worlds and to become emotionally attached to characters with whom they are familiar (2009, 125-6).

Seriality (see Telotte 2014, 183), therefore, allows continuous series to take part in ongoing cultural discussions and for the narrative and characters to develop over time (see also Telotte 2014, 16-17). This enables the viewers to form emotional bonds with the characters. In addition, television can produce audio-visually affective narratives of war and violence that call for affective responses.

However, according to Johnson-Smith, television narratives rarely utilize their potential to discuss war (2005, 133). Both the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version nevertheless create continuous story arcs that discuss war and violence in a complex manner. Both narratives, in

fact, even comment on the role of television in creating the frames of war. In the original *V*, television is represented as both the medium for resistance and the source of propaganda and manipulation. The Visitors broadcast their propaganda via television and at some point take over all the Earth's media. The resistance, however, later uses television to broadcast their material. This highlights the role of television and the media in both maintaining and breaking certain frames of war. In the re-imagined series, the Visitors also use television to manipulate public opinion. The Internet, too, is used to spread propaganda, which is telling of the growing role of new media in our human societies. Television, nevertheless, is represented as the most powerful medium to create and maintain the frames of war. Representing the Visitors as using propaganda and taking over the media is clearly meant to frame them as deceitful enemies, but it also questions the quality, dependability, and independence of the American media. Both the original *V* saga and the re-imagined version seem to imply that one should not believe all they see or hear on television—which also suggests that the viewers should watch the *V* narratives critically.

The original *V* saga and its re-imagined version also present thought-provoking narratives and violent imagery that invite the viewers to get emotionally attached and to respond affectively to the events that occur during war. In addition of establishing the Visitors as horrifying because of their lizard-like appearance, in both the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version, the viewers are presented with audio-visually striking and affective scenes of the Visitors performing violent acts that are somehow coded as inhuman. In both the original and re-imagined versions, the Visitors torture humans, use them as test subjects and even plan the total eradication of the human race. In the original *V* saga, the violence done by the Visitors is most graphically narrated in *V: The Final Battle* (pt. 2). In this episode a human, Julie Parrish (Faye

Grant), is tortured by the Visitors using their *conversion process*, which could be described as a form of harsh psychological torture. Julie's torture frames the Visitors as animal-like, non-human others by representing them as unemotional and unmoved by Julie's pain, even when she is horrified and screams in agony. Lack of empathy is often used to differentiate aliens and monsters from humans in fictional narratives, as Susanna Paasonen has noted (2005, 32).

According to Gomel, empathy is also closely connected to human rights. The discourse on human rights is based on the assumption that humans possess some unifying essence that forms the grounds for universal human rights and empathy has been considered as one of these unifying factors (2014, ix, 24). Therefore, analysed in this humanist context, representing the Visitors as incapable of empathy encodes humans as morally superior to the Visitors. The conversion process also threatens to erase human individuality, which further posits the Visitors as a threat for humanist ideals, such as individuality, and evokes fears of totalitarianism, such as Communism. In 1984, when *V: The Final Battle* aired, Amnesty International also launched a campaign for the abolition of torture (Amnesty International). This, again, is telling of how the original *V* saga discussed issues topical at the time of its production.

In addition to representing the Visitors as lacking in empathy, the scenes of Julie's torture visually associate the Visitors with non-human beasts by making Julie imagine that she is being attacked by a giant lizard. In Butler's (2010, ix) terms, these scenes circulate certain imagery that represents the alien Visitors as non-human and unethical. This calls for the viewer to affectively respond to Julie's horror and to condemn the Visitors as the non-human, unethical enemy. This is established by utilizing the possibilities a television series has for evoking emotional responses from the viewers through audio-visually striking imagery and their identification with the

characters. The continuity of the original *V* saga also affects the way Julie's torture is perceived. The fact that the viewer has been introduced to Julie already in the miniseries makes her a character with whom the viewer has possibly already identified, thereby making her torture even more affective.

Figure 1. The tortured Julie in *V: The Final Battle*, pt. 2. DVD. Warner Bros.

Figure 2. The Visitors are unmoved by Julie's pain (*V: The Final Battle*, pt. 2). DVD. Warner Bros.

The re-imagined series also circulates affective imagery of the Visitors using violence and performing torture. The Visitors are represented as an unemotional species incapable of empathy—unless they are contaminated by *human emotion* (love and empathy). Because the Visitors are framed as the inhumane enemy, the human war effort against them may sometimes seem even virtuous in both the original *V* saga and the re-imagined version. According to Gomel,

> The connection between war and virtue has been articulated through the classic distinction between *jus ad bellum*, the just reason for war, and *jus in bello*, the just

> conduct of war. If both obtain, the war is not only justified, but positively virtuous (2014, 40).

In this sense, the framing of the Visitors as unemotional and evil makes the war seem justified. However, the boundaries of just conduct are rendered problematic in both the original *V* saga and the re-imagined version. Both narratives blur the boundaries between humans and the alien others by representing some humans taking the side of the aliens and being equally deceitful and violent. In both versions, violence against the Visitors is also questioned. In *V: The Final Battle* (pt. 1), for instance, humans experiment with their Visitor prisoner Willie (Robert Englund), which alludes to the experiments the Nazis conducted on their prisoners.[7] From the beginning of the series, Willie is represented as a sympathetic character, which makes it hard for the viewer to justify the experiments conducted on him simply on the grounds of his otherness. These scenes also remind the viewer that humans are capable of treating their prisoners unethically.

In the re-imagined *V*, the human capability of violence is highlighted even more, which further questions the division of lives into grievable and ungrievable during a war. The humans treat their prisoners, both human and Visitor, violently and use questionable warfare tactics—such as contaminating other humans with "DNA bombs" (designed to contaminate the Visitors) that kill their carriers. This complicates the virtuousness of the war in terms of just conduct. The most vivid representation of human violence against the Visitors is seen in the episode "Laid Bare" when a Visitor called Malik (Rekha Sharma) is tortured by the human resistance. Her torture offers a thought-provoking representation of violence that can be interpreted as taking part in the way the Iraqi war was framed in the media. The role of Malik is played by Rekha

Sharma, a Canadian actress of Indian descent (see Nuytens 2007), and her physical appearance (such as skin tone, facial features, and dark hair) can evoke allusions to people that are considered ungrievable or unlivable in the War on Terror. In addition, Malik's torture is ordered by Erica who is the main protagonist of the series and, from the beginning of the series, is represented as a caring mother. These factors invite the viewer to identify with Erica instead of Malik, who is a less significant character and has been seen in only some of the episodes before. Malik has also violently attacked Erica. The scenes also circulate imagery that emphasize Malik's otherness from humans and her lizard-like origins. The form of torture plays on Malik's otherness as she is tortured by ripping off her human-like skin—unlike in the original *V* saga, the tearing off the Visitor's humanoid mask causes great pain and leads to the Visitor's death.

However, when the re-imagined *V* series first aired on NBC, the imagery of the War on Terror circulating in the media already included images of American soldiers torturing Iraqi prisoners in Abu Ghraib. According to Butler, the American media did not want to release the Abu Ghraib photographs to limit the possibilities for the American people to create affective responses to torture and "turn public opinion against the war in Iraq, as indeed it did" (2010, 40). The scenes of Malik's torture were therefore received in a cultural atmosphere that was already increasingly critical towards the War on Terror. The scenes also present affective imagery that emphasize Malik's similarity to humans and call for the viewer to identify with Malik's pain and to question the justification of her torture. The viewers are shown close-ups of Malik's bloodied, humanoid face that do not portray her as the other, but as a very human-like woman in pain. The viewer is also forced to listen to Malik scream in agony, which makes it difficult not to acknowledge her pain. The human characters also seem uncomfortable with the torture, which is

highlighted by the melancholy background music and the close-ups of Erica's face that reveal her discomfort. These affective scenes call for the viewer's emotional involvement with both the human and alien characters, inviting the viewer to consider if the violence against Malik is just conduct. This creates a break in the logic of war that justifies it on the grounds of the dehumanization of the enemy.

Following Butler, putting the emphasis on human discomfort might indicate that Malik's suffering leads to Erica's apprehension of their equal vulnerability, even though this does not save Malik's life—the skinning nevertheless kills her. Set in the context of humanism and humanist ideals, empathizing with Malik's pain can nevertheless be interpreted as making the human characters seem even more human. In this sense, Malik's remains a life that is not considered as truly grievable or lost but a mere causality of the war. Analysed in this cultural context, the *V* series seem to be offering ambivalent frames of war that support at least two different interpretations: one that speaks to the viewers who are for the War on Terror and another that speaks to those viewers who are against it—or, perhaps, leads to the acknowledgement of and reflection on these different positions.

Figure 3. Malik's torture in "Laid Bare" (*V* 2009-2011). DVD. Warner Bros.

Figure 4. Erica's discomfort in "Laid Bare" (*V* 2009-2011). DVD. Warner Bros.

Although science fiction is a genre of cognitive estrangement, the *V* narratives elaborate how science fiction television series can create strong emotional attachments and, by doing so, strive for utilizing the potential of series television to continuously comment on cultural anxieties related to war and otherness. In their affective scenes, the ideas considering grievable and ungrievable lives are set into motion, inviting the viewer to reconsider, what, indeed, constitutes a livable life. Writing on literature, Gomel has argued that "good science fiction […] makes one think rather than emote" because it "respects the reader's capacity to buckle the book's argument and come up with alternatives of his/her own" (2014, ix). Johnson-Smith has noted that television is a medium associated with "the domestic, the mundane and the secure", which can pose a problem for a long-running science fiction television series, as too much familiarity can take away the cognitive estrangement required for science fiction (2005, 48-49). I would, however, claim that the affective scenes that call for emotional involvement in science fiction television series—such as the original and re-imagined *V*—can contribute to the sense of cognitive estrangement, for instance, when the characters' (or the viewers') initial emotional engagement becomes somehow strange or problematic, disrupting the familiarity of the narratives.

War, violence and posthumanist ethics

What, then, are we to make of the frames of war in the original and re-imagined *V* when grievable or livable lives and human–non-human relations are considered? The affective scenes

presented by the *V* narratives call for the viewer to empathize with the others and to affectively respond to the violence directed towards them. Following Butler, it could be argued that there are scenes in both the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version that evoke the apprehension of the precariousness of the non-human others and the grievability of their lives—which, then, may allow for the grievability of these others to be recognized and the conditions of a livable life to be extended to cover them.[8] Analysed as cultural allegories, the *V* narratives can thus be interpreted as problematizing the division of human beings into grievable and ungrievable and lives into livable and unlivable on the grounds of "ontological" differences between different human "races" and cultures. I have also argued elsewhere that as the original and re-imagined *V* narratives represent both humans and aliens as being capable of violence and deceit but also of love and empathy, they contest certain ideals of human supremacy over the non-human others (author, 2011). Representing both humans and the Visitors as capable of violence means that the Visitors are not represented as evil because of their non-human ontology alone, but the emphasis shifts to individual choices and acts.

The emphasis on individual choice, however, posits some problems as it highlights individual heroism and individual morals and does not discuss the limits of individual choices during times of war (see also Gomel 2014, 83; Johnson-Smith 2005, 133). It would thus seem that some Visitors choose to be "good" and some choose to be "evil", but can we really make such conclusions of the enemy during times of war (see also Gomel 2014, 29, 41)? The good and evil acts are also judged by humanist moral standards. According to Gomel, narratives of war between humans and aliens are always humanist. Although war is often justified on the grounds of the difference of the enemy, the enemy is nevertheless judged according to humanist moral

standards. If the enemy was radically other, its actions could not be judged by human standards at all (2014, 29, 41). The apprehension of the Visitors' grievability also posits problems. As discussed above, the affective scenes establish this by making the equal precariousness between human and non-human lives visible. The Visitors are, nevertheless, recognized as grievable only by their similarity to humans, and the non-humans that are not similar enough are not considered grievable or worthy of life. The human becomes the norm for life. This humanist framework of the *V* narratives is most clearly articulated in the re-imagined series in which the Visitors that are considered good only become so through being "contaminated" by human emotion, which allows them to resist *the bliss* (a feeling of complete content) given by their Queen and to make individual choices.

Gomel has claimed that, at its best, science fiction literature can offer representations of transformative ethics with non-human others. In these narratives humans accept the otherness of the aliens and choose to act compassionately towards them, even when it seems inconceivable to judge the others by humanist ethics (2014, 213). Braidotti (2013) and Haraway (2008) have also argued for ethical encounters between humans and non-humans that are based on *becomings* or *mutual transformations* between humans and non-humans. According to Haraway, we should recognize that the "ways of living and dying matter" for humans as well as non-humans (2008, 88) and make the lives of our companion species more livable with "nonantropomorphic sensitivity" (93). The *V* narratives might not be able to completely break from their humanist frames and represent humans voluntarily accepting mutual transformation with the alien others. I nevertheless claim that the negotiations of the similarity and difference of the Visitors does not only reaffirm the humanist ideals but they also highlight the inconsistencies and ethical problems

behind the humanist frames that are used to justify war—and to differentiate humans from non-human others. On one hand, war must be justified on the grounds of difference, but on the other hand, the ethics of war are justified on the grounds of similarity and the assumption is that the enemy can be judged by human standards. The frames that justify war on the grounds of difference thus become problematic (cf. Butler 2010, 93).

The Visitors' similarity to the humans also makes humanity appear unstable, negotiated and performative, which calls for the re-evaluation of how the boundaries between humans and non-humans are drawn. What should our ethical responses be based on, if we cannot necessarily recognize humans from the non-human others (see also Badmington 2004, 150-1; Gomel 2014, 28)? Another way that both the original *V* saga and its re-imagined version frame the Visitors as the non-human enemy is the representation of reproduction: the Visitors intervene with human reproduction by impregnating human women or manipulating their pregnancies. This compromising of bodily integrity can evoke associations of rape as a method of torture during war, but it can also be linked to the concerns of species purity as well as racial purity in, for instance, immigration debates. This contamination is represented as a bigger threat in the re-imagined *V*, which can be linked to the spreading environment of xenophobia or to the "crisis" of anthropocentric humanism today (see, for example, Braidotti 2013). The contaminated human bodies can be connected to the scientific discovery that our bodies actually inhabit more bacteria than human cells, making us already contaminated by the other. Therefore, we never really were *pure humans* (Haraway 2008, 3-4, 165; Åsberg 2013). Acknowledging this crisis of humanism today causes another break in the re-imagined *V*'s frames of war, especially in the logic that justifies war on the grounds of dehumanization—but the original *V* saga can also be analysed

within this posthumanist framework. If we never really were that human, how can we deem non-humans as "lower" than humans?[9]

The Visitors' treatment of humans can be interpreted as an allegory of the ways we treat other species: the Visitors only treat us like we treat those that we consider unlivable, such as non-human animals. In the original series, the Visitors even mass produce humans for food. According to Sherryl Vint, the human-eating aliens of science fiction speak of the anxieties in our relationship with animals (2014, 21, 24). The original *V* taps into this same anxiety. The human-eating Visitors therefore resonate with the commodification of non-human animals as "always-already meat" (Vint 2014, 28) that has been justified through their difference from humans ever since the early modern period (Vint 2014, 26; see also Resl 2007, 3). In this sense, the logic of the Visitors is not so different from the humanist logic which situates humans above all other species. These allegorical connections to human–animal relations also resonate with Haraway's concerns regarding the ways we draw the boundaries between livable and killable species (2008, 69-82). These negotiations of the human–animal boundary also have political connections to the treatment of those human beings that have become considered "the others of Man" in Western cultures—for instance, animals, enemies in war, women, "other races", and those that are not *intelligible* as acceptable genders (see also Butler 2004; Wolfe 2003, 6-8).

These polysemic and contradictory interpretations made possible by the original and re-imagined *V* narratives thus remind us that the frames of war and how we understand categories such as the human and non-human are never stable and fixed but constantly negotiated and drawn. The *V* narratives take part in this negotiation by representing affective narratives of war and violence between humans and non-humans. The ambivalent nature of these narratives that

brings to fore the problems and inconsistencies within a certain humanist framework can also invite the viewers to consider the cultural frames that construct their understandings of human and non-human lives.

Conclusions

As a genre that imagines possible worlds and futures, science fiction is an important platform for discussing questions such as violence, war and livable lives. The speculative frames of science fiction allow for the creation of imaginative ways to negotiate these issues. They also enable the creation of powerful allegories which express cultural anxieties in a manner that is unsuitable for more "realistic" fiction. Science fiction's speculative frames can thus help us to imagine possibilities for different kinds of livable lives for humans and non-humans alike. The original *V* saga and its re-imagined version both use science fiction's speculative frames to establish their frames of war. By doing so, they create thought-provoking narratives that can be analysed as cultural allegories of historical events—such as the Cold War and Second World War in the original *V* saga and the War on Terror in the re-imagined series.

Television series also have qualities that make them a powerful platform for challenging the viewers to rethink their notions considering war, violence, and livable lives. For instance, continuous narratives allow television series to comment on ongoing cultural discussions and the viewers to create emotional attachments to the characters. In science fiction, these can even be non-human characters. Television can also produce audio-visually striking imagery of violence and war that call for affective responses. Going back to Butler's idea of the frames of war, the

media creates certain frames of war within which affective responses to war are mediated. The original *V* saga and the re-imagined version use affective scenes that call for affective responses and identification with either human or Visitor characters to maintain but also question their frames of war. The affective nature of these speculative television narratives invites us to create compassionate relations to both humans and their non-human others by acknowledging their common vulnerability or precariousness, or the grevability and livability of their lives.

It nevertheless would seem that in our already quite *posthuman* present, science fiction television faces a challenge of creating even more intriguing encounters with non-human aliens to make terms with the demands of our increasingly *posthuman(ist)* futures. For instance, acknowledging the Visitors as grievable lives has its problems as it is based on the Visitors' similarity to humans. The apprehension of a life as grievable and thus also as livable seems to rely on their similarity to human beings. Indeed, in both the original *V* saga and the re-imagined version, it is easier to frame the aliens as grievable or livable when they seem human and are understood as "moral" and good by humanist standards. The human, and humanist ideals, seem to emerge as the norm for life itself. This leads to the conclusion that there are no true possibilities for *transformative ethics* or *ethical becomings* between the humans and their non-human others—as called for by Braidotti, Gomel and Haraway—as the narratives remain, in this sense, deeply anthropocentric.

I would nevertheless conclude that even though the *V* series may seem to be humanist to the core, the human–non-human encounters leave a lingering suspicion of the ontological purity of humanity—and humanist ideals. As Butler has noted, the reproduction and iteration of the frames of war lead to the instability of the frames. The anthropocentrism of the frames of war

presented by the original and the re-imagined *V* narratives highlights the inconsistencies within the logic of war. War must be justified on the grounds of difference, but simultaneously, the ethics of war are justified on the grounds of similarity; the very assumption is that the enemy can be judged by human standards. But if the others are truly non-human, *what happens then*? On what grounds can we judge their actions? The humanist frames, therefore, emerge as incoherent, unstable and ambivalent, and in need of constant re-enforcement and negotiation. In addition, the *V* narratives raise questions of not only the ethics of war but also the definition of the human (against the other) as well as the human–animal boundary in our human societies. Analysed in this manner, the *V* narratives can even inspire certain ethical "transformances" in the ways viewers respond to the others—such as animals, women, or "other races" that are considered to be "the others of Man" in Western cultures—in their daily lives. Science fiction television should thus continue to find new ways to utilize its potential for both emotional engagement and cognitive estrangement in negotiating the ethics of meeting non-human others. I believe that we can use these sorts of narratives as inspiration when we try to imagine the ethical transformations that might lead to more sustainable and livable living conditions for humans and non-humans alike.

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Notes

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[1] On the production of the original *V* saga, see Booker 2004, 91-3; Johnson-Smith 2005, 120-1; Geraghty 2009, 81-4.

[2] It was cancelled after the second season because of the low ratings (TV Series Finale).

[3] The fact that the Visitors are aliens connects them to illegal immigrants, as the word "alien" refers to: "An individual who is not a U.S. citizen or U.S. national" (IRS). In the 1980s, questions of illegal immigrants were a topical issue in the United States. In 1986 Ronald Reagan instituted the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) which made it illegal to hire illegal immigrants and offered amnesty to several of them (Boston University Human Resources). The original *V* saga discusses questions of immigration; for instance, by aligning the Visitors with illegal workforce (see the miniseries *V*, 1983).

[4] Quotes from the *V* narratives are transcribed by the author from DVDs.

[5] Gomel has claimed that for the last two decades, radical conservatism has been gaining ground in the United States, leading to "the disdain for lawyers and politicians" (2014, 110). The Visitors in the re-imagined *V* have been connected to the Obama presidency as the promises of "peace and change", offered to the humans by the Visitors, are reminiscent of Obama's first presidential campaign (see Gavin 2009; cf. Moran 2009).

[6] Whereas the serial usually implies a continuity and conclusion in its narrative, a series does not (Ellis 1992, 123; Telotte 2014, 11). J. P. Telotte has, nevertheless, argued that science fiction television series have increasingly started to incorporate serial-like qualities in their narratives by creating continuity between different episodes and story-arcs (2014, 183). Although the original *V* saga was not initially a continuous series, the narrative of the miniseries continued and developed in its following productions and some of the characters remained the same.

[7] Willie is not hurt by the experiments, as the Visitors have been inoculated for all Earth diseases. The humans can, nevertheless, not be sure if the inoculation works before the tests are performed.

[8] According to Butler, recognition is the "stronger term" and apprehencion is "less precise" and "can imply marking, registering, acknowledging without full cognition". Apprehencion can, nevertheless, lead to the critique of the norms of recognition (2010, 4-5). In this sense, apprehension of the other's grievability in the *V* narratives evokes questions of the norms and conditions of a livable life.

[9] Alien invasion and infestation in the *V* narratives also evokes associations with the lizard people meme on the Internet. The lizard people conspiracy discourse claims that lizards have

infiltrated the United States Government and threaten the purity of the human race (see Bump 2013).