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A Search for Home: Navigating Change in *Battlestar Galactica*

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Abstract

This dissertation explores the various ways in which the multiple leaders portrayed in the science fiction television series *Battlestar Galactica* (2003-2009) navigate extreme conditions of continual change. In addition, the dissertation contains a discussion of the larger narrative themes of love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other as principles effective leaders must cultivate. Through an interpretation of this specific popular media text, a deeper emotional sensitivity to and understanding of leadership, positive and negative, during extreme crises is gained. Furthermore, the series serves as a vehicle through which viewers can reflect on and engage in their own self-awareness about issues surrounding leadership and reconsider personal paradigms based on the depiction presented in the narrative. The choice for using an interpretive hermeneutic method for this dissertation comes from the specific desire to understand the visual text of *Battlestar Galactica* in relation to leadership studies. The goal is neither to predict behaviors nor to examine an individual case against theory. My intent is to develop our further and deeper understanding of leadership *in extremis*, while questioning how the visual text may influence our perceptions of leadership theory and practice. The electronic version of this dissertation is at OhioLink ETD Center, www.ohiolink.edu/etd

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Chapter I: Introduction

Leadership Studies and the Humanities: A Perspective of Symbiosis

Leading during times of extreme crisis is an atypical experience for most leaders. Yet, the urgency for understanding leadership competencies in volatile environments has seemingly increased in the aftermath of natural disasters, financial system implosions, terrorist attacks, and perpetual hostilities against ill-defined and elusive enemies. *Transboundary crises*, those crises where multiple systems, functions, or infrastructures are acutely threatened and the causes and remedies are ambiguous, may become the rule and not the exception for what leaders face in this millennium (Boin, 2009). Exhorting the value of proactive crisis planning as a necessary element for effective leadership does little to prepare leaders, neither for unimaginable chaotic events nor for coping with ethical and emotional challenges stemming from an inconceivable crisis.

Role models of crisis leadership are predictably portrayed in heroic terms as 'great' men or women who emerged as stoic leaders when their organizations encountered a crisis, and we learn their stories in hindsight when the acute change event has passed. However, as Gilovich (1991) cautions, people are predisposed to create relationships and construct meaning in ways that provide order and comfort. Since the outcome is known, the narrative of the struggle is revised. Moments of confusion, emotional weakness, unflattering behaviors, poor judgment, follower dissatisfaction or resistance, and ethical lapses may have occurred but are moderated or dismissed from memory as these moments can be embarrassing and do not directly lead to the restoration of order. Yet, these moments are precisely what leaders need to explore in order to gain greater insight about the vagaries of personal leadership conduct and competency during a crisis as well as periods of accelerated change.

Popular media texts provide an accessible alternative for exploring leadership during crises by illuminating the changing and challenging environment leaders confront with an unfiltered emphasis on the personal change aspects of leading during crisis. As Hatcher (2006) observes, "works of fiction sometimes display dimensions of human character better than theoretical concepts or principles" (p. 201). Lewis, Rodgers, and Woolcock (2008) state, "not only are certain works of fiction 'better' than academic or policy research in representing central issues relating to development but they also frequently reach a wider audience and are therefore more influential" (p. 198). Huczynski and Buchanan (2004) provide compelling arguments for the use of film, in that "valid explanations, albeit with limited generalizability, can be based on the study of unique events, or event sequences that never happened" (p. 712). They view films as "cultural artifacts that shape and constitute our understanding of social and organizational life" and are "a powerful tool for illustrating topics and concepts and for demonstrating the application of theory" (p. 708). Moreover, popular media, especially episodic television, creates a reciprocal relationship between the creators and the viewer, which allows time for reflection on the events and themes of the narrative between episodes. As Appel (2008) notes, narratives can "stimulate moral evaluation," (p. 64) which is enhanced through the space between episodes.

Importantly, fictional narratives in mass media have the potential to convey modes of leadership viewers and readers will likely internalize. Media effects research suggests mediated experiences have a greater influence in shaping beliefs about the social world (Slater, 1990). Moreover, fictional television and film have become major sources for reflection on significant social issues and the representations of our leaders (Beck, 2004). Indeed, presentations of fictional narratives are designed to invoke emotional responses and, although not empirical truth, the effect upon the participant is greater cognitive and emotional understanding of human actions

(Oatley, 1999). Gerrig discussed this experience as *narrative engagement* where readers have "thoughts and emotions predicated on the fictional context…[that] are not merely a form of entertainment, but have lasting real-world consequences" (Mar, Oatley, Hirsh, dela Paz, & Peterson, 2006, p. 695). The internalization of narratives through emotional absorption can manifest in both conscious and unconscious ways within the actual world of the reader or viewer.

More specifically, science fiction (SF) narratives provide an optimal genre for exploring leadership and the human condition. The core construct of these narratives is they examine an exotic imaginative journey that blurs the line of what is real or can be real and allow us to contemplate more fully our human experiences in the World (Roberts, 2007). These experiences are accomplished through *cognitive estrangement*, the presentation of an alternative world that is different from our own, but wholly familiar (Suvin, 1977/2010). In essence, most science fiction narratives are not realistically based on accepted scientific or technological epistemologies, but extrapolated, and are "texts that adduce qualia that are not to be found in the real world in order to reflect certain effects back on to that world" (Roberts, 2007, p. 3). Furthermore, as King and Hutnyk (2009) note, "SF television can be construed as a project of working through the ways we deal with our selves and our others" (p. 240). The ways in which this project happens can be both positive and negative, as offered within this dissertation.

I am grounding this research topic in the perspective that the social sciences and the humanities, as they relate to leadership studies, hold a symbiotic relationship not readily acknowledged or accepted within the traditional structures of this scholarship discipline. Cuilla (2008) championed the "fusion" of these branches of learning by stating, "the social sciences provide us with descriptions and explanations of leadership, but we need the humanities to help

us understand those explanations in the context of history and the ways in which artists, writers, theologians, and philosophers depict elements of the human condition" (p. 395).

In addition, popular culture artifacts, such as film and television, are uniquely situated to create an environment where individuals can reflect on socio-economic inequities. The narratives may not ignite immediate social and economic revolutions in favor of marginalized and oppressed peoples, but can spark the viewer's moral imagination to a greater empathetic understanding of societal injustices. Potentially, these individual reflections may give rise to dialogues on a group level that explore ways in which the fictionalized narratives mirror contemporary society and how inequities may be ameliorated. Significantly, fictional narratives often demonstrate that leadership surrounding issues of social justice is "bottom up" and change agents may emerge from unlikely places.

Film and television offer several examples where the artists have been able to create societal change by starting a dialogue about inequities. Documentary films are typical of this kind of challenge to the status quo: Frederick Wiseman's *Titicut Follies* (1967), which examined the treatment of the mentally ill at a state hospital and eventually Massachusetts laws were changed; Edward R. Murrow's *Harvest of Shame* (1960) broadcast which challenged national perceptions of class by demonstrating the plight of migrant workers; and even Ken Burns' *Civil War* (1990), which not only changed the way documentary films are made, but challenged our understanding of ourselves as a nation. Popular films can also bring about external and internal dialogues that create change in *Golddiggers of 1933* (Mervyn LeRoy), where Joan Blondell sings "My Forgotten Man" to remind the audience – and those in power – of the difficulties of World War I veterans when they returned home; the mini-series *Roots* (David Wolper, Producer, 1977), while problematic on many levels, was hugely popular and generated interest in self-heritage, as

well as creating a means by which dialogues about race relations could begin; other films, such as *The China Syndrome* (James Bridges, 1979), *War Games* (John Badham, 1983) and *Silkwood* (Mike Nichols, 1983) which can also be considered catalysts for changing how we think about nuclear power and corporate responsibility. I have also wondered if Barack Obama's candidacy for President would have been as well received if Morgan Freeman (*Deep Impact*) and David Hastert (*24*) had not been cast in the role of the President years before Obama's candidacy.

These are examples of how artists can act as change agents by challenging the status quo and provide a vision that may be different from what participants in the arts have previously experienced. The caveat, of course, is the artist cannot always anticipate the change that may occur because of the nature of art being a personal individual experience. Nonetheless, artists who wish to influence change have a responsibility to get their message across and not to turn away, but to engage with the world. Without engagement, any change they might envision will never happen. Film and television are powerful artistic means for engagement as they reach large audiences through narratives that provoke emotional responses, which may be more likely to inspire subsequent action in the real world.

Science fiction narratives are useful for the purpose of creating change in that the "imaginary worlds of sf are pretended resolutions of dilemmas insoluble and often barely perceived in the present" (Csicsery-Ronay, 2008, p. 3). SF literature and film often discuss issues barely within the collective consciousness of the mass audience. Importantly, the depiction – though fictional – of resolutions to complex societal issues demonstrates change is possible. This depiction of the possible becomes a strong combination for activating the moral imagination of the audience and leading to changed behaviors and social systems. This approach is Gadamerian in that it is an engagement both historical and relational. In essence, "meaning is

not an objective, eternal idea but something that arises in relationship" (Palmer, 1969, p. 227).

As Kuhn (1990) explains, "meanings in film texts are not already there, but are produced in a

relationship between text and spectator" (p. 145). At the very least, the narratives can trigger

understanding that a problem exists, as most readers and viewers of SF are keenly aware of the

parallels between the fictional worlds of the story and the reality of contemporary societies.

And yet, care must be taken to avoid considering SF narratives as allegorical tales of

contemporary social lives. As Suvin (1977/2010) notes, science fiction narratives are "always

bound to a particular time, place, and sociolinguistic norm… so SF is a historical genre" (p. 69).

However, Suvin (1977/2010) is clear to state SF narratives

> cannot be an orthodox allegory with any one-to-one correspondence of its elements to
> elements in the author's reality, its specific modality of existence is a feedback oscillation
> that moves now from the author's and the implied reader's norm of reality to the
> narratively actualized novum in order to understand the plot-events, and now back from
> those novelties to the author's reality, in order to see it afresh from the new perspective
> gained. (p. 76)

This "feedback oscillation" between the narrative and reality allows authors and audiences to

explore issues of contemporary society through cognitive estrangement and, ideally, develop or

even change their understanding of those issues. Essentially, SF narratives are a hermeneutic

experience of repeated encounters resulting in new insights from the interpretation of the

narrative.

An Interpretive Hermeneutical Approach

Arguably, a hermeneutical element to the study of leadership through cultural artifacts

exists, which uncompromising positivists would dismiss as nothing more than subjectivity with

little epistemological value. However, hermeneutical interpretation should not be confused with

non-scientific subjectivity as ethical boundaries are defined and justified within the methodology

(Vandevelde, 2010). In addition, as leadership is a construct of human experience "embedded in

culture," (Cuilla, 2008, p. 393) the importance of acknowledging and sense making of mediated depictions of leaders enables scholars and practitioners to explore more fully the issues of leadership theory and development.

Importantly, people will interpret a work in different ways that maintain respect for the source material but provide a new window for understanding how the material influences us intellectually and emotionally. No two interpretations will be the same, nor is duplication to be desired. The divergence of interpretations is the juncture at which participants in the work of art—whether creators or viewers—can enlarge their understandings and create more fully realized meaning of societal issues or personal conundrums. Therefore, interpreting the text and creating the subtext is critical for performing and appreciating a work of art. These practices from the dramatic arts are highly correlated to the area of leadership and change studies. Indeed, the study of leadership as it relates to change is fundamentally an exploration and interpretation of human experiences.

I speak to this subject from the position of a SF enthusiast, theatre actor, writer, and director coupled with undergraduate work in film studies. When I was ten years old, I picked up a copy of Frank Herbert's *Dune,* and my passion for science fiction narratives was ignited. As a teenager in 1977, my friends and I were captivated by George Lucas' *Star Wars* and then Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. I remember tallying 26 viewings of *Star Wars* in the theatre before the era of home video. These stories and films, among others, provided not only entertainment, but shaped the way in which I began to understand politics, ethics, religious fervor, women's roles, diversity, and possibilities.

As a young adult, I lost touch with SF literature in favor of work and theatre but discovered it anew in the 1990s. Coming to the literature with the experiences of theatre and as a

mature adult elevated my understanding of the ways in which SF narratives speak to the reality of our lives and understanding of human experience. Taking another look at films, such as Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*, reinforced this impression. Significantly, I discovered the author Ursula Le Guin, who brings forth the power and poeticism of science fiction narratives. Le Guin's novels are about "the big stuff": race, gender, marginalization, courage, reverence for the environment, religious tolerance, and harmony. Over the years, I have discovered other authors who deal with these and other issues within the genres of science fiction and fantasy. Importantly, I also became interested in myths and folktales, heavily influenced by the writings of Joseph Campbell, which have inspired my work as a children's theatre playwright.

My question as an artist is why we, as humans, tell ourselves the same stories over millennia and across cultures. What is it that we are to learn and understand? As a result, I have turned my scholarship interests to how these narratives influence our collective thinking and how they can influence our understanding of leadership. During my doctoral work, I noticed connections between theoretical understandings of leadership practices and the depiction in popular culture, particularly, science fiction films and television. As SF narratives helped to shape my understanding of the socio-historical time I inhabit, I sensed there might be more to explore and understand in the association of SF narratives and leadership studies. My reflections on this have formed the direction of my scholarship and this current research. For contemporary communities, science fiction narratives have become a particular means for retelling ancient stories. These narratives, specifically as visual texts, are highly influential in the shaping of social norms and of advocacy for social change on viewers or readers. The challenge is to harness the collective —but, perhaps, unspoken —understanding of these stories as road maps for encouraging leadership action. As a consequence of my interest in science fiction literature

and film and my studies in film and leadership, I am afforded a unique perspective for identifying and interpreting ways in which leadership can be more fully explored through the interpretation of a SF film text.

Exploring the science fiction television series *Battlestar Galactica* (2003-2009) is an opportunity to add to our understanding of leadership through the interpretation of a long complex narrative of crisis and change with multiple leaders who adjust their functional roles and behaviors. An outcome of repeated encounters with the text was my interpretive perception of overarching themes of love, forgiveness, redemption, and otherness within the narrative. Exploring these narrative themes allows us to look beyond traditional leadership discourses to get to the core of leading change in the 21st century. The series speaks to our fears and desires about technological-scientific advances and the transcendence of the human spirit. The study of leadership and change can greatly benefit from this study.

Purpose of the Dissertation

The television series *Battlestar Galactica* (2003-2009) is an exceptional example of a science fiction text that explores the intricacies of leadership under extreme conditions of continual change. The purpose of the dissertation is to explore the various ways in which the multiple leaders portrayed in the series navigate the shifting situations of continual change. Furthermore, I discuss larger themes, such as love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the other. These themes generally go beyond the leadership literature, but I will offer my interpretation of how these themes are critical to the effective performance of leadership.

Importantly, the depiction of these leaders provides the 'public' and 'private' face of leadership, the virtuous and unscrupulous ethical actions they take, and the journey of personal change they take as they search for a home. Through an interpretation of this specific popular

media text, a deeper sensitivity to and understanding of leadership, positive and negative, during extreme crisis is gained. Furthermore, the series serves as a vehicle through which viewers may reflect on and engage in their own self-awareness about issues surrounding leadership and reconsider personal paradigms. Ultimately, the portrayal of leaders in this series has the potential for influencing our understanding of leadership in profound ways.

To this end, my research questions are: In what ways does *Battlestar Galactica* demonstrate the challenges of leading during extreme crisis and continual change? How are personal and social justice paradigms transformed? What are the implications for furthering our understanding of leadership theory and practice?

Summary of Dissertation

To explore the questions posed above, the dissertation sections provide cultural, theoretical, and philosophical frames from which to begin the inquiry. To provide a cultural understanding, the dissertation offers an explanation of the historical development and social function of science fiction narratives. Theoretical contexts germane to the discussion include a discussion of leadership competencies during extreme crises and the 'dark side' of leadership coupled with charismatic qualities. As the story of *Battlestar Galactica* depicts the transformation of leaders and a social system, this section provides the theoretical foundation for comparison with the portrayal of leaders. To substantiate the overarching philosophical themes of the narrative that bear upon leadership principles, further sections include a definition and discussion of love, forgiveness, redemption, and being human/being other.

The following methodology chapter introduces the hermeneutic tradition, focusing on Gadamer's universal hermeneutics, discusses the key characteristics of hermeneutics, and the role and ethical obligations of the hermeneutic interpreter. This section concludes with my

specific process for hermeneutical inquiry and my perceived strengths and limitations of the research.

The findings chapters are organized through categories of leadership: military leadership, political leadership, religious leadership, shared leadership, and emergent leadership. In these sections, I describe and interpret the leadership qualities and actions of each major leader as they relate to relevant leadership theories and principles. Within the discussion of the major characters, I provide brief comparisons and contrasts with other characters that function in similar capacities to deepen the understanding of how the leaders are portrayed. Additional findings include an interpretation of the leadership principles for love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other. Specific examples of how the leaders navigate this area within their socio-cultural worlds and the outcomes of their actions is offered.

The final chapter summarizes and synthesizes the findings of the previous sections across leadership areas and compares the themes with concepts presented in Chapter II. From this summary, new insights are offered for leading during times of extreme crisis and continual change; the potential for transformation of personal and social justice paradigms; and, how the series furthers our understanding of leadership theory and practice. The dissertation concludes with a discussion of the implications for leadership from the interpretation of the series and offers opportunities for further research on popular media texts.

To support readers in their comprehension of this lengthy and complex narrative, appendices are included, which describe the characters discussed, an episode guide, and a glossary of terms used in the series.

An Introduction to *Battlestar Galactica*

Battlestar Galactica (2003-2009) is a reimagined series based on a 1970s television program of the same name. The story begins on the day when twelve planets, the Colonies, are destroyed in a surprise nuclear attack by human-created machines, known as Cylons. Forty years earlier, the Cylons rebelled against their human creators. That Cylon War ended with an armistice and the Cylons were forced to retreat to an unknown place in the galaxy. Each year on the anniversary of the armistice, a human diplomat waits for a Cylon representative to arrive at an outlying spaceport as a part of the agreement to end aggressions and further dialogue, but no Cylon has ever arrived. Instead, the Cylon forces attack the Colonies.

In essence, the narrative of *Battlestar Galactica* begins with the transboundary crisis of nuclear genocide that affects the social, economic, political, and military infrastructures of a human civilization and carries implications of extinction for the human species. The only humans to survive the nuclear genocide, approximately 50,000, are those traveling in space at the time of the attack. The survivors are ill prepared to confront the crisis and the narrative explores how legitimate and emergent leaders cope, adapt, provide basic needs, and struggle to create and maintain a social system through the establishment of diverse relationships.

As the science fiction genre is rooted in narratives that explore contemporary society, the creators of *Battlestar Galactica* purposefully developed this series as an artistic response to the terrorist attacks of September 2001 (audio commentary, Miniseries, 2003) and used the narrative to explore American social and political issues in the ensuing years. The culture of the Colonies is depicted as similar to contemporary Earth. In particular, the colonial planet of Caprica is resolutely implied as an interpretation of the United States, replete with the arrogance and imperfections of the economic, political, military, and social systems. However, through the use

of cognitive estrangement, the similarities to our contemporary world are meant to be

comforting, though not allegorical or analogous, so that the larger subtext of the narrative can be

discerned without undo struggling past the unfamiliarity of an imagined universe. Our collective

unconscious as viewers is activated, so that we know what we are watching and are enabled in

our reflections and meaning making of the issues presented in the series as being relevant to

those in our own lived experience.

The production is strikingly different from the original series, technological advancement

notwithstanding, as the design is imbued with a dark, gritty visual aesthetic enhanced by

handheld cameras that impart a documentary-like texture. The "you-are-there" quality and sense

of immediacy imparted by the filming techniques cultivates the ability of the narrative to exhibit

the frailties, nuances, and shifting dynamics of the characters and themes being explored. We

become invested in the characters and sensitive to their dilemmas by witnessing their struggles

and failings with the immediacy of visual/auditory storytelling. This is not mere manipulation,

but the creation of an environment for reflection about our own lived experiences in the present.

Chapter II: Review of the Literature

The History and Social Function of Science Fiction Narratives

Most scholars of science fiction narrative development begin their histories of the genre during the 19th century, with a conventional starting point of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* in 1818, and concentrate on British and French authors. However, reaching back to ancient Greek tales provides a richer and more varied approach to the genre that demonstrates more fully the function of science fiction literature and the *Battlestar Galactica* text, in particular. Telotte (2001) traces the antecedents of modern science fiction to "our fascination with technological power [emerging] from ancient Greek culture," (p. 64) such as the stories of Daedalus and Prometheus, and the themes of humans who overreach in their quest for knowledge. Similarly, Roberts (2007) finds roots in the ancient Greek tales of "fantastic voyages [and] stories of journeying through space form the core of the genre" (p. vii). The journey may be across the globe, outward to the stars, or inward to the center of the Earth – or the human psyche.

Defining the genre. Defining the science fiction genre is a highly contested pastime for enthusiasts and scholars alike. Telotte (2001) laments the exercise of defining the genre as it "often seems quite difficult to pin down satisfactorily" (p. 3). Sobchack (2004) describes the requirement of defining terms as a means to "imprison the critic in an ontological construct" (p. 17) that can become limiting and seem arbitrary. She argues for a definition of science fiction, which goes beyond the scientific elements commonly associated with the genre. Specifically for science fiction film, she offers a definition for the genre of SF film "which emphasizes actual, extrapolative, or speculative science and the empirical method, interacting in a social context with the lesser emphasized, but still present, transcendentalism of magic and religion, in an attempt to reconcile man with the unknown" (Sobchack, 2004, p. 63). Importantly, Sobchack

(2004) views science fiction as representing "our cultural imagination of the possibilities for social being in a technological world" (p. 8). Csicsery-Ronay (2008) also acknowledges the difficulty of defining the genre and offers an approach to thinking about the genre as "a form of discourse that directly engages contemporary language and culture, and that has, in this moment, a generic interest in the intersections of technology, scientific theory, and social practice" (p. 4). Csicsery-Ronay's offering connects with Kuhn's (1990) understanding of cultural instrumentality, which is less concerned with what a genre is and more concerned with how the genre functions in a social context.

Roberts (2007) makes a strong argument for the core construct as those narratives that examine the *fantastic*—an exotic imaginative journey that blurs the line of what is real or can be real. Similar to the scholars noted previously, Roberts' (2007) thesis is that science fiction allows us to contemplate more fully our human experiences in the World. These experiences are accomplished through cognitive estrangement, the presentation of an alternative world that is different from our own, but wholly familiar. The understanding of cognitive estrangement as essential to the definition of science fiction narratives is found in Suvin's concept of the *novum*, a novelty or innovation in the fictional text. Following Ernst Bloch, Suvin (1977/2010) defines the "novum or cognitive innovation [as] *a totalizing phenomenon or relationship deviating from the author's and implied reader's norm of reality*" (p. 68). Importantly, there must be a central narrative logic to the novum from which the entire narrative acquires its logic (Suvin, 1977/2010). The novum is not relegated to a scientific gadget, but can also encompass a spatiotemporal dislocation and characters or relationships different from the time/environment of the author and reader (Suvin, 1977/2010). In essence, science fiction narratives are "texts that adduce qualia that are not to be found in the real world in order to reflect certain effects back on

to that world," (Roberts, 2007, p. 3) which follows Suvin's (1977/2010) concept of feedback oscillation.

However, the definition of the science fiction genre is complicated by the obdurate "camps" that hold closely to the characteristics that define science fiction, where many readers will include or exclude certain narratives based on their preferences for technoscientific or fantastic elements. Within the larger genre, there are broad categories, such as hard science fiction, soft science fiction, and sociological science fiction. Within these sub-genres are varieties of even finer distinctions including space opera, post-apocalyptic, cyber-punk, time travel, alternative history, and superheroes. Hard science fiction is a narrative that emphasizes science, as opposed to mere gadgetry, and is devoted to the detailed plausibility of the scientific particulars. As an example, a hard science fiction story could involve the exploration of a black hole, but the author would need to determine specifically and plausibly how the characters are able to enter a black hole without being stretched to bits by the gravitational forces. Without the plausible scientific understanding, the hard science fiction reader would discard the story. Soft science fiction is not as concerned with the science or technology of the story as it is with human relationships and emotions. Technology and science are still present, but are not the primary imaginative forces. Nevertheless, the narrative must have a degree of explanation and plausibility for any technoscientific elements, but the story is more concerned with characters than science and 'space operas', like 'soap operas', are typical of this category. The third broad category of science fiction narratives is sociological science fiction, as defined by Wolfe (1986), which concerns the more philosophical concepts of the human condition and typically involves themes and issues that address contemporary societal issues. Further complications ensue when horror and fantasy genres are blended into science fictional texts. Following Suvin (1977/2010),

Telotte (2001), Sobchack (2004), and Roberts (2007), I acknowledge the contribution and tangential influence of horror and fantasy tropes, but demur from including those narratives from the discussion of science fiction narrative development.

All difficulties, ambiguities, and preferences aside, I am left with the task of providing a definition, historical background, and social context of science fiction narratives to build the framework from which to interpret *Battlestar Galactica.* Suvin (1977/2010) declares, "SF cannot be extracted intuitively or empirically" (p. 65). Perhaps it just *is.* Nonetheless, I offer a working definition of science fiction narratives as those that contain a logical novum to explore the human condition by mediating the tensions between the rational/technoscientific and the spiritual/transcendent through cognitive estrangement. Most often, the narrative contains a journey, either internal or external and through space or time. The arrival at this definition will become apparent through a discussion of literary and social influences.

My readings and reflections have led me to take the long-view of the genre connected to political, scientific, and religious upheavals over the centuries. I am heavily influenced and indebted to Adam Roberts' (2007) *The History of Science Fiction* for my thinking on the historical development of science fiction narratives, particularly his emphasis on the Protestant Reformation as a key shift in Western thought leading to the development of modern science fiction narratives. The importance of the Protestant Reformation for changing the way in which we think about our selves, our world, and our God, cannot be overstated. The hermeneutic tradition also finds roots in this period, which I find to be serendipitously appropriate. At the heart of Roberts' reflections on science fiction narratives as a form of literature is a quite profound and compelling argument of historical events that led to the development of the genre and I am persuaded to agree. Roberts' thesis was instrumental to my appreciation of the socio-

historical context of science fiction narratives and to the interpretation of *Battlestar Galactica*. Consequently, I offer at length a historical view of the development of science fiction narratives centered on Roberts' propositions.

Ancient Greek influences. Roberts traces the beginning of science fiction narratives to the ancient Greek traditions of the fantastic voyage story. As Roberts (2007) takes a fundamental stance of science fiction being "stories of journeying" (p. vii) that are technologically mediated and produce a cognitive estrangement through depictions of the fantastic, revealing the antecedents of contemporary science fiction in ancient Greek narratives is very compelling. As most ancient novels involve some element of the fantastic, Roberts (2007) is careful to distinguish the science-fictional fantastic from the supernatural fantastical, explaining, "the science that most frequently informed Ancient SF was either practical and technical (as in the sciences associated with naval navigation and warfare) or philosophical" (p. 22). Therefore, Roberts takes as his entry point the concept of the voyage extraordinaire as the central theory for the ancient roots of science fiction and cites several ancient works from Homer's Odyssey to Lucian Samasota's True History (an author frequently designated as the "father" of science fiction). In some way, the ancient texts provide a journey into the air or space, which for the ancients had no differentiation, or into unknown or 'strange' lands. However, it is notable the separation of secular and religious spheres is not as transparent in ancient societies as they may appear in contemporary societies. Therefore, ancient science fiction is not an unadulterated – or spiritually sterile – literature, but mediates scientific speculation, fantastic voyages, and religious fables (Roberts, 2007).

The reemergence of science-fictional literature. A curiosity to scholars and critics is the veritable disappearance of science-fictional texts from the fall of the Roman Empire to the

Protestant Reformation. Roberts (2007) makes a compelling argument for the Protestant

Reformation as the turning point that allowed for the reintroduction and development of science

fiction literature across Europe. His argument contends that during the Protestant Reformation

"the balance of scientific enquiry shifted to Protestant countries, where the sort of speculation

that could be perceived as contrary to biblical revelation could be undertaken with more

(although not total) freedom" (Roberts, 2007, p. ix). The scientific advancements included a

shift from the geocentric universe to a Copernican cosmos, so that Roberts (2007) reasons

conditions were ripe for the formation of a generic science fiction genre when nascent scientists

and theologians "were in the process of separating themselves into rationalist Protestant and

ritualist-magical Catholic religious idioms" (p. 42). Essentially, Roberts considers the Protestant

epistemological tradition to be more materialistic and solidly scientific, while Catholicism

remained a more mystical—if not magical—tradition for ontological explanations.

Both the emergence of Protestant enquiry, with its influence on the ascension of

rationality in the Age of Enlightenment, and the entrenchment of Catholicism in mystical

orthodoxy provides the dialectical rift in worldviews that differentiates science fiction narratives

from supernatural fantasy, as well as some of the delineation between hard science fiction, soft

science fiction, and sociological science fiction. Indeed, Roberts (2007) claims the "tension

between 'humanist' or 'Protestant' perspectives (which veers toward materialism and

unmediated individual exploration of the cosmos) and 'sacramental' or 'Catholic' perspectives

(which stress a spiritual, transcendental, divinely mediated and fundamentally magical universe)

intimately shapes the development of the genre" (p. 39). Per Roberts (2007), "SF texts mediate

these cultural determinants with different emphases, some more strictly materialist, some more

mystical or magical. But without an understanding of the broader historical context many aspects of the tradition of SF are incomprehensible" (p. 19).

The Middle Ages provided many texts dealing with the fantastic, particularly those written by persons in religious orders, but Roberts (2007) argues that these texts must be read as stories of miracles or chivalric romances predicated on the articulation of religious tenets, which disqualifies them for a place within the genre of science fiction. However, under the premise of science fiction literature as the means for mediating materialism and the transcendent, the advent of Copernican cosmology in 1543 opened a space wherein imaginative speculation could develop, if not flourish.

In a Copernican cosmos, the possibility of multiple worlds and the removal of Earth as the central point of that cosmos staggered scientific and religious understandings. (Indeed, it was not until the 20th century that the Roman Catholic Church firmly reconciled religious dogma and scientific empiricism during Vatican II in the early 1960s.) Within this new cosmology, "humanity might encounter radically different beings" (Roberts, 2007, p. 40) on these multiple worlds and encouraged a newfound imaginative zeal in writing from a science-fictional perspective. Importantly, the 17th century was a time of profound scientific and philosophical theories, exemplified by Isaac Newton and René Descartes, which thoroughly contribute to the development of science fiction (Roberts, 2007). An utmost example of a narrative that epitomizes the imaginative freedom made possible by a Copernican cosmos is Fontanelle's 1686 novel *Entretiens sur la pluralite des mondes*. In this narrative, the protagonists' converse confidently of travel and life found on other planets, including the moon, and compare these exotic locales to the equally exotic Americas and Australia (Roberts, 2007).

Not only did the scientific advancements of the 16th and 17th centuries allow for speculative exploration of an immense universe, this era also incubated the sub-genres of utopian and futurist fiction. Utopian fiction, so-named from Thomas More's 1516 story *Utopia*, develops as a parallel to science fiction in the depiction of idealized societies and fantastically strange lands. Roberts (2007) includes utopian fiction in his historical account "because they mediate a general cultural fascination with otherness in material terms" (p. 54). Utopian fictions also indicate the divide between Protestant and Catholic worldviews, with utopian fiction being more fixed and static within the space of the utopian land (journeying there, notwithstanding) and hence more "Catholic" than the texts of the voyage extraordinaire inspired by Protestantism (Roberts, 2007). Specifically within More's *Utopia*, the idealization of the society is quite conservative and not significantly different from any monastic society of that historical period (Roberts, 2007). In addition, the altering of cosmological understanding meant futurist fiction was now unfettered from religious dogma, specifically the future described in the bible chapter Revelation, and allows for negotiating "the imaginative possibilities of the [scientific] dialectically engaged with the human anxieties about the erosion of the [religious]" (Roberts, 2007, p. 49).

Science fiction in the Age of Enlightenment. The Age of Enlightenment in the 18th century heralded a shift in the cultural landscape, not only for literature, but also in the fundamental ways in which humans make sense of their lives within the natural world. This period is commonly characterized by the ascension of the rational mind and the perceived superiority of experimental and evidentiary science that refuted myths and superstitions as explanations of phenomenon (Roberts, 2007). Roberts (2007) is careful to identify most scientists, artists, revolutionaries, and others who embraced the new paradigms established in the

18th century were not devoid of religious sensibilities, but their concern was a more appropriate balance between the sacred and the mundane—between God and God's World. Consequently, tensions "between materialist and theological cosmic narratives" (Roberts, 2007, p. 65) still exist.

As scientific methodologies began to emerge and new insights to the workings of the natural world and the universe began to be theorized, the opportunity for science fiction speculation and artistic interpretation burgeoned. Interestingly, Newtonian physics gave rise to several works by contemporary poets who could now access larger imaginative planes of thought and support their voyage extraordinaire with Newton's empirical knowledge (Roberts, 2007).

As for prose, *Gulliver's Travels* by Jonathan Swift and *Micromégas* by Voltaire are the two key pieces of science fiction literature in this period. Other writers of the time employed the voyage extraordinaire, but Swift and Voltaire succeeded in "rewrite[ing] the rules of imaginative speculation, freeing it from both the choking literalism of 'science-poetry' and the deadening constraints of conventional religious thought" (Roberts, 2007, p. 68). However, critics are split as to whether *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) can be considered science fiction as many purport there is no 'science' in the stories. Roberts (2007) disagrees and points to the mathematical elements within much of the exposition and the amazement of non-humans for things such as pocket watches, which clearly represent the technoscientific artifacts of the day. Nonetheless, in describing science fiction literature as journeys, *Gulliver's Travels* would certainly fit the genre.

Voltaire's *Micromégas* (*Littlebig*), written in 1730 and published in 1750, is less well known in comparison to Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* to Americans, which perhaps has more to do with the language barrier and overt philosophical nature of the book than with its literary worth. *Micromégas* is the story of a giant (5km) from the star Sirius who befriends a native of the planet

Saturn (who is "only" 1,000 fathoms tall) and together they travel to Earth. They meet a ship full of philosophers, ask many questions about scientific and astronomical knowledge to gauge the intelligence of these tiny humans, and are impressed. Yet, when they begin to ask questions of the inner knowledge of humans, questions such as the nature of their soul, the philosophers supply multiple and conflicting answers based on their philosophical views or simply cannot answer. However, the philosopher's are agreed and confident that the universe was built 'solely for mankind's benefit', at which point Micromégas and the Saturnian fall over laughing. At the end of the story, Micromégas gives a book of philosophy to humans that he says contains the truth about everything. After the aliens leave, the book is opened and its pages are blank—a *tabula rasa* (Roberts, 2007).

The importance and value of Voltaire's work is twofold: (a) it represents the first instance of an alien encounter on Earth; and (b) inverts the popular narrative depicting Earthlings traveling to other worlds to discuss Christian beliefs with aliens. In *Micromégas*, the humans still try to promote the view of human exceptionalism through the grace of a Christian God, but the aliens seem to know better. By building on the new understanding of the cosmos and Earth's infinitesimal place within that vastness, Voltaire begins the intellectual and cultural process of displacing humankind as the physical, philosophical, and theological center of the universe (Roberts, 2007).

A further development in science fiction narratives occurring in the 18th century are voyage extraordinaire both 'above' and 'below'. Roberts (2007) sees a persistent theme in the 18th century for flight, either by "alien creatures…or by humans who are aided by machines" (p. 75) in the Earth atmosphere and among the stars. Complementarily, other writers imaginatively explored the "strange land" of the inner core of the Earth, also known as *hollow*

earth fantasies (Roberts, 2007), which pre-date and, presumably, influenced the works of subsequent authors, such as Jules Verne. Still, many of these narratives struggle with the imaginative space opened by scientific empiricism and ingrained theological epistemology.

Following his thesis on the historical tensions between Catholic and Protestant paradigms, Roberts (2007) sees the development of late 18th century science fiction narratives as stemming from the political and cultural conflicts embodied by Protestant England and Catholic France. Roberts (2007) states, "both countries were engaged at the violent nascence of technological and imperial augmentation. They were also two of the [European] countries with the most pronounced history of Catholic/Protestant religious reformation, and therefore cultures determined by the dialectic at the core of SF" (p. 82). These tensions played out in revolutionary futurist science fiction in the period and aftermath of the French Revolution and the fearful retreat of English writers to Gothic fiction (Roberts, 2007). French futurist fiction developed themes of societal futures wherein the Catholic Church was absent, gender roles were questioned, and radical critiques of social mores were put forth (Roberts, 2007).

During the Age of Enlightenment, the genre successfully exploited scientific advancements and socio-political unrest to create narratives of voyage extraordinaire and speculative future fiction. Essentially, these science fiction authors set the trajectory of how the genre would continue its development. In effect, the rise of rational, logical thinking and developments in scientific knowledge during this period lead to "works that modern readers of SF are more likely to recognize as consonant with the protocols of the genre as they understand it" (Roberts, 2007, p. 65).

Science fiction narratives in the 19th century. Science fiction narratives and literature in general began to enjoy considerable popularity as the 19th century progressed. Increased

levels of literacy, the capitalist exploitation of cultural production, and the rise of the middle class all contribute to the development of reading as a major pastime. The tensions and concerns of previous eras are still apparent within the themes of science fiction in this period, but are enhanced by technological and industrial advancements, as well as the growing imperialism of European nations. An outcome of these events is a genre that begins to emphasize the future (Roberts, 2007). Major writers of this period include Mary Shelley, Edgar Allen Poe, Jules Verne, and H.G. Wells; authors whose works enjoy enough continued popularity as to remain in print for modern readers.

Many scholars consider the birth of the genre to have been Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* in 1818. As we have seen, the genre enjoys a much longer history of development. Absent the previous texts that worked through thematic issues and extended imaginative boundaries, the works of the 19th century would have no foundation. Nonetheless, *Frankenstein* is a seminal work within the science fiction genre as it continues exploration of materialist/religious dichotomies, but "is the first work in which a contemporary human invention…is, despite its human provenance, obscure, powerful, and capable of escaping from rational, scientific civilization" (Csicsery-Ronay, 2008, p. 152). An alternative reading by Franco Moretti considers the novel to be ideological, not science-fictional, and an exploration of the monster as emblematic of the alienated industrial proletariat (as cited in Roberts, 2007), which began to emerge as a labeled constituency in the 1800s. Read as a discourse on the dangers of the technoscientific or a metaphor of societal abandonment, the novel is unquestioningly a watershed moment for the genre. At its core, *Frankenstein* is a narrative of human hubris that ends tragically, but raises significant questions, such as "the ontological status of the animated objects

of human scientific art" (Csicsery-Ronay, 2008, p. 154). This question is a science fiction theme, and, arguably, a larger social discourse, that continues to be explored in the 21st century.

There are advocates for Poe as the originator of the science fiction genre, though much of his writing is Gothic fiction, and his work can be characterized as "a dialectical balance between 'science' and 'magic', between rationalism and mystic fantasy" (Roberts, 2007, p. 99). Roberts (2007) points to his last major work, *Eureka: a Prose Poem* (1849), as an attempt "to marry contemporary scientific and astronomical knowledge with a quasi-Idealist religious sensibility" (p. 100). Clearly, the influence of the 17th and 18th centuries can be discerned, but Roberts (2007) reserves Poe's significance as the ability to write of the fantastic in an unpretentious matter-of-fact tone where "the *intuitive imagination*," (p.103) rather than deduction, serves as the impetus for scientific advancement.

From the early decades of the 19th century, science fiction narratives continued to examine the previously determined themes of "subterranean adventure, future fantasy and journeys off-world" (Roberts, 2007, p. 95). Utopian fiction was also present, but did not yet enjoy the great popularity it would have at the end of the century. In addition, American writers, such as Poe and Washington Irving, began to leave their mark on the science fiction landscape. However, European writers remained the primary influence on the genre. Specifically, both French and British writers explored the futurist fiction theme of apocalypse, but in a decidedly secular manner distanced to a degree from biblical texts and religious dogma. In this development, futurist fiction is modified and "space loses its monopoly upon the location of estrangement and the alternative horizons shift from space to time" (Suvin, 1979, as cited in Roberts, 2007, p. 88). Novels such as Grainville's *The Last Man* (1805) and Byron's *Darkness* (1817) are distinctly pessimistic, but optimistic visions of the future were also conceived by

authors such as von Voss and Bodin (Roberts, 2007). The importance of these novels, taken as a whole, is they establish the utopian/dystopian thematic speculations that will continue within each subsequent era of the genre.

By mid-century, the geological theory of Charles Lyell (who proposed the Earth was much older than the 6,000 years abstracted through biblical interpretation) and Charles Darwin's theory of natural selection continued to relocate humans from their privileged central position in an ordained and ordered cosmos. In addition, John Clarke Maxwell built upon Rudolph Clausius' concept of the entropic to argue, "order inevitably disintegrates and chaotic order inevitably increases" (Roberts, 2007, p. 106). What results is the dialectical binary of conceiving the future either pessimistically or optimistically, depending on "the broader cultural attitudes to science and technology" (Roberts, 2007, p. 107). In each case, the final effect is change. Either the future and humanity changes for the better due to the use of technoscientific artifacts or they will degenerate from the use or abuse of those artifacts.

Even so, an argument can be made that those who embraced the technoscientific advances of the 19th century appear to be unable to embrace the actual consequences of change. This is exemplified in the works of Jules Verne, who, along with H.G. Wells, can be considered one of the most famous science fiction writers in history. Verne's work in the late 19th century evoked the technologically mediated voyage extraordinaire with *Voyage au centre de la terre* (1864), *De la terre à la lune* (1865), and *Vingt mille lieues sous le mers* (1869). These works have become staples of popular culture with several filmed versions in the 20th century, although the film endings do not always reflect the original literature endings. What seems to be lost within the popular understanding of Verne's work is the return of his protagonists from the fantastic worlds of the hollow earth, moon, or deep sea to the "comforting bourgeois social and

cultural certainties… [of the] world 'as we know it' which itself remains largely unchanged and unchallenged" (Roberts, 2007, p. 130).

H.G. Wells presents a more radical vision of change in his works, such as *The Time Machine* (1895), *The Island of Dr. Moreau* (1896), and *The War of the Worlds* (1898) (Roberts, 2007). Wells' protagonists are more passive and less swashbuckling than Verne's, which Roberts (2007) argues provides a more compelling fiction. The outcome of a technoscientific event, such as the landing of the Martians in *War of the Worlds* and the ensuing destruction, exemplifies the idea that change in a Wells novel has an impact. Particularly in *The Time Machine*, the narrator travels hundreds of thousands of years into the future and discovers humans have become the beautiful Eloi or the ugly Morlocks, then further to discover humans are rabbit-like creatures, and finally to a desolate Earth where "crab-like monsters [are] scuttling about a terminal beach under a dying sun" (Roberts, 2007, p. 144). Depending on one's paradigm, this contemplation of the future could elicit fear, but fundamentally, it provides an understanding in which future visions can be radical in their speculations about change. In essence, the novel "displaces the dilemma posed for human existence by real technoscience into extreme cases, in which epistemological questions tip over into ontological ones" (Csicsery-Ronay, 2008, p. 120).

Overall, the 19th century begins to separate the optimists of technoscientific advancement and those more dubious about the impact of technology, but who are more willing to accept the mysticism of psychic phenomenon, telepathy, ghostly communication through séances, and reincarnation (Roberts, 2007). Preeminent scientists endorsed many of these mystical activities, which resulted in "the blurring of the boundary between the mystic and the material," (Roberts,

2007, p. 115) and created the dialectical tradition followed by science fiction writers into the next century.

Struggles for cultural ascendancy in the 20th century. In the early decades of the 20th century, the separations that began in the 19th century begin to delineate what will become known as science fiction and fantasy, but also to the struggle of high modernist science fiction maintaining its foothold on the genre in the face of the massive capitalist cultural production of pulp science fiction. Indeed, several scholars make a distinction between these two spheres by denoting artistic science fiction as 'SF' and the mass-produced formulaic as 'sci-fi' (Csicsery-Ronay, 2008). By mid-century, this struggle would also be established between written and visual texts and, by the end of the century, between televised visual texts and the science fiction spectacle properly experienced on large theatrical screens. Increasingly, science fiction narratives become a visual, as opposed to written, project in the social sphere of dissemination. The genre described as a literature of ideas would be repeatedly challenged by the complexities, both financial and creative, of cultural production in a market economy. Therefore, Csicsery-Ronay (2008) describes science fiction as the "art of the marketplace, willing to fold sublime moments into cheap, received formulas that are proven sellers" (p. 8). To that end, science fiction in the 20th century becomes "a predominantly Anglo-American genre and its current influence reflects the cultural power of the U.S. hyper-modernism and the technoscientific ideology that undergirds its cultural hegemony" (Csicsery-Ronay, 2008, p. 11).

As science fiction begins its march toward cultural dominance, Roberts (2007) frankly states "the first half of the twentieth century sees the opening of a cleavage between 'high art' and popular culture, something which, if not wholly unprecedented, had never before been as ideologically charged or divisive" (p. 156). There is a danger in assuming that rifts in cultural

modes are more ideologically divisive in our own time. These battles are fought quite often with pens and we still have the texts, which may not be true for previous eras. Nevertheless, Roberts' point is well taken for separation of an elitist art and a popular art for the masses becoming a concern for some scholars and enthusiasts in the 20th century.

At issue, the artistic elites were generally in favor of a mythopoeic literary tradition and adverse to technological changes, whereas popular culture artists embraced these changes (Roberts, 2007). To exemplify this schism, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932), considered a masterpiece of dystopian futurist science fiction and 'art', presents a story characterized as "machine-bashing" (Roberts, 2007, p. 158). In contrast, mass-produced magazines with striking and colorful covers, such as *Amazing Stories* and *Astounding Stories of Super-science*, were marketed to a general audience and celebrated technology (Roberts, 2007). Known as "The Pulps"[1], these magazines were enormously popular from the 1920s to the 1960s with many soon-to-be-famous science fiction writers getting their start with these publishers (Roberts, 2007). Hugo Gernsback was the preeminent publisher of pulp science fiction magazines during this time and many scholars consider his efforts to be the beginning of science fiction narratives as a literary form (Roberts, 2007). Although an argument can be made that pulp science fiction was ultimately the greater influence on the genre as it morphed to a visual idiom for mass audiences, it is *Brave New World* and George Orwell's equally dystopic *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1949) that are typically included in educational curricula as exemplars of the genre.

From a modern perspective, it may be hard to imagine science fiction narratives were not initially considered to have a proper domain in film. The science fiction films created in the early 20th century were deemed "whimsies" (Roberts, 2007, p. 186); most notably exemplified

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[1] "'Pulp" is a phrase used to denote a particular type of story printed in a series of niche-marketed magazines … and printed on cheap paper manufactured from treated wood pulp" (Roberts, 2007, p. 174).

by Georges Melies' *Le voyage dans la lune* (1902), considered to be the earliest science fiction film narrative. Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1926) presents an attempt at greater sophistication, not only technically, but also ideologically in its tale of human exploitation in a futuristic machine-mediated landscape. What the early films may have lacked in mature and coherent storytelling they made up for in visual imagery. This is precisely the advantage of science fiction film, which heralds the cultural battle between prose and film for science fiction narratives.

Filmed science fiction also had the advantage of a backlist of texts to adapt to the new medium, particularly with the advent of sound, such as James Whale's *Frankenstein* (1931) and *The Invisible Man* (1933), and Rouben Maumoulian's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1932). Notably, *King Kong* (dirs. Cooper & Schoedsack, 1933) is an exception for not being an adaptation, yet has remained a cultural icon of science fiction film. A note must be made regarding the inclusion of these particular highly popular films as they resist the working definition of science fiction and the delineation of SF from horror and fantasy. As Suvin (1977/2010) explains, SF is a historical genre where understandings of what constitutes a science fiction text will change in relationship to the spatiotemporal horizon of the audience. As the cultural production of science fiction film begins to build during the 20th century, these films in their own time would be considered as science-fictional. Contemporary audiences, with the benefit of an evolving understanding of the genre, will be more apt to categorize the films as horror or fantasy and exclude them from science fiction texts. However, Telotte (2001) makes a case for considering *The Invisible Man* as still worthy of inclusion in science fiction. Nonetheless, these films are a critical development in the progress of science fiction texts and cultural ascendancy.

In the 1930s, the power of the visual image combined with the market economy of cultural production and led to serializations of science fiction film narratives. *Flash Gordon,*

Buck Rogers, and *Undersea Kingdom* are typical of the serials with their heroic human male protagonist, dependence on technologically mediated plot events, and problematic American ideologies. These serializations would remain popular into the television era and "they had no pretensions to anything other than narrative momentum and were accordingly much more successful" (Roberts, 2007, p. 193). Another note on 1930s science fiction narratives must recognize the infamous radio broadcast of *The War of the Worlds* (1938) by Orson Welles and the Mercury Theatre. As the world prepared for another global armed conflict, this broadcast became ensconced in popular mythology for the panic that broke out in a few communities when listeners believed the fictional narrative was real. Yet, its importance, as Roberts (2007) points out, is "it expresses the truth that SF, its assumptions and icons were now part of the mental furniture of most Americans" (p. 193). The plausibility of hostile encounters with beings from another world had seeped into the imagination of the populace through their experience with science fiction narratives.

Not unlike the socio-political upheavals of previous centuries that influenced the development of science fiction narratives, 1940s and 1950s America similarly found science fiction an optimal form in which to explore desires and fears in a society that was rapidly becoming more ordinarily technological and less hegemonic. Often referred to as The Golden Age, this era is often characterized through hard science fiction prose. A closer examination reveals a broad spectrum of science fiction paradigms were being written, both for print and for screen, which denies supremacy to any single sub-genre or thematic element. The Golden Age is typified by the pulp stories shepherded by John W. Campbell in *Astounding*, elevating linear narratives, male protagonists battling threats from outer space, and plausible technologies that have a social and human impact (Roberts, 2007). Yet other science fiction writers were

exploring soft science fiction, utopian fiction, fantasy, and the like, so a single definition of the kind of science fiction narratives created in this time is not entirely apt (Roberts, 2007).

Nevertheless, these decades produced several of the great science fiction authors who enjoyed popularity for the rest of the century. Notable works include Isaac Asimov's *Foundation* series and *The Caves of Steel* (1954); Robert Heinlein's "The Roads Must Roll" (1940, *Astounding*), and *Starship Troopers* (1959); Ray Bradbury's *Martian Chronicles* (1950) and *Fahrenheit 451* (1953); Arthur C. Clarke's "The Nine Billion Names for God" (1953, *Amazing Stories*); and Alfred Bester's *The Stars My Destination* (U.S. title, 1956) (Roberts, 2007). The above are some of the most revered authors and works of science fiction narratives and, unsurprisingly, the themes and issues addressed in these novels would come to represent the popularly held definition of science fiction.

Concurrently, Roberts (2007) sees "some of the very best SF from the 1950s was interrogating, in surprisingly unevolved a fashion, the theological anxieties that had given birth to the genre in the 1600s" (p. 216). Walter Miller's *Canticle for Leibowitz* (1959) and James Blish's *A Case of Conscious* (1958) are two examples of science fiction narratives that explored religious meaning and cultural politics in futuristic settings. These themes would also be explored in science fiction films of the 1950s, such as *The Day The Earth Stood Still* (Robert Wise, 1951), *When Worlds Collide* (Rudolph Maté, 1951), and *The Incredible Shrinking Man* (Jack Arnold, 1957), where Judeo-Christian sensibilities or savior motifs are present (Roberts, 2007). The 'savior story' also played out in superhero comics, which enjoyed huge popularity during the 1940s and 1950s. These stories merged the technoscientific fantastic with American ideology and the (divine) superhero who battles evil and 'saves' the city/nation/world/humanity in a formula that would become a veritable cliché.

Messianic themes continued into the 1960s and 1970s, a period marked as The New Wave, as a number of authors rebelled against science fiction tropes. In effect, New Wave science fiction artists took "a genre that had been, in its popular mode, more concerned with content and 'ideas' than form, style or aesthetics, and reconsider[ed] it under the logic of the latter three terms" (Roberts, 2007, p. 231). Although inventiveness with style and form created consternation among critics and scholars, several authors wrote their most memorable and lasting works in the 1960s, including Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land* (1961), Frank Herbert's *Dune* (1965), and Philip K. Dick's *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (1968). Per Roberts (2007), these messianic texts were appropriate in a time when Americans faced the prospect of nuclear annihilation and rising religious cultism. I would add the assassinations of political leaders perceived as ideal heroes who would bring social justice might also have contributed to the proliferation of messianic science fiction. Other developments in science fiction included the emergence of feminist science fiction, most notably by Joanna Russ and James Tiptree Jr., the pen name of Alice Sheldon. In addition, the socio-political upheavals within American culture allowed exploration of race, gender, class, and other social issues within science fiction texts by writers, such as Ursula Le Guin, Samuel R. Delaney, and Harry Harrison. Even so, science fiction texts of the 1960s to mid-1970s were more backward gazing by revisiting many of the concerns of the materialist/spiritualist binary (Roberts, 2007).

The alternative science fiction prose in the 1960s and 1970s can also be interpreted as a reaction to the traditional science fiction story motifs dramatized on television. American television in the 1960s produced several science fiction series, from the rather introspective *Twilight Zone* (1959-1964) to the animated domestic comedy *The Jetsons* (1962-1963), as well as *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* (1964-1968), *Lost in Space* (1965-1968) and *The Time*

Tunnel (1966-1967). British television produced *Dr Who* (1963-1989, 2005-2011) and the film series *Quatermass*, broadcast in different incarnations from the mid-1950s to 1979 (Roberts, 2007).

However, in the collective consciousness of science fiction popular culture Gene Roddenberry's *Star Trek* (1966-1969) overshadows each of these series. This series was acutely American in its ideology and moralizing principles, which opened a space for more reflective and philosophical prose, as well as the divide between artistic SF and mass-produced popular sci-fi. *Star Trek* mirrored the capitalist cultural production of earlier narratives, but at warp speed, and significantly changed the power relationship between science fiction prose and science fiction visuals. In this period, television begins its ascendance as an increasingly dominant form of cultural production, particularly for all types of narratives, and there is an "increasingly visual bias [which changes] the textual focus of SF" (Roberts, 2007, p. 272). Essentially, the science fiction television series as a collection of "individual texts subordinated to a premise or particular imaginative identity…becomes the template for all SF textual production" (Roberts, 2007, p. 272).

The "visual bias" of science fiction narratives solidified in 1977 with George Lucas' *Star Wars* and Steven Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Previous films, such as Stanley Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968), Douglas Trumball's *Silent Running* (1971), *A Clockwork Orange* (Kubrick, 1971), Richard Fleischer's *Soylent Green* (1973), *THX1138* (Lucas, 1974) and Michael Anderson's *Logan's Run* (1976), while uneven in their visual impact as a group, all represent a rather pessimistic, if not outright dystopian, view of the future. For Americans raised on science fiction television narratives and suffering the aftermath of the Vietnam War and Watergate scandal, *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters* filled the desire for a

different more positive paradigm with astonishing visual imagery and lack of difficult contemplative demands on the viewer. Moreover, *Star Wars* (now referred to as *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*) remains the highest grossing film of all time in the United States when adjusted for inflation (www.the-numbers.com).

From the mid-1970s to the present, prose science fiction increasingly carved out niche areas for readers with specific (and vociferously held) understandings of the genre. An explosion of novels based on the *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* megatext, along with fan fiction based on these worlds and others perpetuated the tradition of cultural mass-production. Quasi-religious themes and social commentary continued, with Ursula Le Guin's *The Dispossessed* (1975), Gene Wolfe's *Book of the New Sun* series (1980-1983), Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale* (1985), Orson Scott Card's *Ender's Game* (1985), Sheri Tepper's *Grass* (1989), Octavia Butler's *Dawn* (1987), and Kim Stanley Robinson's *Mars Trilogy* (1992-1995), among several other works by these and other authors.

However, science fiction prose has seemingly become a secondary medium in contrast to the cultural dominance of the science fiction film (Roberts, 2007). The primary medium for science fiction texts over the last few decades has become film. The quaint positivity of *Star Wars* and *Close Encounters* quickly gave way to Ridley Scott's *Alien* (1979) and *Blade Runner* (1982), James Cameron's *Terminator* (1984), Michael Radford's *Nineteen Eighty-four* (1984), Terry Gilliam's *Brazil* (1985), and Paul Verhoeven's *Robocop* (1987), which were interspersed with *Star Trek* films and *Alien* sequels. Interestingly, these films of the 1980s have an historical transcendence not quite attributable to the former titles, as the narratives continue to provide meaning to contemporary audiences, while their popularity equals or surpasses the films that followed.

Visual science fiction texts in the 1990s and 2000s enjoyed great success on television with series such as, *Quantum Leap* (1989-1993), *X-files* (1993-2002), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (1997-2003), *Stargate SG-1* (1997-2007), *Firefly* (2002-2003), and several *Star Trek* franchises: *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (1987-1994), *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* (1993-1999), *Star Trek: Voyager* (1995-2001), *Star Trek: Enterprise* (2001-2005), as well as *Babylon 5* (1994-1998), and *Battlestar Galactica* (2003-2009). Technological advances in television production techniques allowed for special effects that rivaled those of theatrically released films. In turn, the quality of these programs developed an audience base from science fiction enthusiasts and those new to the genre, which provided increased financial incentives to produce science fiction television programs. Indeed, the proliferation of syndicated programming and the creation of the SyFy cable channel in 1991, contributed to the cultural production apparatus that made science fiction television a profitable endeavor.

With increased pressure from television programs vying for viewers and revenue, science fiction films increasingly raised the sophistication and power of the visual and auditory elements of theatrical science fiction films in order to attract audiences. Certainly, science fiction films could be more graphically violent and sensual than television, but many filmmakers (James Cameron and George Lucas being the most notable) developed film equipment and digital processes that elevated the audio-visual aspects beyond what could be experienced through television. As Kuhn (1990) observed over twenty years ago, "science fiction cinema distinguishes itself from other film genres—and indeed from science fiction writing—by its appeal to special effects technology in creating worlds that do not exist… inviting admiration for the wizardry of the boffins and the marvels" (p. 148). Thus, the era of the science fiction spectacle began. In addition, film franchises, such as *Batman* and *Star Trek*, have been

"rebooted" to take advantage of growing interest in science fiction films and the themes they mediate, as well as to cultivate new generations of filmgoers.

Interestingly, the films of the 21st century still echo the tensions between the materialist technoscientific and the spiritual transcendent formulated in the 1600s. Technoscientific tools, such as social media, smart phones and myriad computer paraphernalia, can lead to the sense of accelerated social change mediated through technology at the expense of human interaction and relationships. Many recent films involve the theme of what constitutes being human and the socio-political implications of answering this question. Key visual texts that meld technologically mediated story events and the yearning for transcendence include, the Wachowski Brothers' *The Matrix Trilogy* (1999-2003), *X-Men Trilogy* (2000-2006), Steven Spielberg's *AI: Artificial Intelligence* (2001) and *Minority Report* (2002), James Cameron's *Avatar* (2009), and Neill Blomkamp's *District 9* (2009). Many of these films push the edge of visual storytelling further than previously conceived, which not only provides the spectacle of modern science fiction films, but also pushes the genre toward an unpredictable visual storytelling future.

Though visual storytelling of science fiction narratives may have unknown qualities in the future, reviewing the historical development of the genre suggests the themes explored in the narratives may remain recognizable. Accepting the premise science fiction narratives are the means by which human fears and desires are mediated in order to make sense of the present, provides a powerful approach to discussing how these narratives affect us. With the exponential proliferation of ordinary technology and scientific innovations, technoscientific discoveries call into question religious orthodoxy and the concept of human exceptionalism in the universe. These tensions between the rational-technoscientific and the spiritual-transcendent offer a

profound opportunity to explore human experience on individual and collective levels,

particularly in times of crisis and change.

Competency During Crisis

Narratives, in general, and science fiction narratives, in particular, build upon moments of

change. *Something* has happened and the characters must deal with their new and possibly

frightening situation. The audience is able to view the crisis from the perspective of the

characters, while simultaneously critiquing the characters and reflecting on their own potential

response. Typically, the main characters are formal leaders or people thrust into positions of

leadership through the changed circumstances. Understanding leadership competence during a

crisis sheds light on the consideration of *Battlestar Galactica* as a text with implications for

leadership theory and practice.

How leaders affect the individual and collective experiences during a crisis is predicated

on their basic competency skills. As Northouse (2007) explains, leadership is a process of

influencing others. Conventionally, the leadership process is described as having two primary

objectives, goal achievement and group maintenance, which are realized through a number of

different leadership functions oriented toward task or socio-emotional skills (Casimir, 2001).

Casimir (2001) defines leadership style as "a pattern of emphases, indexed by the frequency or

intensity of specific leadership behaviors or attitudes, which a leader places on the different

leadership functions" (p. 246) and proposes that the perception of leadership is influenced by

how leaders combine the behaviors. In effect, one set of behavioral skills should not be

demonstrated without the other set spaced temporally near. Kouzes and Posner (1995) advocate

that exemplary leaders not only combine these skills, but demonstrate additional virtuous

qualities, such as aspiration for a shared vision, empathy, and communal values based on dignity,

respect, and empowerment of followers. Moreover, Gardner, Avolio, Luthans, May, and Walumbwa (2005) endorse leadership that fosters a "healthy ethical climate characterized by transparency, trust, integrity, and high moral standards" (p. 344). Competent and effective leaders must possess self-awareness, self-regulate, create a climate that is inclusive, ethical, and caring, while modeling the positive behaviors that will increase the group's ability to achieve goals (Gardner et al., 2005). Jackson and Parry (2008) use an inductive common-sense approach to defining effective leadership characteristics as "confidence, integrity, connection, resilience and aspiration" (p. 17).

Conversely, Sinclair (2007) supplies critical alternatives to the conventional wisdom about leadership. Sinclair acknowledges the 'dark side' of leadership that includes the need to explore qualities that are considered negative, such as narcissism and grandiosity, which contradicts the traditional emphasis on positive attributes. Importantly, she considers how "leadership is supported and mediated through structural power relations… and is often invoked to avoid radical change [and support the] status quo" (Sinclair, 2007, p. 31). As leaders are particularly urged to provide vision and inspiration, these behaviors can "create meaning to reinforce legitimacy…but may also be a device for manipulation" (Sinclair, 2007, p. 30). In addition, Sinclair (2007) discusses how leadership processes can create an unhealthy dependency of the follower upon the leader, and thus, followers become obedient and relinquish their accountability for finding solutions, as they "project a confidence and certainty on to a leader as a way of managing their own anxieties" (p. 68). To avoid the hazards of conventional leadership practices, Sinclair (2007) advocates for leaders to be aware of the contextual power relations, provide structure and authority without creating dependence, and deeply reflect on their own place and behaviors.

When leaders are confronted with a crisis, the positive attributes they are capable of displaying during relative stability are challenged. The stressors of a crisis can overwhelm leaders and they may cling to ingrained behaviors that lack innovation and are potentially counter-productive for the situation. "The bewildering pace, ambiguity, and complexity of a crisis tends to overwhelm normal modes of situation assessment" (Boin, 2009, p. 372). Research by Wooten and James (2008) discovered that during the life cycle of a crisis "not all competencies were demonstrated in a positive or beneficial fashion…there were many cases in which leadership behavior was the antithesis of what might be considered a display of competence in crisis management" (p. 357). Understanding when and how positive attributes can be compromised or abandoned allows for a greater understanding of leadership competencies during a crisis.

Crisis phases and competencies. Using general research that defines the five phases of a crisis (signal detection, preparation and prevention, damage containment, recovery, and learning), Wooten and James (2008) identified leadership competencies in each phase. Signal detection includes sense-making and perspective taking; prevention and preparation includes issue selling, agility, and creativity; damage containment includes decision-making, communicating, and risk taking; recovery involves the promotion of organizational resilience; and learning emphasizes reflection (Wooten & James, 2008). Boin's (2009) analysis of transboundary crises echoes the work of Wooten and James in promoting crisis management as five specific executive tasks: preparing in the face of indifference, making sense of an emerging and evolving crisis, managing large response networks, offering credible answers, and learning under pressure.

Boin (2009) further explains, a transboundary crisis which crosses geographic and functional boundaries can "easily create a power vacuum as it is not clear who 'owns' the crisis and who must deal with it" (p. 368). This is particularly relevant in conjunction with Sinclair's view of structural power relations within leadership practices and the *Battlestar Galactica* narrative that employs a construction of military versus civilian authority. Cohen (2005) explains that an oft-secretive hierarchical armed group "within the framework of a state, is in many ways the antithesis of the democratic ideal" (p. 37). Tensions can develop and power struggles can often ensue, not simply between the power holders as an effect of historical mistrust and communication gaps, but also when military forces are "encouraged to turn their efforts toward the preservation of the political power of the regime rather than to the security of the state as a whole and the protection of its citizens" (Cohen, 2005, p. 46). Cohen determines that successful civil-military relations will require teamwork between military officers, who must undergo a radical change in perceptions, and politicians, but recognizes that long-term reform is subordinate to the urgent demands of a crisis.

Basic follower needs. A final aspect of leadership competence pertinent to a discussion of transboundary crises is providing basic needs for followers. Maslow's motivational theory of hierarchical needs is particularly germane. Within Maslow's theory, humans require certain needs to be met in order to not only survive, but also become motivated to achieve goals. Schwartz (1983) characterizes Maslow's theory as dynamic and a succession of psychologies that present "a hierarchy of created worlds, constructed around the dynamics of the needs that are present, and structured to provide sense to those needs" (p. 936). The needs to be met within Maslow's hierarchy include: physiological needs, such as hunger, thirst, shelter, and sex; safety needs for security and protection from physical or emotional harm; social needs, which include

affection, a sense of belonging, acceptance and friendship; esteem needs, which are internal factors such as self-respect, autonomy, and achievement, and external factors such as status, recognition, and attention; and, finally, self-actualization needs which drive personal growth, achieving one's own potential, and self-fulfillment (Robbins, 2005). As transboundary crises affect multiple social systems, functions, and infrastructures, leaders may face the challenge of providing for these needs in order to maintain group cohesion and motivate followers to achieve goals under arduous circumstances.

Crisis, Charismatic Leadership, and Religion

Group cohesion and motivation can be challenging during a crisis and the charisma of a leader may become a key factor for influencing others. We find in *Battlestar Galactica* two political leaders, Laura Roslin and Gaius Baltar, who emerge during times of crisis and cultivate their charismatic qualities in tandem with religious fundamentalism. The potential for negative outcomes is a strong component of the narrative. I offer an overview of charismatic leadership integrated with religious fundamentalism as a framework for the discussion of certain aspects of leadership in the series.

Weber's seminal model of charisma suggests charismatic leaders emerge during times of crisis (Eatwell, 2006). Several scholars note the relationship between crises and the emergence of charismatic leaders (Halverson, Murphy, & Riggio, 2004; Hunt, Boal & Dodge, 1999; Pillai & Meindl, 1998). Pillai and Meindl (1998) state, "crisis or the perceptions of crisis create opportunities for charismatic leadership to emerge" (p. 644). Halverson et al. (2004) suggest leaders are defined as more charismatic as a result of crisis. Hunt et al. (1999) specifically make a distinction between two forms of charismatic leadership in times of crisis: visionary and crisis-responsive. A visionary charismatic links "followers' needs to important values, purposes or

meanings through articulation of vision and goals" (Hunt et al., 1999, p. 424) and move toward action, while "crisis-responsive charismatics start with actions to deal with the crisis and then move to new interpretive schemes or theories of action to support or justify the actions" (p. 425).

Gordijn and Stapel (2008) bring the discussion of crises and charismatic emergence to the concerns of the 21st century. They contend the aftermath of terrorist attacks, particularly those of 9/11, produces a "charisma-conducive environment" (p. 391) that allows for greater influence by a charismatic leader as followers have an increased need for vision (i.e. an articulated message) to alleviate feelings of threat and social crisis. Their findings discovered the visionary and communicative qualities of charismatic leaders influence followers, in that "when people think about …the possibility of terrorist attacks, they report that they are in need of someone who can offer them solutions, and that they would like to listen to someone who can tell them how to proceed" (Gordijn & Stapel, 2008, p. 395). More fully, Terror Management Theory reasons that the human biological need for survival comes into conflict with the human awareness of mortality, creating psychological terror, which can be alleviated by increased self-esteem (Cohen, Solomon, Maxfield, Pyszczynski, & Greenberg, 2004). This mortality salience is mitigated by the efforts of the charismatic leader, who increases follower self-esteem and provides greater meaning to their lives, and thus followers are more attracted to charismatic leaders when crises threaten their sense of mortality (Cohen et al., 2004).

Crises can also give rise to charismatic leaders who utilize religion as a method for maintaining their own power and achieving a divinely inspired vision to communicate to their followers. Building upon the religious foundation of charisma, Barnes (1978) observes when meaning, morality, and suffering threaten a group of people, religious charismatic leaders must develop an ideology to help their followers cope with perceived chaos. In addition, self-

sacrificial behaviors are positively correlated to the attribution of charismatic qualities upon a leader, which have a stronger influence and effect on followers during times of crisis (Halverson, Holladay, Kazama, & Quiñones, 2004). The research of Halverson, Holladay, et al. (2004) determined that self-sacrificial behavior coupled with a situational crisis had a greater influence on follower perceptions and attributions of charisma.

Scholarship on leaders has traditionally focused on the positive aspects of leadership, while shying away from many of the harsher truths about the negative aspects. As Bligh, Kohles, Pearce, Justin, and Stovall (2007) observe, "the study of leadership as a potentially detrimental or destructive force in organisations is an area deserving increased attention" (p. 530). As academic discourse continues to advocate potent values-based leadership, scholarship would be well advised to address more fully the potential liabilities when values-based leadership is practiced. Of particular concern is the junction of positional or referent power and the espousal of religious values. Legitimate charismatic leadership coupled with religious fundamentalism can be a powerful force for exhibiting the 'dark side' of leaders.

Closely aligned to religious principles, but purportedly different, spirituality as a prized quality for leaders has recently been an area of interest (see Fry, 2003), but again the literature dwells on the positive outcomes of this leadership quality, glosses over religious aspects, and ignores the dangerous consequences of leadership that co-opts spirituality and substitutes religious dogma as an enforcement of policy and marginalizes those who would hold different beliefs. Sinclair (2007) additionally questions the advocacy of spiritual leadership as risking actions that are materially transactional and potentially coercive, as well as the commoditization of spirituality as another tool for organizational success.

More typically, leaders who espouse religious values are seen as charismatic and the description is not always flattering, although athletes, actors, and other icons of American culture are esteemed for their 'personal magnetism'. However, not all charismatic leaders with religious underpinnings to their vision are considered inferior to their counterparts who communicate values that are more secular. Importantly, the view depends on cultural and political paradigms coupled with the benefit of time. Jesus, Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther, Joseph Smith, and Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., to name a few, were all leaders divinely inspired with extraordinary gifts who emerged during times of crisis, built their leadership practice in the public sphere on the values of their respective religious doctrine, and came into conflict with political authorities. Similar leaders have not been afforded this deference, such as Ayatollah Khomeini, David Koresh, and Osama Bin Laden, which points not only to the differences in cultural, religious, and political ideologies, but also the understanding that charismatic leadership based on religious doctrine and practiced in the public sphere can have frightening consequences for the status quo of institutionalized Western Judeo-Christian supremacy.

An overview of charismatic leadership. Although the concept of charisma is found in the writings of St. Paul, the term is strongly identified with sociologist Max Weber who developed a three-fold model of legitimacy and power, which included traditional, bureaucratic, and charismatic forms of leadership (Eatwell, 2006). Weber closely associated charismatic leaders to the religious foundation of the concept, considering them to be divinely gifted and endowed with "exceptional powers or qualities" (Weber, 1922, as cited in Barnes, 1978). Weber expands his theory to incorporate the emergence of charismatic leaders during times of crisis who hold a radical view for change (Eatwell, 2006) and gain authority through the recognition of others (Barnes, 1978). Weber's classification is an 'ideal-type' that morphed into an ideology by

subsequent theorists, and as Pombeni (2008) argues, deprives the type of its "interpretive strength and generates the risk of spawning monsters" (p. 37). Beyer (1999) further takes issue with subsequent theorists, arguing "the so-called neo-charismatic and transformational leadership paradigms have tamed the original conception of charisma advanced by Weber, and, in the process, diluted its richness and distinctiveness" (p. 308). However, leading scholars on charismatic leadership, such as House (1999), make a distinction between Weber's model of charisma and definitions used within studies on organizational behavior.

Charismatic leadership is, as Eatwell (2006) notes, a theory of agency as opposed to fashionable structural system theories and, therefore, invites criticism from contemporary theorists. Defining the theory is complicated by the vague and inconsistent writings of Weber and lack of consensus on the personal attributes necessary to define leaders as charismatic, as well as the situational factors that must be present. Furthermore, the characteristics of charismatic leaders have been indelibly etched in the American psyche as belonging to men like Hitler, Mussolini, and Lenin. Kallis (2006) observes the term charisma became conventional wisdom to "explain complex psychological patterns of popular support for fascism… [and] the fundamental departure from rational-bureaucratic normativity in the exercise of power" (p. 26). Moving past these conceptions shaped by warfare and political incompatibility allows for a broader understanding of charismatic leadership employed within the current American social and political environment.

Personal attributes of charismatic leaders. The Weberian concept of charisma offers a quasi-religious view of leaders, comparable to prophets, who possess extraordinary supernatural qualities that are divinely gifted or inspired and a unique personality that "elicits responses of awe, deference, and devotion from a group of people" (Barnes, 1978, p. 2). This characterization

suggests the charismatic leader possesses innate traits that cannot be developed (Gibson, Hannon, & Blackwell, 1998). Importantly, leaders are seen as having a mission that is fused with their sense of personal destiny.

In accord with the sense of prophet-like special qualities, Conger and Kanungo in the late 1980s developed their model of charismatic leadership to conclude charismatic leaders differentiate themselves by "their ability to formulate and articulate an inspirational vision and by behaviors and actions that foster an impression that they and their mission are extraordinary" (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000, p. 748). As House (1999) notes, impression management is a clear attribute for the definition of a charismatic leader. Far from being a negative connotation, impression management mitigates undesirable attributes that may be present and joins with other characteristics generally considered to define superior leadership, such as self-regulation. Indeed, Jung and Sosik's (2006) empirical research into identifying the personal attributes of charismatic leaders chose the characteristics of self-monitoring, self-actualization, motive to attain social power, self-enhancement, and openness to change as the virtuous qualities that define charismatic leaders. Yet seen in a different light, the effort to manage impressions becomes a dramaturgical process of "framing, scripting, staging, and performing" (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000, p. 153), which suggests undertones of disingenuousness on the part of the leader. Nonetheless, the effort to define characteristics indicates charisma is no longer considered innate and can be developed.

Leader-follower relationships in a charismatic model. Much of the scholarship that attempts to define charismatic leaders leaves the determination to the follower. Yukl (1999) argues, "the most useful definition seems to be in terms of attributions of charisma to a leader by followers who identify strongly with the leader," (p. 294) which allows for incorporating the

original concept of charisma and differentiation from transformational leadership. Further development of this argument states, "charismatic leadership is sociologically and psychologically attributed to the belief of the followers and not so much to the quality of the leader" (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000, p. 147). In short, if followers do not perceive a leader as having charismatic qualities, the leader should not be considered charismatic. This constructivist view argues identity is a "relational construct formed in interactions with others" (Sinha & Jackson, 2006, p. 239). In essence, the view contends charismatic leadership is more than an individual's force of personality and must be bestowed by followers.

Implicit in these arguments is the concept and process of self-identification for the follower through identification with the leader. A leader who is perceived to represent follower values will trigger those followers to identify with the leader, and thereby gain their own sense of identity (Sinha & Jackson, 2006). While charismatic leadership can still be deemed a 'heroic' leadership model, the leader-follower relationship examined through Sinha and Jackson's (2006) Burkean model suggests a more interactive process rather than a unidirectional leader-produced approach to the relationship. However, even though the model is receiver-oriented the charismatic leader will "actively facilitate identification through various means of communication" (Sinha & Jackson, 2006, p. 238).

The Conger-Kanungo model of charismatic leadership is based on follower perceptions of leader behavior that include: desire to change the status quo; sensitivity to the environment and follower needs; effective articulation of a shared and idealized vision; actions that are self-sacrificial or personally risky, thus empowering followers and building trust; and, using innovative or unconventional means to attain goals and be seen as an expert (Conger et al., 2000). This model contends these behaviors will cause followers to attribute charisma to the

leader and stimulates change in their own attitudes, values, and behavior. Additional follower

effects will be "heightened reverence, trust, and satisfaction with the leader" and will be

"positively related to followers' sense of collective identity, perceived group performance, and

feelings of empowerment" (Conger et al., 2000, p. 749). Reverence, collective identity, and

perceived group task performance were found to have a direct relationship with charismatic

leadership, while the other variables of leader behaviors were found to have a mediated or

indirect relationship (Conger et al., 2000).

House (1999), while acknowledging a lack of consensus among organizational

behaviorist theories regarding definitions of leader traits and behaviors, sees the various

definitions as compatible within organizations. Furthermore, he offers his definition as the:

> extraordinary relationship between an individual (leader) and others (followers) based on
> shared deeply held ideological (as opposed to material) values. The outcome of this
> relationship is extraordinary accomplishments as a result of the vision and inspirational
> ability of the leader and the loyalty and trust of the followers, their cohesiveness as a
> collective, and their willingness to make personal sacrifices in the interest of the leader's
> vision and the collective led by the leader. (House, 1999, p. 564)

Situational factors for the emergence of charismatic leaders. For organizational

theory, Gibson et al. (1998) present four situational factors that can lead to the emergence of a

charismatic leader based on the research of House. These situational factors are: (a) the

organization or situation must offer a chance for moral involvement; (b) the situation does not

base leader rewards on contingent extrinsic rewards and punishments; (c) the situation is

unstable or new and there is ambiguity and anxiety among members; and, (d) the situation

requires exceptional effort, behavior, and sacrifices (Gibson et al., 1998). Additionally,

non-exceptional situations may also give rise to charismatic leaders when members of an

organization "are disillusioned with the status-quo" (Gibson et al., 1998, p. 16). In a larger

societal context, this is echoed by Tismaneanu as a 'culture of disillusionment' when

marginalized groups yearn for political saviors (Tismaneanu, 1996, as cited in Pappas, 2005). Importantly, Shamir and Howell (1999) explain not all crises are externally created or objectively viewed, pointing to the ability of organizational members to construct a crisis and enact behaviors consistent with conferring charismatic qualities to a leader.

      Power and legitimacy. The conferring of charismatic qualities onto leaders by followers is essentially a transfer of power, which provides legitimacy to the charismatic leader and increases their authority. As followers are attracted to charismatic leaders through identification with the message, values, and beliefs of the leader coupled with a need for mitigating existential fears, a hierarchical structure is formed that places followers in a subordinate role. Sinha and Jackson (2006) emphasize Burke's understanding of leader-follower dynamics that "distributes authority in an unequal way" and yet, allows for "mutual rules and services between the two" (p. 236). "Providing a legitimate basis for power differences not only makes individuals feel better about the inequality, but it also increases overall acceptance of and compliance with the existing social structure" (Smith, Jost, & Vijay, 2008, p. 361). Smith et al. (2008) add, "sometimes the sheer presence of an explanation is enough for people to accept power differences" (p. 361). Bellamy (2007) further characterizes legitimacy as depending on "the interplay of morality, legality, and political sensibilities within a given context" (p. 517) and that "acts are legitimate if they are justified in terms of common referents and if those justifications are validated by other actors" (p. 518). In other words, legitimacy, like personal charismatic attributes, is also bestowed by followers.

      Legitimacy is also maintained through forming the interests of the individual into the interests of the group (Conger et al., 2000). As a result, a group or collective identity is formed. However, most research on charismatic leadership is viewed primarily through the relationship

between the leader and individual follower at the expense of research about leader influences on the group (Yukl, 1999). Consequently, the power held by charismatic leaders could be additionally viewed as a consequence of *group justification theory*. Group justification theory reasons that people are "driven by ethnocentric motives to build in-group solidarity and to defend and justify the interests and identities of fellow in-group members against those of out-group members" (Jost, Banaji, & Nosek, 2004, p. 882). Furthermore, the given social hierarchy can be legitimized, even at the expense of group interests, through *system justification theory* (Jost et al., 2004). Members of disadvantaged or subordinate groups may bolster the status quo and maintain their inequality through identification with the dominant or socially preferred group (Jost et al., 2004).

Particularly in times of stress created by external forces, follower need for increased identification can translate into an 'us and them' paradigm that can be shaped by charismatic leaders and used as a means for holding power. Beu and Buckley (2004) explain there are two types of power used by charismatics: socialized and personalized. Both types have a high need for power, yet socialized charismatics exercise restraint in using power, recognize follower needs, and communicate messages that meet follower goals; while personalized charismatics enjoy using their power, view situations as contests where they must win, and are motivated by their own needs (Beu & Buckley, 2004). Gibson et al. (1998) describe similar characteristics as examples of ethical versus unethical charismatic leadership, while Pillai and Meindl (1998) suggest definitions of visionary versus crisis-responsive charismatic leadership and hold a positivity bias toward visionary charismatics as ethical.

The 'dark side'. The questions of ethical behavior are precisely what provoke the most serious criticisms of charismatic leadership. As Beyer (1999) states, "the positive virtues of the

new forms of leadership need to be balanced with an awareness of possible negative consequences" (p. 321). Yukl (1999) sees research relating to charismatic leadership as preferring "socially acceptable behaviors rather than manipulative behaviors that increase follower perception of leader expertise and dependence on the leader" (p. 296). Consequently, primary concerns about the 'dark side' of charismatic leadership involve the potential for exploitation, coercion, and the manipulation of impressions, messages, and situations in an effort to enhance follower dependence and bolster leader power.

Underlying these concerns is the appreciation that charisma, by its very nature, is irrational and largely constructed by the emotional needs of the leader and the followers with few objective standards (Aaltio-Marjosola & Takala, 2000). This irrationality provides charismatic leaders with the latitude for greater persuasion and manipulation of followers. Aaltio-Marjosola and Takala (2000) consider leadership to be "that part of executive action directly attributed to…his or her personal vision, imagination, and fantasies" (p. 149) and contend, "entire groups of individuals become influenced by the delusional ideals of the affected person" (p. 149). Manipulation is further imagined by critics due to the understanding of leaders adjusting their images, or 'performance', in order to behave in ways that are important to potential followers, but may not exhibit their true personalities (Sinha & Jackson, 2006). Messages may also be created which speak to the emotional needs of followers, but may not prove successful in overcoming obstacles and, when failure occurs, the group could be in a worse situation (Beyer, 1999). Charismatic leaders may also provide messages incorporating objects of cultural significance to their followers in order to gain credibility and trust, thus increasing their power (Pappas, 2005).

As charismatic leaders allow for the construction of identity and the establishment of in-groups and out-groups, the risk of not only creating a hierarchical structure, but one in which those in the out-group are oppressed or eliminated, as in the case of the enemies of Nazi Germany, is highly dangerous. More typical is the use of rhetoric to justify in-group identification, such as contemporary American politicians who invoke images and phrases of patriotism to differentiate themselves and their followers from others in society who do not share the same belief in how to solve societal problems. This tension can be exploited and perpetuated by charismatic leaders, which leads to greater divisions within the social system.

More significantly, charismatic leaders may demonstrate manipulative behaviors by "misinterpreting events or inciting incidents to create the appearance of a crisis" (Yukl, 1999, p. 296). Specifically, religious charismatic leaders may interpret sacred texts and contemporary world events in ways that promote apocalyptic visions of the future that could be hastened or prevented by follower in-group actions. These actions could include violence, which furthers the appearance of a crisis, even though the group is actually responsible for the creation of the crisis. The charismatic leader's response may possibly begin a cycle of crises through the manipulation of messages and misinterpretation of events, resulting in a chaotic environment with little regard for seeking stability. Charismatic leaders may have little motivation to form a stable environment, as this would result in a diminishment of their power.

In summary, charismatic leaders typically emerge during times of crisis and their message addresses the existential fears and emotional needs of followers to be understood as unique and valuable, while providing a greater purpose for their lives. Charismatic leaders are viewed as possessing divinely gifted exceptional qualities and are able to articulate an inspiring message to others and leading to action. Followers are seen as having the prerogative to imbue

leaders with charisma, but this can also be a function of the manipulative tendencies of the leader. Nonetheless, power, legitimacy, and authority are a relational construct between the leader and followers. Indeed, charismatic leaders are fully dependent on their followers to endow them with authority, and thus legitimacy, within a system. The irrationality of leader-follower relations in Weber's analysis of power lies at the heart of viewing charismatic leadership as potentially dangerous.

Narrative Themes Associated With Leadership Principles

Beyond classic and contemporary leadership theories discussed above, leadership principles are intrinsic to the narrative themes of *Battlestar Galactica.* Themes of love, forgiveness, redemption, and otherness are explored in a myriad of ways throughout the series, affecting the decisions made by the leaders. For a social system in extreme crisis, moral and ethical values clash against the urgent objectives of basic survival and play out on the macro level of the social system and the micro level of the individual. In both arenas, the quest for love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other underscores the ways in which the narrative's characters make sense of events and attempt to bring order to their environment and project a positive future. Not surprisingly, as individuals interpret events and create meaning in diverse ways, principled actions within the narrative are defined differently and created the conflict central to all stories.

Love, forgiveness, redemption, and otherness are known concepts within leadership studies, but are not fully integrated in the discipline as crucial elements for a virtuous life and activating human potential. One might interpret this absence as a part of the traditional bias of separating the scientific from the emotional—the rational from the spiritual. Yet, I recommend these principles must form the base on which leaders act in mature and positive ways. Without

love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other, leaders cannot reach their full potential nor galvanize the full potential of their followers. The concept of principled leadership expects leaders to be 'good', rather than 'great'. Many leaders can achieve moments of greatness in achieving a goal or overcoming an obstacle. The larger challenge is to act in principled ways on a daily moment-to-moment basis.

Significantly, the leadership principles explored in the narrative are closely aligned to religious tenets. Religious beliefs, in several different expressions, are a core element in the narrative. The collision between rational survival necessities and spiritually informed ethical principles continues the function of science fiction narratives for exploring the tensions between the rational/technoscientific and the spiritual/transcendent. Interestingly, Deacy (2006) argues, "film studies has consistently shunned the insights and contributions made by scholars in theology, religious studies, and biblical studies [where]…the religious nature and orientation of film is substantially overlooked, if not altogether dismissed, as a viable or authoritative interpretation" (p. 149). However, there is no single lens through which to study or debate the contributions of theology within film (Deacy, 2006).

For the purposes of comparison to the narrative, brief descriptions defining each of the leadership principles under consideration are offered.

Love. Love is understood to be a social construction that varies across cultures and times (Beall & Sternberg, 1995; Josselson, 1996). In view of the myriad contexts in which love is experienced, a normative definition is elusive. Nevertheless, "love has helped to define the essence of human beings" (Belli, Harré, & Iñiguez, 2010, p. 250). A significant bit of that essence is the human need for relational contact (Josselson, 1996), which is performed through actions and emotions associated with love (Belli et al., 2010). Yet, as language shapes our view

of reality within our respective cultures, the above statements may be interpreted in ways that are circumspect to romantic love and disregards the full breadth of loving actions and emotions within the capabilities of humans.

While there stands disagreement that love must be solely enacted in relationship, such as the notion of unrequited love, understanding love as an action allows us to more fully appreciate the primal requirement of love for human fulfillment and development. Consequently, I am persuaded to agree with Oord's (2010) definition: "To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic response to others (including God), to promote overall well-being" (p. 15). From this definition, Oord characterizes love as an act that is a deliberate, or intentional, decision motivated by noble purposes and requires free choice, as well as the acceptance of responsibility for those choices. Oord further demonstrates the relational component of love by including sympathy, which he holds synonymous with empathy, and discusses this as being "internally influenced by the other such that one's own experience is partially constituted by the one or ones perceived" (p. 20). Importantly, Oord acknowledges the divine influence in loving actions and "[considers] God an actual, causal agent" (p. 21). Most useful for a full understanding of the numerous ways humans can engage in loving actions is Oord's final phrase, where "acting to promote overall well-being can pertain to any dimension of life" (p. 24). Intentional actions of love can range from ecological stewardship to social and political unity to providing physical necessities (i.e. food, water, shelter, clothing) to promoting higher order social needs, such as a sense of belonging and self-actualization, which echoes the Maslow model of hierarchical needs. In short, "love takes into account, in varying degrees, the life of the individual, local community, and global community" (Oord, 2010, p. 24).

It would be a simple thing to discuss love, as defined by Oord (2010), as a utilitarian approach to ethical social relationships. However, Oord views the intentional act of love as motivated by the purpose of the loving action and not the consequences of the action, thus supporting a stance more akin to deontological ethics. Nevertheless, a loving action motivated by serving the common good with a projected positive outcome provides a foundation for principled leadership. Unsurprisingly, the social construction of 'the common good' is as varied across cultures as the conceptions of love. How a culture conceives love is particularly important as the conception affects cultural institutions and proscribes appropriate behaviors and relationships, as well as the collective understanding of 'right versus wrong' (Beall & Sternberg, 1995). The implications for socio-political structures, dyadic relationships, and the ethical considerations of loving actions are particularly germane to discussions of leadership. By appealing to an intentional, sympathetic active response that promotes overall well-being for the individual and the community, we can lay the foundation for love as a basic leadership principle spanning specific styles or theories.

Forgiveness. A second narrative theme within Battlestar Galactica that pivots upon leadership principles is forgiveness. Similar to love, "forgiveness is a construct that has its roots in religion" (Madsen, Gygi, Hammond, & Plowman, 2009) and this has potentially led to the absence of mainstream scholarship on the topic due to anti-religious bias (Sells & Hargrave, 1998). Cameron and Caza (2002) consider forgiveness as a universal virtue embedded in the major religious traditions, but "is among the least understood virtues and one of the most difficult to attain" (p. 37). Worthington et al. (2010) consider spirituality, one's relationship with the Sacred, as intertwined with and a precursor to genuine forgiveness, which they view as a stress and coping framework.

Madsen et al. (2009) undertook a review of the literature pertaining to forgiveness and

"discovered that nearly all definitions or frameworks acknowledge that forgiveness is not

condoning, forgetting, or ignoring a hurtful action" (p. 248). Furthermore, forgiveness is a

conscious decision transforming the one who forgives and the transgressor (Madsen et al., 2009).

There is a change not only in the individual who forgives, but also in the dyadic relationship

requiring changes in behaviors and feelings (Cameron & Caza, 2002). The person who has

suffered a hurt relinquishes any claim to resentment or revenge and allows the transgressor to

make amends, thus (re)creating a positive relational change and minimizing the negative effects

of the injury (Madsen et al., 2009).

Sells and Hargrave (1998) similarly analyzed the literature on forgiveness and found six

emergent themes for defining forgiveness:

> First, there is an injury or violation with subsequent emotional/physical pain. Second, the
> violation results in a broken/fragmented relationship between parties. Third, perpetuation
> of injury is halted. Fourth, a cognitive process is pursued where the painful event of
> action is understood or reframed within a fuller context. Fifth, there is a release or letting
> go of justifiable emotion and retaliation related to the event. Sixth, there is a renegotiation
> of the relationship. (p. 28)

Implicit within their definition is the understanding of forgiveness as a *process*. Forgiveness is

not a moment in time without history or future consequences. Forgiveness is recurring within

each relational encounter and the conscious decision to continue a forgiving path—the release of

justifiable emotion—must be made in order for genuine forgiveness to occur.

For organizations, to include social systems, forgiveness is similarly transformative and

positive. Cameron and Caza (2002) consider organizational forgiveness as "the capacity to

foster collective abandonment of justified resentment, bitterness, and blame, and instead, it is the

adoption of positive, forward-looking approaches in response to harm or damage" (p. 39). Yet,

Kearney (2003) asks the unanswerable questions of who has the power and who has the right to

forgive? His recommendation is to continue to seek understanding, seemingly holding at Sells and Hargrave's "cognitive process" stage, though it is difficult. Unfortunately, this does little to advance the process of forgiveness in a timely manner for systems in crisis from internal or external injuries. In supporting acts of forgiveness to occur, organizational leaders must take the responsibility to encourage their followers in this transformative process. To do otherwise would risk the effectiveness and productivity of the system, if not its very existence. Moreover, Grant (2008) asserts leaders must see themselves as imperfect, and as such, they must see others as imperfect and practice forgiveness as a means for creating an organizational environment in which people can flourish and leaders can emerge.

An example of a leader who facilitated collective forgiveness is Nelson Mandela of South Africa. His ability to foster forgiveness within a society ravaged for generations by the evils of apartheid speaks to the profound effect forgiveness can yield in the healing process and the renegotiations of relationships within the system to advance a positive vision of the future. However, we must be cautious in thinking whole system change in this area is the exclusive prerogative of legitimate leaders. For social systems under duress, forgiveness as a basic leadership principle that can be performed by any actor appears to solidify the ability of the system to recover and move forward without denying or condoning the hurt.

Redemption. For many characters within *Battlestar Galactica,* redemption is a key motivating factor behind their actions, whether articulated as such or not. Redemption has several meanings, though Doran (2010) asserts, "any articulation of redemption must remain irretrievably elemental, esthetic, dramatic, [and] ultimately narrative in form" (p. 50). The term is understood historically to mean the payment of a debt or ransom (Clark, 2003). Yet the abstraction of the word may be more easily understood as forgiveness, both given and received,

that also holds a quality of "removing shame" (Clark, 2003, p. 77). Additionally, in the context of redemption and human activity, the *Biblica Judica* maintains, "redemption is salvation from the states or circumstances that destroy the value of human existence itself" (Clark, 2003, p. 76). Redemption is a process that occurs through interaction between "person and person, person and community, person and God, and a community and God" (Clark, 2003, p. 78) moving the actors from alienation to reconciliation.

Within a wholly Protestant Christian context, "redemption involves the restoration of the torn fabric of personal relationships between God and his 'fallen' creation" (Deacy, 2006, p. 152). Indeed, redemption is closely associated in the minds of many Christians "with a vengeful and violent god who demands appeasement" (Edwards, 2010, p. 244) through an act of repentance for expiation of sin. Yet a repentant attitude that creates a closer relationship with the Sacred and provides for personal growth, enlightenment, or forgiveness can be observed within many spiritual traditions (Caldwell, Dixon, Atkins, & Dowdell, 2011). Repentance is, according to Caldwell et al. (2011), a "behavior that incorporates an ongoing desire to improve one's life by honoring duties owed to oneself and to others… [with] an integrated change in one's actions or way of life that seeks to improve relationships with others, either individually or as members of a group" (p. 474).

Through this understanding, we can appreciate redemption as a process similar to forgiveness. The key aspect distinguishing the two is that the process of forgiveness begins within the injured person or community, whereas the process of redemption begins with persons who have transgressed and seek to rectify their relationships with individuals, the community, or God through repenting their actions. Redemption requires self-awareness, humility, and action.

One cannot be passive, but must pursue redemption by restoring relationships and being open to those serendipitous moments when debts can be forgiven.

Seeking redemption through repentance and forgiveness is a critical quality for leaders and a basic principle for ethical leadership. Caldwell et al. (2011) provide a compelling argument as to how the processes of repentance and continuous improvement unite as a framework for ethical leadership and "reinforce the obligation of each leader to look deeply within in examining how to improve, how to prepare for obligations owed, and how to strengthen levels of trust within the entire organization" (p. 483). As a process tied to the effectiveness of organizations, redemption can potentially enhance the ability of leaders and other individuals within the social system to reach their full human potential.

Being human and being other. Central to the narrative of *Battlestar Galactica* is the conflict between humans and Cylons. Pertinent to this discussion are the ways in which leaders construct otherness as a means for social stability and follower motivation. In short, it is the ancient understanding of 'us versus them' that permeates the story. Yet, the series presents the non-human Other of the Cylon as human, not only in look and in behavior, but also emotional characteristics. This complicates the good versus evil trope in ways that lead to questioning the nature of being human and our relationship to those who are different. My intention here is not to create a list of characteristics or behaviors that define humans, but to identify the ways in which we create otherness in opposition to self and ways for reconciliation.

Kearney (2003) explored the construction of the Other in western culture and greatly influenced my understanding on this subject. A main thesis is "we often project onto others those unconscious fears from which we recoil in ourselves" (Kearney, 2003, p. 5). To resist these fears, "ritual scapegoating" (p. 26) of the stranger is one of the earliest coping mechanisms.

However, there is a dual identity of the scapegoat, which represents both external threat and internal corruption. By purging the stranger, menace from the outside and divergence on the inside can be eradicated and creates a new solidarity within the community. Importantly, the historical image of the stranger becomes demonic and monstrous—yet maintains recognizable human characteristics. This image is maintained in the 21st century, particularly through science fiction narratives of alien encounters (Kearney, 2003).

Kearney's (2003) key to disrupting the cyclical creation and purging of others/strangers/monsters is to "imagine other possibilities of existence which challenge the status quo and embrace peace and justice over dual agonistics" (p. 41). He adds, "When violent fears go, so do monsters. Love is the casting out of fear. The key, perhaps, is not to kill our monsters but to learn to live with them" (Kearney, 2003, p. 62). Kearney takes a hermeneutic approach to the understanding of the Other, "which construes otherness less in opposition to selfhood than as a partner engaged in the constitution of its intrinsic meaning" (p. 80). Put differently, we need our others in order to define ourselves, though not in an adversarial manner, but in a fusion of understanding.

Once again, we are presented with a process for development within an ethical and moral framework. Transformative change is implicit within confrontation of the Other. However, "transformation is not in itself a guarantee of ethical improvement" (Kearney, 2003, p. 223). Principled leadership is required to bring about co-existence. Facing fears with compassion and understanding creates a practicable moral environment.

In this overview of love, forgiveness, redemption, and otherness, the interrelated components of each principle become apparent. These principles are connected through spiritual and ethical understandings of humans in relationship to each other, the local and global

community, to the stranger, and to the Sacred. By embracing the otherness of strangers, gods, or ourselves through love and forgiveness, redemption becomes possible. Redemption clears a path for greater human development and progression toward a positive future. Importantly, actions for attaining the positive outcomes promised by each principle must involve a process simultaneously internal and external. In addition, there is no assurance the processes will be brief or even linear. Undoubtedly, the irrationality of human behavior and feeling creates an assumption that loving, forgiving, redeeming, and embracing must be repeatedly revisited in order to gain the complete restoration of broken relationships. Leaders can take responsibility, if not fulfill the obligation, to reflect upon the ways in which they can model loving, forgiving, and redemptive behaviors and, thus, create positive ethical communities that empower others to reach their fullest potential.

The incorporation of these principles into this dissertation stems from previous work on the subject of love and science fiction narratives in film. As I explored the narrative of *Battlestar Galactica*, I initially expected to describe the frequent lusty encounters of the characters. However, my viewings and interpretation brought forth a deeper understanding of love beyond the sensual and romantic to discover love – in all its permutations – as a means of redemption for the characters. Further contemplation and readings on the subject brought forth the connections to forgiveness and the way humans create otherness. Through my interpretation of the narrative, I offer a connection between these leadership principles and leadership actions during extreme crises and continual change. The next chapter will discuss the method by which I explore these themes.

Chapter III: Methodology

The choice for using an interpretive hermeneutic method for this dissertation comes from the specific desire to understand the visual text of *Battlestar Galactica* in relation to leadership studies. The goal is neither to predict behaviors nor to examine an individual case against theory. My intent is to develop our further and deeper understanding of leadership *in extremis* for reflection and dialogue, while questioning how the visual text may influence our perceptions of leadership in general. This integration of leadership studies and the arts requires interpretation, as opposed to experimentation or content analysis. Moreover, some scholars utilize visual texts as a means for illustrating how leadership theories can be enacted and even emulated (Gray & Callahan, 2008; Rosser, 2007; Sudbrack & Trombley, 2007; Torock, 2008; Williams, 2006). This is not my endeavor, though positive behaviors worthy of following become evident through the findings.

I begin this chapter with a brief history of the hermeneutic tradition and the thinking that influences my development as an interpretive hermeneuticist. I follow with a description of the key characteristics of hermeneutics, the role of the hermeneutic interpreter, my process for interpretation, and conclude with the strengths and perceived limitations of the dissertation.

Evolution of the Hermeneutic Tradition

The word *hermeneutic* derives its meaning from the Greek verb *hermeneuein* and the noun *hermeneia* (Palmer, 1969). Respectively, these words are commonly translated as "to interpret" and "interpretation." Importantly, the word is associated with the ancient Greek messenger god, Hermes, who is imbued with the skills of speaking, language, and writing, among others. This association promotes the function of Hermes as an interpreter of that which is unclear or concealed to human understanding or, in other words, "bringing to understanding,

especially as this process involves language" (Palmer, 1969, p. 13). Palmer (1969) further explores the linguistic meaning of the ancient Greek in describing three basic directions implicitly contained within the terms: (a) to express or say out loud, (b) to explain, and (c) to translate. Each of these directions can refer to an act of interpretation, which Palmer (1969) describes as a process whereby "something foreign, strange, separated in time, space, or experience is made familiar, present, comprehensible; something requiring representation, explanation, or translation is somehow 'brought to understanding'—is 'interpreted'" (p. 14). Kearney (2003) sees the purpose of the hermeneutic project as a way "to recover some lost original consciousness by way of rendering what is past contemporaneous with our present modes of comprehension" (p. 17).

A strong connection exists between the dimensions of modern hermeneutics and earlier periods of textual analysis. In the mid-1600s, the need arose within Protestant theology for a proper method of developing commentary on scriptures in the absence of a centralized authority (Palmer, 1969). The Protestant Reformation was not only a schism between the Roman Catholic Church and its dissenters over perceived corruption, but also speaks to the divergence of Protestantism to a more 'scientific' mode of determining religious meaning, while considering Catholicism to be of a more 'magical' nature (Roberts, 2007). Thus, a theory and rules were essential to the successful development of Protestantism and *hermeneutics* became the phrase for this means of scriptural commentary.

With the rise of rationalism in the 18th century, discontent with the 'mythical' qualities of traditional biblical exegesis provoked an "intellectualizing of biblical assertions" (Frör as cited in Palmer, 1969, p. 39) and the 'historical' school of interpretation was on the ascendant, as the favorability of the 'grammatical' school declined. The challenge for the Age of Enlightenment

was to make the bible relevant to the rational mind, which required a dedication to the historical context of the biblical texts. Concurrently, methods of biblical interpretation were commonly considered applicable to secular texts.

The late 18th century to the early 19th century brought another significant shift in the philosophical reflections on text interpretation. Many scholars hold this period to be the starting point for the genealogical considerations of the field (Martinengo, 2010). This is the era of Romantic Idealism, which posited understanding of the physical world is "a manifestation of the one mind or spirit" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 12). The foremost thinker during this period was Freidrich Ast (1778-1841). Ast is credited with conceiving the *hermeneutic circle*, his visualization of the method for understanding a whole through the understanding of its parts in an iterative process leading to greater depth of understanding for the text under consideration. Importantly, to gain genuine understanding, interpretation was seen as an "intellectual act of returning to the source material" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 14). Not surprisingly, Ast regarded interpretation as a re-creation of the text aimed at recovering the original circumstances and intent of the author (Bontekoe, 2000). Another famed philologist of the era was Friedrich August Wolf (1759-1824), who also developed a three-fold dimension for hermeneutics. Significantly different in Wolf's conception is the absence of the spiritual dimension of interpretation seen in Ast, as well as the aim of his model as a practical, as opposed to theoretical, response to the problems of text interpretation. Wolf saw the act of interpretation as having differing needs based on the type of text under consideration. Consequently, his model remained a collection of rules meant to identify and mitigate the difficulties encountered in interpretation (Palmer, 1969). Ast and Wolf had a substantial influence on the thinking of Schleiermacher, considered the first major theorist of modern hermeneutics.

Schleiermacher's (1768-1834) primary thesis was in the process of extracting understanding and meaning from a text, "the highest perfection of interpretation consists in understanding an author better than he could answer for himself" (Schleiermacher as cited in Vandevelde, 2010, p. 297). Schleiermacher's contribution was to be the first to bridge the gap between text and common human nature within a methodological theory (Margolis, 1987). These concepts would set a new direction in the evolution of the field by forming a *general hermeneutics* systematic enough in its approach to be able to embrace any text regardless of the genre (i.e. scriptures, legal documents, or literature) and dispense with the abundance of specializations within the hermeneutic tradition (Palmer, 1969). Interpretation becomes an art, as the interpreter must have a talent for language and an intimate knowledge of the influences that affect human nature (Bontekoe, 2000). Furthermore, the reconstruction of the author's mental process was seen as "an intuitive and divinatory matter" (Palmer, 1969, p. 87) more closely related to an art than to a science. Schleiermacher's capacity for envisioning a means of interpreting all texts, regardless of genre, through a general system of thought that connects language and author within a cultural period would lay the foundation for the modern hermeneutical tradition.

Wilhelm Dilthey (1833-1911) expanded on the work of Schleiermacher by considering hermeneutics as a means for understanding the expressions within *Geisteswissenschaften,* the humanities and social sciences. He saw hermeneutics as merely a theory of interpreting texts and transformed it into a "general methodology governing *all* human studies" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 41). Dilthey sought to remove human studies from the mechanistic causality-oriented positivism of the natural sciences by developing some means of understanding complex human experiences (Palmer, 1969). Dilthey took as his basic tenet "concrete, historical, lived

experience" (Palmer, 1969, p. 99) was the key to understanding human expressions. Similar to the concept of Schleiermacher, Dilthey was interested in the re-creation of texts, not as divined within the mind of the original author, but as a "projective identification" the interpreter could utilize based on "archetypal experiences… [and] basic mental states common to all human beings" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 42). Dilthey's emphasis was not on understanding the inner life of the other person, but in understanding the world within a social-historical context of commonality—the unity of life. Within this, we find *historicality* as the next step in the evolution of hermeneutics. Dilthey's contribution is significant in trying to remove the metaphysical characteristics of previous theorists and edge closer to an empirical foundation of analysis that recognizes temporality and interconnectedness.

Although more interested in developing a fundamental ontology than a methodology for interpretation, Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) was influenced by the writings of Dilthey, and in turn, was highly influential to the hermeneutic theorists who followed. Through his efforts, the field was advanced as Heidegger delivered "a more profound examination of the conditions of being human which make interpretation possible" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 62). The hermeneutic circle was essential to Heidegger's thinking. He broke with Husserl's claim that presuppositions can be 'bracketed' or cleared away; indeed, Heidegger determined this was impossible. The hermeneutic circle allowed a means for becoming aware of preconceptions and testing their legitimacy so the phenomenon being studied could "reveal itself as it actually is" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 64). Importantly, Heidegger was not interested in re-creating understanding based on an original authority, but in de-constructing the beliefs that mask the true nature of the matter under consideration (Bontekoe, 2000).

Heidegger also wrote of the act of *hermeneutical violence*, whereby the interpreter searches for what is not explicitly present. In essence, the interpreter must not be satisfied with what is stated within a text, but create a dialogue whereby the truth of the text is revealed. Through a process of re-asking the questions offered by the text—re-encountering the object with revised expectations—meaning is brought to light. It is at once opening up the space in which truth can be disclosed and moving into that space (Palmer, 1969). Heidegger offers a radical departure from the previous distanced view of interpretation as a conceptual or analytical function and places it at the very core of human existence. Though Heidegger never revisited and more fully developed his ideas about the hermeneutics of interpretation, his student, Hans-Georg Gadamer, would advance the subject beyond the confines of the humanities and social sciences by providing a systematic expression for understanding the whole of the human experience.

For Gadamer (1900-2002), the exploration of meaning and understanding would go beyond the humanities and question how understanding becomes possible for the totality of the human experience. As an ironic twist to the title of his 1960 classic work, *Truth and Method*, Gadamer eschews methodology as a means for discovering truth. As stated in his introduction, "the hermeneutics developed here is not, therefore, a methodology of the human sciences, but an attempt to understand what the human sciences truly are, beyond their methodological self-consciousness, and what connects them with the totality of our experience of world" (Gadamer, 1960/1989, p. xxii). By using a method, a set of questions are present within the method and "structure in advance the encounter one will have with the work" (Palmer, 1969, p. 227). Gadamer sought to acquire a greater openness unconfined by scientific doctrines. Importantly, Gadamer was concerned with the actual practice of interpretation, "not just the persistent posing

of ultimate questions, but the sense of what is feasible, what is possible, what is correct, here and now" (Gadamer, 1960/1989, p. xxxiv). The function of interpretation begins to be addressed and Gadamer insists what is to be understood must be understood within and relevant to the present. Nonetheless, Gadamer's was a *philosophical hermeneutics* seeking to overcome the methodological disputes limiting the ability to further our knowledge of the human experience.

Building on Heidegger's ontological base, Gadamer meticulously sets up his argument of a new direction for hermeneutics by breaking down the weaknesses of previous theorists, as well as reintegrating ancient Greek concepts, particularly Socratic dialogue, to move toward a broader concept of the field. By evoking ancient Greek thought, Gadamer achieves distance for his philosophical hermeneutics in two ways. First, he provides a foundation that is, arguably, secular and not entrenched in the theological Protestantism or metaphysics of the previous major theorists. Secondly, in dialectically exploring the question of human experience, he pulls hermeneutics further from the natural sciences and the pervasiveness of mid-20th century positivism. As he explained to Boyne (1988), "What matters here is not the theoretical elaboration of a general formula, but rather an attention to detail which requires a whole chain of judgments. The point of hermeneutics is to find the right judgments in the human context, where it is not a question of applying a general rule" (p. 30).

At the risk of neglecting many admirable points of Gadamer's philosophy of hermeneutics, I offer the following major tenets for consideration of his contribution to the hermeneutic tradition that greatly influence my thinking: the historicality of understanding and the fusion of horizons.

Historicality of understanding. Human understanding of the world is open to characterization as a project of arrogance. As contemporary beings, we may insist our time and

culture is more advanced, enlightened, or knowledgeable than any other previous time or culture. Thus, like Dilthey, we would determine there would be no fairness in comparing our world to the world(s) of the past and our understanding of the past must remain unfettered by contemporary perceptions. We presuppose our present is correct and the past cannot compete with it and becomes irrelevant for us (Palmer, 1969). This arrogance prevents us from examining, experiencing, and discovering the world as it is. Yet, as Heidegger argues, understanding is intrinsically temporal and must always be seen "in terms of past, present, and future [in] what is called the historicality of understanding" (Palmer, 1969, p. 180).

Historicality does not refer to the mundane chronology or transience of human existence. Rather, historicality is man's self-understanding "through objectifications of life" (Palmer, 1969, p. 116) where "man's nature is not a fixed essence" (p. 116) and meaning is temporal "always [standing] in a horizonal context that stretches into the past and into the future" (p. 117). We are dependent on history for self-understanding and self-interpretation, yet this same history can also be revised and newly understood through experience and projection. "An event or experience can so alter our lives that what was formerly meaningful becomes meaningless and an apparently unimportant past experience may take on meaning in retrospect" (Palmer, 1969, p. 118). Therefore, meaning becomes contextual, changeable over time, and always in relationship to life. Contrary to the natural sciences, understanding for the social sciences cannot be fixed or formed as detached truths. Each of us perceives meaning from our own horizon within the hermeneutic circle and so our positionality becomes embedded in the process of understanding. Consequently, interpretation becomes a cognitive task of finding "viable modes of interaction…with the text" (Palmer, 1969, p. 121) based on lived experience. The epistemological process of this task is achieved through degrees, an "interminable refinement and correction of our initial

assumptions," (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 58) where 'truth' is an ideal that is unachievable, but the process may provide greater confidence for what is 'valid'.

Our understanding is influenced by our past, our future, and our prejudgments. As Coe (2009) explains, "we are thoroughly historical beings, in that our history shapes our interpretations of what we encounter, despite our best efforts to gain the autonomy of consciousness cleansed of the merely given" (p. 924). There is no such thing as an interpretation that is presuppositionless. Gadamer (1960/1989) acknowledged the temporal tensions of understanding and found them to be central to the hermeneutic principle. Hermeneutics becomes the 'between-place' that bridges temporal distance. Time functions to "eliminate what is inessential, allowing the true meaning that lies hidden in a thing to become clear" (Palmer, 1969, p. 185). The historicality of understanding is shaped by the temporal distance, which allows meaning to become clear over time so that significance can emerge and become relevant for the present. However, in bridging the gap between the text and the reader, the interpretation must be "humanly significant for today or [is] worthless" (Palmer, 1969, p. 29). So, while a text may be adequately expressed, explained, or translated to a reader (e.g. in terms of language or purpose), the value of a hermeneutic process is only achieved when the process provides significance for a contemporary reader's world. An example of this concept is the work of Van Gogh, which was summarily dismissed during his lifetime, but after the passage of time, his artistic insights into the human experience became relevant and valuable, creating meaning for a contemporary audience.

Meaning, as perhaps already inferred, is predicated on the questions being asked in the present. Therefore, simply re-creating or restoring an interpretation is impossible. Gadamer poses the work of hermeneutics as a process of *integration*. Gadamer (1960/1989) explains "the

historical approach of ideative reconstruction is transformed into a thinking relation to the past…as the essential nature of the historical spirit consists not in the restoration of the past but in *thoughtful mediation with contemporary life*" (p. 161).

The key for Gadamer was in finding the right questions. Questioning is not a technical skill of proscribed method, but "cultivating a readiness to see what remains to be shown" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 115). Importantly, these questions come from experience—which is not simply an accumulation of perceptions about one's life, but an active interaction and encounter with the subject. Importantly, experience comes from negativity. Our experience broadens when what occurs is contrary to expectations. Historicality of understanding, simultaneously, is being grounded in the present by recognizing the teachings of the past, yet remaining open in expectation to future possibilities. We accomplish this within a horizon of understanding.

Fusion of horizons. Within this discussion, we can consider a horizon as the point to which we can 'see', but with the prior knowledge that a small change in perspective allows us to see farther than our original point of view. For the hermeneutic approach, perspectives continually change as we engage in questions and answers challenging our preconceptions and prior judgments about a subject. As Gadamer (1960/1989) explains:

> The present is continually in the process of being formed because we are continually having to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing occurs in encountering the past and in understanding the tradition from which we come. Hence the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more an isolated horizon of the present in itself than there are historical horizons which have to be acquired. *Rather, understanding is always the fusion of these horizons supposedly existing by themselves.* (p. 305)

Gadamer's point is to shed light on the important notion that understanding occurs when we forego isolating the past from the present and realize the reflexivity of *historically effected consciousness* that overcomes mere self-reflection and reconciles with itself effecting recognition of experiencing meaning in a reality (Gadamer, 1960/1989). In essence, the reflection allows for

a consciousness of the ends, as well as the means (Gadamer, 1960/1989). In turn, this reality is changeable, as "it is the course of events that brings out new aspects of meaning in historical material" (Gadamer, 1960/1989, p. 366).

The *experience* of a hermeneutical encounter, where we discover something we did not know or something counter to what we had previously believed, is the application of Gadamer's hermeneutic philosophy. Consequently, it is not possible, nor beneficial, to leave our horizon— our point of view—behind when we engage in an interpretation, whether it is a text, a conversation, or an event. Indeed, effective application must include our own individual horizon. As Vessey (2009) explains,

> Horizons fuse when an individual realizes how the context of the subject matter can be weighted differently to lead to a different interpretation from the one initially arrived at… the original understanding is surpassed and integrated into a broader, more informed understanding… we have a new perspective on our old views. (p. 534)

This is achieved by openness in allowing "new possible relationships in being to speak to us and address our understanding" (Palmer, 1969, p. 212). Meaning, then, is a reciprocal project—a dialogue—between the interpreter and the object under consideration (Gadamer, 1960/1989). Moreover, this dialogue can demonstrate several alternative interpretations to a single question, which allows for flexibility and deepening of our understanding.

In its essence, Gadamer considered his philosophical hermeneutics to be a practical endeavor:

> The point…is to indicate that hermeneutics is the renewal of the practical philosophy. The whole concept of practice has been distorted by the modern concept of theory, of theory as an instrument for explaining reality. But theory is an attitude of human beings, an attitude which demands a great deal of self-control and discipline… Theory, then, is a form of human practice; practice is not to be seen as the application of theory. (Boyne, 1988, p. 29)

Further understandings on dialogue. Jurgen Habermas (b. 1929) built upon Gadamer's understanding of hermeneutic dialogue by exposing the potentials for unequal power and

developed a critical hermeneutic theory model. This theory "describes a position of skepticism and critical reflection regarding the status quo… [and seeks] liberation from unnecessary and unreflected constraints, including the constraints incurred by knowledge limitations" (Trede, Higgs, & Rothwell, 2009, ¶ 4.2). The purpose is for greater understanding of the ontological and epistemological paradigms of interpretation for social transformation. In essence, Habermas calls for a balance between distance and engagement in critical dialogues to protect against coercion and allow the conversants to gain knowledge beyond their own horizon, which Gadamer rejected as not possible. Critical hermeneutics is a project for commenting on and resisting the status quo through raising consciousness and is enacted in the public sphere with full awareness of the political implications. Habermas' critical dialogues are reciprocal and force assumptions and tensions into the open. "Mutual understanding is only mutual when it is free of coercion and provides opportunities to not only hear the voices of the marginalized or even silenced groups but to integrate them" (Trede et al., 2009, ¶ 5.6).

Richard Rorty (1931-2007) also questions Gadamer's notions of dialogue and is typically identified as a neopragmatist who favored the concept that methods are subject to the vagaries of social conventions in that "what it is rational for us to believe currently may not be true" (Ray, 2004, p. 316). He intersects with Gadamer and the hermeneutists through considering the power of language/vocabularies. He moves beyond by rejecting the representational notions of knowledge and language. Rorty has become a controversial figure for developing a philosophical stance integrating thought, culture, and American leftist politics. His goal was much like Habermas' for developing a rational mode of social organization as his thought, "links changes in understanding to action" (Kinsella, 2006, ¶ 2.1.8). Rorty's strategy was "to move everything over from epistemology and metaphysics into cultural politics, from claims to

knowledge and appeals to self-evidence to suggestions about what we should try" (Rorty, *Truth and Progress,* p. 57, as cited in Ramberg, 2009). One example of how his strategy can be perceived as problematic, and hence controversial, is in regards to the nature of reciprocal dialogue. For Rorty, conversation is only successfully accomplished within one's own ethnocentric group because of the inherent shared beliefs of the group, which "he insists is a philosophy of solidarity, not despair" (Ray, 2004, p. 317). Rorty's pragmatism led him to break with previous hermeneutical thought as it "left its conservative focus on dialogue and [became] a progressive conversational philosophy" (Zabala, 2010, p. 162) more concerned with fusing horizons than measuring success through the dissolution of problems.

Visualizing the Hermeneutic Circle

In light of the previous discussion, my visualization of the hermeneutic circle is contained in Figure 3.1. As historical beings, we hold *preconceptions* of any experience we may have. These preconceptions are confirmed or disconfirmed in our *encounters*. From the encounter, we broaden our understanding through *interpretation*. We try to make sense out of the encounter we have just experienced based on all our previous encounters. Our interpretation allows for *new insights* for ourselves in relationship to the object of the encounter and a projection for future encounters. The circle then continues, as our new insights become preconceptions laying in wait for other encounters and further interpretations.

New Insights   Preconceptions

Interpretation   Encounter
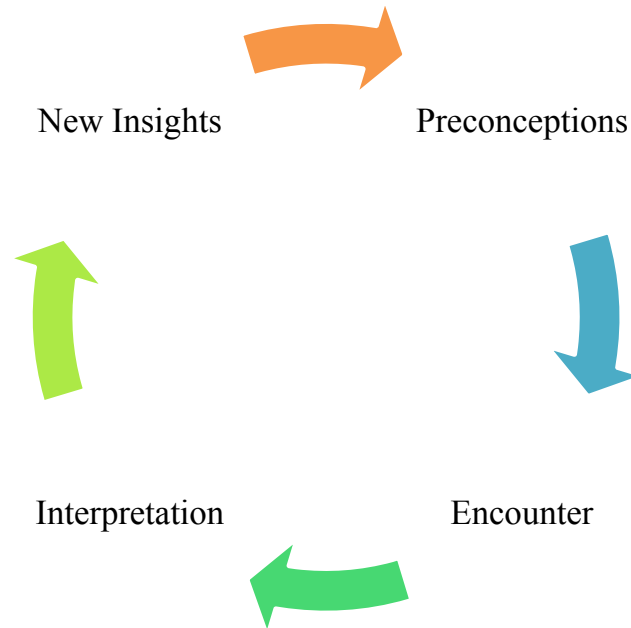
Figure 3.1 Visualization of the Hermeneutic Circle

Importantly, the interpretation *is not* the insight. Interpretation can too often be substituted as explanation, which is not the concern of philosophical hermeneutics, and provides no new understanding beyond the specific encounter under consideration. Making sense of an encounter must go beyond the process of interpretation and allow for the production of knowledge over and beyond the actual encounter. Thus, insights become a consequence of interpretation. In a more scholarly context, insight forms from interpretation going beyond the "explicitness of the text," (Palmer, 1969, p. 235) where "the moment of interpretation is not merely explaining what the text means in its own world but what it means to us" (p. 236). This application of interpretation to our own historicality makes hermeneutics a practical means for understanding.

That being said, the potentially infinite process of the hermeneutic circle is impracticable for a time-bounded project of scholarship. In other words, there must come a point in time when the interpreter must stop encountering the text. Paul Ricoeur (1913-2005), a hermeneutic phenomenologist concerned with the interpretation of discourse and action, supported Gadamer's

understanding of multiple interpretations, but also criticized his failure to provide a methodological approach for practice (Bontekoe, 2000). For Ricoeur, the process of interpretation contains three stages: *explanation*, which clarifies the text's structure; *understanding*, which clarifies the meaning of the author's intent; and, *appropriation*, which is the process of determining the significance of a text for the reader (Bontekoe, 2000). This process is a hermeneutical arc, rather than a circle, and as such, the interpretation process is finite, bridging the space between the text and lived experience (Bontekoe, 2000). As a matter of practicality, an interpretive hermeneutical approach in scholarship implicitly ends on an arc.

Key Characteristics of Hermeneutics

Kinsella (2006) provides a wonderfully concise summation of elements for the conceptualization of the hermeneutic approach, which include:

- seeks understanding rather than explanation;

- acknowledges the situated location of interpretation;

- recognizes the role of language and historicity in interpretation;

- views inquiry as conversation; and

- is comfortable with ambiguity (¶ 2.1)

These elements are particularly useful to keep in mind with qualitative research and, more specifically, within the area of interpretive hermeneutics of visual texts, which is my primary focus as a scholar. For my own scholarship, I would add attentiveness to what is not within a text (inspired by Heidegger), critical theory aspects for social justice issues and examination of the status quo (inspired by Habermas), and the ways in which an interpretive hermeneutical approach can go beyond the arena of intellectualization of a phenomenon (inspired by Rorty).

These dimensions more clearly relate to and focus on the role and ethical obligations of the hermeneutic interpreter.

The Role of the Hermeneutic Interpreter

As hermeneutics eschews the idea of a methodological practice based on an authoritative set of rules, the role of one who undertakes the task to interpret a text is rather opaque and subject to ethical compromise. The task is "to make something that is unfamiliar, distant, and obscure in meaning into something real, near, and intelligible" (Palmer, 1969, p. 14). Interpretation then "is not a bald reenactment but a new creation, a new event in understanding" (Palmer, 1969, p. 212). Kogler (2010) accurately views interpretation as "the constant working-out between our own historical context and the background of the other's meaning" (p. 346). For Gadamer, this involved the interpreter playing the role of a 'servant' to the text through listening, participating, openness, and dialectical interaction (Palmer, 1969). Even so, Gadamer (1960/1989) stated, "However faithful we try to be, we have to make difficult decisions…If we want to emphasize a feature of the original that is important to us, then we can do so only by playing down or entirely suppressing other features. But this is precisely the activity that we call interpretation" (pp. 387-388).

Ricoeur distances himself from Gadamer's assertion of the validity of reinterpretation by the reader of a text, in that readers may impose inappropriate meanings where "it is quite possible to think that one has understood a text, and to be egregiously in error about what it actually says" (Bontekoe, 2000, p. 140). Ricoeur's interest was in discovering interpretations that would be more *likely*:

> If it is true that there is always more than one way of construing a text, it is not true that all interpretations are equal.… The text is a limited field of possible constructions. The logic of validation allows us to move between the two limits of dogmatism and skepticism. It is always possible to argue against an interpretation, to confront

interpretations, to arbitrate between them and to seek for an agreement, even if this agreement remains beyond our reach. (Ricoeur, *From Text to Action*, p. 160, as cited in Dauenhauer & Pellauer, 2011)

In contrast, Derrida argues, "interpretation is grafting onto an existing text and in the process [producing] another text" (Vandevelde, 2010, p. 295). Yet again, Schlegel contends, "the life of the original…is a continuous process that also includes the future of the work, which means its interpretation" (Vandevelde, 2010, p. 298). Vandevelde (2010) offers a third-way that lies somewhere between Gadamer's concept of the goodwill of the interpreter and Derrida's politics of destruction that is indebted to the Romantics and "sees interpretation as a process of transformation of both the work and the interpreter, while being mindful of the devastation interpretation can cause" (p. 300). Vandevelde (2010) delineates three levels where meaning is made: (a) the words and the sentences or the 'literal' meaning; (b) discerning the meaning of the author's intent; and, (c) distinguishing the interaction of the reader as they add their own projections to the text. Importantly, "only someone who is benevolent toward the work can complete it…The creativity of the interpreters is thus very much recognized and even necessary for the continued life of the work" (Vandevelde, 2010, p. 301). The "creativity of the interpreters" is not without limits, of course. Interpreters are part of a scholarship community, and as such will be responsible for justifying their claims and be in conversation with other community members (Vandevelde, 2010).

A major part of the ethos of interpretation is an acknowledgment of the empathic skills necessary for truth-oriented responsible interpretation. We, as interpreters, create complex relationships with the other of the text or the dialogue. While criticism may be an outcome of the interpretation, an interpreter must also cultivate a "practical sense of rightness" (Kogler, 2010, p. 361) about the socio-historical contextual rules within the object being approached

(Kogler, 2010). In essence, there must be a sense of fairness if there is any hope for justification of an interpretation.

Vendevelde's thoughts on the interpretive approach, as well as Kogler's, strongly influence my own thinking on the role and responsibility of the hermeneutic interpreter.

> [W]e have to give up the idea that the work is a self-sustained entity with a well-delineated sense that lies in the wings, waiting to be discovered.… Once we complement the Romantic view with the claims that engage the responsibility of the interpreter, we have an efficient combination of an attitude of benevolence following specific rules for demanding or redeeming validity claims… to avoid the 'interpreting differently' of Gadamer and the writing of a new text of Derrida. In addition, we give some substance to an 'interpreting better' that is not the content of the text or the author's intention, but by the potentiality of the text we are able to carry forward. (Vandevelde, 2010, p. 302)

In short, the role of the hermeneutic interpreter is to acknowledge their personal and social relationship with the object of interpretation in an empathic ethical framework that carries forward the text and is justifiable to the community of scholars. With this in mind, the dissertation is designed to carry forward the text by looking at the narrative against leadership theories and the ethical principles of love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other.

Interpretive Hermeneutic Process

Following Kinsella's (2006) characterizations of the interpretive hermeneutic process and my own concerns for seeking what is absent, issues of social justice, and usefulness beyond intellectualization, this dissertation: (a) seeks to understand the dynamics of leadership in a distressed social system, rather than explaining or predicting leadership behaviors when transferred to a non-fictional situation; (b) acknowledges the situated location of interpretation for both the interpreter and the environment wherein the interpretation is carried out; (c) examines the historical socio-political conditions that led to and informs the creation of the work; (d) maintains a reiterative and contemplative process as a form of self-conversation; and, (e) accepts that any meaning of interpretation derived from the process can be ambiguous and

others will create different interpretations of the material that are equally justifiable. The process was a series of reflections and questions; the hermeneutic process of interpretations leading to new insights that become preconceptions and are confirmed or disconfirmed by subsequent encounters with the visual text. Importantly, per Vandevelde, the process maintained empathy and benevolence to the material to carry forward the text in a justifiable and responsible manner. Adherence to these characteristics is sufficient for exploring the visual text within the interpretive approach.

The process for this dissertation was multiple viewings of the series *Battlestar Galactica* with attention given to the major characters and their leadership qualities. The actions of the characters were compared against leadership theory and the overarching themes of love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other. Notes for each episode were placed in a form for basic referral. Reflection was a key element of the research process. To that end, contemplative notes were created with further questions and issues to be encountered in subsequent viewings of the series and insights for inclusion in the dissertation interpretation. From the viewings, basic episode notes, contemplative notes, and further reflections, the interpretation was organized around major characters relating to the ways in which these leaders navigate change in extreme circumstances in correlation with the overarching ethical leadership principles of love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other. Ultimately, the dissertation seeks greater understanding on the questions: In what ways does *Battlestar Galactica* demonstrate the challenges of leading during extreme crisis and continual change? How are personal and social justice paradigms transformed? What are the implications for furthering our understanding of leadership theory and practice?

Strengths and Limitations

When analyzing this specific popular media text, several issues arise. First, the narrative is subject to melodramatic elements that create conflict, but this is the bedrock of fiction. With fiction, and science fiction in particular, we must suspend our disbelief and cynicism to allow ourselves to be open to the larger understandings and knowledge within which narrative fiction functions. Secondly, the story is deeply entrenched in the late capitalism of American society during wartime. The leadership competencies demonstrated in the series are fully informed by the norms generated within this society and could be dismissed as propagandistic, neo-colonial, and counter to strong sentiments in support of diversity and emerging attitudes about global cooperation and harmony.   As Kidd (2007) notes, "norm generation…innovation, and social change are the key social functions to which popular culture contributes" (p. 86). Moreover, science fiction narratives, per Suvin (1977/2010), should not be misconstrued as nothing more than allegorical extensions that uphold or dissent from the status quo. There is more to be accessed through the telling of a story than a comparison to contemporary society. Lastly, this research is my personal interpretation of the dramatization of the narrative sustained by my enthusiastic affection for the series and science fiction narratives, in general. However, as a fundamental aspect of interpretive hermeneutics, this positioning should not be considered without merit as, per Vandevelde (2010), the purpose is to carry forward the text with empathy. Through my personal lens and reflection on my encounters with the visual text, I endeavor to provide insight to further scholarship and stimulate discussion on the intersection of popular culture and leadership.

Chapter IV: Interpretation of the Findings for Leadership Practice

In the following two chapters, I offer an informing commentary on *Battlestar Galactica* noting significant story arcs, scenes, dynamics, and dialogue that captured my imagination and interest as the interpreter of the series within the area of leadership studies. In addition, these two chapters will integrate my interpretations at key points throughout the text. The final chapter offers an interpretive essay comparing the important themes in *Battlestar Galactica* with leadership concepts presented in Chapter II.

This chapter is organized through categories of leaders: military leaders, political leaders, religious leaders, shared leadership, and emergent leaders. In these sections, I describe and interpret the leadership qualities and actions of each major leader as they relate to relevant leadership theories and ethical principles. Within the discussion of the major characters, I provide brief comparisons and contrasts with other characters whose leadership roles are similar to deepen the understanding of how the leaders function and can be interpreted.

Military Leaders

Fundamentally, *Battlestar Galactica* is a war story. The narrative begins by framing a conflict between humans and Cylons when we witness a diplomatic space station obliterated and the planet Caprica, seat of human government and learning, bombarded with multiple mega-ton nuclear missiles. The humans are unprepared to meet the attack, through neither defense nor retaliation. An unconditional surrender by the President of the Colonies goes unacknowledged by the attackers. Within hours, the twelve Colonial planets are completely irradiated and their billions of inhabitants are dead. The only humans who have survived the attack are those who were traveling in space or able to escape immediately from the planet surfaces (*Miniseries*,

2003). A group of military and civilian survivors are aboard the Colonial ship Galactica commanded by William Adama.

William Adama. An "us versus them" stance is established at the outset providing the basic momentum for the narrative. This rather militaristic view is embodied in Commander William Adama of the Galactica. However, the story provides a more complex understanding of military leadership than might be expected. Prior to the Colonial discovery of the attack, we are introduced to Adama walking the passageways of the Galactica clumsily attempting to practice his speech for the decommissioning ceremony of his ship later in the day, while he humbly accepts good wishes on his retirement from the crew. In fact, we see Adama with Lt. Felix Gaeta, a young tactical officer, who brings him a message from fleet headquarters indicating something might be amiss at the diplomatic space station. Adama rather pleasantly decides the Galactica is "too busy today" to deal with the matter (*Miniseries*, 2003).

Our sense of Adama develops in his initial contact with Laura Roslin, the Colonial Secretary of Education and government representative for the decommissioning ceremony. We view Adama and Roslin together for the first time as the narrative brings us to them in mid-argument. Roslin is advocating the networking of computers as a means to aid teachers who will be using the ship as it is repurposed as a museum. Adama flatly and condescendingly refuses to network the computers while he is still in command and appears as a military man who distrusts civilians and continues to fight a war against an enemy that no longer exists (*Miniseries*, 2003).

What we find in this introduction is a representation of military leadership that undercuts our preconceptions of starship captains. Unlike the culturally iconic Captain Kirk of *Star Trek*, this captain does not drop everything to investigate a concern of his superiors. Our first

understandings of Adama are shaped by his vulnerability in trying to prepare a decommissioning speech, rigidity in outdated mindsets, and, ostensibly, his neglect of duty. We see him as not only anxious about the upcoming events of the day, but also old, tired, and apathetic – hardly the traditional notion of military leadership, in general, and science fiction military leaders specifically.

Yet, our understanding of Adama is enhanced by the ways in which his crew greets him with respect and amity. Several deck hands have also prepared gifts for him, which he accepts with humility and appreciation. But even this affirmative sense of a man who is well loved by his crew and, in return, feels affection for them is shattered by the arrival of his estranged son, Captain Lee "Apollo" Adama, and their awkward and fractious meeting. Lee was ordered to attend the decommissioning ceremony and we discover he holds strong feelings of resentment against his father for being absent during his childhood and for insisting his older brother, Zak, become a fighter pilot. The death of the brother hangs as a barrier between the two. Adama insists his eldest son was a hero, while Lee accuses his father of improperly using his influence to get Zak into flight school, which became a fatal lack of judgment (*Miniseries*, 2003).

Adama curtly dismisses Lee, but his son's words have a latent impact as Adama begins his decommissioning speech:

> The Cylon War is long over, yet we must not forget the reasons why so many sacrificed so much in the cause of freedom. The cost of wearing the uniform can be high but-- (*a pause as he goes off script*) Sometimes it's too high. You know, when we fought the Cylons, we did it to save ourselves from extinction. But we never answered the question, why? Why are we as a people worth saving? We still commit murder because of greed, spite, jealousy. And we still visit all of our sins upon our children. We refuse to accept the responsibility for anything that we've done. Like we did with the Cylons. We decided to play God, create life. When that life turned against us, we comforted ourselves in the knowledge that it really wasn't our fault, not really. You cannot play God then wash your hands of the things that you've created. Sooner or later, the day comes when you can't hide from the things that you've done anymore. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

The audience is under-whelmed and confused by the speech, but politely applauds. This is not what they were expecting to hear on a joyful occasion full of pomp and tradition.

However, for the viewer, this speech frames the central question of the narrative: Are we worthy of survival? By exploring the subsequent actions of Adama, we can interpret the Commander believes the human species is worthy of survival, but must be aware of not committing previous mistakes again. In consequence, Adama inhabits a delicate space where the notions of human superiority and efficacy clash against fallibility and indifference. Moreover, Adama's military role and the technoscientific tools available to his role are interpretively presented in conflict with the longing for transcendent integrity and peace.

The initial hours and days of the transboundary crisis narrative portray the unenviable position of a military leader riding a steep learning curve, but essentially clinging to his hierarchical military/structural perspective. As news of the Cylon attack on the Twelve Colonies begins to reach the Galactica, we view Adama's leadership qualities and skills in action. Whereas ceremonial speeches may be unfamiliar territory, communicating within the culture of the military is customary and straightforward for Adama. After receiving the initial message on the Cylon attack, Adama speaks clearly and forcefully to his crew:

> This is the Commander. Moments ago this ship received word of a Cylon attack against our home worlds is under way. We do not know the size or the disposition or the strength of the enemy forces. But all indications point to a massive assault against Colonial defenses. Admiral Nagala has taken personal command of the fleet aboard the Battlestar Atlantia following the complete destruction of Picon Fleet Headquarters in the first wave of the attacks. How, why doesn't really matter now. What does matter is that, as of this moment, we are at war. You've trained for this. You're ready for this. Stand to your duties, trust your fellow shipmates and we'll all get through this. Further updates as we get them. Thank you. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

The importance of his words and stoic demeanor is highlighted as the camera moves throughout the ship capturing the faces of a crew who are undoubtedly too young to have been through

battle before. Adama has reminded them they are trained, but we realize they are not experienced.

Adama's first instructions as the crisis takes shape are tactical. He barks orders to locate other military units in the system, scramble his fighter pilots, and plot a course to join the battle. The challenges encountered include finding ammunition since the ship was de-armed in advance of the decommissioning and lack of fighter planes for his pilots. Adama sends Lt. Kara "Starbuck" Thrace to retrieve Viper planes from what is now the museum area of the ship. She encounters difficulties moving the Vipers since the nearest launch bay is now a gift shop. The situation is further complicated by generally confusing messages received from other ships. There is no clear information about what is happening in areas of the conflict.

We witness the Galactica's fighter squadron poised not far from Caprica as they meet two Cylon Raiders in battle. They are led by a Commander of the Air Group (CAG) who is clearly older than his pilots are, and presumed a veteran of the First Cylon War. His ability to prepare his pilots for battle is based on his experience and maturity and the pilots appear to depend upon him. However, the Cylons inexplicably cause the electronics on the Colonial ships to malfunction and the squadron is helpless to defend itself and is wiped out. The loss of the squadron is not only heart wrenching, but leaves a leadership gap for Adama and the other pilots.

Adama's next communication is expectedly more somber, but provides direction:

> Preliminary reports indicate a thermonuclear device in the 50-megaton range was detonated over Caprica City thirty minutes ago. Nuclear detonations have been reported on the planets Arilon, Picon, Sagittarion [*sic*] and Gemenon. No reports of casualties, but they will be high.... Mourn the dead later. Right now the best thing we can do is get this ship into the fight. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

The fight comes quickly as the Cylons arrive and commence an attack on Galactica. There are malfunctions in launching the Vipers and the pilots who have engaged the enemy are confused,

anxious, and miss shots to bring down the enemy. We see inexperienced pilots make mistakes

and die.

During the fight, Galactica is hit by a nuclear warhead and a fire breaks out, endangering

the ship's oxygen supply. Adama orders Saul Tigh, his Executive Officer, to take personal

command of damage control and assessment for the area. When Tigh is testily surprised, Adama

tells him "you're either the XO or you're not" (*Miniseries*, 2003). Tigh orders the damaged units

sealed which means the death of 85 personnel trying to put out the fire. Engineering Chief Galen

Tyrol tries to change his mind and asks a few more seconds to get his men and women out of

harm's way. Tigh refuses and Tyrol reluctantly follows orders.

Moments later, Tyrol confronts Adama with his moral outrage over the loss. Adama

offers him little support as both men try to keep their emotions in check.

> Tyrol: (*sotto voce*) Do you know how many we lost?
> Adama: (*curtly*) Yes… Set up a temporary morgue in Hangar Bay B.
> Tyrol: Forty seconds, sir. All I needed was forty seconds. 85 of my people.   I told-- I
>   told that son of a bitch.
> Adama: (*leaning directly into Tyrol's face and with a deadly whisper*) He's the XO of this
>   ship. Don't you dare forget that. Now, he made a tough decision. If it had been
>   me, I would've made the same one.
> Tyrol: Forty seconds, sir.
> Adama: Resume your post, Chief. (*He tersely walks away.*) (*Miniseries*, 2003)

As the situation becomes clear they are in an active "shooting" war, Adama's next

decision is to ensure they have ammunition. The Ragnar munitions depot is three days away.

The only way to get there and back in time to join the battle is a Faster Than Light (FTL) space

jump. Tigh reminds Adama this has not been done in over twenty years and they could end up in

the middle of a star if their coordinates are off, but Adama insists on taking the risk. Before they

can make the jump, Adama receives and relates that Admiral Nagala, supreme commander of the

fleet, is dead. Tigh asks who, then, is in charge. Adama instantly announces that he will

personally take control of the fleet. However, there is no indication any fleet ships remain except

the Galactica (*Miniseries*, 2003).

As a signal of Adama's authority, he contacts Lee, who is with Laura Roslin, the newly

sworn President of the Colonies, and a number of civilian ships. Adama orders Lee to

rendezvous at the munitions depot. Lee decides to stay with Roslin, which infuriates Adama.

> Adama: Hey, are you—(*clears throat*) is your ship all right?
> Lee: We're both fine. Thanks for asking.
> Adama: Is your ship's FTL functioning?
> Lee: That's affirmative.
> Adama: Then you're ordered to bring yourself and all of your passengers to the
> rendezvous point. Acknowledge.
> Lee: Acknowledge... receipt of message.
> Adama: What the hell does that mean?
> Lee: It means I heard you.
> Adama: You're going to have to do a lot better than that, Captain.
> Lee: We're engaged in rescue operations.
> Adama: You are to abort your mission immediately and proceed to Ragnar.
> Lee: The president has given me a direct order. (*Roslin enters and overhears.*)
> Adama: You're talking about the secretary of education. We're in the middle of a war and
> you're taking orders from a schoolteacher? (*Miniseries*, 2003)

Just then, inbound Cylon fighter scouts appear and Lee puts Adama "on hold", which

displeases Adama immensely. Lee advises Roslin they should leave immediately. She refuses to

abandon the other ships and people. Lee removes himself to the cargo hold and, on a theory

discussed in military training, turns on a machine that simulates a nuclear explosion as a decoy

against an actual attack from the Cylons. Adama, however, does not know this is happening and

helplessly watches Galactica's radar screen as his only living son ostensibly dies. The crew

waits to see how their commander will react. Adama barely holds his emotions in check and

then orders the ship to jump to Ragnar (*Miniseries*, 2003). Seemingly, he will mourn the dead

later because he has to get his ship into the fight.

In the narrative so far, Adama's actions and decisions allow for a continuation of

traditional modes of military command, which help defray anxieties among the crew, as well as

allow Adama to act within his own training and experience, which can be both a comfort and a crutch in such a stressful situation. There are protocols to follow and he is engaged in modeling his own and expecting others to do the same. Moreover, anxieties are lessened by the successful outcome of the risky jump to Ragnar, which underscores his ability to lead by making tough decisions and masking his personal emotions (*Miniseries*, 2003).

Adama seems content to approach the highly ambiguous and dangerous situation through a military/structural perspective, but his next encounter with Roslin, who has brought over 40 ships to the rendezvous site, shakes that determination. She confronts him about the possibility of a military coup, which he denies. Adama intends to leave the civilians in the safety of Ragnar's electromagnetic atmosphere, while he takes Galactica back to fight. Roslin pointedly explains the war is over because the humans have lost.

> Roslin: I'm gonna be straight with you here. (*Pauses to choose her words carefully*) The human race is about to be wiped out. We have 50,000 people left and that's it. Now, if we are even going to survive as a species, then we need to get the hell out of here and we need to start having babies.
> Adama: Excuse me. (*He gets up and exits.*) (*Miniseries*, 2003)

Once Adama returns to the Command Information Center (CIC), he learns Starbuck has discovered the orbit of Ragnar is filled with enemy base ships. Adama gathers Lee, Tigh, and Gaeta. He dismisses their concerns—the how/why—as the need is to keep focused on action.

> Tigh: How the hell did they find us?
> Adama: Doesn't really matter. They've got us.
> Gaeta: Why aren't they coming after us, sir?
> Tigh: (*interrupts*) Why should they? They can just sit out there and wait us out. What difference does it make? They're machines. We're the ones that need food, medicine, fuel.
> Adama: I'm not gonna play their game. I'm not gonna go out there and try to fight them.
> (*Miniseries*, 2003)

The other three men look at him with complete surprise. Lee asks about the civilians and a heated discussion ensues. Adama looks away from his advisors and notices Billy Keikeye,

Roslin's Chief of Staff, and Anastasia "Dee" Dualla, Galactica's Communications Specialist,

flirting with each other. Adama interrupts the debate:

> Adama: They better start having babies.
> Tigh: Is that an order?
> Adama: It may be before too long. Okay, we're gonna take the civilians with us. We're
>   gonna leave this solar system and we're not gonna come back.
> Tigh: We're running.
> Adama: This war is over. We lost.

A few moments later, Tigh asks Adama why he changed his mind, but the Commander lightly

refuses to answer the question (*Miniseries*, 2003).

Within this sequence, we witness Adama essentially taking the measure of Roslin, but

declining to grant her any authority by simply walking out of the meeting. Adama's military

authority and duty elicits an initial reaction to fight, but he soon discovers and accepts he is

outnumbered and outmaneuvered. Additionally, he appears to understand intellectually the

importance of gathering the perspectives of his senior officers, but does not feel the need to take

their advice. The narrative is also vague about the reasons why he chose to accept Roslin's view

of the situation and the imperative to flee and have babies.

Interpretively, Adama sees this second Cylon War as a reiteration of the first, when the

human race was fighting to stave off extinction. He is aware his crew and pilots are

inexperienced and inadequate to stand against the military superiority of the Cylons. If he

chooses to fight now, the odds are he will lose and cause the annihilation of the human species.

If Adama is truly interested in not repeating past mistakes and discovering whether humans are

worthy of survival, his only choice is to take the civilians and flee.

Essentially, Adama is caught in the drama of what Heifetz (1994) would describe as an

adaptive challenge, consisting of "the learning required to address conflicts in the values people

hold, or diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face" (p. 22).

This requires a change in values, beliefs, or behaviors to provide new methods of learning and behaving (Heifetz, 1994). Adama must choose between the value he places on military duty and the reality of an unwinnable battle. A Skills Approach, based on The Ohio State Studies of the mid-20th century as described by Northouse (2007), considers leadership to consist of "task behaviors and relationship behaviors," (p. 69) where "leaders provide structure for subordinates, and they nurture them" (p. 71). This is the classic theory of leaders being task-oriented or people-oriented. There is an implicit obligation to one's immediate followers, which Adama originally attempts to fulfill by adhering to the protocols of war and reminding the crew they are prepared to face their enemy. However, Adama must also extend his sense of obligation past his military personnel by realizing his ship, meager though it may be, is the only defense the civilians have. The adaptive challenge presents Adama with a situation where his known leadership practices are tested and questioned. Does duty lay with combat exclusively or is there a greater duty to the remnants of humanity? Adama chooses humanity and escapes to fight another day.

Nevertheless, Adama maintains his understanding of providing structure and meaning to the fleet. Adama seizes the opportunity to address the survivors during a funeral for those who died during the battles. Elosha, a Priestess of the predominant polytheistic religion of the Colonists, is completing the service:

> Elosha: … so now we hope and pray that you [The Lords of Kobol] will lead us to a new home where we may begin life anew. So say we all [*equivalent to amen*].

> (*There is scattered unenthusiastic response and Adama is not pleased. He repeats the phrase "so say we all" until the response is stronger. He paces the floor around the bodies of the dead and forcefully lectures the attendees.*)

> Adama: Are they the lucky ones? That's what you're thinking isn't it? We're a long way from home. We've jumped way beyond the Red Line into uncharted space. Limited supplies. Limited fuel. No allies. And now no hope! Maybe it would've been better for us to have died quickly back on the colonies with our

families instead of dying out here slowly in the emptiness of dark space. Where shall we go? What shall we do? "Life here began out there." Those are the first words of the sacred scroll. And they were told to us by the Lords of Kobol many countless centuries ago. And they made it perfectly clear that we are not alone in this universe. Elosha, there's a thirteenth tribe of humanity, is there not?

Elosha: Yes. The scrolls tell us a thirteenth tribe left Kobol in the early days. They traveled far and made their home upon a planet called Earth, which circled a distant and unknown star.

Adama: It's not unknown! I know where it is! Earth. The most guarded secret we have. The location was only known by the senior commanders of the fleet and we dared not share it with the public. Not while there was a Cylon threat upon us. For now we have a refuge to go to, a refuge that the Cylons know nothing about! It won't be an easy journey. It will be long and arduous. But I promise you one thing. On the memory of those lying here before you, we shall find it. And Earth will become our new home. So say we all! So say we all!! So say we all!!! Dismissed!

(*Raucous cheering, but Roslin only smiles and folds her arms.*)

We discover the reason for Roslin's lesser enthusiasm for the vision put forth by Adama

in the next scene where she visits Adama in his quarters:

Roslin: Firstly, I suppose that I should thank you for deciding to bring us –
Adama: Listen, you were right, I was wrong. Let's just leave it at that.
Roslin: (*solemnly nods*) All right. (*pause*) There's no Earth. You made it all up. President Adar and I once talked about the legends surrounding Earth. He knew nothing about a secret location regarding Earth and if the President knew nothing about it, what are the chances that you do?
Adama: You're right. There is no Earth. It's all a legend.
Roslin: Then why?
Adama: Because it's not enough to just live. You have to have something to live for. Let it be Earth.
Roslin: (*smiling*) They'll never forgive you.
Adama: Maybe. But in the meantime I've given all of us a fighting chance to survive. And isn't that what you said was the most important thing – survival of the human race? (*Miniseries*, 2003)

Adama may have succeeded in his ability to provide a vision and sense of hope for the

fleet, but it is based on a lie, which Cooke (2008) characterizes as a "noble lie" invoking Platonic

philosophical notions of unity which simultaneously "justify a political hierarchy" (p. 221).

However, Cooke (2008) also concedes the difference between Plato's understandings of a

beneficial lie and Adama's pragmatic use is to provide motivation and a hope for the *future*, as

opposed to simply curbing the populace. Nevertheless, by providing the goal of a once mythical and now legitimate Earth as a means for hope and motivation, this lie functions as a tactic for Adama to maintain his power and status. He is the only one who knows how to get there—and he's not sharing that information.

Indeed, Adama is fully aware of his power and attempts to keep it in check, though he often fails. During his conversation with Roslin on the legitimacy of Earth, Adama lessens his capability for full authority over the fleet. He strikes a political deal with Roslin, albeit one with plausible deniability, and establishes shared power within the fleet.

> Roslin: Who else knows?
> Adama: Not a soul.
> Roslin: All right. I'll keep your secret. But I want something in return.
> Adama: I'm listening.
> Roslin: If this civilization is going to function, it's going to need a government. A
>   civilian government run by the President of the Colonies.
> Adama: So, you'll be in charge of the fleet, but military decisions stay with me.
> Roslin: Yes.
> Adama: Then I'll think about it, Madam President.
> (*Adama reaches out his hand and they shake on the deal.*) (*Miniseries*, 2003)

The newly negotiated balance of power is tested in the opening episode of the first season of the series. The narrative begins five days after the initial attack and we discover the crew has been without sleep for over 130 hours because the Cylons appear and attack every 33 minutes. Nerves are frayed. Mistakes are being made. FTL equipment is being overloaded. Adama is simply trying to keep his crew and pilots functioning through their exhaustion by telling Tigh to order the ship's doctor to start giving pilots stimulants (*33*, 2005). On their 238th consecutive jump, they lose a civilian ship, the Olympic Carrier. This time the Cylons do not appear when the 33 minutes have elapsed. The Commander calls the President and makes a military decision to put the fleet on a lower level of alertness so that people can get some rest. Shortly thereafter, the Olympic Carrier returns and Adama returns the fleet to Condition One. He is concerned the

ship is compromised by the Cylons and poses a threat. He advises the President that if this is

true, they will have to eliminate the threat by evacuating the passengers and destroying the ship.

Roslin agrees, except the Cylons may be tracking a passenger and not the ship itself. Starbuck,

Apollo, and Lt. Sharon "Boomer" Valerii are sent to intercept the Olympic Carrier. The ship is

hailed and ordered to stop their course towards the fleet, which is silently ignored, as radiological

alarms detect nuclear weapons aboard. Interestingly, Adama does not act as if the situation is the

prerogative of the military and contacts the President for her authorization to shoot down the

civilian ship, thereby maintaining the balance of power where civilians are concerned.

Adama also acts with self-awareness about his power when Roslin asks him to quell riots

over the lack of water. The Galactica water tank is sabotaged and they lose 60% of their water

reserves, which were also supporting the other ships that cannot furnish enough water for their

passengers on their own. Adama immediately puts the Galactica on emergency rations and

Roslin instructs Billy to tell the ships' captains to do the same. Adama sends out astronomical

survey teams, but before they can locate water, riots break out among the fleet. Roslin confronts

Adama:

> Roslin: We need to demonstrate an ability to maintain order. We need to do it now.
> Adama: We don't have extra manpower for fleet security.
> Roslin: You have the only armed, disciplined force available.
> Adama: Yeah, but I'm not going to be your policeman. There's a reason why you
> separate military and the police. One fights the enemy of the state. The other
> serves and protects the people. When the military becomes both, then the
> enemies of the state tend to become the people.
> Roslin: I appreciate the complexity of the issue and I won't let that happen.
> (*A pause while Adama considers.*)
> Adama: I'll send troops to the cruise ship.
> Roslin: Commander, I won't let that happen. (*Adama remains displeased.*) (*Water*, 2005)

Certainly, a peaceful civilian population is beneficial to both military and political interests as

they maneuver against an external enemy. However, the need to maintain power, status, and

control may be at the heart of Adama's decision to go against his better judgment and send marines to police the water riots.

Adama further demonstrates his inability to restrain his power and authority during the independent tribunal looking into the cause and culprit of the water sabotage (*Litmus*, 2005). Adama asks Master Staff Sergeant Hadrian to open a security investigation and she asks for a free hand, an independent tribunal, to which he agrees. Adama and Roslin debate the public's right to know and issues of transparency. Roslin sees the potential for a witch-hunt, but the tribunal is established.

Of course, as viewers, we are already aware the sabotage was due to explosives set by Boomer, who has no memory of the event and who we know is a Cylon sleeper agent, and covered-up by Tyrol, her lover who is unaware of her identity. Hadrian quickly focuses on Tyrol as a suspect, but his crew does everything they can to protect him, particularly Socinus who perjures himself in the effort. Hadrian eventually overreaches and tries to implicate Adama. He quickly puts a stop to the proceedings, which are progressing from a fear of "conspiracy and collusion with the Cylons" rather than facts and law, by echoing Roslin's sense of a witch hunt and stating, "We've lost sight of the purpose of the law to protect its citizens, not persecute them. Whatever we are. Whatever is left of us. We're better than that" (*Litmus*, 2005).

Adama has Socinus put in the brig for dereliction of duty. Tyrol confronts Adama to explain Socinus was only trying to protect him and is innocent of any charges. Adama is without pity as he explains he cannot let his crew lie and he needs Tyrol to keep his pants zipped and his planes flying. He knowingly generates feelings of guilt within Tyrol, who ultimately breaks off his relationship with Boomer as a result.

While the narrative presents Adama's decision to put a stop to the tribunal as admirable and a virtuous action upholding the purpose of the rule of law, it also problematizes Adama as an individual who has unilateral authority and power above the law. We may consider the narrative themes of unbridled government invasion into the privacy of its citizens and the zealousness of security officials to be a test of our judicial ideals, but we should also be concerned with the ability of a single authority figure to determine when actions are warranted and when they are not.

This theme is also explored in *You Can't Go Home Again* (2005) after Starbuck crash lands on a desolate planet during a sortie and Adama insists on continuing rescue operations past the reasonable amount of time she could be expected to survive on a single tank of oxygen. Tigh and Gaeta try to convince Adama to suspend operations, which are compromising the safety of the fleet and burning precious fuel stores, and Adama relieves Tigh from duty. When Roslin objects to his actions, Adama characterizes them as a military decision, which is beyond the power of Roslin to countermand per their power sharing agreement. Nevertheless, Roslin shuttles to Galactica and squarely tells Adama he has "lost perspective." Regrettably, Adama realizes his optimism about finding Starbuck and adherence to the military code of never leaving a comrade behind put the fleet at serious risk and he suspends the search. He justifies his actions by saying Kara was like family, and "You do what you have to do. Sometimes you break the rules" (*You Can't Go Home Again*, 2005). I will return to the theme of family in a moment, but include one more example of Adama's failure to restrain his personal power.

Adama relinquishes any moral authority he may have had in terms of curbing his power when he has Roslin arrested for treason (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 2,* 2005). Roslin has convinced Starbuck to return to Caprica in a captured Cylon Raider and retrieve the Arrow of

Apollo from the Delphi Museum because she believes it will be a crucial artifact for helping them find Earth. Roslin sees her request as part of their duty to the fleet, but Adama sees it as compromising military resources and creating a danger, so he asks for her resignation, which she declines. In essence, Adama is retreating from his stance at their first meeting in Ragnar when he stated he had no plans to take over the government. He sends a strike force to board Colonial One and arrest the President, even though Lee advises, "We cannot sacrifice our democracy just because the President makes a bad decision" (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 2,* 2005). However, for Adama, Roslin has undermined his authority in military matters and this is something he cannot abide.

Indeed, Adama's leadership style and decision-making abilities during the crises consist of two specific characteristics: a sense of family and the inability to tolerate anyone who undermines or questions his authority and integrity. At its core, Adama's leadership style is consistent with Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) Theory. LMX Theory emerged in the mid-1970s and challenged the assumptions of previous leadership research that explained leadership as something 'done' by leaders to a group of followers collectively. This new approach "centered on the *interactions* between leaders and followers…[and] makes the *dyadic relationship* between leaders and followers the focal point of the leadership process" (Northouse, 2007, p. 151). Most memorable from this theory are the constructions of *in-groups* and *out-groups*; those who have close relationships with the leader and those who do not. "Relationships within the in-group are marked by mutual trust, respect, liking, and reciprocal influence. Relationships within the out-group are marked by formal communication based on job description" (Northouse, 2007, p. 154). As a process of leadership development, relationships for the in-group subordinates follow a three-stage process of "Stranger,"

"Acquaintance," and "Mature Partner" (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995). Those subordinates who do not move to the Acquaintance phase are relegated to the out-group.

There is a danger within the practical application of LMX Theory to create divisiveness within the larger group when a leader clearly favors one group or one individual (Jackson & Parry, 2008). Therefore, the theory is more fully developed by understanding the reciprocity in the relationship. Scandura (1999) explains the reciprocity can be economic or social, but for LMX Theory to be truly effective followers—whether in-group or out-group—must perceive the relationship they have with the leader as equitable. An organizational justice perspective for LMX Theory must include perceptions of fairness when distributing benefits and allocating resources (Scandura, 1999). When followers remain socially distanced from leaders and in the Stranger phase, the economic reciprocity is closely aligned to Transactional Leadership described in the 1980s by Bass (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995), yet Scandura (1999) offers the understanding these followers must still perceive their transactional relationship as fair and just. Relationships occur over time and on a continuum, where there may be fluidity between in-group and out-group status based on events within the relationship, and leaders are advised to reassess the members of their groups to determine if their actions are equitable and just with each individual (Scandura, 1999).

The paternalistic aspects of LMX Theory (Jackson & Parry, 2008) can be interpreted within *Battlestar Galactica* as Adama, the father figure for the fleet, labels his in-group as 'family'. In fact, a number of characters describe their relationship to the military and the people of Galactica as their family (Starbuck, Boomer, and Louanne "Kat" Catraine, most notably). We even witness Adama doing memory exercises to recall the names and functions of his crewmembers, such as "Jaffee brings me my coffee," (*A Day in the Life,* 2007) which appears to

be a method for bringing his crew out of the status of Stranger and toward the in-group. In his treatment of the in-group as family, he is willing to risk the safety of the fleet and his own position, sometimes as a rescuer and sometimes through unconditional trust, for an individual family member. This is exemplified by his rescue operations for Starbuck, as noted above, but also in other instances. Throughout the narrative, Adama retains his complete trust in Starbuck, even though she is insubordinate and willful, calling her "his daughter." He also trusts and holds feelings of being a father to Boomer, who he sends on a dangerous mission to destroy a Cylon base ship, even though her emotional state is suspect as she is recovering from a self-inflicted gunshot wound (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 2,* 2005).   The human/Cylon child, Hera, is given the status of family as Adama prepares to rescue her after she is abducted by the Cylons (*Daybreak, Part 1*, 2009). Adama admits his burgeoning romantic love for Roslin, leaves Tigh in charge of the fleet, and waits alone in a Raptor for Roslin to return from an unexpected space jump when she went aboard the Rebel Cylon base ship to talk to their Hybrid (*Sine Qua Non*, 2008). Tigh remains the XO of the Galactica, even after his revelation to Adama about his status as a Cylon, though Adama is hard-pressed to reconcile the fact his oldest and closest friend and officer is the enemy (*Revelations*, 2008). After Roslin escapes from the brig and persuades a third of the fleet to follow her back to Kobol in order to find the way to Earth, Dee berates him for letting them all down and Adama determines to follow and reconcile with Roslin, stating, "I'm putting this family back together" (*Home, Part 1*, 2005).

Adama's relationship with his actual family member, Lee, follows the pattern of development. Their relationship is portrayed in the beginning of the narrative as strained, where Lee undermines his father's parental authority and, with false piety, follows the scripted interaction of subordinate to senior officer, but the storyline develops as the two manage in small

ways to come to reconciliation through to a reciprocal mature relationship. This is not to say that Lee follows his father in all things—quite the contrary. Lee sides with Roslin and refuses to arrest her for treason. He resigns his commission, on more than one occasion, and embarks on a political career. He often takes an opposite view of tactical strategies in their war with the Cylons. Nonetheless, their relationship is repaired through these experiences.

Within the dyadic relationships with his crew and the civilians, Adama demonstrates the relational differences developed with individual followers. There are some he is quick to discipline, such as Tyrol, who is abruptly dismissed after complaining about Tigh's decision to sacrifice 85 of his crew, imprisoned for instigating a work stoppage, and demoted to maintenance crew painting the hull after an angry exchange with Adama while drunk; Tom Zarek and Gaeta, who are summarily executed for leading a mutiny; Boomer, who is taken into custody on sight after she attempts to assassinate Adama and they learn she is a Cylon; and Gaius Baltar, who is imprisoned for numerous perceived offenses and tortured with psychotropic drugs. Adama indulges others, most notably the drunkenness and critical nature of Tigh, the insubordination of Starbuck, and the political machinations of Roslin. This lack of fairness and equity on the part of Adama appears to be one of the critical factors leading to the dissatisfaction within the fleet and the mutiny. However, Adama indulges his in-group only to the point when they undermine his authority or turn away from him, which he feels as a personal betrayal. Unfortunately, nearly everyone betrays him at some point in the narrative, thus demonstrating the fluid nature of in-group and out-group relationships.

As his sense of authority goes beyond his legitimate military role and becomes entangled in the psychology of paternalism, Adama dismisses the reciprocity of his mature relationships and shifts to an autocratic style when his followers disappoint or question him. For all his

shortcomings, Adama appears to understand the relational constructs within his leadership have been imperfect. Instead of bringing people into the in-group, he tries a different tactic. In *Unfinished Business* (2006), Tyrol casually rejects Adama's concerns over maintenance work to be done while members of the crew watch boxing matches. Adama calls out Tyrol for a match and is badly beat by him. After the match is stopped, Adama addresses the crowd:

> Adama: When you fight a man, he is not your friend. Same goes when you lead men. I forgot that once. I let you get too close. I dropped my guard… I let this family disband and we paid the price in lives. That can't happen again. (*Unfinished Business*, 2006)

As the incident with Tyrol demonstrates, Adama's rigid moral code and privileged authority allow him to justify his questionable actions, but he has little to no patience with others who cross the line and challenge his authority or integrity.

Adama and Cain. Adama's questionable actions are juxtaposed against Admiral Helena Cain, Commander of the Battlestar Pegasus, who finds the fleet in a story arc during season two (*Pegasus*, 2005; *Resurrection Ship, Part 1*, 2006; *Resurrection Ship, Part 2*, 2006). Power bases shift as Cain is now the senior military officer and exhibits little concern for civilian matters, thus marginalizing Roslin. Her sense of authority is clearly demonstrated as she boards Galactica and says to Adama, "Welcome back to the Colonial fleet," (*Pegasus*, 2005) even though she has only the single ship and Adama is responsible for dozens of spacecraft. Adama accepts Cain's seniority with little public fuss, even as she intervenes and reassigns many crewmembers to the Pegasus over concerns about his closeness to his people, implicitly reinforcing the notion of family, when she indicated she would not interfere with his command. We discover Cain has a significantly different perspective of military authority and privilege from Adama.

Our understanding of Cain is garnered primarily through conversations between Tigh and Fisk, the XO of the Pegasus. Fisk relates Cain's decisions to strip civilian ships of parts and useful people, including executing family members of those who do not wish to 'join' her crew, then leaving the ships behind without FTL capacity and the ability to defend themselves from the Cylons. He relates an incident where the previous XO refused Cain's direct order to attack a vastly superior Cylon force, which the XO considered unethical, and she immediately executes him in the middle of the CIC.

This backstory is augmented by Cain's behaviors, which suggest she considers herself to have absolute authority with unilateral prerogative to determine how scarce resources and personnel will be managed. Beyond the integration of the crews, Cain refuses to return Roslin's calls or share supplies with the civilian ships as promised. While Cain stubbornly clings to the traditional role of the military as a privileged constituency during wartime in a society that no longer exists, she pointedly disregards the political structure of that same society which places civilian authority (i.e. the President) as the dominant legitimate power. As Mulligan (2008) explains, her "authority once derived from civilian laws is now based on superior military strength" (p. 58).

Yet, the reading of Cain must be placed against the reading of Adama to bring greater understanding of military leaders during extreme crisis. Both leaders attack civilians, manipulate the emotions of their followers through lies, imprison and torture Cylons, and insist on their own privilege to determine military matters and the management of scarce resources. In Burrows (2010) queer reading of *Battlestar Galactica*, she states, "each of Cain's actions parallel those taken by Adama in a similar situation, ensuring that she is always read against his pre-established correctness" (p. 208). Burrows is correct in defining the function of Cain as a depiction of

alternate military and moral choices and the consequences, but Adama is only seen with "correctness" as a result of exploring Cain's choices, not prior to them. Prior to Cain's arrival, Adama's actions and choices were uncomfortably close to tyrannical, such as ordering the arrest of Roslin. Only in hindsight, after the introduction of Cain, do our morality concerns resolve in favor of Adama.

The parallel continues in *Resurrection Ship, Part 2* (2005) as they both make contingency plans to assassinate the other. For Adama's part, Roslin advises him to kill Cain. On the other hand, Cain seems to be acting per her ingrained need for complete control. The two military leaders place the survivors of the human race on the brink of civil war, which ostensibly will be brief with severe casualties, based on little more than opposing worldviews on the role of the military and the future. In essence, Cain's intentions are to return to the Twelve Colonies and take back their home worlds from the Cylons, while Adama stays committed to a potential settlement on Earth. The narrative resolves with neither taking action against the other, though it is a near thing. Adama explains his hesitation by stating, "One has to be worthy of surviving," (*Resurrection Ship, Part 2*, 2005) reestablishing the narrative's central question and the moral imperatives intrinsic to a response.

In light of the depiction of Cain as an irrational and inhumane tyrant, much has been made of her sexual orientation as a lesbian and gendered notions of leadership (see Burrows, 2010). However, a closer exploration of the narrative provides a deeper understanding of her leadership practices as an abuse of power during times of extreme crisis. Mulligan (2008) places the controversy in succinct perspective by stating, "Cain is a criticism of command, not of gender or sexuality… her relationship to Adama and Roslin is one of power, not sexuality. Cain is not harsh and militant because she is a lesbian any more than as compensation for being a

woman" (p. 63). Gender and sexual orientation are not a hindrance to achievement in this

fictional Colonial society, though the depictions of lesbian and gay characters are problematic

when placed within the heteronormative construction of the text. Nonetheless, we must meet the

narrative on its own terms and interpret Cain through her use and abuse of power. This story arc

functions to inform Adama, Roslin, and viewers about the dangers of absolute power. In doing

so, viewers may potentially frame and interpret the subsequent behaviors of Adama and Roslin

against those of Cain and decide the moral standing or failing of these leaders.

Saul Tigh. Adama's ability to resist an irreversible transformation to military tyrant may

be the result of his close relationship to Executive Officer Saul Tigh. Tigh stands as a foil to

Adama on many occasions, particularly when hard truths need to be told or the crew needs to be

kicked rather than coddled, as when the Olympic Carrier is lost during a jump (*33*, 2005). His

strengths include unquestioned loyalty to Adama, as we discover in a flashback where Tigh is in

the process of active suicide over his inability to reintegrate into Caprican society after the First

Cylon War and Adama's men show up to take Tigh to his new berth as an officer on Galactica

and save his life (*Scattered*, 2005). But his weaknesses are numerous, including alcoholism,

bullying behavior toward subordinates, and a dysfunctional relationship with his wife. Indeed,

any effective relational skills Tigh possesses are barely perceptible.

Tigh's narrative arc takes him from XO to insurgent leader to vigilante to bitter old drunk

and back to XO. However, his competencies as a leader are negligible in comparison to his

abilities as a follower. A stark contrast exists in Tigh's actions as a leader after the assassination

attempt on Adama (*Scattered*, 2005; *Valley of Darkness*, 2005; *Fragged*, 2005) and his

leadership on Cylon Occupied New Caprica (*Occupation,* 2006; *Precipice*, 2006; *Exodus, Part 1*,

2006; *Exodus, Part 2*, 2006). In the first sequence after Adama is shot, Tigh has no plan of

action and the enemy is internal and unclear. He complains about having to take responsibility, declares martial law, lacks a defensive position to prevent Centurions from boarding Galactica, sends a marine squad led by a pilot to quell riots on the ship Gideon and four civilians are killed, loses the fleet when he orders a jump too quickly and the emergency coordinates are incorrect, and allows Roslin and Lee to escape from the brig and off the ship. His only solace is to tell the comatose Adama the mistakes he has made and hope for the Commander's forgiveness once he recovers. In the second sequence on New Caprica, Tigh is decidedly different. There is a predetermined plan and the enemies, Cylon occupiers and collaborators, are clearly defined. Now he wholeheartedly accepts responsibility for leading the insurgency through creating evacuation plans and caching weapons stores for the time when Adama and Galactica returns, to deploying suicide bombers, to the poisoning of his wife, Ellen, when she is discovered to be a collaborator. He submits to imprisonment and torture by the Cylons, resulting in the loss of an eye, but maintains his loyalty.

This loyalty to humanity and his role as a leader is furthered in the episode *Collaborators* (2006), when Tigh is the senior officer of a group of six New Caprican survivors who have formed an underground movement called "The Circle," sanctioned by an executive order of acting-President Tom Zarek, to try and judge collaborators in absentia for their crimes, find them in the fleet, and then execute them by sending them into space through an airlock. Tigh attempts to maintain the moral legitimacy of the group through the trappings of reported evidence and the farce of democratic decision-making about guilt or innocence. The reality is that The Circle is nothing more than a vigilante group condoned by a former political terrorist working through their grief and resentment by taking revenge on those who tried to make peace with the Cylons.

Imagine, then, Tigh's horror at discovering he is a Cylon (*Crossroads, Part 2,* 2007). His strength has been in defining and maintaining efforts to kill the enemy, particularly the Cylons, with offensive actions. He uses language to belittle and intimidate others, especially Cylons and those he feels are not working hard enough or lack professionalism, such as Starbuck. To discover he is the enemy is a great shock. But his existential angst is short-lived as the Galactica is under attack and his need to fight the enemy brushes aside considerations of his compromised humanity. In a remarkably effective speech to Tyrol, Samuel T. Anders, and Tory Foster, who are discovering their Cylon identity at the same time, he makes his declaration:

> Tigh: The ship is under attack! We do our jobs! Report to your stations! My name is Saul Tigh. I am an officer in the Colonial fleet. Whatever else I am… Whatever else it means, that's the man I want to be. And if I die today, that's the man I'll be. (*Crossroads, Part 2,* 2007)

The speech is less a repudiation of his Cylon Otherness and more a reinforcement of his innate character and right to autonomy (Barker, 2008). However, he lives in fear of being 'outed' as a Cylon; finally confessing himself to Adama, who, predictably, sees this as a personal betrayal and becomes unhinged.

Tigh is not necessarily an incompetent leader, like Starbuck and Baltar (see discussions below), but his lack of relational skills—both personal and professional—compromise his ability to be effective within a structured system during crises. On the periphery of structure, such as the power vacuum created by Adama's absence when comatose and during the occupation of New Caprica, Tigh fares much better. In these fringes, the 'rules' are relaxed or non-existent and there is no place for empathy or indulgences. Tigh's hard-nosed attitude and bullying behaviors serve the survivors in these circumstances. Fortunately, Tigh remains loyal to Adama and serving humanity.

Lee Adama. Lee "Apollo" Adama enjoys a unique presence within the story as both a military professional and a politician (see Lee Adama in Political Leadership section). Interpretively, his function is to operate as an ethical conscience for Adama and Roslin. In terms of his career in the military, Lee does his duty and exhibits classically defined positive qualities and skills of leadership. Particularly at the beginning of the narrative, Lee acts from a sense of duty when he arrives to take part in the decommissioning ceremony and protects Colonial One from Cylon attack while escorting the ship back to Caprica (*Miniseries*, 2003), as well as following orders to shoot down the Olympic Carrier (*33*, 2005). As the Commander of the Air Group (CAG), he respects his subordinates, asks for their input, assigns tasks to fit their skills and experiences, clearly outlines goals and objectives, and communicates frequently. In sum, he's a good guy. However, Starbuck berates him for being so nice and allowing his pilots to disregard orders to take stimulants and keep flying—specifically, herself—and not being ruthless enough in his language for encouraging the killing of the enemy (*33*, 2005). To his credit, Lee dispenses with the leadership style that is not working in a time of extreme crisis and becomes a better CAG by acting more authoritatively assertive.

Nonetheless, the destruction of the Olympic Carrier haunts Lee's dreams. In the second episode, *Water* (2005), he catches up with his father in the passageway and confides he has concerns over the incident:

> Adama: That was three days ago. That's ancient history under these circumstances.
>   Leave the second guessing to the historians.
> Lee: But don't we have a responsibility? I mean as… as leaders don't we have an
>   obligation to question our actions to… I don't know. To make sure the decisions
>   that we make are the right decisions.
> Adama: (*stops walking and turns to Lee*) We did what we had to do, son. A man takes
>   responsibility for his actions, right or wrong. He accepts the consequences and
>   lives with them… every day. (*Water*, 2005)

This conversation appears to provide the foundation for Lee's narrative arc and his development as a military leader and a political leader. Essentially, the narrative tensions between military and civilian authority are played out against Lee. His struggle to accept the consequences of poor or unethical decisions provides a middle ground for reflection on the decisions of other leaders, particularly Adama and Roslin. Moreover, the tensions build until Lee must choose sides. This, too, is established in the beginning of the narrative.

A few days after the destruction of the Olympic Carrier, Roslin offers Lee a position as her personal military advisor. Lee demurs, but she explains she needs advice about the military, not military advice, and Lee accepts. He is rather pleased with his new duty and catches up with his father again in the passageway of Galactica hoping for a congratulatory remark:

> Adama: I have nothing to say to the personal representative of the President.
> Lee: I'm still Galactica's lead pilot.
> Adama: I have nothing to say to him either. Every man has to decide for themselves
>   which side they're on.
> Lee: I didn't know we were picking sides. (*Lee walks away.*)
> Adama: (*aside*) That's why you haven't picked one yet. (*Bastille Day*, 2005)

Lee's necessity to pick a side comes to fruition during the standoff with Tom Zarek and the other prisoners in *Bastille Day* (2005). Even Zarek weighs in on the need to choose as he debates Roslin's right to govern with Lee.

> Zarek: Who voted for Laura Roslin? You? Did you vote for her?
> Lee: She was sworn in under the law.
> Zarek: The answer is no one voted for her. No one. And yet she's making decisions for
>   all of us, deciding who lives and who dies. Is that democracy? Is that a free
>   society?
> Lee: What do you want from me? Do you want me to say she shouldn't be president?
>   We need a government. We need rules. We need a leader.
> Zarek: We need to be free men and women. If we're not free, then we're no different
>   from the Cylons. […] a mortal has to pick one side or the other. Have you picked
>   a side, Apollo? (*Bastille Day*, 2005)

Lee does pick a side, but perhaps not the expected one. As he explains to Zarek, who he is holding at gunpoint to force him to convince the other prisoners to help the fleet retrieve water

and earn their freedom, "you're right about democracy and consent of the people. I believe in those things and we're gonna have them" (*Bastille Day*, 2005). He brokers a deal with the prisoners and informs Roslin and Adama, who are not pleased:

> Roslin: You've committed me to holding elections within a year.
> Lee: Madam President, with respect, you're serving out the remainder of President Adar's term. When that term is up in seven months, the law says there's an election. I only committed you to obeying the law.
> Roslin: You were not authorized—
> Adama: You sound like a lawyer.
> Lee: I swore an oath to defend the articles. The articles say there's an election in seven months. Now if you're telling me we're throwing out the law, then I'm not a captain, you're not a commander, and you are not president. (*Bastille Day*, 2005)

Lee has chosen to walk the middle ground, favoring neither the military nor the politician. He does not side with people, per se, but with organizing principles of social systems. With the implicit understanding there will be general elections held in seven months, the power holders, however regretfully, have agreed the continuation of this human civilization will have civil law as its foundation and not military or political tyranny. Without Lee's moral compass, access to power through in-group status, and the choice to uphold the rule of law, which applies to both military and governmental institutions, the future of the fleet could have been quite different.

Fortunately, Lee is not portrayed as the good soldier or the wholesome hero throughout the narrative. He neglects his duty as an officer and a person by shooting the black market kingpin, Phelan (*Black Market,* 2006) and cheating on his wife, Dee (*The Eye of Jupiter*, 2006; *Rapture*, 2007). Still, he maintains his moral integrity and disobeys orders when they contradict 'the right thing to do', such as siding with Roslin against Adama's military coup and returning to the battle at New Caprica with the Pegasus, flying it into a Cylon base ship, which turns the battle.

Notwithstanding the ultimate act of his command of the Pegasus, Lee's promotion to Commander after Cain's death is disastrous. His privileged status as Adama's son, a member of the in-group who is loyal and trustworthy, got him the job, but it is not a good fit. Lee becomes lazy, gains weight, and complains incessantly. He argues with Adama for military tactics that are safe and without risk and questions the decision to return to New Caprica and rescue the humans from the Cylon occupation (*Precipice*, 2006). Seemingly, the traits that allowed him to be a very good advisor do not serve him as well in the role of commander. After the Pegasus is destroyed and Lee is back to being CAG, he not only transforms his physical shape back to the lean, hard body of a fighter, but also overhauls his attitude and reclaims his moral center.

Lee Adama appears to embody the classic leadership traits, per Northouse (2007), of "intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability" (p. 18). Trait leadership is a theory that has gone in and out of fashion over the decades of leadership studies, but remains a compelling means by which to discuss leaders whose roles change and are able to maintain their central beliefs. These traits are not too far removed from the effective leadership characteristics of "confidence, integrity, connection, resilience and aspiration" (p. 17) defined by Jackson and Parry (2008). Furthermore, the (preposterously) brief sequence of Lee transforming his physical appearance indicates a return to self and reclaiming his authenticity. Interestingly, Ladkin and Taylor (2010) explore the relationship between the body and authentic leadership by theorizing, "it is the leader's body, and the way he or she uses it to express their 'true self', which is the seemingly invisible mechanism through which authenticity is conveyed to others" (p. 65). Extrapolating this to an interpretation of Lee's military leadership, authenticity can be seen as his preferred leadership style.

Why Starbuck is not a leader. There are many ways in which to characterize Lt. Kara "Starbuck" Thrace, but leader would not be one of them. She finds herself in legitimate power roles, as CAG, Flight Trainer, and Captain of the Demetrious, but her performance significantly lacks an appreciation of the qualities and skills required to lead others. Starbuck is insubordinate and lacking in sufficient respect for authority, but she gets away with this behavior because she is damn good at her job as a Viper pilot and a 'family member' of Adama's in-group. She holds expert and referent power for her skills, which has translated into promotions and Adama's trust. Unfortunately, Starbuck presents us with a case where job performance does not equal leadership potential.

As Flight Trainer, she belittles the *nuggets* (rookie pilots) and dismisses them all before they have any chance of learning to be pilots because of her guilt over intentionally passing Adama's son, Zak, out of flight school when she knew he was not fit to be a pilot. Her fear of a Cylon Raider with extraordinary fighting skills keeps her from adequately preparing young pilots to go into combat and they die (*Scar,* 2006). She establishes a long-running dispute with Kat, who is her heir apparent as top pilot and Adama's CAG during Starbuck's time on New Caprica, which demolishes Kat's self-esteem and results in Kat taking a fatal risk to prove her worthiness (*The Passage*, 2006). As the captain of the Demetrious, Starbuck is uncommunicative, secretive, belligerent, authoritarian, and refuses the advice of her crew. Her behavior divides the crew and drives them to mutiny, including Gaeta being accidentally shot and losing a leg. At best, Starbuck can be described as having a task-orientation with few people skills, but this still cannot be construed as leadership. As she bluntly states to Lee, "I'm a screw-up. Try to keep that in mind" (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 1*, 2005). Nonetheless, she plays a pivotal role in the narrative, which is discussed later in this paper. Perhaps even finding her role as a leader, as the

Cylon hybrid tells her she "will lead them all to their end" (*Faith*, 2008). Indeed, Starbuck is seemingly incapable of leadership until she finds the ability to lessen the tension between her rational and spiritual natures, thus providing another instance of the depiction of how science fiction narratives function.

Political Leaders

The organizational structure of the Colonial fleet is predicated on a balance of power between the military and the government. This shared power is an agreement Roslin and Adama established at the outset (*Miniseries*, 2003), but in practice it became a means by which each would maintain their power and status within the fleet. As seen in the exchange between Lee, Roslin, and Adama after the standoff with Tom Zarek (*Bastille Day*, 2005), this is contrary to democratic ideals and the Articles of Colonization, and the survivors of the Cylon attack determine to organize themselves on principles carried over from their Colonial society. The military will not have absolute power over the fleet, but be accountable to civilian authority. The political leadership of the fleet is frequently changed, but the Presidency is undertaken primarily by Laura Roslin, Gaius Baltar, and Tom Zarek, while Lee Adama enjoys a short, but significant, tenure.

Laura Roslin. As with Adama, our introduction to Laura Roslin is at a moment of vulnerability. Roslin is first seen in her doctor's office in Caprica City receiving the news she has inoperable breast cancer and then in the lavatory of the colonial ship headed for the decommissioning ceremony of the Galactica in a moment of grief-stricken panic. As the Colonial Secretary of Education, Roslin is not seen to have any authority, aside from being the representative of the President of the Colonies on this occasion, underscored by her argument with Adama over the networking of computers, which he flatly refuses (*Miniseries*, 2003).

After the ceremony, Roslin is returning to Caprica when news of the Cylon attack is received. Roslin's understanding of the emerging crisis and her reaction is quite different from the Commander. In essence, Roslin has two primary concerns throughout the narrative that are established in the early moments: the safety and survival of the human race and retaining her personal power.

Roslin goes to the cockpit and asks the Captain to confirm a wireless report of nuclear detonations on Caprica. The Captain holds a message and his hand is uncontrollably shaking. Roslin grips his hand to give him support and reads the message. The Captain voices that he does not know what to do. Roslin's first action is to take control of the situation. She tells him she will make an announcement to the passengers since she is a member of the President's political cabinet:

> Roslin: I'll do it. It's my responsibility. (*pause*) While I'm doing that, I would ask that
> you... (*making a choice in the moment*) contact the Ministry of Civil Defense and
> see what we can do to help. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

The passengers greet Roslin with fear and panic and she tries to calm them. She also provides direction by asking them to prepare "for an extended stay aboard the ship" (*Miniseries*, 2003) and choosing two passengers to take an inventory of emergency supplies and rations. But her authority is immediately questioned.

> Doral: Hey, wait a minute. Who put you in charge?
> Roslin: Well, that's a good question. The answer is no one. But this is a government
> ship, and I am the senior government official, so that puts me in charge. So why
> don't you help me out and go down into the cargo area and see about setting it up
> as a living space. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

She then abruptly turns her back on him, which undoubtedly signals to Doral and the other passengers she is not to be trifled with.

The Captain soon makes contact with Caprica and Roslin speaks to a fellow government official. Information from the civilian side of the crisis is also confusing and insufficient. She is

told President Adar offered an unconditional surrender after the first nuclear attack, but there was

no response from the Cylons and the attacks continued (*Miniseries*, 2003).

For Roslin, the succession to political power, and hence the continuation of governmental

authority, is more complex than Adama's simple announcement of taking charge. An automated

signal is received asking government officials to respond. Shortly, the Captain receives the

message Roslin, 43rd in line for the presidency, is the only government official to survive. The

subsequent swearing in ceremony shows a shaky, teary, disheveled Roslin taking the oath of

office for President of the Colonies that is purposefully staged to remind viewers of Lyndon

Johnson's swearing in after the assassination of President Kennedy (*Miniseries,* audio

commentary, 2003). This echo of American history relieves a bit of the cognitive estrangement

of the narrative and reminds us of the potential for interpretation and understanding against our

own lives and reality.

Roslin's ship, now using the call sign Colonial One, embarks on rescuing survivors and

gathering ships from across the solar system with the help of Lee Adama, who was a courtesy

military escort back to Caprica. They receive the message Adama now controls the fleet. Roslin

tells Lee to inform Adama they need his assistance in rescue operations and the Galactica is not

to go to the Ragnar munitions depot. Lee follows Roslin's orders, which infuriates his father.

> Lee: We're engaged in rescue operations.
> Adama: You are to abort your mission immediately and proceed to Ragnar.
> Lee: The president has given me a direct order. (*Roslin enters and overhears.*)
> Adama: You're talking about the secretary of education. We're in the middle of a war and
>   you're taking orders from a schoolteacher? (*Miniseries*, 2003)

Just then, inbound Cylon fighters appear. Roslin refuses to abandon the other ships and people.

Lee goes to the cargo hold and, on a theory, turns on a machine that simulates a nuclear

explosion to distract the Cylons by suggesting the ship's destruction. Those aboard Galactica

believe them to be lost, but Colonial One has not been destroyed. Roslin returns to gathering

survivors and "form a convoy, we will guide them out of the combat zone and into safety,"

(*Miniseries*, 2003) clearly pursuing an agenda for safety and survival. Roslin tours some of the

ships and in reaction to an expressed need for supplies replies, "You will have your needs met,

Captain. You have my word on it," (*Miniseries*, 2003) but Roslin is not able to keep her word.

A Cylon scout ship finds them and they must quickly decide what their next action will

be. Roslin and the men advising her must determine the needs of the many over the needs of the

few. Lee advocates leaving behind those ships that have no FTL capacity:

> Doral: We can't just leave them behind. You'll be sacrificing thousands of people.
> Lee: But we'll be saving tens of thousands. I'm sorry to make this a numbers game, but
> we're talking about the survival of our race here. And we don't have the luxury of
> taking risks and hoping for the best because if we lose, we lose everything. And
> Madam President, this is a decision that needs to be made right now.
> (*The camera comes to rest on a close-up of Roslin as she takes a moment to decide.*)
> Roslin: Order the fleet to jump to Ragnar immediately. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

Roslin chooses the safety and survival of the majority, but quickly reflects on her own position

by abruptly confiding to Billy Keikeye, her assistant and now Chief of Staff, that she has cancer,

ruefully stating, "The world is coming to an end and all I can think about is that I have cancer

and I'm probably going to die. How selfish is that?" (*Miniseries*, 2003). Billy then informs

Roslin the ship where she met a little girl and made promises to the captain will not be able to

make the FTL jump. She keeps her emotions in check and coolly thanks him for the

information.

The next sequence is quite chilling as Colonial One prepares to jump. The radio chatter

grows increasingly anxious and hateful. Roslin sits alone, hunched over, hands clasped, as she

listens to the tirade:

> Man: (*on radio*) Colonial One, for gods' sake, you can't just leave us here.
> Man: Colonial One, this is Picon 36. I can't believe you want us to leave these people
> behind.
> Man: At least tell us where you're going! We'll follow at sub-light. Please!
> (*Colonial One Captain reaches for communication handset, but Lee stops him.*)

Lee: No. If they're captured then the Cylons know too.
Man: I've got fifty people on board. Colonial One, do you copy this?
Man: Don't leave us here.
Man: Show a little humanity. We don't have any weapons.
Man: Colonial One, please respond.
(*Roslin is sitting upright, still alone, clutching the armrests of her seat.*)
Man: May the Lords of Kobol protect those we leave behind.
(*Roslin now seen in close up with her jaw set and tears forming in her eyes.*)

As the Cylons reappear, a final communication is heard over the radio before the fleet jumps:

Woman: I hope you people rot in hell for this! (*Miniseries*, 2003)

We see a barrage of missiles head toward the remaining ships and an image of the little girl,

eerily reminiscent of a 1964 Lyndon Johnson presidential campaign advertisement, as the screen

dissolves into the bright white of nuclear annihilation. The episode goes to a break, which

heightens our ability to reflect on the dreadfulness of the past few moments.

Now in orbit around Ragnar, Roslin boards Galactica. As Adama is on the surface, Tigh

is in charge of the ship and Roslin encounters her first serious difficulties with the military when

she requests assistance to help with the civilian survivors and Tigh refuses. However, Lee is able

to resolve the situation.

Roslin: (*incredulous*) We have 50,000 people out there. Some of them are hurt. Our
        priority has to be caring for refugees –
Tigh: My priority is preparing this ship for combat. In case you haven't heard there's a
        war on.
Roslin: Colonel, …the war is over and we lost.
Tigh: We'll see about that.
Roslin: (*agreeing*) Oh yes, we will. In the meantime, however, as President of the
        Colonies, I'm giving you a direct order—
Tigh: You don't give orders on this ship!
Roslin: —to provide men and equipment!
Lee: (*hurriedly breaking into the conversation*) Hold on, Colonel. At least give us a
        couple of disaster pods, huh? […] Two disaster pods, Colonel. You can do that.
Tigh: Because you're the old man's son and because he's going to be so damned happy
        you're alive. Okay. Two pods. But no personnel. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

The first meeting between Adama and President Roslin occurs shortly thereafter. Billy is

briefing Roslin when Adama enters. Roslin tells the Commander she will be with him shortly

and asks Billy to continue his briefing. After Billy leaves, Roslin calmly turns to Adama:

> Roslin: You planning to stage a military coup?
> Adama: (*surprised*) What?
> Roslin: Do you plan to declare martial law, take over the government?
> Adama: Of course not.
> Roslin: Then you do acknowledge my position as president as duly constituted under the Articles of Colonization.
> Adama: Ms. Roslin, my primary objective at the present time is to repair the Galactica and continue to fight.
> Roslin: What we do know at this moment is that there are 50,000 civilian refugees out there who don't stand a chance without your ship to protect them.
> Adama: We're aware of the tactical situation. And I'm sure that you'll be safe here on Ragnar after we leave.
> Roslin: After you leave? (*clears throat*) Where're you going?
> Adama: To find the enemy. We're at war. That's my mission.
> Roslin: (*pauses and smiles*) I honestly don't know why I have to keep telling you this, but the war is over.
> Adama: It hasn't begun yet.
> Roslin: That's insane.
> Adama: You would rather that we run?
> Roslin: Yes. Absolutely. That is the only sane thing to do here. Exactly that – run. We leave this solar system and we don't look back.
> Adama: And we go where?
> Roslin: I don't know. Another star system. Another planet. Somewhere the Cylons won't find us.
> Adama: You can run if you like. This ship will stand and it will fight.
> Roslin: I'm gonna be straight with you here. (*pauses to carefully choose her words*) The human race is about to be wiped out. We have 50,000 people left and that's it. Now, if we are even going to survive as a species, then we need to get the hell out of here and we need to start having babies. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

This exchange is quite telling in establishing Roslin's dual purposes of safety and survival of the

human race, while maintaining personal power by asserting her right to govern.

Adama changes his mind about standing to fight and the Galactica with the civilian fleet

jumps away from Ragnar and into uncharted space. Adama gives a rousing speech at the funeral

for those killed in the attacks, declaring he knows where the legendary planet Earth is and that is

where they will be heading. Roslin is not as enthusiastic as others are about his statements. We discover why in the next scene where she visits Adama in his quarters and solidifies her power:

> Roslin: There's no Earth. You made it all up. President Adar and I once talked about the legends surrounding Earth. He knew nothing about a secret location regarding Earth and if the President knew nothing about it, what are the chances that you do?
> Adama: You're right. There is no Earth. It's all a legend.
> Roslin: Then why?
> Adama: Because it's not enough to just live. You have to have something to live for. Let it be Earth.
> Roslin: (*smiling*) They'll never forgive you.
> Adama: Maybe. But in the meantime I've given all of us a fighting chance to survive. And isn't that what you said was the most important thing – survival of the human race?
> Roslin: Who else knows?
> Adama: Not a soul.
> Roslin: All right. I'll keep your secret. But I want something in return.
> Adama: I'm listening.
> Roslin: If this civilization is going to function, it's going to need a government. A civilian government run by the President of the Colonies.
> Adama: So, you'll be in charge of the fleet, but military decisions stay with me.
> Roslin: Yes.
> Adama: Then I'll think about it, Madam President. (*Miniseries*, 2003)

Adama reaches out to shake her hand and with this political deal in place, Roslin and Adama have momentarily succeeded in developing a shared leadership, though it is based on maintaining a fiction allowing each of them to retain their power and status within the nascent social system.

The incident with the shooting down of the Olympic Carrier (*33*, 2005) tests Roslin's resolve to be a strong leader and hold her emotions in check. Though she ultimately gave the order, when she receives word the Olympic Carrier is lost, she adjusts the running total of humans on the whiteboard behind her makeshift desk from 49,998 to 47,972. There are tears in her eyes as she contemplates the impact of losing over 1,300 people, but states "Okay. Next crisis?" (*33*, 2005). Billy finds Roslin sitting quietly forlorn in the aftermath.

> Billy: Twenty-four hours and no Cylons. At least you know it was the right choice.

>Roslin: (*scoffing*) The right choice. (*33,* 2005)

As Lee is having difficulty resolving his feelings about following the order to shoot down the

civilian ship, Roslin has a private conversation with him:

>Roslin: I understand you were in charge of the mission that destroyed the Olympic
>Carrier. I know what a hard thing that is to live with, for all of us. I'm struggling
>with it myself, frankly.
>Lee: I can't stop thinking about it. But a man has to accept responsibility for his actions.
>He doesn't second guess the choices he makes. He lives with them. Every day.
>Roslin: You know, I remember when President Adar sent the marines into Arilon.
>Fifteen people died. In public, of course, he had to say all the usual things. He
>was sure of what he'd done. He made the right choice. He stayed the course.
>But he knew it was a mistake. And he kept the names of the dead in his desk
>drawer. He said that it was imperative for a leader to remember and learn from
>the mistakes even if they can't admit to them publicly.
>Lee: Do you think we made a mistake?
>Roslin: I don't know. (*She reaches into her pocket and takes out a slip of paper.*) I don't
>have a desk drawer yet, but I have a pocket. (*A close up of the paper reveals that
>she has written the name Olympic Carrier.*) (*Water*, 2005)

This is a hopeful sign Roslin's presidency will be marked by an understanding of her fallibility

and the ethical dangers of power. However, her need to assert power and control comes forth

soon thereafter in her act of addressing the crewmembers of the Galactica and when water

rations are lost due to sabotage and riots break out.

The second episode begins with Roslin complaining about the military protocol as she is

about to address the troops aboard Galactica. However, she sees the address as a political move

and tells Billy she will go along with it because she thinks Adama feels more comfortable with

the pomp and "if he feels more comfortable, he'll be easier to deal with" (*Water*, 2005).

Moreover, her speech to the crew of the Galactica is also a political opportunity to advance her

authority as the legitimate leader of the Colonies using the traditional presidential privilege of

addressing troops.

As the severity of the water shortage begins to be felt across the fleet, Roslin sees her

control slipping and confronts Adama:

Roslin: We need to demonstrate an ability to maintain order. We need to do it now.
Adama: We don't have extra manpower for fleet security.
Roslin: You have the only armed, disciplined force available.
Adama: Yeah, but I'm not going to be your policeman. There's a reason why you separate military and the police. One fights the enemy of the state. The other serves and protects the people. When the military becomes both, then the enemies of the state tend to become the people.
Roslin: I appreciate the complexity of the issue and I won't let that happen. (*Water*, 2005)

Adama agrees to send troops, but seems to have little faith in Roslin's ability to separate military and police actions. This issue of whether to use military forces to keep order against citizens appears to reduce the progress Adama and Roslin previously made in developing their interpersonal relationship.

Roslin is not wholly without a sense of morality and justice. They soon find water and Tyrol estimates a thousand people will be needed to transfer it to Galactica. The suggestion is made to use prisoners for the labor, but Roslin is angrily adamant this "slave labor" is counter to ethical and moral standards. Lee wants to give the prisoners incentives to earn their freedom. Roslin chooses to use the prison labor, against Adama's objections, as long as they are volunteers and treated properly (*Bastille Day*, 2005).

Lee's attempts to convince the prisoners to volunteer goes terribly wrong and the prisoners, led by Tom Zarek, imprisoned for political terrorism, take over the ship and hold Lee and others hostage. Zarek addresses the fleet and publicly questions the legitimacy of the leadership. Their reaction underscores Adama's reluctance to police the fleet and Roslin's need for political control.

Adama: (*speaking to Roslin on the CIC phone*) We've jammed his transmissions.
Roslin: A little bit late for that. Every ship in the fleet heard that broadcast.
Adama: It doesn't matter.
Roslin: It does matter. He's trying to bring down this government.
Adama: No one's going to take him seriously. […] He's a criminal and a terrorist. People won't give him credence.

> Roslin: Don't be so sure, Commander. Rebellions are contagious. People are already rioting over the water crisis. We can't afford to destabilize this government right now.
>
> Adama: I agree.
>
> Roslin: When are you going in?
>
> Adama: I assumed you were going to talk with him first.
>
> Roslin: We don't negotiate with terrorists.
>
> Adama: I said talk.
>
> Roslin: There's nothing to talk about. What he wants I can't give him. […] He wants legitimacy. He wants to be recognized. He wants his crimes validated. I watched President Adar offer him a full pardon if he'd apologize and give up violence as a means of political change. He refused. (*pause*) No commitments. No deals. (*Bastille Day*, 2005)

The result of the hostage situation is Lee brokering a deal for elections to be held in exchange for prisoner labor, which Roslin meets with anger. However, she also realizes there is no alternative if she intends to govern by right, as Lee reminds her she is simply serving out the remainder of the previous president's term.

In the immediate aftermath of the Cylon attack, Roslin's concerns are chiefly safety and security as she gathers survivors, seeks out food, medicine, and shelter. For Roslin to achieve safety for the survivors, she must leave behind and sacrifice those ships that cannot move quickly enough to elude the Cylons. She advocates fleeing from the Cylons to "start having babies" (*Miniseries*, 2003). At this point, her understanding of human needs, per Maslow's hierarchy, are physiological, such as food, water, medicine, shelter, and sex (though having babies may not be exactly what Maslow had in mind), followed by safety needs for security and protection, which are the primary concerns for Adama. As the narrative continues, many of her decisions are rationalized on the basis of safety and survival in accordance with the need to safeguard her political power. Effective leadership requires qualities such as "transparency, trust, integrity, and high moral standards" (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 344). What we find in Laura Roslin is a political leader who struggles, and often fails, to demonstrate these qualities in an environment of extreme

crisis and continual change. As she states, "The nice thing about being President is that you don't have to explain yourself" (*Flesh and Bone*, 2005).

Transparency is a key quality Roslin disdains as openness could call her leadership and decision-making into question. This quality is established early in her bargain to keep Adama's secret about mythical Earth. She frequently dissembles in front of the media and essentially does not trust them. Even so, when morale is lacking and distrust is brewing within the fleet, she and Adama co-opt D'Anna Biers to make a documentary on the daily life of the Galactica crew and pilots (*Final Cut*, 2005), which eventually proves disastrous by providing information to the Cylons. Roslin also keeps her illness a secret from nearly everyone until it serves her purposes for keeping power (see Laura Roslin in Religious Leaders section for a fuller discussion on this topic).

Her need for secrecy to preserve her political power extends to her relationship with the Quorum of Twelve, the legislative body representing each Colonial planet and equivalent to a congress or parliament. Particularly in the final season of the series, members of the Quorum, including Lee and Zarek, discover numerous executive orders, secret plans, and unilateral actions that have been kept from open debate within the Quorum (*The Ties That Bind*, 2008; *Escape Velocity*, 2008; *Guess What's Coming to Dinner?*, 2008). Chief among these are banning the right of assembly for the monotheists led by Baltar and rescinding reproductive rights. Her explanation for banning assemblies is to thwart Baltar's political power, over concerns about what Baltar might do with "all that blind religious devotion" (*Escape Velocity*, 2008). Lee convinces Roslin to withdraw her ban on peaceful assembly, but the other issue is much more complicated.

In *The Captain's Hand* (2006), Roslin confronts the issue of reproductive rights and must contend with her divided loyalties to her religious followers, her lifelong commitment to the rights of women over their bodies, and the needs of a near-extinct human species. When a young Gemenese woman seeks an abortion by clandestinely getting aboard Galactica to find Doc Cottle, the Gemenese Quorum delegate, an arch supporter of Roslin, insists Roslin refuse the request and send the young woman back to her parents. Roslin grapples with the competing values of her religious political base and her secular social convictions. In the end, she opts for placating her supporters, while providing for the survival of the human race, by signing an executive order to ban future abortions and granting the young woman asylum. The Gemenese delegate is furious over asylum, but Roslin hisses at her: "You have your pound of flesh, and I suggest you take your victory and you move on" (*The Captain's Hand*, 2006). We see the decision was not easy, but closer examination discovers an inescapable sense that Roslin betrayed her genuine ideologies to maintain political power more than from a conviction for human survival.

Similar to Adama, Roslin is entangled in an adaptive challenge trying to address and "diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face" (Heifetz, 1994, p. 22). Yet, a reading of Roslin suggests her method of adaptation to crisis and change is to compromise her integrity and morality, although they are considered effective leadership qualities. As a consequence of solidifying her political power, she is able to make decisions that are ethically questionable, but rationalized through her concentration on human safety and survival. Her rational nature asserts itself over her spiritual nature, even though she rationalizes the decisions as upholding human values. These decisions include: promising the Cylon, Leoben, his life will be spared if he gives up information about a possible hidden nuclear device

and then immediately ordering him tossed out an airlock because he is dangerous and "just a machine" trying to kill her people (*Flesh and Bone*, 2005); kidnaps the human/Cylon child, Hera, and covers up her actions by having the parents, Helo and Sharon Athena, told the child died (*Downloaded*, 2006); orders Adama to assassinate Admiral Cain, who is seen as dangerous and a threat to the safety of civilians and military, not to mention her own political efficacy (*Kobol's Last Gleaming*, *Part 1*, 2005); convinces Starbuck to steal a captured Cylon Raider and return to Caprica to retrieve the Arrow of Apollo by revealing Adama has no idea where Earth is located (*Kobol's Last Gleaming*, *Part 1*, 2005); complicity in the pharmaceutical torture of Baltar for information on his collaboration with the Cylon occupiers on New Caprica (*Taking a Break From All Your Worries*, 2007). A further ethical challenge is her discussions with Adama, Tigh, and Helo on the potential to win the war against the Cylons through biological genocide when a Cylon ship is discovered and the Cylons are dying from a virus humans can resist. If the humans can get the Cylons near a resurrection ship and kill them, they will download into new bodies and carry the virus into their entire system, essentially wiping out their society and creating a victory for humanity. Though Roslin authorizes the use of biological weapons, the action is not taken because Helo kills the Cylons before they can get within range of a resurrection ship (*A Measure of Salvation*, 2006).

Perhaps the clearest understanding of the growing inability of Roslin to relinquish her personal power because she sees herself as the only one capable of providing the leadership necessary for the survival of humanity, is the electoral process. In an impromptu election for a Vice-President instigated by Tom Zarek, Roslin ruthlessly sets aside a loyal and competent advisor in favor of Gaius Baltar, who has captured the imagination of the populace through the media, in order to prevent the office being held by Tom Zarek (*Colonial Day,* 2005). In the

presidential election, her lack of integrity peaks as she authorizes Tory to do whatever is necessary to keep Gaius Baltar from winning the election.

During the election campaign, a marginally habitable planet is found inside a nebula that would shield them from Cylon detection. Roslin wants to use the planet as a rest stop on the road to Earth, but others want to make it their new home. Baltar enters the race for President, running on a platform that insists the survivors will stay on this new planet and be safe from the Cylons, while berating Roslin as a "radical religious" (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 1*, 2006). Roslin, as the "dying leader" of the Pythian Prophecy (see Laura Roslin in Religious Leaders section), believes "the scriptures hold real-world relevance," but she "will not allow the scriptures to dictate the policy of this government" (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 1*, 2006). However, her previous actions seem to disagree with her own assessment and there is nothing to suggest she would not use scripture as a basis for policy if her power were threatened. Consequently, Roslin persists on continuing the journey to Earth and her popularity sinks, while Baltar's increases as he speaks to the immediate needs and hopes of the people. In losing sight of the values, beliefs, and immediate needs of her followers, Roslin is unable to craft a message that will continue to appeal to the collective identity of the fleet as opposed to a smaller base of religious believers.

The complexity of the situation is compounded by the unethical behavior of Roslin in trying to steal the election from Baltar through ballot fraud. The fraud is discovered and Adama firmly convinces Roslin to concede the election. Roslin wants Adama to support her against Baltar and cover up the fraud. He appeals to her deeper ethical values, even though they both know Baltar is not fit to be president.

> Adama: If we do this we're criminals. Unindicted maybe, but criminals all the same. You won't do it. We've gone this far, but that's it… you try to steal this election, you'll die inside…
> Roslin: It's the wrong choice.
> Adama: Yes, it is. (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2*, 2006)

Nevertheless, Roslin allows Adama to announce a miscount in the voting without revealing her campaign's conspiracy and declare Baltar the winner of the Presidential election.

The fleet settles on New Caprica and a year later, the Cylons appear and take over. Roslin, now a schoolteacher, retains her referent power and works with others in an underground resistance movement. Once the Cylons are defeated and Baltar fully discredited by seeking asylum with them, Roslin is able to reassert publicly her authority as a leader. Interestingly, as the humans are fleeing New Caprica, Roslin takes control of Colonial One and sits in the president's chair, even though Tom Zarek is the Vice President and, strictly speaking, the legitimate leader (*Exodus, Part 2*, 2006). However, Zarek, like Baltar, dislikes the daily administrative duties and responsibilities of leadership and strikes a deal with Roslin to make her the President again, but give him a role in the government (*Collaborators*, 2006). Roslin quickly agrees.

Roslin's second administration is more focused on vision, compassion, societal values and beliefs than on prophecy, and she seems to have a greater concern for consolidating political power than on managing her image as a religious symbol (*Collaborators*, 2006). That is not to suggest she has renounced her role as the dying leader and gives up on finding Earth. She continues her personal identification and objectives, tempering them with secular virtues, such as initiating the slow dismantlement of class privilege and creating opportunities for inclusion of those traditionally treated as inferior in the old Caprican society (*Dirty Hands*, 2007).

Roslin appears to operate within the understanding that she 'knows best,' which may be an optimal trait for a leader in an environment of extreme crisis and continual change per Terror

Management Theory as described by Gordijn and Stapel (2008), but cannot be sustained over the long-term. At some point, she will be tragically wrong in her assumptions and self-confidence. Indeed, when her fixation on finding Earth results in the discovery of an uninhabitable post-apocalyptic nuclear wasteland, she falls apart (*Sometimes A Great Notion,* 2009; *A Disquiet Follows My Soul*, 2009). She burns her scriptures, tosses away her cancer medications, refuses to discuss fleet matters or her health with Adama, and allows Vice-President Zarek to direct daily governmental operations.

The above should not be misconstrued as characterizing Roslin as bereft of any integrity or ethical foundation, nor that her actions are only to serve her political authority. She does berate Adama and Lee for wasting resources and placing the fleet in jeopardy due to their single-minded desire to search for a lost Starbuck (*You Can't Go Home Again*, 2005). Significantly, she also declares a general amnesty and creates a Truth and Reconciliation Committee after the evacuation of New Caprica and the revelation that acting-President Tom Zarek authorized a secretive vigilante group, The Circle, to enact revenge upon human collaborators with the Cylons by throwing them out an airlock (*Collaborators*, 2006). When Adama recruits volunteers to rescue Hera from the Cylons, Roslin goes even though her cancer is so far advanced she can barely see or walk (*Daybreak, Part 1*, 2009).

Roslin's integrity is principally tested in *The Hub* (2008). Roslin and Baltar are on a Rebel Cylon base ship under attack by other Cylons when Baltar is hit by shrapnel and quickly bleeding to death. She bandages his wound and gives him morphine for the pain. Under the effects of the morphine, he mumbles a confession about giving Caprica Six the access codes to the Caprican defense computer mainframe. Roslin has had clear suspicions of Baltar's complicity in the Cylon attack on Caprica for years, but had no evidence. Her fears are now

confirmed and she pulls the bandages off him and simply wants to let him bleed to death. As the

Cylon hybrid repeatedly jumps the ship to escape, Roslin finds herself in 'a space between' with

Elosha, the priestess killed on Kobol years before. Elosha accuses Roslin of not loving people,

in general, and Baltar, specifically.

> Elosha: The harder it is to recognize someone's right to draw breath, the more crucial it
> is. If humanity is going to prove itself worthy of surviving, it can't do it on a
> case-by-case basis.
> Roslin: What do you want from me here?
> Elosha: Just love someone. (*The Hub*, 2008)

The ship completes the jump and Roslin is returned to the scene with Baltar, where she hurriedly

tries to replace the bandages and eventually saves Baltar from dying.

What we find with Laura Roslin is a person who accepts a leadership position with the

best of intentions, only to get lost in the forest of immediate high stakes crises and her own need

to control situations. Roslin justifies her unethical actions by placing them in the context of

acquiring the goal and her personal destiny, as opposed to an understanding of behaviors simply

wrong under any circumstances. As Roslin explains to Adama, "sometimes the right thing is a

luxury. And it can have profoundly dangerous consequences" (*Escape Velocity*, 2008).

Wooten and James (2008) discovered during the life cycle of a crisis "leadership

behavior was the antithesis of what might be considered a display of competence in crisis

management" (p. 357). The unrelenting crises compromise her idealism and her ethical moral

center as her experiences are defined by trying to navigate the tensions between the former social

order and the urgent needs of the moment where the destruction of the human race is at stake.

As Boin (2009) explains, "the bewildering pace, ambiguity, and complexity of a crisis tends to

overwhelm normal modes of situation assessment," (p. 372) which appears to account for

Roslin's inability to practicably demonstrate theorized leadership competencies in an

environment of extreme crisis and continual change.

However comforting it may be to place blame for unethical leadership on situational factors, it is not sufficient. "Transparency, trust, integrity, and high moral standards" (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 344) are indicators of effective leadership, but Roslin denies each of these attributes through her actions. Interpretively, Roslin is caught in the trap identified by Sinclair (2007) of grandiosity and lack of reflection on the consequences of the identity she has built for herself after ascending to the presidency. Roslin carved a deep path when she identified herself as the dying leader of ancient prophecy and, coupled with her legitimate role as president, asserted an almost divine right to lead and to be followed. Sinclair (2007) would describe these as *identity scripts* that "can be an impediment to good leadership" (p. 140) and when changes begin to occur "the leader may experience relinquishing control as personal annihilation" (p. 140). Indeed, when Earth does not prove habitable, Roslin loses her self-made identity and retreats from public life—except to assert she maintain the power of the presidency, but not the daily operational duties. Power cannot be extracted from leadership, but we find in Laura Roslin an uncomfortable example of how power can be misused through structural systems to support the powerful and maintain the status quo.

Gaius Baltar. While Roslin's political skills may be disappointing and questionable, Gaius Baltar's presidency is disastrous and tragic. Similar to Roslin, Baltar has a strong sense of entitlement, but arising from the arrogance of his intellectual prowess. In addition, he also feels a need for power and control, but is aware enough to realize it serves his own self-interests. Baltar's primary interest is to stay alive and keep others from discovering his unwitting complicity with a Cylon that led to the malfunction of the defense mainframes during the Cylon attack on Caprica.

Due to Roslin's maneuverings to prevent Tom Zarek from achieving political power and Baltar's evident ease with the media in capturing the public's imagination, Baltar accepts her endorsement as Vice-President. His vanity is appeased and he wins the election (*Colonial Day*, 2005). Yet, he derives little respect as the Vice President and yearns for others to see him as a legitimate leader. When the planet Kobol, ancient home of Gods and men prior to the human diaspora to the system of the Twelve Colonies, is found he insists on being allowed to accompany the scouting team to the planet's surface. As he is refused based on his argument of being Vice President, which he feels should be weighty enough, he must remind them he is the only qualified scientist to assess the suitability of human habitation. As a scientist, he is given approval. Yet, even on Kobol, he must remind the scouting team of his position and superiority by addressing him as Doctor or Mr. Vice-President (*Valley of Darkness*, 2005).

Baltar's belief in his own superiority to others is a driving force behind most of his actions, whether as a political leader or as "The Chosen One" of the Cylon God (see Gaius Baltar Religious Leaders section). He is a self-made man, who left the farm on his home planet to move to Caprica, where he changed his accent, received an education, and became rich and famous for his scientific knowledge. This self-identity script is even more pronounced than Roslin's. For Baltar, "such individuals can get sucked into the omnipotent fantasy: they have done it all and can do it all single-handedly—without setbacks or the effort and sacrifice of others" (Sinclair, 2007, p. 140). Indeed, nearly the only confidant and advisor Baltar has throughout the narrative is Angel Six (also known as Head Six or Virtual Six), whom only he can see and hear, which provides an unsettling dilemma in the beginning of the narrative as to whether Baltar is completely sane.

Baltar's flaws are easily recognizable and Tom Zarek preys upon them when convincing Baltar to run for President against Roslin. The fleet has discovered a marginally habitable planet and most people yearn for colonizing it instead of continuing their meanderings toward Earth and skirmishes with the Cylons. Zarek appeals to Baltar's vanity and sense of dissatisfaction with his marginalization from the decision-making within the government. Angel Six whispers to Baltar, "You have been chosen to lead these people by Almighty God" (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 1,* 2006). With these words ringing in his ears, Baltar agrees to run and to appoint Zarek his Vice-President. Baltar wins through a combination of appealing to the hopes of the populace and not their fears, while also belittling Roslin's religious visions. Baltar is principally upset by a note left for him when Roslin thought she was actively dying, which is a tradition for Presidents and their successors. When Roslin recovers, the letter is forgotten, but Baltar reads it anyway. Roslin is not particularly gracious in her words to Baltar and his feelings are hurt. When Roslin sees the election slipping away and becomes desperate, she surreptitiously meets with him and appeals to his sense of patriotism in putting aside their differences and not settling on the planet. Baltar is still hurting from the letter and tells her, "I see it as my patriotic duty to lead this fleet to a new world… I saved your life, but I won't save your political career" (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2*, 2006). Baltar's obstinate sense of privilege and superiority keeps him in the race and he is announced the winner after Adama convinces Roslin the ballot fraud was a poor decision.

The very first crisis of Baltar's presidency comes moments after his inauguration and the signing of an Executive Order to colonize the new planet. Gina, a Cylon model six, who is in possession of a nuclear warhead gifted to her by Baltar, detonates it and destroys several ships and thousands of lives. Baltar is clearly shaken and tears roll down his cheeks as he receives a

report from Adama on the incident. Adama appears suspicious of how the nuclear warhead got

into Gina's hands, but offers an explanation that it must have been stolen and smuggled out to

her. Adama advises more Cylon attacks may be coming and precautionary measures should be

taken. However, Baltar wants to colonize the planet and refuses to take Adama's counsel by

stating, "I don't have to listen. I'm the President" (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2*, 2006). This

statement is very similar to Roslin's view on the president not having to explain him or herself,

but carries disastrous consequences as Baltar completes plans to colonize New Caprica. Baltar

understands the power of the Presidency, but he neglects to understand the role must be in

concert with the other stakeholders and powers within the government and military.

One year after the election and settling on New Caprica, Baltar enjoys using his power, as

evidenced by what, Gaeta, his Chief of Staff, terms "hot and cold running interns." Baltar is

pleased with being the president, even though he has little patience with actual governing, drinks

heavily and pops prescription drugs, and makes decisions based on his own personal

convenience without full regard for the needs of the people. He does not understand why the

people are complaining when there have not been any Cylon attacks. His isolation behind the

privilege and perks of his office, coupled with his lack of relational skills, have skewed his

perspective on the quality of life on New Caprica (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2*, 2006).

The next extreme crisis of his presidency occurs when the Cylons discover the humans

through the trace radiation of the nuclear warhead Gina detonated and arrive on New Caprica

with the hopes for a truce and reconciliation with the humans. However, their understanding of a

truce is their own occupation and control of the planet and the human population. Once again,

Baltar's need for self-preservation motivates him to surrender the planet and the remaining

humans (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2*, 2006).   In essence, he has no other choice but

surrender because he does not have a working relationship with or a full-strength military (as evidenced by Adama's inability to defend New Caprica and retreat) or a cohesive populace able to resist. In effect, he has made no Plan B. The only plan was to have the title of President and settle on a planet.

The only thing worse than what the New Capricans experienced under Baltar's administration is the occupation of New Caprica by the Cylons with Baltar's collusion. During the Cylon Occupation, Baltar is incapable of persuading the populace to stop the protests and insurgent bombing attacks. He signs arrest warrants and tries to get an imprisoned Roslin to persuade the insurgents to stop, but to no avail. He becomes further isolated through his own behaviors and attitudes, including the absence of Angel Six. And yet, Baltar finds a shred of decency and his old obstinate arrogance when he is asked by the Cylons to sign the death warrants for nearly 200 people believed to be the leaders of the resistance. He flatly refuses and they literally place a gun to his head. Doral shoots Caprica Six as an expression of his serious intent to also shoot Baltar. Angel Six returns and tells Baltar to sign the document. Shaking and in tears, he eventually signs the paper and sinks into further depression. The Presidency is not what Baltar had envisioned it to be (*Precipice*, 2006).

Adama returns and the humans are rescued, but Baltar is spirited away with the Cylons as he understands the humans will not be happy to have him in their midst. At this point, Baltar truly thinks he might be a Cylon and cultivates a relationship with D'Anna who is trying to discover the identities of the Final Five. Baltar's desire to be a Cylon derives from his need for absolution of his crimes. Therefore, he would not be a traitor to his people if he were actually a Cylon (*Exodus, Part 2*, 2006). Unfortunately, he is not a Cylon and must eventually come to terms with his actions.

The last stage of Baltar's political leadership is his writings from prison as he awaits trial for crimes against humanity. The tome, "My Triumphs, My Mistakes," is a political manifesto that sows the seeds of class-consciousness and warfare within the fleet (*Dirty Hands*, 2007). The writings can also be interpreted as a last desperate effort at self-preservation. If he can reinvent himself as a man of the people by acknowledging his humble origins, perhaps his reputation will be rehabilitated and his trial will have a better outcome. Once again, the outcome of Baltar's machinations are not what he was hoping for as the work is interpreted as a messianic tract by those who cannot find solace in their traditional religion or agnosticism. Here is the moment where Baltar begins to move away from lost political power and toward religious charismatic leadership and power (see Gaius Baltar Religious Leaders section).

The character of Gaius Baltar must not be misconstrued as the villain in the series. While he stands in opposition to Roslin and Adama, his decisions are tragically self-serving and ill conceived, but he rarely acts from the intent to cause harm and misery. He is simply incapable of serving others. Nonetheless, he is capable of compassion, as seen in his rescue of Gina on the Pegasus and in his sermons to his religious followers (see Religious Leaders section). The trappings and respect of political authority address his vanity and sense of superiority, but he cannot provide actual vision, goals, or organization to the fleet. These leadership tasks are beyond his abilities. Furthermore, his relational skills suffer due to his abrasive personality and odd behaviors resulting in an inability to cultivate a group of followers with the skills to complement his weaknesses. Baltar exhibits none of the characteristics of effective leadership discussed in this paper, which prolongs the crisis and continual change experienced by the humans. However, Baltar does have a saving grace, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Tom Zarek.

Billy: He's a freedom fighter. He's a prisoner of conscience.
Dualla: He's a butcher.
Billy: His colony was exploited by the other eleven for centuries. His people were
    marginalized, brutalized.
Dualla: I'm from Sagittaron and that man doesn't speak for all of us. He blew up a
    government building and there's no excuse for that. (*Bastille Day*, 2005)

This is the introduction to Tom Zarek: freedom fighter, terrorist. Through the course of

the narrative, he is also an opposition leader, Vice-President, President, and mutineer. Zarek is a

man who has spent his life advocating for the ascendancy of the common people, democratic

rights, and social liberties. He views all things as political and carries a strong commitment to

social justice. He asks tough questions about social equity, points out inconsistencies in the

socio-political structures both prior and after the Cylon attack, and is committed to social change.

And yet… Zarek determines the only solution to a system based on the privilege of the ruling

class and the exploitation of the poor, working class, and ill educated is violent change.

While Zarek refashions himself from a political prisoner with a life sentence to the

Quorum representative for Sagittaron and eventually President of the Colonies, he remains

closely connected to the underside of the fleet's society and those in opposition to the decisions

and actions of Adama and Roslin. When Lee and Roslin escape from the brig after they are

arrested for treason, Lee makes a deal with Zarek who has the means to hide them within the

fleet (*Resistance*, 2005). Zarek plots with his follower, Meier, to kill Lee on Kobol to prevent

hereditary succession of power and reduce Roslin's ability to hold power (*Home, Part 1,* 2005).

Zarek visits Lee, after Lee is assaulted by black market thugs, and we see him casually walking

through the black market ship greeting people (*Black Market*, 2006). There are implications

Zarek has connections to an assassination attempt on Roslin and the murder of the gunman

(*Colonial Day*, 2005), the anti-war protestors (*Sacrifice*, 2006; *Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2*, 2006), and the anti-Cylon extremists (*Blood On the Scales*, 2009).

Conversely, he does attempt to work within the political system carried over from Colonial society on the Twelve Colonies, but he finds it exasperating, hypocritical, and many of his machinations are meant to expose the inadequacies of the system or embarrass those in power. In *Colonial Day* (2005), Zarek is the newly elected representative of Sagittaron, based in part on his ability to gain supporters through seeing to their needs, such as fixing the air filtration on one of the ships when Roslin ignored the request. In front of the media, he essentially dares Roslin to shake his hand in a receiving line when it is commonly known Roslin views him as a terrorist and dislikes the notion of his political position. He further pushes Roslin when he interrupts the agenda of the Quorum meeting to point out she has no Vice-President and, in these dangerous and uncertain times, a clear line of political succession should be established. The delegate from Gemenon, a Colonial planet traditionally marginalized much like Sagittaron, immediately nominates Zarek. Roslin is extremely displeased, but suspends the meeting until a Vice-Presidential election can take place. Roslin can play politics as well as Zarek and outmaneuvers him with the nomination of Gaius Baltar, which proves to be successful and Zarek is kept away from being second in command of the government (*Colonial Day*, 2005).

Zarek is undaunted in his attempts to gain legitimate political control and sways Baltar to run against Roslin in the presidential election. He appeals to Baltar's vanity and sense of dissatisfaction, but also provides the political acumen for a message of hope to capture the imagination of the people and a platform to include settlement on New Caprica. As a result, Zarek is also elected as Vice-President (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2*, 2006). The narrative is silent on Zarek's role in government on New Caprica prior to the invasion by the Cylons, but we

learn the Cylons arrested him immediately and kept him imprisoned during the entire occupation (*Exodus, Part 1*, 2008), which indicates they had a clearer understanding of the danger he posed to their political power and were not interested in the niceties of due process.

After the evacuation of New Caprica and Baltar's escape with the Cylons, Zarek is legally the head of state for the fleet. Yet Zarek, for all his protestations about the inequities and ineffectiveness of government, has no desire actually to lead in a legitimate role. In another political bargain, Zarek offers Roslin the Vice-Presidency, after which he will step down, but wants to remain a part of the government and she offers him the Vice-Presidency (*Collaborators*, 2006). During this interregnum, Zarek authorizes "The Circle" by executive order, which creates a shadow court for the prosecution and execution of humans who were collaborators with the Cylons on New Caprica. In practice, the group is little more than a government sanctioned vigilante gang. When Roslin confronts Zarek about them, he explains he wanted to "circumvent legal showboating" and keep Roslin's hands clean for when she took over the presidency (*Collaborators*, 2006).

What we find in Tom Zarek is a man who cannot change the script of how he operates. Even when he has full legitimate power as President of the Colonies and the ability to shape the system to the vision he desires, he abandons that role to his political rival. Moreover, he continues to work within the margins through violent means, as demonstrated with The Circle. Zarek has spent a lifetime constructing his identity as an outsider and cannot redirect his self-image or his tactics. He is entrenched in a singular view of being in opposition to authority. An opposition that uses violent destructive means to gain attention in an attempt to create social change, which also defines him as a person who cannot be trusted.

As Vice-President, he does take responsibility for the daily operations of the government during Roslin's absence on the Cylon ship. He is seen trying his best to keep order and fairness within the Quorum, but becomes exasperated by the pettiness and lack of focus on the part of the Quorum members. It is clear the Quorum does not fully support him, nor does Adama, which results in Lee Adama, now Caprican delegate to the Quorum (see Lee Adama in Political Leaders section), installed as Acting President while Roslin is on the Cylon ship (*Sine Qua Non*, 2008).

In the aftermath of the revelation about Earth and the Colonial-Cylon Alliance, Zarek reaffirms his role as opposition leader and finds an issue that speaks to his sense of outrage and injustice. He rallies factions in the fleet, including the tyllium ship and Gaeta, to rebel. Adama has him arrested and bluffs Zarek into telling him where the tyllium ship disappeared. Zarek then appeals to Gaeta's sense of injustice at losing his leg and being marginalized in the sick bay in favor of Cylons, setting up a plan to take control of the government and the military with others who are radicalized in opposition to the alliance with the Cylons (*A Disquiet Follows My Soul*, 2009; *The Oath*, 2009). Zarek unsuccessfully tries once more to rally the support of the Quorum against Adama, but when they are hesitant, he sends two men into the Quorum meeting and has them gunned down (*Blood On the Scales*, 2009). The mutiny Zarek and Gaeta put into action is unsuccessful not simply because of the efforts of those loyal to Adama and Roslin, but also because Zarek makes questionable choices and oversteps to the point even Gaeta cannot abide. In the end, Adama puts down the mutiny and executes Zarek and Gaeta by firing squad (*Blood On the Scales*, 2009).

Zarek's 'us versus them' viewpoint is essentially no different from Adama's or Roslin's. In the absence of an enemy, he has no purpose or social standing. Indeed, if there were peace

and prosperity—with or without the Cylon alliance—Zarek would have no role to play and his identity as an outsider and champion of the marginalized would come to an ignominious end. In essence, Zarek is just as involved in self-preservation and power as the other leaders. In fact, he convinces others to carry out the brutal destructive acts he conceives, which appears to give him some sense of plausible deniability. He may be complicit, but he is not guilty. We do not know Zarek's backstory in the way we know others, which would help in understanding how Zarek became the freedom fighter/terrorist of the Colonies and then the fleet. We only see the destructive consequences of his political leadership. In a time of extreme crisis and continual change, Zarek notably does very little changing of fundamental behavior or philosophy. The real tragedy of Zarek's story is his entrenched notions worked against him and he was never able to adapt to the challenges of the new circumstances. If he had, there may have been a real possibility his vision for a future of socio-economic parity may have been realized.

Lee Adama.   In the course of the narrative, Lee Adama functions as the bridge between military and political arenas in the pursuit of balancing power. As discussed earlier, this model is established early in *Bastille Day* (2005) with the deal brokered for prison labor and general elections. Moreover, Lee functions as the ethical conscience for Adama and Roslin due to his privileged status. In essence, he can 'speak truth to power' without fear of repercussions because he is Adama's son, senior pilot, and Roslin's advisor. Nonetheless, Adama will only entertain Lee's 'truth' to a point. After Starbuck's death in *Maelstrom* (2007), Adama takes Lee off flight status. We understand Adama is being unreasonably punitive, but Adama's own grief over losing another person he loves has affected his decision-making. Lee is reassigned as security for Gaius Baltar's new lawyer, Romo Lampkin, in preparation for Baltar's trial for crimes against humanity. The death of Starbuck and his reassignment sets the stage for Lee to begin to reassess

his role in the military and to begin the transition to political leader. Adama and Lee argue over his risk-taking and Lee resigns his commission. He appears no longer to have the edge necessary to continue the incessant fighting and vigilance against the Cylons (*The Son Also Rises*, 2007).

Lee solidifies his role as ethical conscience when Romo Lampkin places him on the witness stand during Baltar's trial. Lee is to testify the trial is a mockery and the judges have already made up their minds based on the inference of a conversation he had with Adama. However, Lee turns his testimony to basic inconsistencies in their thinking about forgiveness as Roslin has given a blanket pardon to everyone in the fleet. Lee's impassioned speech reminds everyone of their culpability and sins in the service of survival and cohesion. He reminds them no one is innocent. Lee states, they may not like Gaius Baltar, but he was in an untenable position and there should be forgiveness for all. He finally questions their status as a civilization and characterizes the fleet as a gang on the run for their lives. Prior to reading the verdict, which acquits Baltar, the leading judge states, "Like everything human, justice is imperfect. It's flawed. But it's those very imperfections that separates us from the machines, and maybe even makes us a species worth saving," (*Crossroads, Part 2*, 2007) invoking the primary philosophical question of the narrative.

The personal outcome of the trial for Lee is a rift in his relationships with Adama and Roslin, who he discovers is using chamallah again and brings up at the trial to discredit her. In addition, Dee finally leaves Lee as their marriage has been difficult for some time (*Crossroads, Part 2*, 2007). Lee refuses to take back his commission, explaining he has had "feelers from the government" (*He That Believeth In Me*, 2008).

Lee is appointed the Caprican delegate to the Quorum, as the previous delegate died from an illness, and remains in a similar center position. However, his loyalties and support are now

being sought by Roslin and Tom Zarek. Lee is not as competent a politician as he is a Viper

pilot, certainly due to lack of experience and training. He also seems to understand this and tries

to keep his head down, as well as not trade on his status as Adama's son and previous position as

CAG. The Quorum delegates still look to him for answers and impressions, especially when they

are not happy with following Zarek's advice due to lack of trust. Zarek is not pleased and Lee

tries to smooth over the problems, interpretively because he does not actually enjoy being in

opposition to authority, like Zarek does (*Sine Qua Non*, 2008).

Lee's rise to power is helped by Roslin's absence on the Cylon ship when it unexpectedly

jumps away with her aboard. The Quorum will not coalesce behind Zarek, and we have already

discussed Zarek is not interested in actually leading, so an acting President must be found.

Romo and Lee begin a search for a possible replacement. Romo realizes the only name that

needs to be on the list is Lee's, because he "can always be counted on to do the right thing" (*Sine

Qua Non*, 2008).

While Lee's tenure as President of the Colonies is short-lived, he effects a major political

accomplishment in line with his moral standards, though not before placing those standards in

jeopardy. The Rebel Cylons, led by D'Anna Biers have discovered four of the Final Five Cylon

models are in the fleet. They insist the Cylons be returned to them and they will then return

Roslin, Baltar, Helo and the other humans to Galactica. Lee knows Tigh is a confessed Cylon

and places him in an airlock, where he also implicates Anders and Tyrol, and then 'negotiates'

with D'Anna for the release of the human hostages. Lee is at the brink of pushing the button to

send the three Cylons out the airlock, when Starbuck stops him because she has discovered the

coordinates to Earth. Lee and D'Anna call a truce, return their hostages, and determine to find

Earth together, visualized by the close up of a handshake. Humans and Rebel Cylons, now

without the ability to resurrect, have developed a mutual purpose and it would seem their hostilities are over. In effect, Lee Adama has ended the war (*Revelations*, 2008).

Lee's political leadership is significantly different from Roslin, Baltar, and Zarek as he maintains his integrity while fulfilling the role. As before, the effective leadership characteristics of "confidence, integrity, connection, resilience and aspiration" (p. 17) defined by Jackson and Parry (2008) apply more fully to his actions as a political leader. The difference for Lee's style is his caution seems more pronounced as a political leader than a military leader. Even so, decision-making in politics can be reflective and slow compared to the decisions that must be made immediately during a battle. What ultimately separates Lee Adama as a politician from the others is his unwavering belief in the democratic process and the ideals on which the Colonial society is founded. His leadership vision is to uphold the principles he has sworn to defend as a military officer and an elected politician. His choices, as Romo states, are to do the right thing. Lee is enabled in his leadership by an absence for the need to hold power and control. His ego does not complicate his decision-making. He is ambitious, but his inexperience also allows him to be rather naïve about the dangers of political power. This serves him and the fleet very well.

Religious Leaders

Laura Roslin and Gaius Baltar. The situational factors presented at the outset of the narrative represent a crisis which Weber determined necessary for the emergence of a charismatic leader. Moreover, the story of a surprise nuclear attack that kills billions of people and continues with the remnants of a human civilization on the run from a more powerful enemy is relatable to the mortality salience discussed by Gordijn and Stapel (2008) and Cohen et al. (2004). Seen from this perspective, there is little wonder the humans in the story are receptive to a charismatic leader.

Indeed, *Battlestar Galactica* presents the viewer with two charismatic leaders who emerge at roughly the same time, but with quite different personal attributes. Laura Roslin, the President of the Colonies who has inoperable breast cancer, comes to believe she is the "dying leader" foretold in prophecy who would lead the people to their new home. While Gaius Baltar, renowned scientist and womanizer, comes to believe he is an "instrument" of the One True God worshipped by the Cylons (*The Hand of God*, 2005). The blatant juxtaposition of protagonists who are polytheistic with antagonists who are monotheistic highlights the religious and spiritual themes woven through the series. As viewers, we are predisposed by cultural traditions in storytelling to identify with Roslin against the wily Baltar and Cylons. However, the evangelism of the Cylons and Baltar for a monotheistic faith built upon God's love has the potential to cause an inner conflict for an audience presumed to be predominantly Christian, which may challenge the viewer to reflect upon preconceptions of faith and the creation of marginalized groups.

Roslin's divinely inspired qualities are triggered by her use of a hallucinogenic herb to treat her cancer symptoms. She confides in Elosha, a priestess of the Lords of Kobol, about having dreams and visions, particularly about snakes. Elosha is at first incredulous and suspects Roslin is mocking her faith, but realizes the President is anxiously serious. Elosha quotes the prophet Pythia, "And the Lords anointed a leader to guide the caravan of the heavens to their new homeland. And unto the leader they gave a vision of serpents" (*The Hand of God*, 2005). Elosha continues by telling Roslin that Pythia also wrote, "the new leader would suffer a wasting disease and would not live to enter the new land" (*The Hand of God*, 2005). A few days later, Elosha remarks, "You made a true believer out of me. Strange as that sounds, considering. But I believe. I know you're the one to lead us to our salvation. You are going to guide us to Earth" (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 1*, 2005).

Roslin comes to believe this herself while looking at a satellite photo of ruins on Kobol, yet sees the buildings and grounds restored. She tells Elosha and Billy, "It's real. The scriptures, the myths, the prophecies. They're all real" (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 1*, 2005). Through the scriptures, they discover they can find Earth by retrieving the Arrow of Apollo from their devastated home planet of Caprica. Roslin, aglow with the conviction of a recent convert, asks Adama for a ship to retrieve the arrow and speaks to his skepticism: "It would seem that we were wrong…Just because you and I don't know *where* [Earth] is, it doesn't mean it doesn't exist" (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 1*, 2005). Through her insistence on believing the prophetic scriptures, Roslin creates an 'extraordinary mission' and personal destiny that neatly coincides with Conger et al.'s (2000) understanding of how charismatic leaders differentiate themselves. In addition, she is able to incorporate significant cultural objects, as Pappas (2005) might observe, which increase her credibility and follower trust.

Conversely, Baltar's embrace of Cylon theology is cloaked in a dramatization that he may be mentally ill. He has fantasy conversations with a Cylon [Angel Six], who declares God has a plan for him and he needs to repent his sins; particularly, his complicity in the nuclear attack. Baltar's narcissism, an unattractive characteristic for some charismatic leaders (Sinclair, 2007), leads him to accept her message. The point is driven home as he states, "I am an instrument of God" and strikes a pose with outspread arms in a disturbingly Christ-like manner (*The Hand of God,* 2005). Baltar's acute sense of self-preservation and seemingly miraculous deliverance from problematic situations, where his responsibility for the Cylon attack or his various lies may be discovered, convinces him of divine protection.

However, his destiny is not revealed until much later in the story. During an imprisonment while awaiting trial for crimes against humanity, he begins to formulate a written

political ideology about the class inequities of the social system, which is furtively printed and distributed throughout the fleet (*Dirty Hands,* 2007). His social justice politics become entwined with theology and a small group of people look to him as a faith healer (*Crossroads, Part 1*, 2007). After Lee's impassioned testimony about forgiveness and acquittal on the crimes, Baltar is spirited away to join this group. As he enters the converted storage locker where they live, his devotees stand and bow their heads. He realizes, with the cynical prompting of Angel Six, his destiny lies in preaching about the One God and bringing peace and hope to those who will follow him and renounce the other gods (*He That Believeth In Me*, 2008). Though this is a decision initially made for self-preservation, Baltar later fervently prays for the healing of a young boy with encephalitis. When the boy recovers, Baltar begins to truly believe he is divinely inspired and has an extraordinary personal destiny different from his previous singularly ego-driven motivations (*He That Believeth In Me*, 2008). Yet his spiritual conversion does not last, even though he remains with his devotees. For Baltar, the charismatic attribute of impression management (House, 1999) is a critical competency for his survival and he uses it repeatedly in quite disingenuous ways.

Both Baltar and Roslin develop their charismatic leadership skills through the attribution of charisma from their followers. Roslin also experiences devotees who bow and ask for her blessing after she calls for members of the fleet to leave the military protection of Adama and follow her in the quest to retrieve the Arrow of Apollo (*The Farm*, 2005). Her followers are primarily religious fundamentalists from the planet Gemenon, but others include those who feel an acute need to find a new home and civil authority purists who see Roslin's break with Adama as a means to create a more just society. Roslin understands the construct of her relationship with followers and "actively facilitates identification" (Sinha & Jackson, 2006, p. 238) as a

religious leader after the Quorum of Twelve is slow to endorse her plan and she angrily announces "I'm playing the religious card" (*The Farm*, 2005). Her political pragmatism and manipulation does not seem to diminish her belief in divine inspiration. Indeed, her need for personal power and asserting the right to govern also comes from fulfilling the Pythian Prophecy of the dying leader, but Roslin is hesitant to actually bless her followers and must be prodded by Elosha to do so. The priest's prompting indicates Elosha may have her own power motives for supporting and expanding Roslin's role as a religious leader through impression management. Therefore, the story provides another opportunity for reflecting on the relationship between political and religious leaders during times of crisis, which carries the potential for manipulation of the populace and cultivation of power.

In terms of the Conger-Kanungo model of charismatic leadership (Conger et al., 2000), Roslin is adept at developing follower perceptions of her charismatic leadership. She is empathetic to their desire to change the status quo by discontinuing their wandering in space and finding a planet to live on; emphasizes the risky behavior involved in retrieving the arrow (*Home, Part 1*, 2005); and uses her self-defined prophetic persona as an unconventional means for attaining the goal of Earth and being perceived as an expert. In essence, Roslin develops a self-identity to provide her followers with a collective identity as people of faith and feelings of empowerment through their reverence for her. Baltar achieves similar charismatic leader-follower relations, although the desire to change the status quo involves personal salvation and existential meaning (*Escape Velocity*, 2008); the risky behavior is to arm themselves against the fundamentalists of the dominant religion (*The Hub*, 2008); and the unconventional means is to eventually disavow God and the tenets of his own burgeoning religious cult when the outcome of finding Earth proves abysmal (*A Disquiet Follows My Soul*, 2009).

In their own way, each creates a collective identity for their followers which establishes their group as the new norm and seeks to identify everyone else as the Other and not worthy of inclusion until they adhere to the beliefs and action goals of the group. For Baltar and his monotheists, the difficulty is not severe because they do not hold legitimate power in the social system. However, they do chastise members who revert to polytheistic beliefs during times of crisis and Baltar ransacks the chapel of the Kobol religion after his people are attacked, jarringly evocative of the biblical story of Jesus in the Temple (*Escape Velocity*, 2008).

Roslin, through her role as the legitimate political authority of the fleet, must be more circumspect in placing people on the margins. Initially, she is anxious to create a division between those who would follow her and retrieve the arrow and those who will not. She attempts to encompass both the fundamentally religious and the politically disillusioned in order to achieve her goal. Her coalition is about one-third of the population, so their ascendance as the normative group can only last as long as the task—her political power base must be fully reestablished in order for her to retain legitimacy and power as President. Consequently, Roslin, an essentially political creature, merely uses the strength of the religious fundamentalists as a means to an end. Once she has succeeded, she quickly reverts to the status quo of marginalizing the religious fundamentalists as too socially conservative and essentially ignoring the political activists as too radical and powerless. Ostensibly, Roslin uses spirituality as another tool for organizational success (Sinclair, 2007) and becomes manipulative and insincere.

Roslin and her followers are successful in finding the Arrow of Apollo, which enables them to discover a vague star map to Earth. This success mends the rift between Roslin and Adama, thereby allowing Adama to rescind martial law and reinstate her as President, both of which re-legitimize Roslin's authority. Unfortunately, Roslin is unable to reconcile her political

pragmatism with her newfound role as prophet as seen in the storyline of the young woman seeking an abortion (*The Captain's Hand*, 2006) and her loss to Baltar in the presidential election (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 1*, 2006) discussed previously (see Laura Roslin in Political Leaders section). In effect, Roslin disregards the importance of maintaining the collective identity, thus relinquishing her role as a charismatic leader by the people, but tragically preserves her self-identity script as a divinely inspired leader.

Baltar's presidency on New Caprica is a disaster and reflects the "personalized power" type of charismatics as discussed by Beu and Buckley (2004). He, too, has lost his charismatic hold on his followers, which could be attributed to what Cha and Edmondson (2006) describe as disenchantment and the attribution of hypocrisy. However, Baltar reemerges after his acquittal on crimes against humanity and transforms to a religious cult leader. Baltar accepts his destiny as an "instrument of God" (complete with clichéd messiah-like shoulder length hair and beard) and seeks the safety of being with his young, mostly female followers.

Roslin's religious zeal and search for Earth reemerges, as does her cancer and use of the hallucinogenic herb. Adama is not pleased and they quarrel, with Adama questioning her motives by saying, "You're afraid you may not be the dying leader you thought you were or that your death will be as meaningless as everyone else's" (*Six of One*, 2008). Seemingly, her skill at impression management and use of charismatic qualities is fading. Her need to maintain her grip on power is blinding her to appropriate behaviors that continue the reverence her followers are willing to bestow.

Roslin's status as a religious—and political—leader is crushed when the fleet actually finds Earth. The planet is uninhabitable due to a nuclear holocaust 2,000 years earlier in a different manifestation of the repetitive cycle of human/Cylon destruction and rebirth. The

hopes and dreams of the survivors are destroyed and suicides escalate. Roslin is so distraught she disappears from public, stops her cancer treatments, and burns the sacred scrolls while saying, "I was wrong. I was wrong about everything. And all those people who listened, and they trusted me, and they followed me, all those people. They're dead" (*Sometimes A Great Notion*, 2009). Consequently, the story demonstrates what Beyer (1999) cautioned about charismatic leaders who provide a message that speaks to the emotional needs of their followers, but actions in pursuit of the goal ultimately fail and the group is placed in a worse situation.

The failed promise of Earth also causes Baltar to reassess his spiritual foundation and he publicly questions the God he has so assiduously promoted as the grantor of forgiveness. "Perhaps we are not the ones in need of forgiveness… Perhaps it is God who should come down here and beg our forgiveness!" (*A Disquiet Follows My Soul*, 2009). He further continues his private scorn of his followers to Angel Six (*Blood On the Scales*, 2009), but continues his public ministry by conducting funerals invoke granting "eternal life" in contrast to the dominant religion that speaks to granting "a measure of grace" (*Someone to Watch Over Me*, 2009). Ultimately, Baltar relinquishes his role, rather ungracefully, as the religious cult leader and joins with Adama, Roslin, and others in a last-ditch effort to retrieve Hera, destroy the Cylons, and gain his own redemption (*Daybreak*, 2009).

The dangers of political leadership coupled with religious fundamentalism are not adequately resolved in the narrative. Roslin and Baltar exploit the irrationality of the leader-follower relationship to enhance their power, authority, and legitimacy for obtaining their personal visions and goals based on religious tenets. They repeatedly manipulate their images and messages to acquire support and prompt action for their preferred change efforts. The pursuit of these goals causes divisiveness within the society, prompting violent action and

retaliation within the group, marginalizes through legal and illegal means those who oppose them, and nearly destroys the fragile social system the survivors are trying to maintain. These plot events have a solution within the narrative, but the larger understanding of politics and religion in a democratic secular society is left to be discerned and interpreted by the viewer.

Cylons and Shared Leadership

As the opening title sequence reminds viewers, Cylons were created Man, they rebelled, they evolved, and they have a plan. Cylons were created to make life easier for humans, presumably for domestic chores, but more importantly for combat, through the Centurions. In piecing together clues within the narrative, the Cylons became self-aware, realized their role as slaves to human masters, and rebelled in the First Cylon War. The war ended forty years prior to the beginning of the series, when an armistice was declared, the Cylons left the Twelve Colonies to find a home of their own, and they were never heard from until the day they launched a nuclear attack on the Colonies. We discover the Final Five Cylons, Ellen and Saul Tigh, Sam Anders, Galen Tyrol, and Tory Foster, are descendants of the Lost Tribe of Kobol and had escaped from the nuclear holocaust of Earth millennia before to find the Twelve Tribes of Kobol and warn them of the dangers of developing Cylon technology in order to end the cycle of violence spoken of in scriptures. They find the Colonies in the midst of the First Cylon War and are instrumental in getting the Centurions to accept a truce by promising them the technology for resurrection[2], which the Lost Tribe had developed on Kobol leading to their expulsion, and the Final Five had redeveloped. Presumably, this bargain included taking eight other humans to develop as Cylons[3]. One model, Cavil, is dissatisfied with the weaknesses of his form and plots

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[2] Resurrection is a technology to download the memories of the dead into new bodies, thus each Cylon model shares the memories and experiences of all the others in their line.

[3] For ease of reading, the human models will be discussed as Cylons, while the metal framed Cylons will be discussed as Centurions, and the pilots as Raiders, even though they are collectively Cylons.

to refigure the memories of the Final Five and Sharon Valerii, and place them within the human society of the Twelve Colonies. His purpose was to get his 'creators' to see the errors of emulating humans with all their physical frailties and moral failings. Once they have been removed from the larger group and forgotten, he is able to assert his authority and plan the destruction of the human race.

The organizing principle of the Cylon society, as redefined by the Final Five and resurrection technology, is democracy, monotheism developed from the Centurion's religion, and free will. While there are millions of copies of each model, they have a consensus or caucus orientation and not what might be termed a 'hive mind'. Nevertheless, the narrative turns on the societal challenges of an individual to differentiate from the larger group. Importantly, the Cylons must work as a team, with one or two individuals representing their model, to work their base ships and communicate with the hybrid that manages the functions of the ship. While discussions and decisions happen between models, the expectation is final decisions will be made by roll call vote of representatives from each model. The basic framework precludes a formal leader and works on the concept of shared leadership.

A challenge for understanding shared leadership is dispensing with the ancient perception leadership consists of actions by an individual from the top-down and rethink leadership as integrated. In a shared leadership model, "leadership is often shared across the various partners or members making it difficult for a single individual of one entity to truly lead the alliance or network" (Pearce, Conger, & Locke, 2008, p. 623). The concept has also been defined as self-leadership involving "several individuals leading themselves and allowing others to lead them through a reciprocal influence process" (Fitzsimons, James, & Denyer, 2011, p. 319). Furthermore, "the resulting collective structure can be considered to be a leadership network

that influences and shapes both team and individual activities and outcomes" (Carson, Tesluk, & Marrone, 2007, p, 1219). Fitzsimons et al. (2011) provide an additional characteristic where "cognition is shared by members of the group," (p. 319) which seems quite appropriate for a discussion of Cylons, and speaks to shared values and principles. However, there are limitations to the success of a shared leadership framework. Pearce and Conger, in their series of clarification letters to Locke, explain, "relying solely on group consensus as the means for making decisions at the top of organizations—or any level for that matter—would be a misguided strategy. …decision making with consensus [is] an important default mode only to be supplanted when organizational circumstances necessitate" (Pearce et al., 2008, p. 626). The literature suggests shared leadership as an emerging model in leadership studies that predicts successful completion of goals and objectives in a team or network environment that does not rely upon a formal individual leader. What we discover with the Cylons in *Battlestar Galactica* is a society also in extreme crisis and continual change, which diminishes their ability to continue the shared leadership framework with disastrous consequences.

The greatest threat to the ability for the Cylons to continue their shared leadership is the individuation of certain models. While each Cylon has their own sense of 'self', that definition is contained within the larger concept of belonging to their model line. When Cavil, Caprica Six, Boomer, Sharon Athena, D'Anna Biers, and, to a lesser extent, Leoben, begin to assert thinking and behaviors contrary to the traditional ways of being, the results divide Cylon society. However, the initial individuation seems to occur with Cavil.

Cavil, as mentioned above, is responsible for placing the Final Five and Boomer into Caprican society without knowledge of their Cylon identity. This is merely one of many decisions he makes unilaterally, or through manipulation of the Doral and Simon models, to

claim dominance over the Cylons. In effect, Cavil disdains democratic principles and, much like

Roslin, believes he "knows best," seeks control, and does not understand why the other Cylons

do not see the situation as clearly as he does. Yet, it may not be the situation that is a problem,

but Cavil's own self-loathing. He despises his body and yearns to be a better machine, as he

angrily explains to the recently resurrected Ellen Tigh:

> Cavil: In all your travels, have you ever seen a star supernova?
> Ellen: No.
> Cavil: No? Well, I have. I saw a star explode and send out the building blocks of the universe. Other stars, other planets and eventually other life. A supernova! Creation itself! I was there, I wanted to see it and be part of the moment. And you know how I perceived one of the most glorious events in the universe? With these *ridiculous* gelatinous orbs in my skull! With eyes designed to perceive only a tiny fraction of the EM spectrum. With ears designed only to hear vibrations in the air.
> Ellen: The five of us designed you to be as *human* as possible.
> Cavil: I don't want to be human!! I want to see gamma rays! I want to hear X-rays, and I -- I want to -- I want to smell dark matter! Do you see the absurdity of what I am? I can't even express these things properly because I have to -- I have to conceptualize complex ideas in this stupid, limiting spoken language! But I know I want to reach out with something other than these prehensile paws, and feel the solar wind of a supernova flowing over me! I'm a machine, and I could know much more, I could experience so much more, but I'm trapped in this absurd body! And why? Because my five creators thought that *God* wanted it that way! (*No Exit*, 2009)

Cavil's solution would be to disappear and have Cylons make their own way. He seems to be

pleased to tell the Colonials that attacking Caprica was a mistake and seeks peace talks (*Lay

Down Your Burdens, Part 2,* 2006), as well as never truly supporting the occupation of New

Caprica (*Occupation*, 2006). But his need for control, or "an audience" as Ellen tells Boomer (*No

Exit*, 2009), seems to prevent him from simply packing up and heading out on his own. This

may also be a latent sense of belonging to a group and the desire to have the entire group follow,

not just a few, which is similar to what the human leaders prefer.

Yet Cavil overreaches and puts in motion the events leading to a rupture in Cylon society.

In *Six of One* (2008), Natalie (a model six) confronts Cavil about lobotomizing the Raiders who

refused to attack the Colonial fleet because they sensed the awakened Final Five. The Cylons

vote on the fate of the Raiders and the outcome is a tie, until Boomer breaks away from her line

and votes with Cavil. The model sixes, eights, and twos remain outraged and Natalie

reconfigures the Centurions to remove their 'telencephalic inhibitor', which limits their self-

awareness and makes them obedient to the human Cylons. The newly aware Centurions gun

down Cavils, Dorals, and Simons as retribution for their cruelty against the Raiders (*Six of One*,

2008).

Boomer's defection is only possible due to her continued sense of self as separated from

her line and the animosity she holds for humans who imprisoned and killed her. While she has

individuated, she is unable to find a way to integrate that self into a community. Her lack of

integration allows her to vacillate between loyalties to the Cylons and to the Colonials,

presumably due to a sense of guilt over the actions she took against the fleet and Chief Tyrol, as

well as a need to find her own redemption for that guilt.

However, Boomer is not the only Cylon who seems to be enjoying a continued evolution.

The model six appears in a multitude of 'looks' and names: Caprica Six, Shelly Godfrey, Gina,

Natalie, Sophia, and an unnamed six with long hair who comforts Baltar after his flight from

New Caprica. Only the model eight has characters with separate identities, Boomer and Sharon

Athena, but they are not visually distinct. Importantly, Boomer and Caprica Six are the two

individual Cylons who have had the most intimate contact with humans through their love of

Tyrol and Baltar, respectively. They are also singled out by their society, which a model three

discusses with the resurrected Caprica Six, who realizes they are dangerous as "celebrities in a

society based on unity" (*Downloaded,* 2006).

Caprica Six is encouraged to help Boomer come to terms with her identity as a Cylon and

get her to move out of her old apartment on Caprica. She tries to appeal to Boomer's

understanding of God's love, but Boomer picks up a picture of the Galactica crew and screams at her:

> Boomer: *This* is love. These people love me. I love them. I didn't pretend to feel something so I could screw people over. I loved them. And then I betrayed them! I shot a man I love, frakked over another man, ruined his life, and why? Because I'm a lying machine! I'm a frakking Cylon. (*Downloaded*, 2006)

The two realize they have a great deal in common by loving a human and come to realize the war on humans was ill-advised and contrary to the wishes of a loving benevolent God. They determine to stop living with guilt, hate, and lies (*Downloaded*, 2006). This culminates in their off-screen conversion of the other Cylon models to seek peace and the on-screen landing on New Caprica to try to live together (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2,* 2006).

However, their understanding of living in peace seems predicated on their possession of power over the human population of New Caprica and their underestimation of Colonial resentment and hate. The oligarchy of Cylon leadership on New Caprica during their occupation is bewildered by the human resistance and questions the decision to be there. Boomer explains they are "here to find a way to live in peace as God wants us to live." However, Cavil counters:

> If we are bringing the word of God then it follows we should employ any means necessary to do so. Any means. Fear is a key article of faith as I understand it. So maybe it's time to instill a little more fear into the people's hearts and minds. (*Occupation*, 2006)

The crackdown by the Cylons on the human population further philosophically distances model lines from each other and strains the shared leadership capabilities of the Cylons.

D'Anna Biers is also a Cylon who individuates from her model three line in an effort to seek spiritual enlightenment and the faces of the Final Five. She embarks on a series of suicides because she sees visions and clues in the space between death and resurrection. Her behavior becomes more secretive and agitated. After she sees the faces of the Final Five in the Temple of the Five and dies from the experience, she is resurrected and Cavil explains she has stepped over

the line in trying to discover the forbidden knowledge of their creators. He takes her model

off-line, known as "boxing," based on a determination the model has a basic design flaw due to

her messianic questing (*Rapture*, 2007).

Boxing the D'Anna is a controversial issue that simmers below the surface of the Cylon

society. Natalie informs Cavil the Cylons should be searching for the Final Five as a principle of

faith. They place resurrecting D'Anna's line to a vote, where the decision is made to revive the

line and learn about the Final Five, although Cavil is still very displeased. Several base ships

travel to the resurrection hub where the line is stored. Instead of honoring his word, Cavil

attacks the base ship with Natalie and those who oppose him. The Cylons have lost their unity—

their shared values and objectives—and now they are embroiled in civil war (*The Ties That Bind*,

2008).

The outcome of the war is an alliance between the Rebel Cylons and the Colonials. As a

token of their sincerity and the objective to discover the Final Five, the Rebel Cylons develop a

plan to resurrect a single D'Anna and then destroy the resurrection hub (*The Hub*, 2008). The

destruction of the resurrection hub is a significant element for the destruction of Cylon society

for it symbolizes eternal death. The key question becomes whether or not Cylons still need each

other or does it become a matter of every Cylon for his or her self—and they are now truly

individuals who will no longer have the capacity to share memories and experiences. With the

end of resurrection, the Cylons have no procreation for human models or Centurions. Without

the ability to procreate, they have no future. They will die and have no descendents to leave as a

legacy. In effect, there is no incentive to continue a cooperative society with a shared leadership

structure because the society is simply doomed to extinction through attrition. There is no future

to hold on to and positively project. Even a belief in God and expectation of an eternal life

through the continuation of their souls is shattered. Cavil explains to a worried and guilt-ridden Boomer during the civil war, "We're machines, dear. We don't have souls" (*The Ties That Bind,* 2008). However, Cowan (2010) considers Cavil's greatest fear to be the possibility that Cylons actually do have souls. If so, the concept of eternal death is reasserted as eternal life and the rift in Cylon society may have been for naught.

As we see through the example of Cylon society and leadership practice, the model of shared leadership appears to work well when the system is relatively stable and all members disown their ego and individuality. In crisis and over time, with competing values and agendas, the shared leadership framework cannot function. This example may point to the need for understanding shared leadership has a specific life cycle and must eventually be abandoned when the environment no longer allows for its practice. More importantly, we might consider the continual growth and development of individuals within a group by virtue of their experiences within and without the group, which may rule out a perpetual shared leadership practice.

Emergent Leaders

Emergent leaders are those persons who are typically without the legitimate authority of position and become known as leaders through their actions, knowledge, or competence. These leaders can hold *referent power*, in that others identify with them positively due to their personality or other characteristics, or they can hold *expert power*, where they are seen as competent and have experience or knowledge others can call upon. Emergent leaders are not considered as those who seek power or authority, but the leadership role is given to them informally by others (Northouse, 2007). Emergent leadership develops from followers who assign qualities and traits to someone who, oftentimes, is similar to them in background and displays qualities, such as trustworthiness, passion, and exercises influence (Northouse, 2007).

In other words, "leadership is essentially in the eye of the follower" (Jackson & Parry, 2008, p. 46). The *Battlestar Galactica* narrative includes several characters that emerge as leaders during the times of crisis. I will highlight four characters, Galen Tyrol, Karl "Helo" Agathon, Caprica Six, and Ellen Tigh, to explore the ways in which emergent leaders meet the challenges of extreme crisis and seek to transform structural and social justice paradigms within their social systems.

Chief Galen Tyrol. Tyrol is the highest-ranking non-commissioned officer in the fleet and, as such, straddles the invisible line between officers and enlisted personnel. He advocates for the needs of his deck crew with senior leadership, as well as explains and justifies orders from above to his crew. While Tyrol holds some degree of legitimate authority as the Chief Engineer, his referent power is more compelling and persuasive. His crew loves him, as evidenced by their willingness to lie about his whereabouts to keep him out of potential trouble with the Master Sergeant (*Litmus*, 2005) and sympathizing with a general work stoppage (*Dirty Hands*, 2007). Tyrol also enjoys expert power from his knowledge of the deck and his competence in performing his duties. Though too young to have served in the First Cylon War, Tyrol is still a few years more experienced than most of his crew and they look to him for direction and understanding during crises.

For persons who are not privileged to possess the legitimate authority of positional power, credibility is a key factor in their capacity to emerge as leaders. One of the means for gaining credibility is through one's actions. As Kouzes and Posner (1995) state, "actions, then, are the evidence of a leader's commitment" (p. 211) and commitment is deemed a foundational characteristic for credibility. In the narrative, Tyrol emerges as a person who leads through his actions. In *Flight of the Phoenix* (2005), the crew is frustrated by the lack of materials and parts

to adequately repair and maintain the Vipers. As a means to motivate others and relieve his own grief at losing his lover, Boomer, Tyrol suggests they build a Viper, but no one is interested in the extra work during their off hours, nor do they truly believe it can be done. Tyrol begins the project anyway and as he progresses, others see his vision becoming a reality and soon there are numerous crewmembers from the Galactica helping him to finish. Starbuck has agreed to take the plane for a test flight, because "While everybody is whining, the Chief is doing something positive" (*Flight of the Phoenix,* 2005). They name the ship, Laura, after the President, and even hold a commissioning ceremony, where Roslin states, the plane is "more than a ship. An act of faith" (*Flight of the Phoenix,* 2005).

This section of the narrative plays out against the backdrop of low morale and increased distance between the pilots and 'knuckle draggers' of the deck crew. We see this in the simple visuals of the pilots drinking liquor and ambrosia, while the deck crew has homemade alcohol from their illicit still. Helo and Tyrol get into a fistfight over the Sharons. Gaeta loses his temper. Adama realizes the crew needs a rest as the constant pressures and anxieties of continuous war are affecting everyone. Importantly, Adama quietly admires what Tyrol is attempting and stays away. In effect, Adama's leadership qualities allow Tyrol the space to emerge as a leader and help restore morale, confidence, and community aboard the Galactica.

The goodwill and credibility Tyrol gains from building the Viper crosses over to civilian life when the fleet settles on New Caprica. As the character who stands between the officers and the enlisted personnel, it seems fitting that Tyrol's role on New Caprica would be the union steward who stands between management and labor. This storyline is not primary within the narrative, but Tyrol is seen at a rally of the labor force that are unhappy with working conditions, wages, and other concerns motivating them to hold onto their ideals and dignity in defiance of

the government (*Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2,* 2006). Tyrol is also a high-ranking member

of the Resistance to Cylon Occupation and works with Tigh, Anders, and others to oppose the

Cylons through insurgency attacks and bombings (*Occupation*, 2006; *Precipice*, 2006; *Exodus,*

2006). Tyrol maintains his referent power by his rhetoric as a labor organizer, but also his

actions as a resistance fighter. However, the episode *Dirty Hands* (2007) brings the

understanding of Tyrol as an emergent leader who navigates change and advocates for social

justice to the forefront. The following detailed interpretation of the episode, one of my favorites,

highlights these themes.

The dilemma for Tyrol in this episode is how to balance the tensions between his duty to

the military and his sentiments for those who do not enjoy power or privilege. After the humans

abandoned New Caprica and resumed their search for Earth, Tyrol was reinstated as the Chief

Engineer and the socio-economic structure of the fleet returned to the status prior to settling on

New Caprica. Primarily, this is a structure based on the subsistence of the people and efforts to

maintain the military and ability to flee from the Cylons. This return to prior conditions sets the

conflict for the episode.

Social strata within the fleet continue the Colonial society devastated in the Cylon attack.

Examples of the taken for granted social gulf include the deck crew being nicknamed 'knuckle

draggers' and political and military leaders enjoying private quarters, while the majority of the

humans are living in caged areas in the holds of the ships. Even so, for the humans, this familiar

structure allows a sense of continuity and emotional comfort in the face of extreme upheaval.

The concept of those with authority and responsibility enjoying greater benefits is simply a

given. In the short-term, this is a means of quick organization, efficiency, and practical steps for

survival. Yet several years on, the society they have worked so hard to preserve is fraying at the edges.

Several sequences introduce the sense of inequality early in the episode. Seelix, a deck hand, is distributing cleaned laundry to her co-workers. She is heckled good-naturedly for having to do this task, but is very upset. A conversation with Tyrol reveals she was denied the opportunity to pursue her aspirations and attend flight school because she is vital as a deck hand, even though she received high scores on her entrance test. Another scene involves Cally, Tyrol's wife, who pointedly speaks to the fact pilots and officers come from the rich planets, particularly Caprica, while those who come from the poorer planets are allowed only to be deck hands or even less prestigious occupations. When Tyrol states that Lt. Dualla came from a poor planet, Cally retorts that Dualla became an officer by marrying someone from Caprica. Tyrol wonders how Cally came to these ideas and she explains that she has been reading an underground tract on class struggle written by the disgraced and imprisoned Gaius Baltar.

These conversations prepare the main storyline that explores socio-economic inequity in this episode and Tyrol's difficult position in balancing the tensions of his increasingly divided loyalties. There is a malfunction on one of the Vipers and it careens into Colonial One, the ship that carries the President and her staff. An investigation reveals that the fuel, a sandy ore called tyllium, was contaminated. President Roslin complains to Admiral Adama about the captain in charge of the tyllium ship who has repeatedly sent her messages asking for resources and privileges she is not inclined to give him. Roslin and Adama both view the fuel supply as a critical military asset that cannot be compromised, as they only have enough fuel for one FTL jump should the Cylons appear and without fuel they would simply drift in the vastness of space. When the captain, Fenner, is brought in to discuss the recurring tyllium problems with Roslin

and Adama, he quotes from Baltar's treatise, stating, "If you hear the people, you never have to fear the people" (*Dirty Hands*, 2007). This quote infuriates Roslin and she orders him arrested for treason.

In Fenner's absence, Adama orders Tyrol to the tyllium ship to get the refinery back on line. As Tyrol enters the tyllium ship's production area, we see through his eyes the exhausted, filthy, distrustful faces of the refinery workers, which are evocative of Appalachian coal miners. Tyrol does his duty and speaks to the foreman about getting the ship working, but is constrained by the uncooperativeness of the workers and their reminders of how he led the union on New Caprica during the Cylon Occupation and their questions of why he does not see this situation as a similar exploitation. Tyrol is visibly torn by dual allegiances, but insists the workers retrieve the missing parts and get the ship operational.

After reporting what the situation is, the foreman is also put in the brig for sabotage and Tyrol is expected to speak with both the captain and the foreman to get information from them on where the missing parts are located. The foreman is profoundly psychologically affected by his incarceration, having also been detained by the Cylons, and Fenner tells Tyrol where the parts are in order to get his shipmate out of prison.

As the ship goes back on line, a mechanical malfunction severely injures a new (and unqualified) crewmember. The rest of the workers are shaken, knowing it could easily have been them, and gaze at Tyrol to see what his reaction will be. This is the moment of transcendence for Tyrol, when he puts aside his oath as a non-commissioned officer of the fleet and emerges as a credible ethical leader. He orders the line to be stopped and declares the refinery workers are on strike.

As Tyrol has disobeyed orders during a time of war, Adama has him placed in the brig. However, Adama goes a step further and has Cally, now Tyrol's wife, detained by the marines. He threatens to have her shot if Tyrol does not call off the strike. Adama considers these actions mutinous and reminds Tyrol he needs people who will unquestioningly carry out orders. Tyrol is stunned by Adama's decision, pleads to speak with the President to no avail, and ultimately calls off the strike in order to save his wife's life. Adama has Tyrol released and mentions he should probably leave quickly since Tyrol needs to talk to the President.

Tyrol and the President meet and he tries to get her to understand how the refinery workers have not had any days off since the war began nearly four years ago. Roslin counters with the understanding everyone is tired, but the workers are critical to the war effort and until they train their children as replacements there is little she can do. This prompts Tyrol to challenge Roslin's notions about social mobility. He questions whether they intend to build a society that proscribes a person's occupation only based on what a child's parents did. He thinks everyone, regardless of the planet they came from or the work they do now, should take a turn with the less wholesome, but no less critical, occupational functions of the fleet. Roslin agrees to consider his proposal. Tyrol also explains to Roslin that he is speaking merely as himself and not as a representative of the workers as she believes.

The final scene of the episode returns to the storyline of Seelix and her desire to be a Viper pilot. Starbuck, currently CAG, strides into the hanger deck complaining that one of her nuggets is late. Starbuck and Tyrol surprise Seelix with her promotion to flight school and her wings that denote her advancement to officer. The other deck hands who had chided her about laundry duty earlier in the episode now applaud, salute, and wish her well.

As a framework for social justice, this episode explores hope in ways that are personal, as well as structural. Indeed, hope is not constrained to the desire of eluding the Cylons and finding Earth, but also involves aspirations and recreating human society on moral foundations that are inclusive and less socio-economically stratified. In essence, the humans have an opportunity to begin over, to reflect on the issues that led to the devastation of their civilization and form an equitable alternative. These issues include conformism, moral development, and the fundamental nature of power. A requirement for turning hopes into realities is the emergence of ethical leaders who allow and enable dissenters the opportunity to voice dissatisfaction and faithfully bargain for redress.

In the world of *Battlestar Galactica*, human society is in perpetual war fighting for the survival of the species. In such an environment, conforming to the status quo—whether carried forward from Colonial society or a result of extreme crisis—is essentially a patriotic duty. Without conformity to the demands of the political and military leadership, the fragile structure of the fleet society would disintegrate. There are very high stakes in this environment, but not everyone can be a warrior. Some must be involved in the rather dull and arduous occupations of maintaining the system. As Hogan (2001) explains for our contemporary society, "the need for food, housing, and clothing requires us daily to reproduce the relations of production, for they not only stifle but sustain us" (p. 34). In *Dirty Hands* (2007), uncontaminated consistently produced fuel for the fleet sustains the ability to not only survive by fleeing the Cylons, but also to continue the paramount search for Earth. The conflict presented in the episode demonstrates what can happen when the dominant ideology of communal safety through communal sacrifice is shown to be little more than oppression by the powerful.

This oppression is carried out through social constructions of identity. Roslin becomes president not because she is intrinsically qualified, but because she was the next in line of succession under Colonial law. A single mother becomes a prostitute because she lacks education and training and there are no other occupational avenues open to her (*Black Market*, 2006). Those who were privileged by ethnicity, education, economic, political, or military status prior to the Cylon attack maintain those privileges. Those who did not enjoy those social privileges continue to be marginalized even when, like Seelix, they demonstrate abilities that qualify them for other roles within society. There is a sense that it is simply easier to broadly generalize the populace and assign functions—or no functions—based on those generalizations than it would be to discern their skills and aspirations. The episode portrays class-consciousness rising as class mobility is impeded. There is nowhere to go and no one as a replacement. Old animosities surface on the part of the marginalized due to socio-economic jealousies and constraints.

However, as Sinclair (2007) points out, "systemically and politically mediated processes of identity formation are rarely total. People—including leaders—find ways to resist the processes by which their personhood… is defined for them" (p. 142). This resistance can include sabotage, as demonstrated in *Dirty Hands*. With resistance comes power that "can be exercised in tacit ways such as in resistance or non-cooperation" (Sinclair, 2007, p. 79). Importantly, Sinclair (2007) also reflects on the "degree to which power is predetermined by structural relations or available to individuals to assert their agency with personal action" (p. 83). In many ways, this is the underlying question being posed by *Dirty Hands*.

What is required per this narrative is a leader who can advocate for those who have acquired a certain level of agency through their resistance, but lack structural power. Because

they have not been able to gain the attention of the legitimately powerful, President Roslin and Commander Adama, in order to express their dissatisfaction and needs, they look outside their immediate group to a familiar figure. Chief Tyrol emerges as the leader of the group. For the refinery workers, a crucial element is for Tyrol to believe in their cause and do what is necessary to get humane working conditions. As a member of society considered one-step up the social hierarchy as a non-commissioned officer, they believe he can affect change for them.

The issue for Tyrol is to reconcile the competing loyalties of military duty and an altruistic duty to his fellow humans. *Dirty Hands* concisely displays the moral development stages Tyrol navigates as an emergent leader. Robbins (2005) describes moral development, as theorized by Kohlberg in 1976, through three stages: preconventional, conventional, and principled. In the preconventional stage, people make choices based on avoidance of physical punishment or when following rules are in their immediate interest. In conventional moral development, people make decisions by trying to live up to the expectations of others or to fulfill obligations that have been agreed upon in order to maintain order. At the principled stage, decisions are made according to values that assert the rights of others and leading to the highest order of moral development, which is following ethical principles based on one's self-understanding, even if those principles violate the law (Robbins, 2005).

Tyrol begins the episode within the conventional stage where he agrees to follow orders and get the tyllium ship operational. He does this because not only is it what Adama expects him to do, but because he has taken the obligation of military duty seriously and knows by following his oath he will be able to bring order, if not stability, to the environment. When the refinery workers present him with a competing set of expectations based on his previous role as a union leader on New Caprica, Tyrol is faced with an ethical dilemma. He attempts to reconcile this

conflict by reverting to the preconventional stage and maintaining his duty because it is in his best interests at that moment. Yet, with an industrial accident, all too common on this ship, Tyrol experiences an epiphany of compassion and respect for his fellow workers running deeper than his military obligations. At this point, Tyrol moves to the principled stage of moral development and calls for a strike. While the strike may not technically be a violation of the law, as there appears to be no law prohibiting strikes, this appears merely an oversight on the part of Roslin and Adama who view the strike as an act of treason during a time of war. Tyrol only backs down when Adama threatens to execute his wife. He does not renounce his principles, but cannot justify the death of someone he loves due to his own choices. Interestingly, he cannot bring himself to tell Cally she is being released because he backed down instead of the government.

This episode would be disheartening, at best, if this is where the narrative ended. A marginalized and exploited populace governed by bureaucratic and armed leaders with no sense of perspective for the lives and conditions of their citizens. Fortunately, the episode continues and viewers are presented with a conversation between Tyrol and Roslin on how inequities could change within the social and economic systems. Importantly, we also understand through Adama's reminder to Tyrol to see the President and Roslin's willingness not to wholly dismiss his concerns that these are not heartless irredeemable tyrants, though we could be forgiven for thinking so earlier when they were arresting and threatening people. Tyrol's effort on behalf of the refinery workers brings an added benefit of unveiling the trappings of power to those in power. As Sinclair (2007) states, "People in positions of leadership are better equipped to maintain their integrity if they are aware of their position in, and maintenance of, the webs of power around their role" (p. 81). The strike and the conversation with Tyrol helps Roslin

identify her shortcomings and myopia. Indeed, she is reminded of the principled reasons she

became a politician, but lost sight of that principled leadership in the day-to-day stresses of

keeping the human species from extinction. Likewise, Adama can be indirectly acknowledged

as having come to an understanding of his own inequitable maintenance of power by rescinding

his previous order and promoting Seelix to flight school candidate.

The social system depicted in *Battlestar Galactica* remains under relentless pressures in

the narrative and there is no continuation of the storyline for the refinery workers or ultimate

clarification of class mobility within their society. An interesting element of this interpretation

of *Dirty Hands* is that for all the utopian sentiment of its themes, the status quo is not changed on

a structural level, but only witnessed on the individual level of one character, Seelix. Even Tyrol

relinquishes his leadership responsibilities to the tyllium crew and workers, returning to his

military duties after spending whatever influence he had gained with Roslin in their one

conversation. There is nothing to suggest the actions of the characters were an aberration in this

episode meant only to portray a pet political ideal of the creator. Consciously or unconsciously,

what we witness—by absence of narrative to the contrary—is a reinforcement of the status quo.

As Hogan (2001) explains, this reinforcement may result in limited local privileges, as in

Seelix's promotion, or anchoring beliefs in larger consensual ideologies, as in fighting Cylons

and finding Earth. Consequently, *Dirty Hands* simultaneously advocates and rejects the concepts

of socio-economic equality and the burgeoning sense of a new configuration of class within the

social system. Applying these mixed messages, as viewers, to our own experiences becomes

highly problematic. More feasible, is a reflection on the moral and ethical principles of Tyrol,

Roslin, and Adama and how their ultimate actions can model our own behaviors when

confronted with issues of social justice. Nevertheless, the lack of evidence for social mobility remains an intriguing element for the resolution of the narrative to be discussed in Chapter VI.

For Tyrol, we may see his emergent leadership as rather pragmatic. As Jackson and Parry (2008) explain, "pragmatic leaders exercise influence by identifying and communicating solutions to significant social problems, meeting the practical needs of followers, working through elites in solution generation, creating structures to support solution implementation, and demonstrating the feasibility of these solutions" (p. 103). This understanding precludes the need to abandon the status quo in its entirety and to act to change those areas that are feasible within the resources and will of the stakeholders within the system.

Karl "Helo" Agathon. Similar to Chief Tyrol, Karl "Helo" Agathon is an emergent leader who must balance tensions between his duty as a military officer and his sense of morality and ethical behavior. Helo does rise within the ranks of the military from a "second seat" on a Raptor with Boomer to eventual promotion to Executive Officer after the Galactica's flight from New Caprica and then to squadron leader and sometimes CAG when the fleet is reunited. Yet, Helo does not enjoy positional power as much as he holds referent power, which stems primarily from his function as the unwavering moral compass of the narrative. Interestingly, this power is not necessarily derived from the other characters, but from the viewer. Lee is singled out in the narrative as the person who always does the right thing, but viewers become more aware Helo is the one who truly acts on his moral principles even when they are not popular. Helo repeatedly antagonizes the legitimate authorities in the series and calls into question their decisions and lack of attention to moral and ethical issues within the fleet. While it puts him at odds with Adama, Roslin, Tigh, Doc Cottle, and others, it reinforces the viewer's sense of Helo as a leader who

emerges during crisis and shifts the way in which issues of social justice can be discussed within and without the narrative.

For Helo, the primary framework for decision-making appears to be whether something is the *right* thing to do. Once his principled choice is made, he follows it with actions that, frequently, subvert and challenge the decisions made by senior leaders, but demonstrate ethical and moral decision making to the audience. The first instance of his ethical decision-making is when he decides to give up his seat on the Raptor leaving ravaged Caprica to Gaius Baltar because he believes that if the humans are going to survive they are going to need scientific geniuses like Baltar (*Miniseries*, 2003).

More importantly, Helo is a defender of the marginalized and outcast. While there is no evidence to suggest Helo held his convictions prior to the Cylon attack, it becomes evident that his championing the humanity of the Cylons is bolstered by his love for Sharon Athena. Indeed, variously Adama, Roslin, and Tigh accuse him of near treasonous behavior because of his defense of the Cylons and feel he is blinded by his romantic relationship to a single Cylon.

Helo specifically acts in accordance with his sense of morality in *A Measure of Salvation* (2006). The fleet comes upon a disabled Cylon base ship and discover everyone on board is dead or dying from a virus released by a human-made space beacon. The ship is one of the rebel base ships from the Cylon Civil War and is now outside of range to a Resurrection ship. Consequently, those Cylons who have succumbed to the virus are actually dead and have no ability to download into another body. The human boarding party rescues the surviving Cylons and takes them back to Galactica for testing and interrogation. The Cylon base ship explodes just as they leave and many people blame Sharon Athena for blowing the ship and destroying potentially useful technology and information.

The humans are declared healthy, as the virus does not seem to affect them in the same way it does Cylons. In fact, humans have had immunity to the disease for centuries and could possibly offer a vaccine to the Cylons in exchange for information. However, Helo is privy to a conversation between Roslin, Adama, Tigh, and Cottle about the possibility of taking the captive Cylons within range of a Resurrection ship where they would be executed, download into new bodies, and potentially spread the virus throughout the entire Cylon fleet. Helo is horrified and accuses the senior leaders of engaging in genocide through an essentially biological weapon. The immorality of biological warfare notwithstanding, he puts an even finer point to his argument by stating, "you're talking about losing a piece of our souls" (*A Measure of Salvation*, 2006). Adama and Roslin dismiss Helo's argument and assert their authoritative power to make this decision. Roslin authorizes the use of the virus and biological warfare, but her orders are not carried out due to Helo's actions. To prevent the Cylons from downloading into new bodies and spreading the virus, Helo reverses the oxygen supply to the Cylon holding cell and they all die of asphyxiation before they are in range of the Resurrection ship. Roslin is very displeased, but Adama insists, "Helo was right about the soul" and refuses to hold an investigation of the incident. Helo sums up his emerging leadership as the ethical center of the story by stating, "I'm not a traitor. I love my people. I love this ship… I did what I thought was right" (*A Measure of Salvation*, 2006).

However, Cylons are not the only marginalized and demonized group whom Helo finds himself defending. Not long after, in the episode *The Woman King* (2007), Helo is assigned to be the administrator for the lower hold of the Galactica, known as Dogsville, where hundreds of civilians are being housed after the exodus from New Caprica. There is overcrowding, meager food and hygiene, and illness spreading through the civilian population. Among those being

housed are a group of Sagittarons who are religious fundamentalists and do not ascribe to modern medical therapies. Various characters provide exposition about the Sagittarons and their "backward" ways, along with complaining they did little to help fight against the Cylon Occupation. As the refugees from New Caprica are herded into the hold, they are quickly examined by Dr. Robert, a civilian, who tries to get several Sagittarons isolated and vaccinated against a spreading disease called Mellorak. The Sagittarons loudly and roughly refuse the medical help, particularly Mrs. King for treatment of her son who shows symptoms of the disease.

Helo is having difficulty keeping up with the demands and challenges of organizing and adequately supplying Dogsville, as well as maintaining order. He tries to get Mrs. King to have her son treated, but she continues to refuse and Helo gives up the effort. Later, Mrs. King comes to tell Helo her son is dead, but she did relent and have him treated by Dr. Robert. She tells Helo Dr. Robert killed her son and she wants Helo to hold the doctor accountable. Even in his exhaustion, he tries to do the right thing and follow up with Dr. Robert who denies anything is wrong except that the son and his mother came to see him too late. Nonetheless, Helo senses inconsistencies in Dr. Robert's story and discovers, through medical records kept by Doc Cottle, the majority of Robert's patients who are Sagittaron inexplicably die from ailments that should not kill them—both within the fleet and on New Caprica.

Helo's sense of moral outrage is ignited and he tries to convince Cottle to investigate. Cottle and Adama dismiss Helo's suspicions, but later Cottle secretly relents and does an autopsy on Mrs. King's son and another Sagittaron who died. The results prove that Dr. Robert did not give them the vaccine as he had claimed, but gave them something else that killed them quicker than the disease. Tigh has Robert arrested and Helo is vindicated.

Nonetheless, Helo continues to experience the tensions between duty/conformity and morality. Even Sharon Athena has no patience for Helo's efforts towards the Sagittarons. Helo accuses her of selfishness and lack of compassion by angrily saying, "as long as everybody hates the Sagittarons they'll forget you're a Cylon for five minutes" (*The Woman King*, 2007). Nevertheless, Helo is aware his ethical stances and actions are placing him in untenable positions against the leadership. He tells Sharon Athena, "I keep ending up on the wrong side of everything. Maybe Tigh's right. Maybe I want it that way. Punishment for the guy who always crosses the line" (*The Woman King*, 2007).

Although Helo typically finds himself at odds with his superiors, the narrative does provide a storyline that blends his military duty with ethical action during the mutiny on the Demetrius. In *The Road Less Traveled* (2008), Adama gives Starbuck a ship, the garbage scow Demetrius, and a crew to go out and find her path to Earth that she insists is within her knowing. The fleet believes they are on a mission to find food. As mentioned earlier (see Starbuck in Military Leaders section), Starbuck is a deplorable leader and the crew becomes frustrated by her actions and attitude. Helo, as second in command, tries to keep the crew in check, but even he has limited patience and confidence, particularly after the death of Sergeant Mathias and Starbuck's uninspiring eulogy. When Starbuck refuses to return to the fleet until they find the sign for the path to Earth, Helo refuses her order to jump to new coordinates. The combination of her poor leadership, erratic behaviors, and characteristic disregard for rules pushes Helo to relieve her of command and place her under Marine guard.

Chaos ensues as the crew must now choose their side. Anders shoots Gaeta in the leg to keep him from jumping the ship back to the fleet against Starbuck's wishes. Helo wrangles the situation to an uneasy truce. There are a few hours remaining before the Demetrious is expected

to rendezvous with the fleet and Starbuck convinces the others to allow her to take a Raptor and a few volunteers to the site of a Cylon civil war battle on the advice of a Leoben who was sent to them to offer a truce. Helo realizes verification of Leoben's information about discord within the Cylon fleet is vital and agrees, but keeps command of the Demetrious and insists he will jump if she and her crew are not back by the deadline (*Faith*, 2008).

What we find in the character of Helo is a man consistently torn between his ethical and moral principles and the military culture of duty, conformity, and following orders. Interpretively, Helo is the character who is depicted as successfully mediating the tension between the rational and the spiritual by following his moral compass. While Helo may have doubts and is stymied or dismissed by his superiors at first, his compassion and moral actions ultimately allow him to prevail. Helo exercises an authentic leadership style "of lower profile but genuine leaders who lead by example in fostering healthy ethical climates characterized by transparency, trust, integrity, and high moral standards" (Gardner et al., 2005, p. 344). As will be discussed in the next chapter, Helo is capable of enacting this authentic leadership style through his commitment to the leadership principles of love, forgiveness, redemption and embracing the Other. This commitment allows him to be perceived as credible and holding referent power, which enhances his emergence as a leader.

Caprica Six. Referent power also enables Caprica Six to emerge as a leader among the Cylons. As the proclaimed hero of the attack on the Colonies by infiltrating the Colonial defense system through her relationship with Baltar, Caprica Six becomes an individual within the standardization of Cylon society. This individuation is propelled by other Cylons who assign her emergent leadership characteristics and publicly admire her competent actions (*Downloaded*, 2006). Yet Caprica Six is not eager to embrace her new leadership position. Explaining to a

D'Anna as they discuss her and the resurrected Boomer, "We're dangerous. We're celebrities in a culture based on unity. Our voices count… two heroes…two heroes with different perspectives on the war. Perspectives based on our love of two human beings" (*Downloaded*, 2006). Rooted in her love for Baltar and her love for God, Caprica Six is able to leverage her referent power and convince Boomer, then other Cylons, the war was a mistake and they should reconcile with the humans. The tragic results are the ineffective and brutal occupation of New Caprica, Cylon Civil War, and her disenchantment with Baltar.

Caprica Six seems to ignore the idea others may follow, but not completely agree with her philosophies and have their own agendas. While she uses the influence of her referent power to gain a change within Cylon society, she neglects to solidify and broaden that power in substantial ways to safeguard the change she envisions. In other words, she misidentified the level of shared understanding within the society. As Kouzes and Posner (1995) explain, "leaders who advocate values that aren't representative of the collective will won't be able to mobilize people to act" (pp. 212-213). Indeed, Sinclair (2007) admonishes leaders "to resist the fantasy that they can single-handedly move a group to a new way of doing things" (p. 40). In Caprica Six, we see the limits of emergent leadership and referent power when structural power is not also cultivated.

Even so, the model six line appears to have a propensity for emergent leadership. After Gina's rescue from the Pegasus, she works within the leadership of the Colonial fleet's peace movement to end the war. Natalie stands against Cavil in support of the autonomy of the Raiders and Centurions and gathers other lines to her cause resulting in the Cylon Civil War, and speaks for the rebel Cylons during the truce agreement with the humans. Sophia is a model six who approaches Adama and Roslin seeking representation for the Cylons on the Quorum. Ostensibly,

these Cylons have not been resurrected in a timeline that would allow them to share downloaded memories, so interpreting their emergent leadership acts as stemming from the memories of the original Caprica Six is not logical. Further, the interpretation of their leadership as being an inherent trait is also dissatisfactory as I bristle against notions of leadership qualities as a genetic marker—even for a manufactured Cylon. Nevertheless, I am inclined to discuss the tendency of the model sixes to emerge as leaders through the role modeling of Caprica Six, intrinsic loyalty to the unity of their model line, and their basic orientation toward the leadership principle of love, which will be discussed further in the next chapter.

Ellen Tigh. Brief mention needs to be made on Ellen Tigh as an emergent leader due to her expert power as the "mother" of the humanoid Cylons. In the final season of the series, we discover Ellen is a Cylon when she is resurrected after being poisoned by her husband Saul Tigh for being a collaborator with the Cylons on New Caprica (*No Exit*, 2009). Her behaviors and actions toward Cavil on the Cylon base ship seem to be one of an indulgent parent waiting for their child to stop throwing temper tantrums and accept the situation. Jackson and Parry (2008) make a distinct corollary between leadership and parenting by stating, "We develop our children from a state of complete dependency, through ever increasing levels of independence and autonomy, until ultimately they are fully independent self-reliant adults… As leaders we develop followers from dependence to autonomy – let's call that empowerment" (p. 105). Ellen explains to Cavil and Boomer the intention for her and the other four creators of the human Cylons was to give them the capacity for independent thinking, free will, and to empower them to be autonomous adults. As discussed earlier, Cavil would rather be a better machine and never quite got past the adolescent stage of hating his mother.

More problematic are Ellen's efforts to assert her authority with the other Cylons in the Colonial fleet. After the initial shock of realizing Ellen is alive, a Cylon, and responsible for their existence through resurrection technology, Tyrol, Tory, Sharon Athena, Caprica Six and Tigh are open to according Ellen a certain level of expert power, hence her potential emergence as a leader. However, Ellen continues to behave inappropriately. Continuing the parenting analogy, as Ellen advocates for all the Final Five Cylons to return to the Cylon fleet and start anew, she also begins haranguing Tigh over personal relationship issues when he refuses to consider leaving. The others stand there uncomfortably and the effect is children watching their parents fight and wishing they could simply escape (*No Exit*, 2009). Because of her actions and behaviors, Ellen is not fully accorded the expert power followers can bestow on people in order to complete her emergence as a leader. They simply do not respect her enough to follow her wishes unquestioningly. She seeks the role and in many ways expects to be obeyed as any parent might, but not everyone will follow her—especially her husband. Ellen remains a jealous, intemperate woman who is overly ambitious for her husband. Her lack of relational skills denies her the opportunity of becoming the leader she expects to be based on her expert knowledge and love for her "children."

Chapter V: Interpretation of the Findings for Leadership Principles

The previous chapter interpretively described the leadership qualities and actions of the major military, political, religious, Cylon, and emergent leaders within the *Battlestar Galactica* narrative. Within this chapter, I discuss the larger themes of love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the other to explore the narrative more fully and provide a foundation for implications to leadership theory and practice. To begin, I review the multiple characters marginalized, outcast, demonized, and otherwise constituted as Other within the narrative.

The depictions of Otherness included in the narrative direct us to what is missing and allows for greater understanding of the narrative as well as the ways in which the characters navigate their relationships. Interestingly, *Battlestar Galactica* dispenses with many of the tropes typically employed to explore marginalization in fiction. There are no discussions of gender or race, beyond the distinction of the Cylons. Indeed, the rancor by fans of the original series over the casting of Starbuck as a woman is indicative of the ways in which we have yet to reconcile performances of gender. Regrettably, depictions of sexual identity fare worse, as evidenced by the character of Admiral Cain and the webisodes exploring the relationship between Gaeta and Hoshi. The paucity of exploring or commenting on gender or race issues is not only refreshing, due to the lack of inevitable preachy or treacle dialogue in the narrative resolution, but leads the viewer to reflect on the absence of language so common in our society and brings the issue into our consciousness. As in Suvin's 'feedback oscillation', our thoughts are engaged in our present, not only the space and time of the narrative, and, thus, become powerful encounters creating new insights and meaning for our current lived experience with the potential for change in the future.

The Others

  Cylons. Cowan (2010) explains, "Cylons are not human, but they challenge the boundaries of what it means to be human" (p. 228). By challenging the boundaries, otherness is created both externally by the humans and internally by the Cylons themselves as they search for their own ontological understanding. There are at least five varieties of Cylons in *Battlestar Galactica*: Centurions, Raiders, Heavy Raiders, hybrids, and Twelve Models who look human (though one model, Daniel, is never seen due to his line being sabotaged), along with Ellen Tigh. Centurions, Raiders, and Human Cylons are sentient, so it seems reasonable to assume the Heavy Raiders are as well. Humans refer to Cylons as 'toasters', 'chrome jobs', 'bullet heads', and 'skin jobs', which are all derogatory terms which demonize the Centurions and dehumanize the human model Cylons. In addition, Cylons have created a caste system of sorts within their own society. The human models assert their self-proclaimed natural dominance over the Centurions and Raiders, even to the point of performing lobotomies on the Raiders to keep them acquiescent to the needs of the human models. The Centurions are also equipped with chips that inhibit their self-awareness, which keeps them in servitude to the human models in much the same way they were slaves to the Colonials. Baltar knowingly hints to a Centurion about the inequities of the Cylon society as a means of self-preservation as well as fomenting unrest among the Centurions (*The Hub*, 2009).

  An interesting element of the narrative is the human Cylon internal conflict as to whether they should embrace their human characteristics or continue their evolution to be "better machines," as Cavil would prefer. In essence, they are searching for their own sense of self by either discounting their otherness to humans or creating greater distance between themselves and the Colonials. Even though the human Cylons understand they must mate with human males in

order to procreate, as opposed to regenerate, the issue is strategic and tactical instead of inclusionary. The intention is to use humans for their own means, but not to recognize human autonomy and selfhood – *even though this is their own objective.* Essentially, the Cylons remake humans in their own image as witnessed by the human females hooked into machinery for an experimental breeding program (*The Farm*, 2005) and humans who are manipulated into becoming hybrids to control the base stars (*Razor,* 2007). These newly constituted Cylons are not only estranged from their human counterparts, they are also marginalized by the Cylons themselves.

The Final Five. The Final Five Cylons, Ellen and Saul Tigh, Galen Tyrol, Tory Foster, and Sam Anders, share the existential journey of other human Cylons but from a different perspective. Believing they are human, the discovery of their Cylon nature calls into question their entire sense of being. Unsurprisingly, the four decide to keep their identities a secret to prevent humans from retaliating against them. They also come to different understandings as to what it means to be a Cylon. For Tory, she sees being a Cylon as an opportunity to become *more*. She remarks to Tyrol that they are now stronger and have other abilities beyond what they could do when they thought of themselves as only human (*The Ties That Bind*, 2008). She is excited about her newfound role as a revered member of Cylon society, particularly after Roslin berates her for leaking secrets that damage their relationship, which Tory deeply regrets. However, Tyrol is too uncomfortable with his Cylon identity to agree or even marvel at the meaning of their being (*The Ties That Bind*, 2008). Both Tyrol and Sam seem rather stunned and disoriented by the discovery and actually fear they may inadvertently betray themselves as Cylons by turning weapons against the fleet (*Crossroads, Part 2*, 2007). Tyrol's difficulty with his identity, coupled with the loss of Cally, manifests in shaving his head, frantic exercise,

lashing out at Adama, and attacking Baltar (*The Road Less Traveled*, 2008). Yet Saul Tigh is the character who immediately decides who/what he is and creates an ethical and authentic self-narrative. In *Crossroads, Part 2* (2007), when the four are brought together by music only they can hear, thus ostensibly activated as Cylons, and the ship comes under attack, Tigh determines his identity by stating:

> Tigh: My name is Saul Tigh. I am an officer in the Colonial fleet. Whatever else I am… Whatever else it means, that's the man I want to be. And if I die today, that's the man I'll be. (*Crossroads, Part 2,* 2007)

Initially, this speech may be interpreted as a rejection of his Cylon identity. However, closer inquiry allows for the understanding of this speech as validation of one's own authority to self-identify and not simply a rejection of Cylon identity.

Sagittarons. As seen in the episode *The Woman King* (2007), Sagittarons are marginalized in the Colonial society for their religious practices, which are considered primitive and superstitious. They are described as dirty, ignorant, backward, and lacking the desire to survive by available medical practices, in this case through vaccinations and secular medical care. Dr. Robert takes his ethnic prejudice to the extreme by killing Sagittarons who come to him for care. Dualla, who comes from Sagittaron, is ashamed of her cultural heritage and disgusted by their practices. She characterizes her ethnic group as "arrogant, pigheaded, and argumentative" (*The Woman King,* 2007). Interpretively, she rejects this heritage in order to be successful as a Colonial officer. In *Dirty Hands* (2007), Cally questions Dualla's marriage to Lee Adama, a privileged Caprican, suggesting the marriage is a tactical move to overcome marginalization. Although the Sagittarons prominently feature in this episode alone, the resolution of the narrative suggests a future of greater acceptance by the leaders.

The working class. As discussed in the previous chapter, the marginalization of the working class is examined primarily within the episode *Dirty Hands* (2007). A careful look at

the narrative provides several other instances of exploration about the less privileged within the social system of the narrative. Throughout the narrative is the juxtaposition of the deck crew 'knuckle draggers' and the pilots and other crewmembers. As people who work with their hands, they appear to have the status of the working class. In *Black Market* (2006), we see the underside of the fleet economy with prostitution, drug dealing, child sexual slavery, luxury goods and contraband sales, all carried out by the less privileged and marginalized. We also see religious fundamentalists, the Sons of Aries, as they attack Baltar's cult (*Escape Velocity*, 2008). Even Baltar's monotheist cult is depicted as ordinary people, those without special skills or qualities that lead to the defense of the fleet. These are some of the citizens the privileged leading characters are defending and they do not fit the mold of the mythical common man or woman. They are as flawed, disingenuous, and complicated as the major characters. And yet, the privileged would not have their raison d'être without them. The narrative, however, obscures the working class and protects both the characters and the viewers from many of the difficult questions and challenging assumptions a brighter light would reveal.

Angels. Science fiction narratives are not known for using unequivocal religious archetypes in the telling of the story. Many beings are cloaked in a quasi-religious pretense that precludes association with any particular Earth religion, such as Klaatu in *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (Scott Derrickson, 2008). However, recent science fiction films have been direct in the portrayal of characters as angels, such as *Legion* (Scott Charles Stewart, 2009) and *The Adjustment Bureau* (George Nolfi, 2011). *Battlestar Galactica* preceded these films by portraying several major characters as angels: Angel Six, Starbuck, Not-Leoben, the Piano Player, and Angel Baltar. These characters are not to be confused with those who died and return as subconscious apparitions, such as Elosha and Adama's wife, Carolanne. Through this

narrative, angels constitute otherness in much the same way benign non-human aliens have functioned for decades. They are at once an estrangement from known living creatures, but completely familiar as icons from various religious traditions. Angels and benign aliens also function as champions of the human ability to be *better*; to reach a potential aligned with ethical and just reasoning. What is atypical per *Battlestar Galactica* is portraying angels as equally flawed and complicated as the human characters. These angels are not perfect beings with omnipotent and infallible understanding of situations and outcomes. They struggle as well to discover the meaning of their existence and the role they are to play.

Foremost, is Angel Six (also known as Head Six) who is only seen by Baltar immediately following the nuclear holocaust on Caprica and takes the form of his Cylon lover, Caprica Six. As Baltar comes to discover, "Angels take the guise of those who are nearest and dearest to you… Those who can understand your doubts and your trials and steer you back on the road to salvation" (*Islanded In A Stream Of Stars*, 2009). Steering Baltar to salvation seems to be the most important function of Angel Six and the tactics she employs begin with harsh treatment and angry caustic words, along with virtual sex, to manipulate his decision-making and actions (*Miniseries*, 2003). The audience is left to wonder, as Baltar does, whether the character is a subconscious manifestation of his guilt and fear even though Angel Six identifies herself as an angel of God (*Miniseries*, 2003; *Home, Part 2,* 2005). A further complication is the changing nature of Angel Six from the first few episodes to the end of season one in *Kobol's Last Gleaming* (2005). At first, Angel Six appears more demonic than angelic as she bullies Baltar into acting in the ways she—and God—desires, but then appears to change to a more typically angelic force as she appears in white, instead of her signature red, at the door of the crashed Raptor on Kobol and pulls Baltar to safety. From this point there appears to be less confusion

about Angel Six as a supernatural being and not the manifestation of a once living Cylon. However, Angel Six does not transcend her otherness. She remains beyond the strictures of other characters as an essential element in the partnership with Baltar for him to define his own sense of self.

Kara "Starbuck" Thrace is even more problematic as an angel, particularly as her human character is notably flawed. The Cylon hybrid declares her the harbinger of death (*Faith*, 2008), an entity closely aligned to an angel, and Leoben insists she has a special destiny that God has set for her (*Flesh and Bone*, 2005). More specifically, on the Demetrious in *The Road Less Traveled* (2008) Leoben tells Kara "I see an angel. An angel blazing with the light of God. An angel who will lead her people home." Which is significantly different from the hybrid's announcement she "will lead your people to their end" (*He That Believeth In Me*, 2008). His statement comes after Kara crashed her Viper into a planet while tracking a phantom Cylon Raider and two months later returns to the fleet announcing she has seen Earth and knows how to get there. Members of the fleet, including Adama and Lee, are wary of her. Roslin has her put in the brig. No one knows what to think of her reappearance in a Viper that has no damage and no navigational records (*He That Believeth In Me*, 2008). She is ostracized from her community. Only her husband, Sam Anders, grants her unconditional acceptance.

Kara's status as an outsider deepens when the fleet finds the post-nuclear holocaust Earth per information found in Kara's Viper. Kara and Leoben follow a beacon signal and find Kara's skeletal corpse in a crashed Viper. Even Leoben, who has been fixated on Kara throughout the entire narrative, backs away from her (*Sometimes A Great Notion*, 2009). Kara, who has been obsessed with visions of the path to Earth and angry that no one believed her, is deeply shaken and calls out to Leoben, "What am I? What am I?" (*Sometimes A Great Notion*, 2009). She

continues to question her identity in *Someone to Watch Over Me* (2009), wondering if she is a

ghost or a demon. She took the dog tags from her corpse on Earth and now asks Baltar to test the

blood on them, stating, "All I know is that I am not an angel" (*Islanded In A Stream Of Stars*,

2009). Baltar determines the dog tags are crusted with necrotic blood and uses this information

to advance his position as a religious leader by calling out Kara in public, furthering her

otherness:

> Baltar: Listen to me for death is not the end. And I'm not talking about Cylon resurrection. I'm talking about the gift of eternal life that is offered to each and every one of us. Yes, even the most flawed amongst us. All we need is the courage to face death when it comes calling for us, embrace it even. Only then will we truly have the ability to cross over. One of us is proof of life after death… I told you there were angels among us.

Adama shouts for everyone to leave, but the damage to Kara's reputation and the sense of her

monstrousness—no matter that Baltar defines her an angel—is solidified (*Islanded In A Stream*

Of Stars, 2009).

Even so, Kara will fulfill the destiny foretold by the hybrid and Leoben through a

relationship with another character that may be interpreted as an angel. In *Someone to Watch*

Over Me (2009), Kara befriends a Piano Player in the Galactica's bar. We discover Kara's father

was a pianist, who abandoned her and her mother, and Kara refused to play the piano after his

departure. The Piano Player helps her reconcile her issues with her father and reconnect with her

love of music. Hera has given her a picture of colored ovals in a line that Kara now realizes are

music notes. Kara and the Piano Player play the song, Bob Dylan's "All Along the Watchtower"

which is the same song that awakened the four Cylons in the fleet, until Tigh abruptly stops

them. In a quick cut to another angle, the Piano Player has disappeared as if he has never

existed.

As the Piano Player helps Kara with the relationship with her father, Not-Leoben helps her with the relationship with her mother. In *Maelstrom* (2007), Leoben appears to Kara as her Viper is about to crash into a planet as she follows a phantom Raider. He explains he is there "to prepare you to discover what hovers between life and death" (*Maelstrom*, 2007). In an odd mixture of flashbacks and Dickensian inspired eavesdropping, Kara and Not-Leoben revisit the last time Kara saw her mother and Socrata's death from cancer not long after. Kara realizes this incarnation of the Cylon is not the Leoben she has known and hated. Not-Leoben replies he never said he was which may be interpreted as another instance of *Battlestar Galactica* employing the use of angels to tell the story.

A final angel character in the story is Angel Baltar. His first appearance comes to Caprica Six in *Downloaded* (2006) and functions in much the same way Angel Six functions to Baltar with nasty commentary on her conversations and questioning her motives and sincerity. Initially, the understanding is also similar in that Caprica Six is feeling remorse and guilt for her role in the decimation of the Colonies and Angel Baltar is a subconscious illusion. However, in *Six of One* (2008) Angel Baltar appears to Baltar in Galactica's mess hall and convinces him to start an affair with Tory, ostensibly something the jealous Angel Six would not allow. In *Daybreak* (2009), before the final battle with the Cylons to retrieve Hera, both angels appear together to Caprica Six and Baltar and they all realize they can see each other. Finally, Angel Six and Angel Baltar appear in the series coda casually walking through an urban landscape commenting on the state of the human condition and what God might think.

The use of angels in *Battlestar Galactica* presents a disconnect that estranges us from not only our own world, but also the conventional world of science fiction narratives. In the absence of bug-eyed monsters as the alien Other, angels, along with the humanoid Cylons, fill the

purpose of providing a space where reflection may occur about what constitutes otherness and what constitutes being a human. As Kearney (2003) explained, otherness should be considered "less in opposition to selfhood than as a partner engaged in the constitution of its intrinsic meaning" (p. 80). These angels are necessary to reflectively understanding one's self as being external to the corporeal body and refute the conception of divine beings as beyond reproach. Humans and Cylons are allowed a divinity while angels are allowed a humanity, which bridges the gap between the characters and their God(s).

God(s). As discussed in the previous chapter regarding religious leaders, religion is a major theme in *Battlestar Galactica* and positions the Colonial polytheism in counterpoint to the Cylon and human cults of monotheism. The Colonial Gods and the Cylon One True God are included in this interpretation of Others because they are depicted as scapegoats for the troubles the humans and Cylons encounter. This scapegoating is particularly apparent in the aftermath of the fleet discovering Earth is a nuclear wasteland.

For Roslin, she turns away from the Gods and from the Pythian Prophecy by burning scriptures and declaring they are all lies (*Sometimes A Great Notion*, 2009). In the same episode, Lee drunkenly summarizes a Quorum speech he gave to Dee, "We are no longer enslaved to the ramblings of Pythia, no longer pecking at the bread crumbs of the Thirteenth Tribe...We are now free to go where we want to go, be who we want to be." Priests of the Lords of Kobol are absent in the aftermath of discovery, presumably just as distraught as the major characters. The polytheists believed in their scriptures about Earth and, when the reality was different, they pushed their Gods away and held them responsible for the calamity.

Baltar and the monotheists are even more outraged at their God for their misfortune. Baltar addresses his followers by saying, "What have you done to deserve this? What kind of a

father abandons his children? God should beg for our forgiveness," which is followed by cheers

from the crowd (*A Disquiet Follows My Soul*, 2009). The Rebel Cylons in the fleet are not as

vocal in their disappointment of God's promise of Earth, perhaps their shock is greater from the

realization of everything they gave up, including resurrection technology, to gain a home on

Earth. The resurrected D'Anna appears to embody this despair as she decides to stay on the

wasted planet and die instead of rejoining the fleet.

In the dark abyss of despair, Gods become divine monsters. Holding God(s) responsible

for the bad things that happen is a particularly human reaction. At worst, people turn away and

negate the existence of a benign or all-powerful God in whom they once fervently believed, and,

at the least, they may inadequately describe terrible events as God's Will and not to be

understood by mere mortals. There is also a middle ground where fear resides. As Cowan

(2010) describes, "what we fear most is not the absence of the gods, but their apathy" (p. 247).

The characters of *Battlestar Galactica* are just as involved in the concept of a 'saving god' as

believers in the actual world. But as Kearney (2003) asserts,

> waiting poetically for a 'saving god' is not enough. For if waiting for God is indeed a
> necessary condition for world-transformation it is not a sufficient one. Poetic waiting
> needs to be supplemented by an ethics of action – one which answers to beings who
> suffer and struggle in the ordinary universe. (p. 225)

The saving God(s) of *Battlestar Galactica* refuse to act in accordance with the understanding of

their followers to provide a safe home and a positive future. The result provides further conflict

in the narrative as some characters supplement the wait for Earth with ethical actions in service

to others, while several characters further project their fears and, in the absence of God(s), seek a

sacrificial purging of those they find monstrous and can no longer abide.

The narrative journeys forward to bring into focus love, forgiveness, redemption, and

embracing the Other as foundations for principled leadership. The groundwork for depicting the

capability of the characters to demonstrate these qualities may be interpreted from viewing the series as a whole. As a story of leaders confronted with bringing order to a social system in chaos and resolving continual crises, *Battlestar Galactica* depicts the gradual understanding of the leaders for the importance of these ethical principles and the experiences that shape their awareness. Importantly, love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other are permeable concepts. Their enactment does not fit neatly into a single category or singular event. They merge in a process moving forward and backward as relationships and understanding change through experiences.

Love

Within the theoretical framework that science fiction narratives function to mediate the tensions between the rational/technoscientific and spiritual/transcendent the concept of love becomes significant. Love may be considered irrational, but a greater sense of meaning and fulfillment in life can also be found through love. In the bleak environment of *Battlestar Galactica,* physical and emotional connections bring a small bit of comfort. Acts of love are depicted as romantic affection, but also as pathological womanizing, empty physical release, or enactment of fantasy. Love is represented by romantic love, parental love, filial love, self-love, civic love, and God's love. These forms of love are illustrated through the various relationships between humans and Cylons, which are complicated by partners being aware and unaware of their differences. However, the story turns away from the type of technophobic hedonism of past films, such as *Logan's Run* (1976) or *The Matrix* (1999), where humans engage in sex as an act of proclaiming their humanity. The Cylons of *Battlestar Galactica* are as capable of physical desire and emotional passion as the humans. As Baltar remarks to Tyrol, "Love is a strange and wonderful thing, Chief. You be happy you experienced it at all. Even if it was with a machine"

(*Resistance*, 2005). As viewers, we feel the emotional loss of Tyrol's relationship to Boomer and come to agree with Baltar on this point.

Nevertheless, this discussion of leadership principles is less concerned with the physical or romantic affects of love as those acts that provide for the common welfare. The definition of love employed here states, "To love is to act intentionally, in sympathetic response to others (including God), to promote overall well-being" (Oord, 2010, p. 15). Part of the key to understanding love in this context is 'overall well-being'. There are many forms of love within this definition, including self-love. Oord (2010) explains, "we are essentially related to others…If what we do partly determines who others become, and others partly determine what we become, our attempts to promote well-being in others often will increase our own well-being" (p.57). However, we must be careful to delineate loving acts and the common good. The justice aspect of love will sometimes preclude acting in loving ways for the few, as well as promoting intentional acts for the well-being of enemies (Oord, 2010).

Furthermore, the writings of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin established love as a concept beyond romantic or religious ideas. Teilhard postulated a *love-energy* has the capacity to change "culture, social institutions, and human beings" (King, 2004, p. 77) and "creates a firm basis for social coherence" (p. 78). Teilhard looks to a universal love encompassing and infusing all things. This concept is not far removed from the mystic Cylon Leoben's declaration to Kara Thrace "I see the love that binds all living things together" (*Flesh and Bone*, 2005). More importantly, we begin to discern how love can be a force for shifting personal and social justice paradigms.

The leaders in *Battlestar Galactica* are embroiled in the quandaries of loving actions, both for the whole, the few, the self, the enemy, and their gods. The *Miniseries* (2003) provides

an initial foundation for discussing intentional loving acts in sympathy with others to promote overall well-being. At the height of the immediate transboundary crisis, several crisis leadership competencies are challenged and some actions are perceived as immoral, particularly Adama's lie about knowing the location of Earth. As Silverman (2008) explains, "it's not merely mistaken, imprudent, or foolish to believe something without adequate evidence, it's outright *immoral*, a violation of our ethical duties to one another" (p. 199). Adama, and subsequently Roslin through her complicity in maintaining the fiction, simultaneously demonstrate positive and negative competencies; positively offering a credible answer to where they should go and, thus, relieving immediate anxieties and maintaining group cohesion, but negatively using their authority by providing a vision and goal that is not attainable because it does not exist. However, Adama's insistence it is not enough to just live but the fleet needs a reason to live can be interpreted as an intentional act of love. The people of the fleet are traumatized and grieving. The sympathetic response would be to motivate them to live and provide a sense of future well-being—an intentional loving act.

Furthermore, traditional power structures, embodied by Adama and Roslin, clash over priorities and purpose. Navigating through the phases of this crisis is complicated by the need to provide hierarchical needs and the tensions created by traditional power structures. Roslin and Adama cleanly demonstrate leadership abilities to provide lower order needs. Roslin views the essential need as being physiological, working toward the goals of providing shelter, water, and other needs such as medicine and sleep. The need for sex is demonstrated in her insistence that the survivors "start having babies" (*Miniseries*, 2003). Conversely, Adama determines the essential need is for safety, which for him means procuring ammunition and offensive action. Adama chooses to fight and Roslin chooses to flee. The narrative suggests Adama realizes his

efforts for safety (in terms of defeating an external threat) are premature and he must join with Roslin in securing physiological needs by providing defensive protection for the survivors. Significantly, Adama begins to set the stage for providing higher order needs through setting the purpose to find Earth. Recalling that Oord (2010) includes social and political unity, as well as physical necessities and higher order social needs in his definition of love, Roslin and Adama demonstrate principled leadership in these intentional actions of love.

However, in *You Can't Go Home Again* (2005), there are competing love interests. Adama insists on searching for Starbuck after her Viper crashes because he loves her as a daughter, a member of his family, but he risks the safety and survival of the entire fleet, also characterized by Adama as family. After Roslin's intervention to berate him for losing perspective, Adama chooses the well-being of the whole and discontinues the search. This episode changes the viewer's perspective of rightness from Adama to Roslin; from leave no one behind to do not risk the whole for the one. Adama and Roslin repeatedly perform these ideologies, particularly for Roslin who orders FTL capable ships to jump and leave non-FTL ships to the mercy of the Cylons (*Miniseries*, 2003) or the destruction of the Olympic Carrier that might be compromised by the Cylons (*33*, 2005). These competing intentional loving actions occurring after the previous actions suggest the difficulties of principled leadership appearing to exist on a continuum and not a static or linear course of action.

The call to act in loving ways to promote overall well-being is tested further in *A Measure of Salvation* (2006). A Cylon base ship has been infected with a virus that has killed nearly every Cylon aboard, but humans are immune to the disease. Adama and Roslin debate the merits of jumping close to a Cylon Resurrection ship, killing the remaining Cylons, and expecting the virus to infiltrate the entire Cylon species through the download process effectively

wiping out the Cylons. Roslin characterizes the plan as potentially winning the war. Helo characterizes the plan as genocide and they are "talking about losing a piece of our souls" (*A Measure of Salvation*, 2006). The interpretive question becomes whether Roslin intends to act in a loving way to save humanity or an unloving way by authorizing genocide. Helo's personal perspective has already been changed through his romantic love of Sharon Athena, and now he challenges Roslin and Adama, as well as viewers, to alter their opposition to the enemy and maintain ethical principles through just non-action. Importantly, Helo kills the captive Cylons by eliminating the air from their prison cell. Is this a loving action? Perhaps. By euthanizing a few Cylons, Helo prevents the deaths of millions of Cylons. More significantly, he hinders Adama's ability to act on Roslin's order to carry out the plan for genocide. Helo promotes the overall well-being of the enemy and shifts the understanding of social justice. As Helo explains to Sharon Athena, "I'm not a traitor. I love my people. I love this ship…. I did what I thought was right" (*A Measure of Salvation*, 2006). The Cylons may be the enemy and may have annihilated billions of humans, but we see principled leadership in action when intentional loving acts provide a means for social justice.

As Oord (2010) indicates, self-love, acting in sympathy with self to promote well-being, is also an intentional loving action. Gaius Baltar, in his role as prophet, encourages his followers to love themselves. After admitting his own flaws, he states, "Love yourself. If we can't love ourselves, how can we love others?" (*Escape Velocity*, 2008). For the narcissistic Baltar, this comment could easily be dismissed. Yet, there is a principled leadership action in play. Particularly for the human monotheists who are socially and politically marginalized and even attacked by polytheist fundamentalists, self-love begins the process of shifting their personal paradigms of worth. As those paradigms shift, their ability to change the quality of their

relationships with others to a more loving model further suggests the potential for promoting overall well-being. As loving acts create stronger social bonds, the possibility of altering the social system in ways that are more just becomes greater.

Loving actions are not the sole province of humans. The Cylons also progress through an understanding of love as a means to promote overall well-being and shift personal and social justice paradigms. In *Downloaded* (2006), Caprica Six and Sharon Boomer have been resurrected and are on Caprica trying to adjust to their rebirth. Boomer denies her Cylon status and Caprica Six pines for Baltar. Their mutual experience of deeply loving a human, coupled with Caprica Six's profound love for God, provides the impetus for their collaboration in changing the purpose of Cylon society from opposition to humans to one seeking reconciliation and harmony. They act intentionally with empathy for their fellow Cylons, humans, and God to promote the well-being of both Cylons and humans in God's universe. The outcome of their loving acts is the occupation of New Caprica.

> Caprica Six: We're here because a majority of the Cylon felt that the slaughter of mankind was a mistake.
> Boomer: We're here to find a new way to live in peace, as God wants us to live.

Unfortunately, the occupation is not as utopian as they had imagined due to the continued resistance of the humans. Nevertheless, the act is the key defining element and not the outcome (Oord, 2010). Caprica Six and Boomer demonstrate principled leadership through loving actions in sympathy with all actors intended to not only promote overall well-being, but correct injustices.

Forgiveness

Social justice paradigms can also be shifted through acts of forgiveness. As a factor in principled leadership actions, forgiveness is a personal process that can both stem from loving actions and lead to them. To review, "forgiveness is not condoning, forgetting, or ignoring a

hurtful action" (Madsen et al., 2009, p. 248) and the person who has suffered a hurt must relinquish any claim to resentment or revenge and allow the transgressor to make amends, thus (re)creating a positive relational change and minimizing the negative effects of the injury (Madsen et al., 2009). Forgiveness is a dyadic relationship initiated by the person who has experienced a hurt. Furthermore, the social system as a whole can begin the process of healing and reclaiming a sense of cohesion. However, this is not a simple proposition when the social system is caught up in the terror of impending death, as "mortality salience engenders a greater need for death-denying cultural worldviews and consequently provokes more vigorous reactions to moral transgressors" (Solomon, Greenberg, & Pyszczynski, 1998, p. 27). As with love, the outcome of forgiveness—repentance of the transgressor and repair of the relationship—is not the key element in defining the ethical principle of forgiveness. The act of forgiving is the essential aspect guiding the understanding of principled leadership.

Similar to the actual world, Roslin as a political leader creates a Truth and Reconciliation Committee to heal the emotional wounds of previous hurts during the diaspora as well as the Cylon Occupation of New Caprica and strengthen the unity of the survivors (*Collaborators*, 2006). She declares a blanket pardon—blanket forgiveness—to everyone in the fleet. Kearney (2003) questioned who has the right or the power to forgive, which plays out in *Battlestar Galactica* as some characters refuse to let go of their resentment, particularly Saul Tigh and Kara Thrace. Nonetheless, Roslin acts in a principled manner by asserting her authority as a leader to forgive those seen as traitors and provide a forum for those who feel betrayed to begin their personal process of forgiveness.

As discussed previously, this forgiveness does not extend to Gaius Baltar. In *Crossroads, Part 2* (2007), Baltar is on trial for crimes against humanity due to his association with the

Cylons on New Caprica. Lee, as co-counsel for the defense, is put on the witness stand to

discredit Roslin and implicate his father as one of the judges who made up his mind before the

trial began. He gives an impassioned lengthy speech pointing out the inconsistencies in their

ideas about forgiveness and justice:

> Did the defendant make mistakes? Sure. He did. Serious mistakes. But did he actually commit any crimes? Did he commit treason? No. I mean, it was an impossible situation. When the Cylons arrived, what could he possibly do? What could anyone have done? Ask yourself, what would you have done? ... If he had refused to surrender, the Cylons would have probably nuked the planet right then and there. So did he appear to cooperate with the Cylons? Sure. So did hundreds of others. What's the difference between him and them? The President issued a blanket pardon. They were all forgiven, no questions asked. Colonel Tigh. Colonel Tigh used suicide bombers, killed dozens of people. Forgiven. Lieutenant Agathon and Chief Tyrol. They murdered an officer on the Pegasus. Forgiven. The Admiral. The Admiral instigated a military coup d'état against the President. Forgiven. And me? Well, where do I begin? I shot down a civilian passenger ship, the Olympic Carrier. Over a thousand people on board. Forgiven. I raised my weapon to a superior officer, committed an act of mutiny. Forgiven. And then on the very day when Baltar surrendered to those Cylons, I as commander of Pegasus jumped away. I left everybody on that planet, alone, undefended, for months. I even tried to persuade the Admiral never to return, to abandon you all there for good. If I'd had my way nobody would have made it off that planet. I'm the coward. I'm the traitor. I'm forgiven. I'd say we are very forgiving of mistakes. We make our own laws now; our own justice. And we've been pretty creative in finding ways to let people off the hook for everything from theft to murder. And we've had to be, because...because we're not a civilization anymore. We are a gang, and we are on the run, and we have to fight to survive. We have to break rules. We have to bend laws. We have to improvise. But not this time, no. Not this time. Not for Gaius Baltar. No, you...you have to die. You have to die, because, well, because we don't like you very much. Because you're arrogant. Because you're weak. Because you're a coward, and we, the mob, want to throw you out of the airlock, because you didn't stand up to the Cylons and get yourself killed in the process. That's justice now. You should have been killed back on New Caprica, but since you had the temerity to live, we're going to execute you now. That's justice. [...] This case...this case is built on emotion, on anger, bitterness, vengeance. But most of all, it is built on shame. It's about the shame of what we did to ourselves back on that planet. It's about the guilt of those of us who ran away. Who ran away. And we're trying to dump all that guilt and all that shame on one man and then flush him out the airlock, and hope that just gets rid of it all. So that we could live with ourselves. But that won't work. That won't work. That's not justice; not to me. (*Crossroads, Part 2*, 2007)

In essence, Lee calls into question the motives of not forgiving Baltar as a means of purging

collective shame and guilt. Baltar has become an Other, a scapegoat for whom forgiveness is not

necessary because he has been demonized and outcast by the community. In this instance, Lee demonstrates principled leadership over and against Roslin. Indeed, Lee's act of forgiveness may be interpreted as more principled than Roslin's in that the injuries for which Baltar was duplicitous were more egregious to the community as a whole than many of the other harms Lee listed. Moreover, he suggests Baltar's trial does little to further social cohesion but suggests the fleet is barely more than a gang without a moral compass. Though Baltar is acquitted of the charges, the fleet does not forget or condone his actions. He is still outcast, but forgiven, and retaliation against him is suspended.

While Roslin may understand the political implications and potential outcomes of modeling forgiveness and creating a space where forgiveness can be enacted, Adama's ability to forgive is barely discernible. As Adama loves deeply and sees those who disagree, disobey, or disappoint him as betrayers, forgiveness is a quality that challenges him. Adama is sufficiently self aware to understand this in himself. As he says to Dualla, "Betrayal has such a powerful grip on the mind. It's almost like a python. It can squeeze out all other thought, suffocate all other emotion until everything is dead except for rage. I'm not talking about anger. I'm talking about rage" (*Home, Part 1*, 2005). However, like Roslin, he can find moments when forgiveness is politically appropriate, such as when Roslin has divided the fleet over her role as the dying leader in the Pythian Prophecy and goes to Kobol in anticipation of Starbuck's retrieval of the Arrow of Apollo (*Home, Part 2*, 2005). Adama declares he is putting the "family" back together after Dualla quietly berates him for letting everyone down and separating people from each other. His act of forgiving Roslin for her treasonous behavior seems rather arrogant, though he acknowledges her decision to run was ultimately correct, and they repair their relationship,

which provides a united leadership model for the fleet in the continued search for the mythical Earth (*Home, Part 2*, 2005).

As the narrative continues and the crises continue to increase, Adama appears to be less able to forgive. In *Sine Qua Non* (2008), Sharon Athena shoots Natalie, a model six and leader of the Cylon rebels who are now allied with the Colonials, over paranoid fears that Natalie will steal her child. Adama is furious about the incident and refuses to trust her or forgive her actions, as he has done in the past, and puts her in the brig. Another example is his private emotional breakdown when he trashes his quarters after learning Saul Tigh is a Cylon and sobs uncontrollably in Lee's arms when Lee finds him (*Revelations*, 2008). Tigh's status as a Cylon calls into question their entire relationship and Adama's purpose since the Cylon attack. He trusted Tigh and sent dozens of men and women to die in combat when the enemy was standing at his side. As his closest friend and second in command, Adama construes Tigh's revelation as a betrayal of that friendship and the loyalty he feels is due to him for bringing Tigh back to the fleet and away from the brink of alcohol-induced suicide. Their relationship suffers until Tigh makes the decision to stop wallowing in self-pity and saves Adama's life in a scuffle with Bulldog (*Hero*, 2006). Nonetheless, Adama's inability to forgive others does serve him and the fleet well during the mutiny led by Tom Zarek and Felix Gaeta. He specifically promises there will be no forgiveness or amnesty if the men insist on mutiny (*The Oath*, 2009). Mutiny is a military code, but more importantly a moral code, he refuses to allow. However, he does grant some measure of forgiveness to the followers of Zarek and Gaeta and has them imprisoned instead of executed.

Moreover, Adama appears to suffer from the inability to forgive himself. He abandons the humans on New Caprica when the Cylons appear. Months later, Sharon Athena asks him if

he feels guilty about fleeing New Caprica and relates how her experiences and the rage she felt caused her to make the choice to forgive herself in order to move forward. He replies, "I don't do guilt" (*Occupation*, 2006). An inference may be made that the choice to deny feeling guilt is also the choice of no intention or need for self-forgiveness. But Sharon Athena puts it even more plainly by stating, "You know I don't think we can survive, I don't think the fleet or Galactica or the people on New Caprica can survive unless the man at the top finds a way to forgive himself" (*Occupation*, 2006). To this, Adama has no response and barely a reaction. His lack of self-forgiveness appears again in *Hero* (2006). Adama tenders his resignation to Roslin for his actions prior to the Cylon attack on Caprica. He believes he was responsible for aggravating the Cylons as he knowingly crossed into their territory in a clandestine operation ordered by the Admiralty. Roslin scoffs at his notions, stating "We know why the Cylons attacked us and it wasn't one thing. Oh, my gods! We did a thousand things, good and bad, every day for forty years to pave the way for those attacks" (*Hero*, 2006). Her plan is to raise the fleet's morale by giving Adama a medal and tells him the medal is "not for you. For them. That will be your penance" (*Hero*, 2006). Roslin appears to excuse and forgive any action Adama may have taken in the past, but Adama continues to reject any self-forgiveness.

The inability to forgive himself is intensified after the death of Dualla (*Sometimes A Great Notion*, 2009). Adama blames himself for her death and does not understand why she would commit suicide and why he was unable to stop her. He drinks to excess and nastily goads Tigh into shooting him, but Tigh refuses. Tigh tells Adama the people need Adama to lead them, but Adama replies, "Lead them where, Saul?" (*Sometimes A Great Notion*, 2009). His despair over the catastrophe of finding a post-nuclear apocalypse Earth, coupled with his personal code of no forgiveness or regret and guilt over decisions, impedes Adama's ability to act in forgiving

ways that lead to principled leadership. As Grant (2008) makes clear, "Once leaders realize their imperfections they can contribute by creating a forgiving culture where followers are accepted for their imperfections" (p. 11). If Adama cannot truly admit he is an imperfect person and able to make bad judgments, his followers will see a model of behavior they—as imperfect people themselves—cannot achieve. He is not an unprincipled man, but is prevented from realizing his full potential as a leader through neglecting to develop the capacity to forgive others and himself.

Redemption

Closely aligned to forgiveness is the concept of redemption. While forgiveness is a process that begins with an act of forgiving by the aggrieved person, redemption is a process that begins with the transgressor seeking forgiveness for his or her own actions. Specifically, the process of redemption occurs through interaction between "person and person, person and community, person and God, and a community and God" (Clark, 2003, p. 78) moving the actors from alienation to reconciliation. Reconciling redemptive behaviors are "an ongoing desire to improve one's life by honoring duties owed to oneself and to others… [with] an integrated change in one's actions or way of life that seeks to improve relationships with others, either individually or as members of a group" (Caldwell et al., 2011, p. 474). *Battlestar Galactica* frequently employs terms considered synonymous with redemption, such as repentance, forgiveness of sins, and salvation. Characters also act in ways that demonstrate their intentions to improve relationships with others, the community, or God with no verbal explanation of the association with redemption.

Battlestar Galactica may be wholly interpreted as a story of redemption for individuals and the communities of humans and Cylons. The theme is established early in the narrative during Adama's decommissioning speech when he speaks off his prepared notes and asks, "Why

are we as a people worth saving? […] We refuse to accept the responsibility for anything that we've done. […] Sooner or later, the day comes when you can't hide from the things that you've done anymore" (*Miniseries*, 2003). Accepting responsibility for hurtful actions and changing behaviors to improve relationships is at the heart of the story. Some characters find their redemption in acts that bind the community, while others find redemption in decisions that challenge the social order. Actions that attempt to reconcile relationships are noble, as well as tragic. Asking forgiveness of another person, the community, or God can be uplifting and lessens an emotional burden, but it is more often terrifying and fraught with unknown dangers— including being denied forgiveness and the ability to be redeemed. Seeking redemption often occurs when a transgressor is most vulnerable, humbled, confused, afraid, or filled with shame and guilt. *Battlestar Galactica* explores these moments in ways that identify redemption as a means for individuals and leaders to move from alienation to reconciliation.

Unlike love and forgiveness, redemption must occur in relationship and cannot stand as a principled act on its own. Consequently, there are instances in the narrative that may appear as redemptive acts, but fall short of the definition. This is most clearly seen in the Cylon decision to occupy New Caprica and live in peace with humans. Their decision is based on a loving intentional act to promote overall well-being and indicates forgiveness of the humans for their previous enslavement, but the humans refuse to forgive the Cylons for the destruction of the Twelve Colonies and resist the occupation. Therefore, while the Cylons may be seeking redemption from the humans they do not achieve redemption during the occupation as the relationship between humans and Cylons is not reconciled.

Redemption is a heady concept permeating the narrative through-line, but also occurs in brief moments and story arcs. Jammer, who joined the human police force on New Caprica and

arrested people at gunpoint in the middle of the night, saves Cally from the Cylon firing squad on New Caprica (*Exodus, Part 1*, 2006). Tyrol builds a Viper plane from scratch not only as a demonstration of emergent leadership but also as an act of seeking forgiveness for poor decisions about his relationship with Boomer and the tribunal that compromised the well-being of others and reconciling with the community (*Flight of the Phoenix*, 2005). Tigh finds redemption for the killing of Ellen in his relationship with the imprisoned Caprica Six, who he sometimes sees as Ellen, during the fourth season of the series. Kelly is given the choice to switch allegiances from the mutineers to Adama and expresses his regret in the role he has played in the mutiny and feelings of hatred for the Cylons, thus earning forgiveness and redemption (*The Oath*, 2009). Others who were imprisoned for their part in the mutiny are offered a chance to redeem themselves and be reconciled with the human community by fighting against the Cylons in a battle the humans do not expect to return from or win (*Daybreak, Part 1,* 2009). Boomer relinquishes Hera to Sharon Athena during the final battle with the Cylons, asking her to "tell the Old Man [Adama] I owe him one," though her reconciliation with the human community is not fully realized since Sharon Athena immediately guns Boomer down (*Daybreak, Part 2*, 2009).

While the death of Boomer near the end of the narrative may be considered tragic in retrospect, *The Passage* (2006) provides an exploration of redemption more profoundly tragic. The episode is deeply tied to concepts of identity. As Baltar states to D'Anna, "Cylons. Humans. We're all just trying to discover who we are. Aren't we?" (*The Passage*, 2006). The main plot centers on Louanne "Kat" Catraine, a Viper pilot who has recently dethroned Starbuck as top pilot in the fleet. While the Galactica was absent during the occupation of New Caprica, Kat assumed the role of CAG and was instrumental in the strategy for rescuing the people on New Caprica. But we now discover she has a hidden past as a smuggler of drugs and people.

People who, according to Starbuck, could have been Cylon agents. Starbuck confronts Kat, accusing her of being a traitor and unfit to be a pilot because of her past associations. "You are not smart enough to accept who you are. You see, you lied your way into the company of good people. […] Accept who you are" (*The Passage*, 2006). Kat begs Starbuck not to tell Adama because she wants to tell him herself and Starbuck reluctantly agrees. Before Kat can see Adama, there is a mission to get the entire fleet through a radioactive nebula to an algae planet so they can replenish their food stores and stave off starvation. Pilots are literally plucking crumbs off tables and glad for the opportunity. Each ship in the fleet is paired with a Raptor to navigate them by FTL through the nebula. Pilots must make multiple trips and wear arm badges that measure their exposure to radiation levels. When the badge is black, they have been overexposed and will no longer be allowed to fly.

On an early trip, Kat cannot locate the ship she was paired with due to the radioactive and visual interference of the nebula and lost the ship and all passengers. She is not the only pilot to lose a ship, but she takes the failure very hard in light of Starbuck's vitriolic statements. In Kat's mind, she is worthy of wearing the uniform regardless of who she was before becoming a Viper pilot and wants to prove her worth to Starbuck, Adama, and the entire fleet. After a few more trips, her hair is falling out from radiation sickness and her arm badge has turned completely black. She surreptitiously trades it for one that is not yet saturated. Kat feels a duty to the fleet and her competitive character will not allow her to stand aside. Her only option in reconciling herself to Adama and the community as payment for past transgressions is to continue doing her job. On her last trip, she loses the Faru Sadin and refuses to jump until she finds the ship. Seconds tick away like hours, but she spots the ship and they make it through the nebula to the

safety of the fleet. Kat is applauded and heralded as a hero on her return, but the radiation sickness is clearly irreversible at this point.

In the sick bay, Starbuck visits her and uncomfortably hands Kat some sleeping pills in an unspoken invitation to end her suffering by suicide, but also a moment for Starbuck to grasp clumsily at her own redemption for being the catalyst for Kat's risky choices. Adama arrives and pulls up a chair to sit with Kat. He tells her he is going to promote her to CAG once again. As a last opportunity to seek forgiveness and reconciliation, Kat tries to tell him about her past. Adama interrupts her, saying, "I don't need to know anything other than what I already know. When you were CAG, you protected your people and made them feel safe enough to be brave. Whatever you were going to say doesn't change that." Within this moment, Kat is reconciled with Adama, as an individual and as a surrogate for the community, and is redeemed. Adama is also able to avoid having to forgive any specific offense, which always proves problematic for him. Kat dies soon thereafter and what may be interpreted from *The Passage* (2006) is the story of a military hero that transcends the traditional pathos of bravery and death in wartime to become a meditation on identity, redemption, and principled leadership in times of crisis and change.

Yet, leaders may believe they are acting in principled ways that lead to redemption, but are mistaken. For Laura Roslin, redemption is the key motivating factor of her existence. As she explains to the Quorum while under arrest for treason and announcing her role in the Pythian Prophecy, "I will lead the people to salvation. It is my sole purpose" (*Fragged*, 2005). Indeed, nearly every decision Roslin makes hinges on the survival and salvation of the human race by finding Earth and being reconciled with the community of other humans and with the Gods. As the President of the Colonies and the dying leader of prophecy, her identity is shaped by the debt

she owes to others by benefit of her position of government and religious authority. However, as discussed previously, her leadership decisions are ethically questionable and include torture, kidnapping, deceit, election fraud, and causing the deaths of civilians. There are many things for which Roslin needs to ask forgiveness, yet she never quite comes to this realization. Her sense of redemption lies in reconciliation for everyone but herself.

Even the spirit of Elosha who visits Roslin in the quantum space between hyper-jumps of the Cylon base star in *The Hub* (2008) desperately tries to explain Roslin's shortcomings in finding reconciliation. Elosha accuses Roslin of alienating herself from others and not making room for people. Elosha continues by saying, "The body of a people and the body of the leader are not the same thing, but the soul and the spirit might be" (*The Hub*, 2008). Elosha is suggesting if Roslin cannot find redemption for herself, she will not be able to help the human race find theirs. If Roslin's soul is bereft of intimate feeling, and her spirit defiant against the greater understandings of love, forgiveness, and reconciliation with others, humanity will not have a leader capable of bringing them to salvation. Roslin is immediately tested by being compelled to save Baltar from bleeding to death. Interpretively, this is not an act of forgiving Baltar, because the purpose is not to forgive Baltar but to seek her own forgiveness from the unseen order, yet it is an intentional loving act of empathy. The critical test for Roslin is to overcome her sense of isolation and find a means for demonstrating her remorse for transgressions against not only Baltar, but the human community as well. Her redemptive act succeeds and Baltar lives, but her redemption also allows her to realize more fully her relationship with Adama by telling him she loves him and opens a path for finding Earth by reconciling herself with the Gods.

Gods, however, seem to have a terrible sense of irony. Shortly after Roslin saves Baltar

from dying, the fleet finds Earth and it is a nuclear wasteland (*Revelations*, 2008). Once again,

Roslin's identity as a leader is thrown into question. The prophecy may be true, she was the

leader when they found Earth, but the outcome was not what anyone expected. Roslin returns to

her alienating behaviors by secluding herself from everyone, refusing to run the government

except in name only, and discards all of her cancer medications, effectively alienating herself

from her dying body. Nonetheless, Roslin is offered one last opportunity for redemption and

reconciliation. In *Daybreak* (2009), the series finale, Adama asks for volunteers to rescue Hera

from the Cylons. Roslin was responsible for kidnapping Hera from her parents, Helo and Sharon

Athena, and telling them the child died. Roslin volunteers to rescue the child, even though her

cancer is so far advanced she can barely stand or see clearly. Her actions in the final battle

against the Cylons are small, but she and the rest of the humans are rewarded with finding a new

Earth. And though the prophecy declared the dying leader would never see Earth, Roslin does

arrive on the new Earth to enjoy its tremendous beauty and the safe arrival of the human and

allied Cylon survivors before she dies. Roslin does lead her people to salvation, but she is only

able to accomplish this by grasping for her own redemption through repairing her relationships

with others by changing her behaviors of alienation, hatred, and secrecy. The question can be

posed that if she had been able to come to this earlier, her ability to lead in a principled manner

may have averted many deaths and prolonged strife.

Brief mention must be made for Adama's redemption also in the final battle with the

Cylons (*Daybreak*, 2009). Adama makes the decision to rescue Hera after finding a photo of

Sharon Athena and Hera left on the memorial wall of the Galactica after nearly every other photo

or remembrance has been removed in anticipation of abandoning the ship, which is now beyond

repair after years of warfare. The choice is at once clinging to the understanding of leaving no one behind and simultaneously allowing Adama to command a final battle from which he does not expect to return. His death in service to others and against an enemy is potentially his redemptive moment. Adama is successful in rescuing Hera and destroying the Cylon Colony, thus unsuccessful in his bid for redemption through a heroic death. Adama must claim redemption in the repair of relationships. He partly accomplishes this on new Earth through his farewells to Kara, Lee, and Roslin. The last image of Adama is on a hilltop speaking to Roslin beside her grave. As Adama is adverse to forgiveness, one interpretation may be that in his solitude he comes to an understanding with himself in an attitude of forgiveness that will mark his ultimate redemption in the eyes of his Gods.

The arrival to new Earth is made possible by Starbuck who trusts her instincts, enters the numbers that coordinate with the song notes from Hera into the FTL system, and jumps the Galactica into unknown territory. As previously discussed, Starbuck has been dead and returned as an angel for months. The question that surfaces is—why? The clever response of producers being hesitant to kill off a lead actor is too trite for a narrative as thoughtful as *Battlestar Galactica*, especially in light of other important supporting players routinely killed in the narrative. Interpretively, Starbuck returns—an angel in the guise of a warrior—in order to find redemption. The redemption of Starbuck occurs through the reparation of her relationship with her mother and father, assisted by Not-Leoben and the Piano Player, and her difficult attempts to repair her relationships with Adama, Lee, and Sam. Starbuck has a death wish; pushing to the edge of death by placing herself in risky situations, but is denied death. In *Flesh and Bone* (2005), Leoben accuses her of thinking she is broken and cannot be fixed, thus undeserving of receiving love and incapable of giving love. The hybrid tells her she is the harbinger of death

who will lead her people to their end (*Faith*, 2008). Fortunately, Leoben is incorrect and the hybrid spoke truthfully, if we understand Starbuck is the harbinger of death for Cylons and the end for humanity as finding the new Earth. Starbuck's redemptive act that repairs her relationship with community, and ostensibly with the Gods, is placing the coordinates into the FTL drive and arriving at new Earth. It is an intentional act done in sympathy with everyone who has traveled with her on the journey of redemption. She has found her ability to love, to forgive, and to be forgiven. She has been given the chance to act as a principled leader, even if only for a few seconds. She seems to have even repaired her relationship with the Gods, as she simply disappears during a final conversation with Lee on new Earth, interpretively being released from purgatory and able to find true death and what lies beyond.

For all her flaws and inabilities to be a military leader, Starbuck was able to lead her people to the end—to the goal of finding a home. In *Maelstrom* (2007), Leoben explains he is there to help her prepare for the space between life and death. Reflecting on this differently, Kara is in the space between life and after-life. As Cowan (2010) explains, "hope is found in what lies between lives" (p. 251). While his discussion centered on the repeatedly resurrected D'Anna and her quest for transcendence by finding the faces of the Final Five, hope is equally applicable to Starbuck. Starbuck is the hope of the human race and the allied Cylons as she goes beyond her corporeal nature to exist in a between-place desperately searching for redemption and her own transcendence to what is next.

The desperate search for redemption is more clearly depicted in the story of Gaius Baltar. Undoubtedly, an argument can be made that *Battlestar Galactica* is essentially a narrative about the redemption of Gaius Baltar. His helpmate in this endeavor is Angel Six. At first, the character gives the impression of a plot device to allow the viewer to know what is going on

inside of Baltar's head, but Angel Six functions in larger tangible ways. She appears to have a mission to pull Baltar kicking and screaming through the cesspool of his narcissistic self-delusions to a place where he can potentially seek redemption for his myriad transgressions.

Angel Six's first goal is to provide Baltar with an understanding of the power and love of God to lead him to salvation. The Cylon's One True God is a god willing to grant mercy and grace to those who believe and repent. Baltar does repent his role in the Cylon attack on the Colonies in *33* (2005) and the ship carrying a man who could identify him as a traitor is destroyed for being compromised by Cylon agents. In *Six Degrees of Separation* (2005), Baltar is peering into a microscope and chiding Angel Six about his inability to find God. She replies, "If you give yourself over to God's love you would find peace as I have… (*Angrily*) I'm trying to save your immortal soul, Gaius." He responds by stating faith is all "superstitious drivel and metaphysical nonsense" (*Six Degrees of Separation*, 2005), which no rational man of science would entertain.   Later, a model six, calling herself Shelly Godfrey, appears with a photo presumably implicating Baltar in setting an explosive device in the Colonial mainframe computer system. After Baltar is put in the brig until the picture can be enhanced, he prays to the Cylon God, specifically asking for grace and forgiveness. The picture is discovered as a fake. Unfortunately, Baltar immediately dismisses his sense of humility and dons his typical bravado and hubris with no second thought for the possibility of divine intervention (*Six Degrees of Separation*, 2005). Nonetheless, he enjoys his status as "an instrument of God," complete with Christ-like pose, after he guesses at the correct target for demolishing a Cylon tyllium refinery (*The Hand of God*, 2005).

Nevertheless, Baltar continues to act in selfish ways and is still in need of repairing his relationship with God. He is given the opportunity in *Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 2* (2005)

when the Raptor he is on crash lands on the surface of Kobol and Angel Six—dressed demurely

in white instead of her usual red—appears to him and helps him escape before the Raptor

explodes. He falls to the ground in another Christ-like pose, where Angel Six finds him and

leads him to the ruins of the Opera House, which is restored to his eyes, and explains he is

destined to be "the guardian and protector of the new generation of God's children" (*Kobol's*

Last Gleaming, Part 2, 2005). How Baltar is to become the guardian is unclear at the time, but

on Kobol he is tested by shooting Crashdown to save Cally's life. While murder is not an ethical

action, it is an integral part of human nature and makes him a man, according to Angel Six

(*Fragged*, 2005). Baltar's momentary redemption comes when Lee asks how Crashdown died

and Baltar replies, "Leading the charge. He died in the finest tradition of the service" (*Fragged*,

2005). This statement is not just self-serving, but allows Baltar to repair his relationship with

Tyrol, Cally, and Seelix who are the other survivors of the doomed mission and allows

Crashdown a legacy of heroism that could boost the fleet's morale.

After Baltar's disastrous turn as President of the Colonies on New Caprica, he joins the

Cylons as everyone escapes the planet. His need for redemption for the events on New Caprica

leads him to consider whether he might be a Cylon, thereby being a hero instead of a traitor (*The*

Passage, 2006). This desire is fully revealed when he is recaptured by the humans and tortured

by Adama and Roslin for information. Under the effects of torture drugs, he mumbles about

wanting to be a Cylon. Roslin asks him why he wants to be a Cylon.

> Baltar: All my sins forgiven… a new beginning…
> Roslin: Are you a Cylon, doctor?
> Baltar: (regretfully) No.

During his imprisonment awaiting trial for crimes against humanity, Baltar begins writing

his manifesto, "My Triumphs, My Mistakes." The treatise questions the social order, raising the

social consciousness of those in the fleet who feel they have been marginalized by Caprican

ascendancy (*Dirty Hands*, 2007). Interpretively, Baltar is making amends for his poor judgment and lack of character during the Cylon Occupation in the only way he knows how—through his intellect. For Baltar, the manifesto is less about exposing social inequities, as it is a way to explain himself and his choices to gain acceptance back into the community of humans.

The narrative continues with Baltar as the leader/prophet of a monotheistic cult, though his spirituality begins as a pretense to gain power, safety, and sex after the debacle of his presidency and his acquittal on charges of crimes against humanity. Baltar is not excited about the prospect of being with these people who worship him, characterizing the place as a "loony bin" (*He That Believeth In Me,* 2008). Among his followers is a mother with a sick child and she asks Baltar to pray for him. As a doctor, Baltar knows there is little anyone can do for someone suffering viral encephalitis and he has no hope. Still, in the quiet of night, Baltar prays to the Cylon God to spare the child.

> Baltar: Please God, I'm asking you this one last time, don't let this child die. Has he sinned against you? He can't have sinned against you. He's not even had a life yet. How can you take him and let me live... after all I've done? Really, if you want someone to suffer, take me. We both know I deserve it. I'm selfish and weak. I have failed so many people. I have killed. I'm not asking for your forgiveness, I'm just asking that you spare the life of this innocent child. Don't take him. Take me. Take me, take me, please. (*He That Believeth In Me,* 2008)

Baltar has a moment of clarity and authentically expresses his transgressions. His self-sacrificial desire creates a properly repentant attitude that brings him closer to repairing his relationships with people and God. Demonstrating the loving power of God, the child is better in the morning and the cultists are even more convinced of Baltar's role as a prophet.

His is further buoyed as Angel Six encourages him to "take on the old gods" at which point, he goes to the ship hold serving as the chapel for the human pantheistic faith of the Lords of Kobol and destroys it. His newfound piety is questioned by Tyrol and he responds, "We change. We evolve. Maybe we even learn something. I have committed unconscionable

crimes, and I have been offered one last chance at redemption, because I chose to accept my fate and not fight it anymore" (*The Road Less Traveled,* 2008). Still, it is not his fate—his future as an instrument of God—he needs to accept, but himself.

The series appears to suggest redemption is not going to be possible for Baltar through repairing his relationships with another person or Cylon alone. For Baltar, accepting his authentic self and (re)building a relationship with God is the key to his redemption. Indeed, Angel Six insists at the very outset of the narrative that Baltar needs to establish "a personal relationship with God" (*33*, 2005). This relationship becomes redemption in the present. Baltar must discover and accept the truth of his self as he is *now*. There are elements of self-love, but self-love in this context has no overtones of narcissism and pertains to acceptance and forgiveness. Baltar must acknowledge who he is—not the man he presents to the world. As Clark (2003) explains, "forgiveness must come out of confronting one's own feelings and belief systems. A person must let go of pride and be willing to accept the consequences of his or her actions" (p. 79). If Baltar can be loving, humble, and accept responsibility for the things he has done, there is the possibility he will be able to gain redemption. After trashing the Lords of Kobol temple in *Escape Velocity* (2008), Baltar admits his flaws and encourages his followers to love themselves, "Love yourself. If we can't love ourselves, how can we love others?" Repairing the relationship with one's self becomes the first important step in seeking redemption from others and God.

Baltar is uneven in his progress toward self-love and his relationship with God. Particularly after the discovery of the Earth as a nuclear wasteland, Baltar forcefully demands to his followers that God should ask forgiveness from them. Though he may be distanced from God at this point, he continues to repair the relationship with the community by distributing food

to those who are without and insisting to his followers that they help others (*Deadlock*, 2009).

He also attempts to repair his relationship with Caprica Six after the loss of her baby (*Islanded In A Stream of Stars*, 2009). From his work in the community, one of his followers suggests they have the right to political representation, which would legitimize their cult and potentially decrease their marginalization and susceptibility to attack by pantheist fundamentalists. Baltar speaks with Lee, now President of the Colonies, about the possibility, but Lee refuses. Lee does not trust him to have political power again because he has never seen Baltar do one truly self-less act, so Lee will not shake his hand or give him representation into government. Lee challenges Baltar, "Tell me when you did a heroic act of conscience that did not help you in the slightest" (*Daybreak, Part 1*, 2009). This challenge causes Baltar to become more reflective about himself and paves the way for his volunteering to rescue Hera from the Cylons. Moreover, Baltar's quiet admission of not being someone to trust demonstrates Baltar's progression toward self-awareness and acceptance.

Volunteering to rescue Hera is not a completely self-less act, as it allows Baltar the opportunity to redeem himself in the eyes of the community and God. The important issues are trust and faith in the community, God, and in himself. Baltar and Caprica Six find Hera in the Cylon Colony and play out the previous illusion of being the guardian of the next generation. Baltar's role as guardian and protector is tested when Cavil grabs Hera and holds her at gunpoint in the hope of being allowed to leave with the child. Adama and Tigh insist that will not happen.

> Cavil: This thing is the key to my people's survival, and I'm not leaving without it!
> Baltar: Hera's not a thing! She's a child, and she holds the key to humanity's survival as well!
> Cavil: And how do you know that?
> Baltar: I see angels, angels in this very room. Now, I may be mad, but that doesn't mean that I'm not right. Because there's another force at work here. There always has been. It's undeniable. We've all experienced it. Everyone in this room has witnessed events that they can't fathom, let alone explain by rational means.

> Puzzles deciphered in prophecy. Dreams given to a chosen few. Our loved ones, dead, risen. Whether we want to call that "God" or "gods" or some sublime inspiration or a divine force we can't know or understand, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter. It's here. It exists, and our two destinies are entwined in its force.
> Cavil: If that were true, and that's a big 'if', how do I know this force has our best interests in mind? How do you know that God is on your side, Doctor?
> Baltar: I don't. God's not on anyone's side. God is a force of nature, beyond good and evil. Good and evil, we created those. You wanna break the cycle? Break the cycle of birth? Death? Rebirth? Destruction? Escape? Death? Well, that's in our hands, in our hands only. It requires that we live in hope, not fear. (*Daybreak, Part 2*, 2009)

Baltar's summation of the extraordinary events of the narrative as being the work of an unseen order repairs Baltar's relationship with God(s), but also increases the bonds to his community by providing a hopeful and not fearful projection of the future in harmony with others, including Cylons. Even as a presidential candidate, Baltar expresses hope for the future and not fear, which suggests his ability to act as a principled leader was always available to him if he could get past his inauthentic self.

Baltar comes full circle in his acceptance of himself, and thus, acquires redemption at the end of the narrative. Once the surviving humans and Cylons have found new Earth, Baltar and Caprica Six bid a final farewell to their Angel doppelgangers and head toward a valley Baltar spied. In response to why there, Baltar replies that it looks like good bottom land and, with a catch in his throat, he explains, "I know a little bit about farming" (*Daybreak, Part* 2, 2009). Becoming a farmer demonstrates an acceptance of his past and his heritage, which he fled as a young man. Baltar finds authenticity, as well as a mature loving relationship with Caprica Six, and is afforded his redemption.

Embracing the Other

The full realization of love, forgiveness, and redemption as principled leadership actions toward a socially just world cannot occur until the relationship with the Other is acknowledged. Embracing the Other is critical to one's sense of self, as the two concepts cannot exist separately.

We need our others to help us define who we are; a hermeneutics "which construes otherness less in opposition to selfhood than a partner engaged in the constitution of its intrinsic meaning" (Kearney, 2003, p. 80). The process follows Kearney's (2003) hermeneutical approach of practical understanding, working through, and pardon. Otherness is often defined as evil, and as such, becomes something to be resisted and eradicated. Particularly for non-human otherness, we find it particularly difficult, as we consider "they, not fully human, as scapegoat bearers of evil, [who] warrant domination, banishment, and death" (Solomon et al., 1998, p. 18). However, we must be able to judge what is evil before we can act against it and this requires practical understanding about what constitutes an evil, acknowledging the emotional and hurtful circumstances, and seeking to forgive (Kearney, 2003). The more we learn and accept our others, the more we learn and accept about our own selves, and both are changed in ways that allow for lessening concepts of evil and increasing personal actualization and harmony.

As previously discussed, the leaders of *Battlestar Galactica* are responsible for defining Otherness in the narrative for their followers, from the enemy Cylons to the religious sects of Sagittarons and monotheists to the socio-economically disadvantaged to God(s); a xenophobia labeling strangeness as excluded, while denying any strangeness in those who are included. Moreover, as previously discussed, the leaders are capable of redefining the status of Otherness through their leadership practices, coupled with the principled actions of love, forgiveness, and redemption. The process of redefining is not simply acts solely affecting the Other, but come from the epiphany of understandings about self. Much of this concept was explored in the sections above. The characters come to understand the way in which they are acting is not in agreement with their preconceptions and assumptions about their basic moral character and they have become strangers to themselves. As Adama explains to Helo, "There's hate. And there's

allowing hate. We're guilty of both. Somewhere we got lost" (*The Woman King*, 2007). The key understanding for the leaders in the narrative, as well as viewers, is the journey forward from being lost in hate and conflict to renegotiate and repair relationships and, thus, making the strange familiar.

Battlestar Galactica dramatizes the dire consequences of personal and social conflict when there is a failure to reconcile with Others. People die. Civilizations are extinguished. Moral and ethical actions are dismissed in favor of torture, deceit, manipulation of the masses, genocide, and civil war. Societies are trapped in perpetual war, as Adama reflects, "We've been at war for so long we forget what we're fighting for. Raise our kids in peace. Enjoy each other's company. Live life as people again" (*A Day In The Life,* 2007). The ability to project a positive future—to live with hope—is compromised. The echo of Adama's question as to whether we are worthy of survival is heard and the unspoken answer may be no.

However, the narrative allows us to work through a possible future in relationship to our others by dramatizing the imagined futures. Although the humans are at war with the Cylons and estranged from their God(s), there are numerous points at which the characters embrace the Other, which stand in contrast to the continued separation that only lengthens the discord. Most obvious is the romantic love between Helo and Sharon Athena with their marriage and child. This is contrasted with Starbuck and Anders in *He That Believeth In Me* (2008) when Anders says he would love her even if she were a Cylon. Starbuck replies she would put a bullet between his eyes if he was a Cylon.

Fundamentally, Laura Roslin is at the core of shifting paradigms about the Cylons. Her decisions to toss Cylons out the airlocks, authorizing biological warfare and genocide, resisting the Cylon Occupation of New Caprica through terrorist bombings, torturing Baltar for

information about the Cylons, and other acts define her in overt opposition to the Cylons. Yet, in

The Hub (2008), Roslin has an epiphany spurred by Elosha's words: "The harder it is to

recognize someone's right to draw breath, the more crucial it is" (*The Hub*, 2008). While the

immediate outcome is to save Baltar's life, the ramifications extend to Cylons. Roslin agrees

with Lee, as acting President, to an alliance with the rebel Cylons in their quest to find Earth. As

a leader, Roslin has discovered she possesses the ability to redefine what constitutes otherness

through the process of learning more about herself. However, her followers are not as apt to

reconcile their differences and forgive the Cylons their sins, which prolong the conflicts and

peaks with Zarek and Gaeta leading a mutiny. Roslin speaks plainly to the fleet from Baltar's

clandestine wireless, stating, "Our former enemies are our only hope" (*The Oath*, 2009). Indeed,

without the rebel Cylons there would be no hope of eluding or battling Cavil and the other

Cylons who desire the extermination of all humans except through the more advanced

technology the rebel Cylons are willing to share. Nor would there be reconciliation with God(s)

without reconciliation with the Cylons.

The Cylons also provide hope through their technology and the need to repair the hull of

the Galactica. Tyrol discovers cracks throughout the hull and recommends an organic compound

of the Cylons for repairs (*No Exit*, 2009). Adama flatly refuses the offer but, in private, he

breaks down and weeps for the imminent loss of his ship. He gives Tyrol the authorization to do

what is necessary to save the Galactica and eventually approves Cylons as part of the work

crews. Galactica has, in essence, become fused with the Other of Cylon technology and becomes

something Other as well. However, during the work a large break occurs, many human and

Cylon workers are lost into space, and repairs are essentially useless. The Galactica continues to

morph into something more than just a Colonial battleship when Anders, in a coma after being

shot and undergoing brain surgery, is connected to the support systems of the ship in much the same fashion as the Cylon hybrids on base stars. The narrative seems dissatisfied with just reconciliation between humans and Cylons, the embracing of the Other extends to the ship as well.

Embracing the Other is not a unidirectional initiative by the humans. The Cylons must also reconcile themselves with humans and embrace the humans in order to discover their own fully realized selves. In the narrative, the key story arc allowing Cylons to begin reconciliation and turn away from the opposition to humanity is the search for the Final Five within the fleet, the destruction of the Resurrection ship, and the political deal to find Earth together (*The Hub,* 2008; *Revelations*, 2008). The destruction of the Resurrection ship has implications for embracing the other, such as signaling the intent of the rebel Cylons to pursue an alliance with the Colonials by damaging the ability of the Cylons to have an advantage in the number of combatants. The destruction also brings Cylons closer to the existential tacit knowledge of humans by becoming aware of their own death. In *Guess What's Coming to Dinner?* (2008), Natalie explains the rebel Cylons can never return to the Cylon community and expect to die without resurrection technology, "Our destiny. Our future. Begins here…Mortality is the one thing that makes you whole." Indeed, mortality becomes the great equalizer and connector between the Cylons and the humans. Solomon et al. (1998) explain, "when people who are different are convinced (or compelled) to adopt the beliefs of the dominant majority, the result is even broader social support for, and thus greater faith in, those beliefs" (p. 17). The 'belief' in death without physical resurrection allows both humans and Cylons the opportunity to view themselves as more alike and increases the conviction that a physical death is the proper end to a physical life. The result is a shift in the personal and cultural paradigm of the Cylons where

death has no meaning due to resurrection technology to one in which death is a very real and near event in partnership with God.

The Cylons meet the concept of death in the same fashion as humans, by incorporating their anxiety into their cultural worldview via religious faith of a soul that will be embraced by God. Per Solomon et al. (1998), "cultural worldviews evolved; these are humanly created beliefs about the nature of reality shared by groups of people that served (at least in part) to manage the terror engendered by the uniquely human awareness of death" (p. 12). This begs the question as to whether Cylons can be considered human because they are now aware of and subject to their own deaths. However, that's the wrong question. The more interesting question is whether Cylons are able to realize their full selves—individually and collectively—through engaging with human notions surrounding death as a means to find intrinsic ontological meaning. Nevertheless, as Cowan (2010) states, "often our understanding of reality is not a function of ontology or biology, but epistemology and social reinforcement" (p. 231). Reality is shaken as what they think they know is disproven and the social order they previously enjoyed is replaced with the social reinforcement of reconciliation with humans and imminent death.

Interpretively, the question Adama introduces at the beginning of the narrative as to whether or not the human race is worthy of survival, may find traces of a positive answer within the concept of embracing the Other. The principled leadership actions of love, forgiveness, and redemption can all connect to the process of seeing our own selves in others and discovering the similarities and differences which constitute others and us. This goal is complicated by the individuals in the social system of the narrative deeply involved in managing the terror of their imminent death. As a coping framework, scapegoats and villains are sought. As Kearney (2003) notes, "When violent fears go, so do monsters. Love is the casting out of fear. The key, perhaps,

is not to kill our monsters but to learn to live with them" (p. 62). Learning "to live with them"

requires granting forgiveness and seeking forgiveness. The key for leaders is not to flinch from

what is seen and be mindful of placing our fears and hatreds onto others, when they are

potentially what we fear most about ourselves. We must reconcile our monsters to ourselves

through love and forgiveness, thus enlarging our capacity to be principled beings in the universe.

Chapter VI: A Search for Home

The previous chapters explored the function of science fiction narratives, leadership competencies during a crisis, the potential emergence of charismatic leaders during crises, and an interpretation of various leaders in the narrative of *Battlestar Galactica* through their leadership actions and qualities compared to relevant theories and the narrative themes of love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing the Other. Within this chapter, I offer an interpretation integrating the theories and narrative themes to provide an insight into the implications for leadership practice and development. I begin by discussing the narrative construction of the series, which is a search for home.

> Sometimes I wonder what home is. Is it an actual place or is it
> some kind of longing for something, some kind of connection?
> (Roslin to Adama, *Islanded In A Stream of Stars*, 2009).

The through-line of the narrative is the human quest for a home and the narrative device is a *voyage extraordinaire* to find a home on the mythical planet Earth. There is a "transcendent value of a homeland in a time of desperation and diaspora" (Cowan, 2010, p. 159) infusing the story from the initial attack on the Colonies to the conclusion on the new Earth. Yet, as Roslin wondered, what is home? Should we consider *Battlestar Galactica* to be little more than a happy-ending story about a group of people looking for Earth and finding it? Or is there something more at play about searching for a home while navigating an environment of continual crisis and change?

Home is a word deeply imbued with personal and cultural meaning that elicits understandings and emotions across the spectrum. Sixsmith (1986) offers 20 categories of meanings about the concept of home going beyond the understandings of physicality and territoriality to include happiness, belonging, self-expression, permanence, privacy, and relationships with others. American popular culture is rife with notions about home, from the

song "Home Sweet Home" to Dorothy Gale's mantra "There's no place like home" to Thomas

Wolfe's book "You Can't Go Home Again." Indeed, *Battlestar Galactica* plays on our notions

of the meaning of home through episodes titled *You Can't Go Home Again, Home,* and *Exodus*.

Adama and Roslin are engaged in the quest to find a suitable home as a component of

meeting their followers' basic needs. Viewing home as a construct within Maslow's hierarchy of

needs "enables individuals to achieve psychological well-being through providing for their

physiological and safety needs, as well as a suitable environment enabling the fulfillment of

security and love needs and a medium of expression for self-esteem and social respect"

(Annison, 2000, p. 256). Hawkins and Maurer (2011) note, "the larger concept of home is

understood to provide ontological security in the constancy of a secure base around which

individual and community identities are constructed" (p. 144). *Ontological security* is defined as

"confidence that most human beings have in the continuity of their self-identity and in the

constancy of their social and material environments of action" (Giddens, 1990, as cited in

Hawkins & Maurer, 2011, p. 144). For the characters of *Battlestar Galactica*, their ontological

security has been disrupted by the Cylon attack on the Twelve Colonies and the relentless

perpetual war against the Cylons. Human flight from their home worlds not only stimulates

mortality salience, but "experiences of displacement, diaspora, and migration evoke fundamental

questions of home and identity…an accentuation of the existential anxiety which lies at the core

of all human experience" (Hayes, 2007, p. 3). For leaders, mitigating the effects of existential

anxiety through restoration of ontological security is a positive competency and the leaders in

Battlestar Galactica provide a means for exploring the concept.

In preparing my thoughts for the writing of this dissertation, I placed a large sticky note

on the wall with the question 'Why doesn't the social system survive?' The note loomed over

the room like the proverbial elephant. The objective set throughout the five years of the series was to find a home where they could begin their lives again. The journey was extremely difficult, thousands of people died, millions of Cylons died, God(s) were beseeched and rejected, and ethics and morality were compromised all in an effort to reclaim their social fabric and assert their identity as humans. And yet, they choose to turn away from the paradigms of their past. In *Daybreak* (2009), the series finale, the surviving humans and allied Cylons disperse in small groups across the globe of new Earth only taking what they can carry, while Anders pilots the fleet of starships into the Sun to their destruction, and the Centurions are freed to find their own future somewhere in the universe. The survivors have determined not to rebuild their Colonial civilization and to live in unity with the Cylons. Romo Lampkin, the final President of the Colonies, expresses surprise at the voluntary diaspora, and Adama states, "Don't underestimate the desire for a clean slate" (*Daybreak,* 2009). Upon reflection, I realized I had been asking the wrong question. The true question was, 'Why does it *feel right* that the survivors go their separate ways?' However, as a dialogue with the visual text, this question raises other questions concerning our understanding of principled leadership actions in times of crisis and continual change.

What is found in *Battlestar Galactica* is a narrative that moves from the search and discovery of a home to one of creation. The survivors move from the place of powerlessness, as the leaders make the decisions for where/when to journey/stop, to a place of empowerment and self-determination, which excludes the assistance of their leaders and the rebuilding of a stratified socio-political hierarchy. They embark on an uncertain journey through a creative act that produces ontological meaning.

Rowles (2008) argues, "Meaning can be discovered, nurtured, and, most important, facilitated through the creation of place" (p. 128). However, the creation of home undertaken by the survivors in the narrative suggests a deeper need or longing than simply investing ontological meaning in a specific locality. In her discussion of Heidegger's concept of Dasein and building-dwelling, Hayes (2007) states:

> This seems to offer an understanding of home which is not retreatist, nostalgic, or exclusionary. Instead, there is a possibility of *becoming* at home through the grasping of one's freedom, the clarification of one's life purpose, and a respectful attitude to one's relationships with others. Building-dwelling is a creative act of defining one's home as an expression of one's authenticity… the fulfillment of our potential. (p. 6)

Hayes (2007) combines Heidegger's position with Kierkegaard's notion of spheres of existence and puts forward the understanding of "an authentic process of (be)coming home to ourselves is one of continually creating and recreating home within ourselves and between ourselves and others" (p. 16). The concept of home becomes more than a place and develops into an interaction with self and others (Madison, 2006).

The understanding of home as a creation in relationship with self and others brings us back to reflections on leadership during crises and principled leadership actions. Beginning with the premise that leaders build relationships with followers in order to influence the ability of the group to achieve goals, we are confronted with followers who, essentially, leave their leaders once the goal is achieved. We could interpret this as a positive outcome of leaders developing their followers towards autonomy, but we could just as easily discuss the possibility of follower dissatisfaction with the means by which the leaders achieved the goal. I am inclined to refer to the latter in light of the previous discussion of the negative behaviors the leaders demonstrated in motivating followers and maintaining group cohesion. Adama and Roslin expend precious resources and blood in providing basic needs for their followers, only to have them walk away without the guarantee of shelter, food, water, safety, and security. The ends do not appear to

justify the means for the followers and they retract their followership for "a clean slate" where they can create purpose and meaning in harmony with their social and physical environment on their own terms.

The implication for leadership studies may become a reassessment of the significance of goal achievement and strong leaders in times of crisis. Valuing the attainment of a goal through any means, gallant or deplorable, may present challenges for leaders, particularly in times of extreme crisis and continual change. What appears to be suggested is the need for a balance between goal achievement and principled actions. As discussed previously, Roslin and Adama were severely tested in their ability to love, forgive, seek redemption, and embrace the other. They did not always succeed and the consequences of their failure brought further conflict and harm to the group. Their need to maintain the status quo of power traditionally held by military and political authorities precluded their ability to create a social system of inclusion and distributive decision-making, often through exhibiting behaviors of tyrants. This interpretation suggests that had the leaders been more cognizant and less averse to acting in loving and forgiving ways by seeking reconciliation with their selves, followers, enemies, and God(s), the outcome may have prevented the scattering of survivors and projected the possible future of a society based on the noble ideals and premises they were previously unable to fully realize. The narrative seems to suggest while it may be efficacious to cling to known structures and ideologies in extremis and continual change as a means for physical survival and psychological well-being, perhaps we need to find a new of being in the aftermath—a way of starting over in community with our others and ourselves. Interpretively, this becomes an issue of mediating the tensions between our rational/technoscientific and our spiritual/transcendent natures. Lee remarks to Adama on new Earth, "One thing we learned. Our brains have always outraced our

hearts. Our science charges ahead. Our souls lag behind" (*Daybreak*, 2009). The reclamation of their souls depends upon the distancing of the technoscientific to balance the transcendent.

Yet, *Battlestar Galactica* does not end with humans and Cylons walking into a new dawn. The series coda brings the narrative 150,000 years into the future to a society, once again wholly familiar yet different, as Angel Six and Angel Baltar remark on the discovery of Hera as the mitochondrial Eve of the inhabitants of new Earth. They walk through the streets filled with flashing billboards, automobiles, chaotic noise, and other accoutrements of a wealthy modern industrialized society. They wonder if this society is now on the verge of enacting the repetitive cycle of birth, death, rebirth, destruction, escape, and death. The camera moves along the streetscape catching images of the homeless against posh storefronts and settling on a television screen broadcasting news of advancements in robotics, complete with a model that looks like a human female. The *Battlestar Galactica* narrative becomes more than a story of people finding a habitable planet or a cautionary tale of the dangers of technological advancement, but becomes a challenge to reflect on our personal and social paradigms of being in the world.

When the survivors of the Second Cylon War come to new Earth, they find a pristine landscape filled with life, including proto-humans. They determine to create home through reclaiming their authentic selves in relationships with others. However, the story demonstrates the hard won understanding is somehow lost over the millennia. The coda frames the potential for the destruction of the society and the disruption of ontological security arising from the alienation of humans to each other in favor of technology. As Dupuis and Thorns (1998) explain, "unlike the pre-modern worlds, where ontological security was sustained by the routine of face to face interaction within the kinship system, ontological security in the modern world is fragile and tenuous...[needing] to be actively regrounded in ties with others" (pp. 27-28). At the

risk of being accused of technology bashing, the comfort of our modern routines of interaction with technology has distracted us from the more fundamental aspects of human existence, which is community. As *Battlestar Galactica* depicts the journey of a community in times of crisis, we would be well served by reflecting on how relationships with our selves, others, and the unseen order may prevent or resolve crises in the reality of our own present. In this fashion, *Battlestar Galactica* functions to mediate the tensions of the technoscientific and transcendent by exploring some of the desires and fears of our present and projected future.

Importantly, the crises and continually changing circumstances of *Battlestar Galactica* are not presented as only situational predicaments or problems to be 'fixed' through the actions of leaders but are further integrated with morality, theology, ontology, epistemology, and social justice issues. In this way, they become meditations on relational practice and the pieces that constitute a just and moral world without the binaries of good/evil or us/them. Numerous science fiction texts and films explore these same themes. This becomes the challenge for leadership studies to clear a space where dialogue on relational practices may occur for individual, organizational, and socio-cultural contexts with the use of science fictional texts. Through the cognitive estrangement of science fiction texts, a possibility exists for dialogue a step removed from the biases and closely held beliefs of conversants. I propose it may be easier, if not safer, to discuss fictional leaders, religions, and marginalized Others as a means to extrapolate understanding in our own lives. We have no stake at play in the discussion of fiction, but we may not be as forthright or honest when the conversation is about real life people and events. Furthermore, extreme crises may never happen to us, but thinking and talking about how we might meet the challenges opens our hearts and minds to the greater philosophical questions of morality, ontology, and justice posed since the time of the ancient Greeks. We simply learn

more about ourselves and our others, which allows for greater understanding of the human condition.

Furthermore, the integration of science fiction texts may be of benefit to leadership development. Films, in particular, can be a powerful tool for creating a common experience and engaging people to think and feel in ways that would be difficult within their proscribed everyday experiences. As science fiction films are hugely popular, they may also be a means of engaging people in a more interesting way to facilitate discussions of leadership theory and ethical actions than written case studies.

Kearney (2003) states, "it is the privilege of a well-told story to be able to disclose, as Aristotle put it, 'universal' aspects of the human condition" (p. 182). More importantly, we require artists to help us see farther and deeper than we can see on our own. In *Battlestar Galactica,* we discover another means for exploring universal concepts of the human condition through the depiction of leaders navigating change in times of extreme crisis. The narrative demonstrates the tensions between the technoscientific and transcendent, illuminating our desires and fears about projected futures. We are gifted with the narrative's central question of whether or not we are worthy of survival. The answer appears to be—maybe. But our worthiness requires formal and informal leaders to demonstrate principled leadership through love, forgiveness, redemption, and embracing our others and ourselves.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Character Descriptions

Name	Call sign	Description
Adama, Lee	Apollo	William Adama's estranged son
Adama, William	Husker	Commander of the Battlestar Galactica
Agathon, Karl	Helo	Raptor pilot; marries Sharon Athena; father to Hera
Agathon, Sharon	Athena	Cylon model eight who falls in love with Helo; mother to Hera
Anders, Sam		Survivor of Caprican assault; professional athlete; marries Starbuck
Angel Baltar		Seen by Baltar and Caprica Six
Angel Six		Also known as Head Six; seen and heard primarily by Baltar
Baltar, Gaius		Renowned scientist; religious leader; incompetent politician
Biers, D'Anna		Cylon model three; film documentarian; obsessed with finding final five Cylons
Boomer		See Sharon Valerii
Brother Cavil		Cylon model one masquerading as disillusioned priest
Bulldog		Pilot captured by Cylons in event prior to the narrative who escapes and tries to kill Adama
Cain, Helena		Admiral of the Fleet; Commander of Pegasus; shot by Gina
Caprica Six		Cylon model six who gains access to Caprican defenses through Baltar
Catraine, Louanne	Kat	Fighter pilot with questionable past; surpasses Starbuck as top pilot; dies from radiation poisoning
Cavil		Cylon model one; depicted as Cylon leader
Crashdown		Lieutenant in charge of Kobol ground party; shot by Baltar
Daniel		Absent Cylon model seven; line sabotaged by Cavil due to jealousy
Doc Cottle		Chief medical officer on the Galactica
Doral		Cylon model
Dr. Robert		Medical doctor who kills patients he feels are inferior and not worthy of surviving or being allowed to have their share of resources
Dualla, Anastasia "Dee"		Communications specialist; marries Lee Adama; commits suicide
Elosha		Priestess of the Lords of Kobol; dies on Kobol after stepping on landmine
Fenner		Captain of tyllium refining ship
Fisk		Executive Officer of Pegasus
Foster, Tory		Assistant to Roslin; final five Cylon; murders Cally; strangled by Tyrol
Gaeta, Felix		Officer; Chief of Staff to Baltar; mutineer
Gina		Cylon model eight; brutalized by Pegasus crew; loved by Baltar; detonates nuclear warhead leading to Cylons finding New Caprica

Hadrian		A Master Staff Sergeant who overreaches against Adama during the independent tribunal seeking answers for the water sabotage
Hera		Human/Cylon child of Helo and Sharon Athena; mitochondrial Eve of New Earth
Hoshi		Officer on Pegasus and the Galactica; Admiral of the Fleet for a few hours
Jammer		Deckhand who joins police force on New Caprica; saves Cally from firing squad; murdered by "The Circle" for collaborating with the Cylons
Keikeye, Billy		Assistant to Roslin; shot by human anti-war protesters
Lampkin, Romo		Lawyer who defends Baltar; last President of the Twelve Colonies
Leoben		Cylon model; mystic sensibilities; obsessed with Kara Thrace
Liam		Child of Tigh and Caprica Six; dies before being brought to term
Mathias		A staff sergeant killed on the Demetrious
Mrs. King		A Sagittaron woman whose son is killed by Dr. Robert
Natalie		Cylon model eight who rebels against Cavil
Not-Leoben		Angel who helps Starbuck reconcile feelings about her mother
Phelan		Black Market kingpin; shot by Lee Adama
Piano Player		Angel who helps Starbuck overcome feelings about father
Roslin, Laura		Former Secretary of Education who succeeds to the Presidency of the Twelve Colonies; believes she is the dying leader of an ancient prophecy who will lead her people to a new home
Seelix,		Deckhand who becomes pilot
Shevon		Prostitute frequented by Lee Adama
Simon		Cylon model typically depicted as doctor
Sons of Aries		Religious fundamentalists prone to violent action against those who do not share their religious beliefs
Sophia		Cylon model eight who seeks political representation from Roslin
Thrace, Kara	Starbuck	Exceptional fighter pilot; marries Anders
Throne		Officer on Pegasus; brutalizes Gina; attempts to rape Boomer; killed in fight with Helo and Tyrol
Tigh, Ellen		Wife of Saul Tigh; Cylon
Tigh, Saul		Executive Officer; final five Cylon
Tyrol, Cally		Deckhand; marries Tyrol
Tyrol, Galen "Chief"		Chief engineer; final five Cylon
Valerii, Sharon	Boomer	Pilot who is sleeper Cylon agent
Zarek, Tom		Imprisoned domestic terrorist; politician and President

Appendix B: Episode Guide

Title	Airdate	Season/ Disc	Writer(s)	Director
Miniseries	12/8/2003 12/9/2003	1.1	Ronald D. Moore & Christopher Eric James	Michael Rymer
33	1/14/2005	1.2	Ronald D. Moore	Michael Rymer
Water	1/14/2005	1.2	Ronald D. Moore	Marita Grabiak
Bastille Day	1/21/2005	1.2	Toni Graphia	Alan Kroeker
Act of Contrition	1/28/2005	1.2	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Rod Hardy
You Can't Go Home Again	2/4/2005	1.3	Carla Robinson	Sergio Mimica-Gazzen
Litmus	2/11/2005	1.3	Jeff Vlaming	Rod Hardy
Six Degrees of Separation	2/15/2005	1.3	Michael Angeli	Robert Young
Flesh and Bone	2/25/2005	1.3	Toni Graphia	Brad Turner
Tigh Me Up, Tigh Me Down	3/4/2005	1.4	Jeff Vlaming	Edward James Olmos
The Hand of God	3/11/2005	1.4	David Weddle & Bradley Thompson	Jeff Woolnough
Colonial Day	3/18/2005	1.4	Carla Robinson	Jonas Pate
Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 1	3/25/2005	1.4	Ronald D. Moore & David Eick	Michael Rymer
Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 2	4/1/2005	1.5	Ronald D. Moore & David Eick	Michael Rymer
Scattered	7/15/2005	2.1	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Michael Rymer
Valley of Darkness	7/22/2005	2.1	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Michael Rymer
Fragged	7/29/2005	2.1	Dawn Prestwich & Nicole Yorkin	Sergio Mimica-Gazzen
Resistance	8/5/2005	2.1	Toni Graphia	Allan Kroeker
The Farm	8/12/2005	2.2	Carla Robinson	Rod Hardy
Home, Part 1	8/19/2005	2.2	David Eick	Sergio Mimica-Gazzen
Home, Part 2	8/26/2005	2.2	David Eick & Ronald D. Moore	Jeff Woolnough
Final Cut	9/9/2005	2.2	Mark Verheiden	Robert Young
Flight of the Phoenix	9/16/2005	2.3	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Michael Nankin
Pegasus	9/23/2005	2.3	Anne Cofell Saunders	Michael Rymer
Resurrection Ship, Part 1	1/6/2006	2.5.1	Anne Cofell Saunders & Michael Rymer	Michael Rymer
Resurrection Ship, Part 2	1/13/2006	2.5.1	Michael Rymer & Ronald	Michael Rymer

Title	Airdate	Season/ Disc	Writer(s)	Director
			D. Moore	
Epiphanies	1/20/2006	2.5.1	Joel Anderson Thompson	Rod Hardy
Black Market	1/27/2006	2.5.2	Mark Verheiden	James Head
Scar	2/3/2006	2.5.2	David Weddle & Bradley Thompson	Michael Nankin
Sacrifice	2/10/2006	2.5.2	Anne Cofell Saunders	Reynaldo Villalobos
The Captain's Hand	2/17/2006	2.5.2	Jeff Vlaming	Sergio Mimica-Gazzen
Downloaded	2/24/2006	2.5.3	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Jeff Woolnough
Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 1	3/3/2006	2.5.3	Ronald D. Moore	Michael Rymer
Lay Down Your Burdens, Part 2	3/10/2006	2.5.3	Anne Cofell Saunders & Mark Verheiden	Michael Rymer
Occupation	10/6/2006	3.1	Ronald D. Moore	Sergio Mimica-Gazzen
Precipice	10/6/2006	3.1	Ronald D. Moore	Sergio Mimica-Gazzen
Exodus, Part 1	10/13/2006	3.1	David Weddle & Bradley Thompson	Felix Alcala
Exodus, Part 2	10/20/2006	3.1	David Weddle & Bradley Thompson	Felix Alcala
Collaborators	10/27/2006	3.2	Mark Verheiden	Michael Rymer
Torn	11/3/2006	3.2	Anne Cofell Saunders	Jean de Segoznac
A Measure of Salvation	11/10/2006	3.2	Michael Angeli	Bill Eagles
Hero	11/17/2006	3.3	David Eick	Michael Rymer
Unfinished Business	12/1/2006	3.3	Michael Taylor	Robert Young
The Passage	12/8/2006	3.4	Jane Espenson	Michael Nankin
The Eye of Jupiter	12/15/2006	3.4	Mark Verheiden	Michael Rymer
Rapture	1/21/2007	3.4	David Weddle & Bradley Thompson	Michael Rymer
Taking A Break from All Your Worries	1/28/2007	3.4	Michael Taylor	Edward James Olmos
The Woman King	2/11/2007	3.5	Michael Angeli	Michael Rymer
A Day In the Life	2/18/2007	3.5	Mark Verheiden	Rod Hardy
Dirty Hands	2/25/2007	3.5	Anne Cofell Saunders & Jane Espenson	Wayne Rose
Maelstrom	3/4/2007	3.5	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Michael Nankin
The Son Also Rises	3/11/2007	3.6	Michael Angeli	Robert Young
Crossroads, Part 1	3/18/2007	3.6	Michael Taylor	Michael Rymer
Crossroads, Part 2	3/25/2007	3.6	Mark Verheiden	Michael Rymer

Title	Airdate	Season/ Disc	Writer(s)	Director
Razor	11/24/2007	4.1	Michael Taylor	Felix Enriquez Alcalá
He That Believeth In Me	4/4/2008	4.2	David Weddle & Bradley Thompson	Michael Rymer
Six of One	4/11/2008	4.2	Michael Angeli	Anthony Hemingway
The Ties That Bind	4/18/2008	4.2	Michael Taylor	Michael Nankin
Escape Velocity	4/25/2008	4.2	Jane Espenson	Edward James Olmos
The Road Less Traveled	5/2/2008	4.3	Mark Verheiden	Michael Rymer
Faith	5/9/2008	4.3	Seamus Kevin Fahey	Michael Nankin
Guess What's Coming To Dinner?	5/16/2008	4.3	Michael Angeli	Wayne Rose
Sine Qua Non	5/30/2008	4.4	Michael Taylor	Rod Hardy
The Hub	6/6/2008	4.4	Jane Espenson	Paul Edwards
Revelations	6/13/2008	4.4	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Michael Rymer
Sometimes A Great Notion	1/16/2009	4.5.1	David Weddle & Bradley Thompson	Michael Nankin
A Disquiet Follows My Soul	1/23/2009	4.5.1	Ronald D. Moore	Ronald D. Moore
The Oath	1/30/2009	4.5.2	Mark Verheiden	John Dalul
Blood on the Scales	2/6/2009	4.5.2	Michael Angeli	Wayne Rose
No Exit	2/13/2009	4.5.2	Ryan Motteshead	Gwyneth Horder-Payton
Deadlock	2/20/2009	4.5.2	Jane Espenson	Robert Young
Someone To Watch Over Me	2/27/2009	4.5.3	Bradley Thompson & David Weddle	Michael Nankin
Islanded In A Stream of Stars	3/6/2009	4.5.3	Michael Taylor	Edward James Olmos
Daybreak, Part 1	3/13/2009	4.5.4	Ronald D. Moore	Michael Rymer
Daybreak, Part 2 & 3	3/20/2009	4.5.4	Ronald D. Moore	Michael Rymer

All episodes produced by Ronald D. Moore & David Eick; SyFy Channel-NBC Universal.

Appendix C: Glossary

Term	Definition
Acquaria	A Colonial planet
Aerilon	A Colonial planet
Ambrosia	Green liqueur favored by Colonials
Arrow of Apollo	Arrow that is expected to help humans find the path to Earth
Base ship	A very large Cylon ship used as a base for Cylons, Centurions, Heavy Raiders, and Raiders
Boxing	Taking a Cylon human model off-line and placing in storage
CAG	Commander of the Air Group
Canceron	A Colonial planet
Caprica	A Colonial planet
Caprica City	Capitol city of Caprica and set of Colonial government
Centurions	Cylons with steel bodies, typically used as soldiers and low-skilled workers by humanoid Cylons
Chamallah	An herb used in homeopathic treatments known to induce hallucinations
Cylon	Used to describe the enemies of the Colonials, particularly those who look human
Cylon Civil War	Hostilities between Cylon factions sparked by the lobotomizing of Raiders and disagreement over finding the Final Five
Cylon War	Typically refers to the First Cylon War forty years prior to the beginning of the narrative
Demetrious	Garbage scow captained by Starbuck to seek the path to Earth
Dogsville	Slang term for the area of the Galactica's hold where refugees from New Caprica are living in deplorable conditions
Earth	Mythical planet foretold of in scriptures; found to be a nuclear wasteland
Final Five, The	Five humanoid Cylons unknown to Cylons and forbidden to be discussed
Frakking	A television appropriate substitute for fuck
FTL Drive	Faster-Than-Light travel capability
Gemenon	A Colonial planet
Heavy Raider	A Cylon ship used for transport and reconnaissance
Hybrid	Initial failed Cylon attempt to create human/machine being. Hybrids look human and are hard wired into the base ship to control ship operations. They speak in prophetic and incomprehensible ways.
Jump	Common word for the faster-than-light movement of a starship
Knuckledraggers	Pejorative name for the deck crew
Kobol	The planet where "Gods and Men lived in peace and harmony" (*Kobol's Last Gleaming, Part 1*). The Twelve Tribes of Men were inexplicably ousted from the planet and settled in a system of stars known as the Colonies.
Leonis	A Colonial planet

Term	Definition
Libran	A Colonial planet
Lords of Kobol	The pantheon of Gods worshipped by the Colonials suggestive of the Ancient Greek and Roman deities from a planet called Kobol
New Caprica	Planet colonized by humans as they elude Cylons
New Earth	Planet colonized by humans at end of narrative
Nuggets	Rookie pilots in training
Olympic Carrier	Civilian ship compromised by Cylons and shot down by Lee Adama on Roslin's orders
One True God, The	The God worshipped by Cylons and Centurions, and eventually by a sect of humans led by Gaius Baltar
Picon	A Colonial planet
Pythia	Prophetess who wrote of a lost 13th tribe who colonized Earth
Pythian Prophecy	Prophecy by Pythia contained in the Kobol scriptures that a dying leader will lead the people to their new home. Commonly interpreted to be Laura Roslin and the search for Earth after the destruction of the Twelve Colonies by the Cylons.
Pyramid	Professional sport played in Twelve Colonies
Raider	A sentient Cylon fighter ship
Raptor	A military vehicle used by the humans for transport and reconnaissance
Resurrection Ship	Cylon ship holding copies of each model capable of downloading memories to a new body
Sagittaron	A Colonial planet
Scorpia	A Colonial planet
Skin job	Pejorative word for Cylons who look human
Tauron	A Colonial planet
telencephalic inhibitor	A chip implanted in Centurions to subvert their free will and make them acquiescent to human model Cylons
Temple of the Five	As temple built on the algae planet as a signpost on the way to Earth
Thirteenth Tribe	Fabled lost tribe of Kobol said to have settled on the planet Earth. Discovered to be a race of Cylons.
Toaster	Pejorative word for Centurions
Twelve Colonies	The twelve planets populated by the twelve tribes of Kobol after their banishment by the Gods from Kobol. Destroyed by the Cylons.
Tyllium	Sand-like ore that is used as a transportation fuel
Viper	A human fighter ship
Virgon	A Colonial planet

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