

## ***Battlestar Galactica: When Being and Appearance Collide***

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### **Introduction**

That war exists, has always existed, might be *the* fact that has caused humanity the most despair. From the Bible to Trajan's column, from *War and Peace* to *Guernica*, war has been painted, recounted, sculpted, dramatized. The arts have historically served as the polished shield of Perseus, allowing us enough remove that we might look into the horrifying face of the gorgon of war. When war is too terrible to take in, we turn to the expressive arts. When we can't find a way to handle the horrific-ness of the Holocaust, we might be able to take in something like the cinematically compelling *Schindler's List* or perhaps Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, where the perpetrators are cats and pigs, the victims of that horror, mice.

From *Princess Mononoke* to *Persepolis*, from Stanley Kubrik's *Full Metal Jacket* to Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind*, the litany of representations of war in art is far too extensive to catalog here. But yet, we are aware that art can mitigate, can help us to gaze upon the havoc wreaked by war. Whether this is a good thing or a bad thing is beyond the scope of this paper, but I think there is no argument that the arts can, and do, make war visible.

But what if we flip this question on its head and ask not what do the arts reveal about war, but instead "what can looking at war show us?" What does the container of war help us to see? For example, *Waltz With Bashir*—a relatively recent animated film about the repressed memories of an Israeli soldier – shows us not only the terror of the massacre of Palestinians at Sabra and Shatila in Lebanon, the strife of the war-torn middle east, but also points to our individual psychological resistance to looking at, and therefore really seeing, war.

The tragic, hopeless, endless war of the four and half season series *Battlestar Galactica* exposes raw humanity. The "Syfy" series – a remake of a short-lived relatively obscure 1978 series – takes off with the nuclear destruction of the planet Caprica at the hands of the Cylons, a "race," if you will, of sentient robots created by the human inhabitants of the planet. Forty years prior to the opening episodes of BSG, the robotic Cylons rebelled against their human creators and left Caprica, only to return in a more highly evolved form. Determined to wipe out humanity, as the scripted narration reminds us at the opening of each episode, "They had a plan." The only humans to survive the Cylon's nuclear attack were those already flying about aboard spacecraft. Led by the aged, ailing, about to be decommissioned Battlestar Galactica, 50,000 humans set off to find Earth, a mythical, lost colony, on which they believe that they will find a new home, with the Cylons in hot pursuit.

The series is visually gritty, with a riveting sound track, dynamic dialog, characters that elicit our concern, and a slow, thoughtful approach to editing that flies in the face of contemporary split-second splicing we have grown used to. The viewing audience reaps the benefits of a long-

term series that unfolds incrementally across a four-year period. In episode after episode, the spectator is graced with relationships that shift, develop or deteriorate, characters who grow and change, who die and, in some cases are resurrected. Richly layered meaning and referential depth is only possible because the series stretches out in and across time.

Producer Ronald Moore, charged with remaking the earlier, briefly aired TV series of the same name, was aware that the premise of the show, an apocalyptic genocide, had a very different resonance in the months following 9-11 than it did in 1978. Moore employed the framework of the new *Galactica* to address pressing post 9-11 issues including racial profiling, the lines between personal freedom and state security, the torture at Abu Ghraib, religious fanaticism, the struggles in the Middle East, to name a few. The long-term series frame of *Galactica* enabled Moore to develop characters with whom the audience was able to build relationships and then to place them in provocative situations, like being hostage to a hostile occupation or contemplating becoming a suicide bomber. These difficult situations inhabited by characters we feel close to, characters we imagine that we know, bring these issues to light in ways that demand debate, Moore believes, and it is this that he suspects is at the heart of the artist's task.

The extended war of *Battlestar Galactica* becomes Moore's Petri dish in which both the mundane issues that confront us, as well as some deeply profound philosophical issues, are nourished and abound. The men and women of the Galatica struggle, as do any members of any armed forces, with substance abuse, despair, suicidal tendencies, jealousy, shifting allegiances, romantic strife, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, -- just what you would expect of characters trapped in an endless war, with no reinforcements expected and none ever coming. But emerging from this metaphoric battlefield are the deeper questions which war, by its close proximity to death, also underscores: questions of meaning, of morality, of home, of the soul, of what, ultimately, makes us human.

### **What makes a person?**

The original Cylons, created by humans and affectionately dubbed Toasters by the crew of *Galactica*, appear to be machine-like. These Centurians are encased in a metallic skin; they are shiny silver with robotic, digitized, fingers and one, eerie, oscillating infrared eye. When they unexpectedly develop sentience, they rebelled against their human masters, and left the twelve planets. During their forty-year absence, the Cylons evolved – like cinematic descendents of *Blade Runner's* "Replicants" – they became virtually indistinguishable from humans. Early on in the current BSG series, they have infiltrated the crew of *Galactica* and no one is aware of their presence, including, in some cases, the Cylons themselves. These "skin-jobs," are programmed to think, act, feel, and in some cases, believe that they are, in fact, human. The juxtaposition of Cylons who look like machines and Cylons who appear as human as can be – who bleed, who feel pain, who make love, who give birth—begs the question of what inheres in humanity.

This question takes center stage and percolates over time as the series unfolds. When the

human crew of Galactica torture Cylon prisoners, when the human president of the colonies secretly steals a interspecies, human/Cylon baby away from her parents, leading them to believe that she is dead, or when the Cylon model Sharon/Athena, risks her life for her human fleet members time and time again, we are confronted with the issues of what makes us human, what makes us compassionate, what will we fight for, who will we die for.

Robert Arp and Tracie Mahaffey have explored the issue of what constitutes personhood in their essay, ““And They Have A Plan””: Cylons As Persons.” (Arp and Mahaffey, 2008: 55)

The person, Arp and Mahaffey insist, is one who is entitled to the rights and privileges of the society in which she dwells. While there is no question that women, children, slaves are all inarguably human, historically they have not always been granted the rights accorded to the person.(Ibid) Comparing this historical lack of personhood afforded to women and slaves, they make the case that simple humanness is not sufficient to establish personhood. But is the converse true? Could personhood status be afforded to a non-human?

Arp and Mahaffey delineate a definition of personhood that includes the ability to be rational and intelligent, to have robust mental states which include beliefs, desires, emotions and self-awareness; the ability to use language to communicate these states, be in relationships, and ultimately to be morally responsible for one’s actions as a free and autonomous being. (Ibid)

Again, the nature of the scope of the on-going series affords us abundant opportunity for examples of each of these attributes constituting humanity. Arp and Mahaffey clearly demonstrate that the Cylons more than meet these criteria. As episodes advance and events collude to blur the distinction between man and machine – a Cylon/human baby is born and raised by an interspecies couple, some Cylons band together with some humans against another group of Cylons, etc. – death becomes the final and defining human experience. Paralleling the life of the series as well, it is not until the final season that the Cylons embrace their finitude.

Previously, when the Cylon were destroyed, in whatever way their living was no longer sustainable, their consciousness was transferred into another of the same model — there were twelve Cylon models created and their were infinite clones of each — and they were resurrected with all their memories in tact in the new clone of their body. Except for the incident with Cylon model, D’anna. During the third season of Galactica, D’anna decides that she wants to experience death, and so, on a daily basis she orders on of the Centurians, the metallic versions of the Cylon, to shoot her in the head. Each time she resurrects into a new body, but all of the memories and experiences of the Number Three model of skin job Cylon, D’anna, is downloaded into this next body.

Brian Willems, in his essay “When the Non-Human Knows Its Own Death,” evokes Martin Heidegger in his look at D’Anna’s behavior. According to Heidegger, only humans, not animals, and certainly not cyborgs, are able to appreciate their finitude, are able to “anticipate or know the potentiality of its own nonexistence.” (Heidegger, 1996:229)

By wanting to experience that space between life and death, by wanting to understand the notion

of mortality, D'anna was deemed by her fellow Cylons as defective. By pushing into an arena hitherto belonging on to the human, she was in fact asserting her individuality. In response, the remaining Cylon skin job models agree to have her "boxed." There would be no further resurrection for her. She is informed by the Cylon model Cavil, that all her data – her memories, thoughts, wishes, dreams, "feelings," if you will – will be boxed, stored in some Cylon database, "indefinitely." (Willem, 2008: 87-98)

Ironically, by giving D'anna this heads up, Cavil inadvertently provides D'anna with the very real experience of confronting her own death. She knows that she will not be resurrected, has the opportunity to feel the fear, anxiety, curiosity, resistance to the notion that she will shortly no longer exist.

In this eternal life, except for the episode of D'anna, the Cylons had for the most part, no relationship with their own mortality. It is not until their resurrection ship is destroyed and they become what humans consider *mortal*, that Cylons in everyway embodied, as Arp and Mahaffey described it, a kind of personhood.

### **A Ball of Wax**

After the destruction of their resurrection ship, the Cylons die, love, feel pain, are rational, use language, raising the specter of what it could possibly mean to be distinctly human. Series creator Moore claims that he saw *Galactica* as an opportunity to turn viewer assumptions on their heads. Showing us machines that sometimes demonstrate more capacity for love and compassion than their human counterparts, is one way that he achieves this. He also juxtaposes a monotheistic Cylon race with humans who paradoxically embrace a polytheistic religion reminiscent of ancient Greek and Roman mythologies. Moore's *Galactica* turns us around and upends many of our assumptions. A world in which robots appear human and humans react robotically provides the ground out of which the ontological figures of *appearance* and *reality* emerge in a new and perhaps startling way.

In order to appreciate the complexity of this issue, we need to return to its Cartesian origins. Since the Enlightenment, science and philosophy, too, have moved in the direction having as their goal, "to lay everything before us, to open it to our inspection." (Shapiro, 2003) On this view all we see and the ways we have come to think about what we see have become rigid. The notion of "metaphysics of presence" rests on the idea that what is standing before us is complete, visible, finite and unchanging. But this unchanging essence is not available to us through our senses. If we rely on our perception, we will be deceived. A classic example of this kind of thinking is Descartes' treatise on a piece of wax. In his Second Meditation he opens the discussion with a sensuous description:

It has been taken quite recently from the honeycomb: it has not yet lost all the honey flavor. It retains some of the scent of the flowers from which it was collected. Its color, shape, and size are manifest. It is hard and cold; it is easy to touch. If you rap on it with your knuckle it will emit a sound. (Ariew, 2000:110)

Descartes brings the piece of wax into relief by engaging all of our senses. But alas! he warns the reader, now, as he approaches a flame, already the qualities of the wax, which his senses had so accurately detected, are beginning to slip away. It is becoming softer, the hint of perfume is dispersing, its color and texture transform the warmer it becomes. He asks then, if none of what his senses had perceived initially is intrinsic to the wax – which is, he assures and perhaps we would agree, still wax even though it looks, feels, smells and sounds different – then what *is* this wax? He arrives at several conclusions. The first is that this wax cannot be its smell or feel or color, for these are transient and its “wax-ness” remains. His second conclusion is that since these apparent and impermanent qualities are perceived via the senses, that they cannot inform our understanding of “wax-ness.” He concludes that although he has an understanding of the wax as mutable and flexible, he realizes that his imagination is limited—he can’t possibly imagine all the combinations of shapes, colors and perfumes the wax *might* embody—his imagination is *not* up to the task of perceiving wax.

It remains then for me to concede that I do not grasp what this wax is through the imagination; rather, I perceive it through the mind alone...[T]he perception of the wax is neither a seeing, nor a touching, nor an imagining....[R]ather it is an inspection on the part of the mind alone.(Ibid: 111)

There are at least two problems with this kind of thinking. The first is the misconception that an object has an unchanging, timeless essence or nature. Why is it a problem that the wax is hard now and soft later? Unyielding now, malleable later? Can’t minds such as ours hold onto this concept that manifests gradations? Can our senses not cope with a shifting presence? Descartes addresses this query by suggesting much the same thing.

Perhaps the wax was what I now think it is: namely that the wax itself never really was the sweetness of the honey, nor the fragrance of the flowers, nor the whiteness, nor the shape, nor the sound, but instead was a body that a short time ago manifested itself to me in these ways, and now does so in other ways.(Ibid)

And we would have to agree that to have this idea of a thing that changes in appearance, odor, texture, is a cognitive function. It requires thought. But where we might challenge Descartes’ conclusion is that it is the province of mind *alone*. It is only *because* he has held it, smelled it, rapped it with his knuckle, put it to his lips, that he can now “step back” and cogitate its aroma, its texture, the sound it makes. It is when the mind and the senses work in concert, slip away hand in hand, like Nietzsche’s light and shadow, that we find understanding, that we make a meaning. To think a thing with qualities like color and aroma, we must have had an immediate experience of these things or trusted someone else’s immediate experience. Where I think Descartes errs is in clinging to the gap between appearance and reality, between thought and sense. He is convinced that the wax’s appearance is not “what it is.” He believes a thing has an essence which remains unchanging, and which does not appear to us. Since the wax clearly changes in all the ways he has so acutely observed, he suspects its appearance could not be its “reality,” but rather a deception.

There also exists a problem with Descartes’ conclusion that since he couldn’t imagine, in advance, all the myriad ways a ball of wax might “extend” itself, he therefore dismisses his imagination as

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inadequate to the task. He may not, in fact, be able to predict its every behavior or how it might change in the bright light of the sun or after it has been molded to serve as a candle or cast into the shape of full lips and dyed red for a Halloween treat or trick. He certainly could never have envisioned the candle I have sitting on the back of



Figure 1 Wax, 20007

my toilet, pictured [here](#). He does not seem to want to take the time to look at the wax, to experience the shifting of its shape, the dispersal of its aroma, the heating up of its surface, the way it pools and then hardens in his hand as it cools. He wants to know, instead, that its wax-ness is something that he can rely on in heat or cold without ever having to bother to engage with it on the sensory level. He wants to be able to strip this substance down to its essence, which he believes is constant and unchanging and which, he can only perceive with his mind. He wants to separate, as if this were possible, this essence from its external qualities.

But indeed when I distinguish the wax from its external forms, as if stripping it of its clothing, and look at the wax in its nakedness, then, even though there can be still an error in my judgment, nevertheless I cannot perceive it thus without a human mind.(Ibid:112)

Descartes wants to extract the wax's appearance, aroma, and texture from its essence as if they comprised an overcoat that hides the true, naked wax. He wants then, to look at the wax's nakedness without seeing the wax!

In another, more appropriate example of Descartes' mistrust of his sensory experience, we have him at the window. In his *Mediations on First Philosophy*, Descartes stands at his window looking down at the crowds of people passing on the street below.

"I chanced, however, to look out of the window, and see men walking in the street; now I say in ordinary language that I 'see' them...[But] what can I see besides hats and coats which may cover automata?" (Descartes, 1641:245) Again, it is Descartes simple reasoning to lead him to assume that beneath the caps whose tops he is able to see, humans walk arm in arm down the

street discussing the weather, what they had for lunch. But since he can't literally see what exists beneath the head wear — he can't ultimately trust what he sees. As Anne Friedberg comments in her treatise on Descartes's window, "Descartes's meditation on the *mediation* of the window reveals an anxiety basic to the Cartesian premise: How does one distinguish between "man" and machine, automata without soul or consciousness?" (Friedber, 2006: 53)

Descartes is just the tip of a long philosophical iceberg that has separated "mere" appearance from "true" being, (Arendt, 1971) a tradition in which the very fact of an appearance suggests that there is something that is not appearance, something beyond, beneath, behind, or over and above appearance: the *metaphysical*.

### **The Recipient of Appearances**

The philosopher, Hannah Arendt, however, approaches the appearance/reality problem somewhat differently from Descartes: she does not assume an unchanging presence, a single essential truth that defines and delimits the wax, for once and for all.

...[W]hen the philosopher takes leave of the world given to our senses and does a turnabout (Plato's *periagōgē*) to the life of the mind, he takes his clue from the former, looking for something to be revealed to him that would explain its underlying truth. This truth—a *lētheia*, that which is disclosed (Heidegger)—can be conceived only as another "appearance," another phenomenon originally hidden but of a supposedly higher order, thus signifying the lasting predominance of appearance. Our mental apparatus, though it can withdraw from present appearance, remains geared to Appearance. (ibid: 24)

Here Arendt is making the notion of "appearing" visible. In place of Descartes' solidified essence, we find instead movement; one that subsumes Plato's *periagōgē* that on its surface resembles Descartes' search: a turning away from the senses toward the mind. But instead here, we keep on turning. We keep turning toward what appears, toward our senses *and* toward our mind. "Appear-ing," an on-going process of disclosing, doesn't come to an end at the discovery of a discreet nugget of being. It has no limit, no ultimate frame, no stopping point. Instead of a "turning away," a simple shift of focus, from the senses which can't be trusted, Plato's *periagōgē* becomes more like a pendulum, elliptically swinging from mind to senses and back again, brushing up against all those points in between.

Descartes hoped to avoid being deceived by his senses. He wanted to know what would always be present for him, with certain edges, in black and white. Holding fast to this kind of essential truth impedes our engagement with the world and renders us blind to experience.

In applying Hannah Arendt's framework, however, which she developed in an opening chapter entitled "Appearance" in her book *The Life of the Mind*, the spectator of *Battlestar Galactica*, becomes the ultimate "recipient of appearances," (Arendt, 1971) and as such, is forced to rethink and revision the intersection of being and appearance.

This chapter is dense with her thinking, examining, and upending the classical dichotomy, “mere appearance,” versus “true being.” Initially, she establishes that what all things in this world have in common is that they “appear, and hence [are] meant to be seen, heard, touched, tasted, and smelled, to be perceived...” (Arendt, 1971: 19) “if there were no recipients of appearance,” she goes on, then “the word appearance would have no meaning.” (Arendt, 1971: 19) Bringing together the two poles of the opposition that so many have taken for granted she declares, “In this world which we enter, appearing from a nowhere, and from which we disappear into a nowhere, *Being and Appearing coincide.*” (Ibid: 19)

### **From the Inside Out**

In Descartes bifurcation of what we sense and what that gives us to know, we find the seeds of our fear and mistrust of our sense experience. It is my contention that the in the dramatization of the humans’ relationships with the two varieties of Cylons – the Toasters and Skin-jobs – we may locate the echoes of Descartes’ warnings not to trust what it is that we sense.

*Battlestar Galactica*, however, won’t let us rest in that Cartesian comfort. In episode after episode we are poked and prodded to consider the relationship between being and appearance, between outside and in, and ultimately to ask ourselves what *does* it mean to be human, perceived and perceiving, and is it inside or out? Are the Cylons who appear more like humans than their Toaster Brethren, more human-like?

Drawing on the work of zoologist Adolf Portmann, Hannah Arendt reverses the entrenched, metaphysical hierarchy and in suggesting to us the value of surface, proffers a unique perspective. Like Descartes, many a scientist relies on a functional model. On this point of view we can rely on knowing that being reigns over mere appearance, and that an intrinsic life process is hidden beneath what we are able to sense. Portmann, in his intensive study of the animal kingdom turns this hypothesis on its head, shifting the argument to one that considers appearance is no longer “mere” or lesser but in fact necessary for whatever processes are occurring within the organism. (Ibid: 27)

It follows from Portmann’s findings that our habitual standards of judgment, so firmly rooted in metaphysical assumptions and prejudices –according to which the essential lies beneath the surface, and the surface is “superficial”– are wrong, that our common conviction that what is inside ourselves, our “inner life, “ is more relevant to what we “are” than what appears on the outside is an illusion; ... (Ibid: 30)

Portmann’s idea then, based on his examination of the animal kingdom, is that *our internal mechanisms are there to support our appearing in the world*, and not the other way around.

“...the predominance of outside appearance implies, in addition to the sheer receptivity of our senses, a spontaneous activity: *whatever can see wants to be seen, whatever can hear calls out to be heard, whatever can touch presents itself to be touched.* It is indeed as though everything that is alive – in addition to the fact that its surface is made for appearance, fit to be seen and meant to appear to others – has *the urge to appear*, to fit itself into the world of appearances by displaying and showing, not its “inner self” but itself as an individual. (Ibid: 29) (Emphasis added)

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Portmann suggests that if we were to look at the infinite varieties in the ways in which humans appear, we would be astounded. And yet if we were to turn our attentions to our innards, if we could see what has been touted as essential, our organs, as they pump blood, digest food, remove toxic waste, perform the functions that sustain our lives, they would appear pretty similar. Perhaps slight variation in color or size, but a heart looks like a heart, no matter whose chest cavity it inhabits. Arendt sites another argument to support the plausibility of Portmann's theory.

She notes that our outer appearance, and in fact the bulk of the appearances of most of the animal kingdom are symmetrical and pleasing to the eye. Our innards, not so much. If our insides were out, we would all look more or less the same. If we examine the notion of the value of surface, we might contend that appearance expresses something unique, an outside revealing something about its inside. Yet here Arendt suggests that there is no expression—nothing from the inside being squeezed out to the appearance. Appearance simply expresses itself. (Ibid: 30)

Yet there is another problem with this paradigm. Yes it is true that our innards are organs, blood and tissue, but we also consider that our psychic life, our soul, if you will resides somewhere inside. And it is this that may be pushed out through the uniqueness of appearance.

The Cylons, believing that humanity has gone astray, take it upon themselves to exterminate the human race. Yet, paradoxically, when they evolve, they choose to inhabit bodies that, for all intents and purposes, are human. They choose to appear in every way, like humans. They chose skin and hair and breasts and muscle and fleshy outer ears, and fingernails and protruding noses. They have human voices and teeth and tongues and elbows. None of these choices are necessary to move in the world or perceive their environments, fight battles or pilot a starship. Yet the Cylons chose to appear in these very human ways, inside and out, perhaps to reveal their souls?

This strange and limiting choice is bemoaned by the Cylon Cavil in a clip from the episode, "No Exit." What follows is a transcript of that segment.

DEAN STOCKWELL, AS JOHN CAVIL, *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA*: In all your travels have you ever seen a star supernova?

KATE VERNON AS ELLEN, *BATTLESTAR GALACTICA*: No.

JOHN 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.

JOHN CAVIL: I don't want to be human. I want to see gamma rays. I want to hear x-rays. And 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 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.

While the Cylon god may or may not have wanted them that way, there is no getting around the fact that Cylons end up in these limited containers so that they “appear” human, so that they are perceived as human and this particular appearance presumes a spectator, that is also human. (Ibid: 19) The Cylons are programmed to feel pain, fear, anger, to bleed, and to experience love and desire. We must assume that they have learned this idea of humanity from observing the appearance of humans and for some reason, choose to replicate in every minute detail, this appearance.

Cavil’s dismay that his vision is limited by the gelatinous orbs he sees through, overlooks what his human experience of sight offers. There is something distinctly human in the interaction of light receptors on a retina and a visual cortex in a brain which interprets those signals based on a lifetime of visual experience; something other than what a spectrometer might measure. Here we might juxtapose the human capacity for perceiving the appearance of a super nova with the capacity of an instrument to measure it. Cavil mistakenly equates having more data with experiencing greater awe. Cavil’s awe at witnessing the supernova have been a simply a human response? If he had been able to record the entire EM spectrum, might it not have been simply a piece of recorded data? When Cavil yearns to feel the solar winds to see dark matter, to hear the exploding supernova, isn’t he in fact longing for a human, or even, animal, if you will sensory experience?

Yet Cavil’s questions are provocative. What is to be gained by appearing, in every possible way, human? As a machine, why not have the most sensitive instruments possible to measure gamma rays and solar fluctuations? Given the technology available to the Cylons, they might have created a robotic model that just looked human. A human skin covering all those instruments that Cavil craved. This certainly would have sufficed tactically, to camouflage the Cylons among the humans. Unless there is something more. Something about being embodied, something in what we humans feel, sense, know, through our human bodies that coincides with what it is that ultimately makes us human. Something without which, Cavil would not care about the limitations of his prehensile paws. The Cylon Skin-jobs’ human appearance is imbricated in their being. In spite of their robotic origins they have become sentient; they love, live, fight, and long, envy, as humans do.

In tandem to their human counterparts, the Cylons embark, in *Battlestar Galactica*, on a shared expedition to find a planet on which to settle, which they call home, the very concept itself, and the complex desire for which is expressly and uniquely, human. Or is it?

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