

Tanya R. Cochran: *In Your Eyes* in the Audiences' Estimation: Situating Whedon's Paranormal Romance within the Larger Body of His Work

In Your Eyes (2014) tells the story of Rebecca Porter (played by Zoe Kazan) and Dylan Kershaw (played by Michael Stahl-David), who share a connection that allows each to experience the other's senses—sight, sound, physical touch—across time and across many miles: she resides in New Hampshire, he in New Mexico. As the narrative unfolds, the two adults slowly realize that their connection is real, and they wonder at and revel in the novelty and surprise of their bond. Slowly, they fall in love. Tension rises as those around the two observe their odd behaviors. For example, both appear to be talking to themselves when they are communicating aloud with one another. On occasion, they experience disorientation while inhabiting each other's bodies, which causes strange physical behaviors as well—tripping, falling, running into objects. Dylan loses his job as a result, and Rebecca is forcibly institutionalized by her husband. The desire to be physically together overwhelms them, and they plot to unite. Directed by Brin Hill and produced by Kai Cole and Michael Roiff, *In Your Eyes* is the second feature film by Bellwether Pictures, Joss Whedon's adaptation of Shakespeare's play *Much Ado About Nothing* (2012) being the first. The script for *In Your Eyes* was written by Whedon, and he participated in its scoring as well. Yet surprisingly no scholars have investigated this text in any depth. My goal in this presentation is to begin that process, to address these preliminary questions: Where does *In Your Eyes* fit in the larger body of Whedon's work? What makes the film Whedonesque, and how do we judge its quality and significance? The answers to these questions offer a richer understanding of Whedon work as a whole.