

## **Alexandra Garner: 'Darn Your Sinister Attraction': Buffybot and the Construction of Humanity**

This presentation analyzes the role of canonical television depictions as well as additional fanfiction characterizations of the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* minor character (the) Buffybot as a human double, a robot, and a cyborg. In doing so, I argue that the use of Buffybot as a foil for the show's titular character is a critique of sexual objectification, heteronormativity and hegemony, as well as the construction and regulation of "humanity." I interrogate other non-human characters whose humanity is in question, and through careful consideration of the few episodes in which Buffybot appears on *Buffy*, as well as her representations in fanfiction, I argue that the latter examples generally challenge the show's dehumanizing depiction of her as a mere robot, preferring instead to find/create spaces for Buffybot to feel, dream, and think.

This project relies on feminist theory and critical media studies for its theoretical frameworks, as well as considering the role of fan counter-narratives in constructing characterization in fandoms such as *Buffy's*. I discuss the relationship between the creators and producers with fans that actively problematize and challenge the canonical representations of the Buffybot. This project also presents a new approach to scholarship, examining specific fanfiction examples in conjunction with analysis of the show's canon. I hope to add this element to the wealth of extant scholarship on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and its feminism.