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“Whack you with a cannoli? Oh, because he left the gun
and took the cannoli.” – Intertextuality and Allusions in
the Dramedy *Gilmore Girls*

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1. Introduction

“I mean – I’m happy. You know? I like my life.
I like my friends. I like my stuff. My time, my space, my TV.”

– LORELAI GILMORE

The medium of television influenced and shaped the lives of millions of people like no other mass medium in the 20th century. Television broadcast turned milestones in history such as the Apollo 11 moon landing in 1969, the Fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the terrorist attacks of 9/11 from individual to shared experiences for people all around the world. Despite its tremendous impact on society and the broadcasting industry, television has long been considered unworthy of academic study. It was faced with prejudices that it was detrimental to literacy and corrupting the youth through its manipulative setup and the contents it featured. The development from media studies’ bad seed to a serious object of interdisciplinary studies has been slow, stony, and fraught with obstacles, but it was eventually successful due to the perseverance of scholars such as Jane Feuer, John Fiske, Amanda D. Lotz, Horace Newcomb, and Raymond Williams.

As an aspect of postmodernism, intertextuality received ample attention in literary studies, music, arts, architecture, and, since television is commonly regarded as the postmodern medium par excellence, also in television studies. Although analyses of intertextuality in television series usually concern the animated series *The Simpsons* or the drama series *Twin Peaks*, *Gilmore Girls* is predestined to be examined from this angle. Besides the series’ fast-paced dialogues and the exceptional mother-daughter relationship between the two main protagonists, the show’s myriad of allusions to pop culture, literature, music, politics, and current affairs is one of its defining features. The main aim of this paper is to reveal how intertextuality and allusions determine the representation of the protagonists as women in the television series *Gilmore Girls*. In order to conduct the corresponding analysis, it is necessary to examine the formal aspects as well as the thematic and symbolic functions of allusions with regard to cultural codes. Moreover, self-reflexivity, as another aspect of postmodernism, is discussed with respect to its realizations in the series and its effect on the perception of *Gilmore Girls*.

The following chapter presents the theoretical framework for the analysis of intertextuality and its various manifestations such as parody, allusion, and self-reflexivity. First, a general discussion of television studies and the struggle of television to be regarded as a serious object of study is examined. Then, the subchapter on postmodernism and television introduces the context of intertextuality and examines the notion of hyperconsciousness. The next section concerns the theoretical implications of intertextuality as a literary device and revolves around the question of responsibility – whether the audience or the author initiates intertextuality – and the difference between vertical and horizontal intertextuality. The last section of the second chapter provides a theoretical discussion of television as a genre, which is then applied in the analysis of *Gilmore Girls* as an example of the hybrid genre of dramedy.

The third chapter introduces some basic information on the series and the plot before the analysis of intertextuality in the series is conducted in the form of an analysis of both paratextuality and interfigurality. While paratextuality concerns seven episode titles of the first three seasons of the series and reveals to what extent each of the episodes under consideration is a parody, interfigurality as intertextuality in terms of names focuses on the examination of the implications of the name Lorelai as the name of both female protagonists.

The fourth chapter deals with the second part of the analysis, namely the study of formal aspects and functions of allusions in the series. Therefore, seven functional categories have been established: mockery, differentiation, adaptation, ambiguity, lightening the mood, identification with powerful women, and initiating an action. For each of these categories, two to four allusions which are predominantly uttered by Lorelai or Rory are analyzed. Again, the allusions exclusively originate from the first three seasons of the series as an analysis of all seven seasons would go beyond the constraints of this thesis. The conclusion provides the results of the study and presents the answers to the research questions.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. *A General Note on Television Studies*

A proper definition of the scope of television studies has to begin with an explanation of what its object – television – exactly is, which is a difficult task not only for those who consume and produce it but especially for those who deal with it from a scholarly point of view. John Fiske defines television as a “cultural agent, particularly as a provoker and circulator of meanings” (*Television Culture* 2) and, therefore, highlights television’s function as a medium that is primarily operating as a system that is concerned with how and for which purposes certain meanings are created. O’Day in turn stresses the various participants that are fundamental in the creation of the medium television: “TV, as a cultural technology and as an apparatus, involves complex interrelationships between producers, advertisers, texts and audiences” (117). The emphasis on the word “complex” concerning the relationships must not be overlooked in television studies as every decade of television production has faced different challenges that involved two or more of these crucial contributors. In recent decades, it has been the relationship between advertisers and audiences, as well as producers, which has become marked by tensions as the influence of the advertising industry tremendously increased and affected not only the channels and their marketing policies, but also the programming itself. O’Day summarizes this movement as the “commercial imperative which underpins television in a postmodern consumer culture” (114) and thereby addresses the fact that the power of the advertising industry has great impact on the creation and consumption of television as it mirrors consumerism as a whole. An example of how far advertisers tried to shape television according to their needs is the football World Cup of 1994 which was held in the United States. For the finals, advertisers suggested to divide the matches into four quarters instead of two halftimes in order to increase their advertising time (O’Day 114). Consequently, a significant amount of work in television studies concerns advertising and the economic value of the system which is estimated to be around “\$25 billion per year in the United States alone” (R. Allen 13), whereby these estimations date back to the beginning of the new millennium and are supposedly even higher today.

This aspect is also addressed by Fiske in his studies on television as he suggests that the two economies of commercial television can be identified as the “financial economy” and

the “cultural economy” (*Television Culture* 312). To find a balance between these two economies is one of the most challenging tasks of television industry as the interests of both must be acknowledged and acted upon in due proportion. O’Day concisely summarizes the situation when he suggests that “[w]e are all, in a sense, working for capital when we watch television” (114). According to this view, television viewers tend to watch television to increase their cultural capital, while advertisers and producers are primarily interested in raising their economic capital. Robert C. Allen, however, partially invalidates this theory by stressing that the prime purpose of watching television is entertainment: “television’s reach into the homes of hundreds of millions of families worldwide has not been accomplished chiefly because those families wanted to acquire an educational tool or an audiovisual newspaper” (2). Although it occasionally creates the impression that the increase of one’s cultural capital and the feeling of entertainment at the same time are mutually exclusive, it would be wrong to deny that television is adequate to this task.

Ott manages to establish a connection between the cultural aspect of watching television and the social benefits television entails, stating that “[v]iewers are [...] drawn to the television programs that they are, at least in part, because those programs teach them to process the world in a way that is useful and meaningful to them” (Preface xi). To a certain extent, this assumption accounts for the different tastes and interests of audience groups and also provides the reasons why some formats and programmes are more popular among certain viewers than others.

With regard to postmodern television studies, the complexity remains partially the same, although a third dimension appears and should be granted the same amount of attention as the financial and cultural economies: the semiotic dimension. Collins sees the problem for television studies in “how to reconcile the semiotic and economic dimensions of television” (766) since the dominance of one over the other always results in negative consequences. In case the semiotic dimension prevails and the economic capital is excluded altogether, a mere counting of the instances of intertextuality might be conducted, while privileging the economic dimension results in a simplification of the semiotic perspective to that extent that only well-known and a limited number of formats and moves are allowed (Collins 766).

Although most of the scholars previously cited reinforce television’s positive features, there are also more critical remarks on this medium. In *Teleliteracy – Taking Television Seriously*, David Bianculli gives an accurate overview of how it has been common practice to

initially reject new forms of art and media as inappropriate for intelligent and educated people: from drama, poetry and theatre at Plato's time to Shakespeare's works for the masses to photography, film, radio, and rock music. Bianculli states that "whenever a medium or work of art catches on with the masses, it's blamed for a variety of societal ills – and not fully appreciated as 'art' for at least a generation" (Bianculli 27). It seems for art to be considered proper art it must be something that is exclusive to the upper class of society and to which other, less educated social classes do not get access. According to the elitist view, whenever a work of art is appreciated and admired by a greater number of people and thus loses its exclusivity, it is abandoned and rejected by the original group of people who commonly make a claim to its initial discovery. As the "popular-arts villain of our society" (Bianculli 40), television is objected to a variation of this elitist view according to which its appeal to the majority of people in society from the beginning of its invention excludes it from recognition as art. Moreover, television is further rejected due to its association with commerce and consumerism and is considered a "classic 'bad object'" based on its "lack of authenticity" (Brunsdon 128) compared to cinema, theater or the music hall.

Not only television itself has been considered an inappropriate object of study, but also those who conduct research in the field. Bianculli emphasizes that taking television seriously involves the danger of not being taken seriously as a professional and fully-fledged scholar, but he encourages academic studies in the field with his "9th Commandment of Good Television: Television Deserves Serious Study" (64). Although the elitist view forbids that television is regarded as proper art due to its appeal to and accessibility for a great number of people in society, it is especially on these grounds that television is predestined to be intensively studied. While scholars tend to agree with this view that television deserves the attention of academic study due to the role it plays in many people's lives, Robert C. Allen identifies another problem which is encountered by those interested in television studies, namely "one barrier of taking television seriously as an object of study is that we don't regard many of the programs we watch as serious" (3). Today's television landscape is as diversified and heterogeneous as never before, which entails that not only the amount of the so-called "quality television" is increased, but also the number of formats with questionable contents that reinforce certain ideologies and stereotypes is rising. In the discussion of the seriousness of television and its programmes, it occasionally remains unclear whether a format is not taken seriously due to its genre or whether the contents and representations are the reasons

for rejecting it as a serious object of study. In this respect, Bianculli states that “television is more easily ridiculed than reassessed” (124) referring to the negative attitude of many television critics who rigorously decline to consider television worthy of serious study.

Regardless of disdained research in television studies might have been, some scholars and critics refused to disregard the new medium and its impact on society and initiated academic television studies. In her article “Is Television History?”, Charlotte Brunsdon suggests a categorization of television scholarship into three distinct phases. She calls the first period of the 1970s the “emergent” (129) period which is characterized by central questions such as “What is television?”. Moreover, the emerging emphasis that is put on the reader contributes to the loss of the text’s primary position as a self-sufficient entity and the assumption that a text influences all its readers in the same way is abandoned (Fiske, “British Cultural Studies”, 227-228). The following period, that of stabilization, ranges from 1980 to 1990 and highlights the social significance of the medium as the center of academic scholarship. Furthermore, studies concerning the audiences of television programs and fan studies became more frequent. Brunsdon defines the third phase of television and television scholarship as one in which the object of study changed and transformed. Television became an object of interdisciplinary studies as more disciplines, such as anthropology and history, were considered when conducting analysis (130). Another significant development that has influenced television studies is satellite television and the possibility to record and watch movies and television shows via video cassette and DVD. For the 21st century, two major branches in television work are proposed by Brunsdon: on the one hand, “‘quality’ fictional programming” (131) which generated television series such as *The Sopranos* and on the other hand, reality programming which produced formats such as *Big Brother*.

A fundamental question remains to be answered, namely whether television is an object of mass culture or popular culture. According to the rather pessimistic view, television is a product of mass culture in which an ideological function dominates. This means that “[w]hole events, spatially fragmented and segmented, are reconstituted via narrativised commentary to offer a particular view of the world” (Thornham and Purvis 8) and concerns all possible formats and programs on television. Whatever programs viewers choose to watch, they are always confronted with contents that are mediated and not available as live experiences as this lies in the nature of television. Consequently, the producers choose the contents that are telecasted and define the layout of their presentation. Furthermore, they determine

the purpose of showing certain contents and, probably most importantly, they decide which contents are deliberately omitted. Comparisons of various programs on different television channels display how fundamentally dissimilar they can be: it is possible to broadcast the same event, speech or news item in an altogether different light in order to convey the ideology that is intended by its producers. In entertainment television, for example, the traditional focus on the family mostly reinforces traditional gender roles and, therefore, it seems reasonable to define television as a medium of “*containment*” (9) as is done by Thornham and Purvis. This refers to television’s purpose of conveying feelings of safety and stability to the audience while they watch certain shows. Most frequently, these feelings are evoked when people watch series like comedies, dramas, and sitcoms as they create a strong feeling of familiarity between the audience and the program.

Against this rather pessimistic view in which television is regarded as a medium that reinforces certain ideologies and rather traditional gender roles in terms of family life, Fiske proposes a more optimistic view. He argues that “television’s economics, which demand that it can be made popular by a wide variety of social groups, work against its apparent ability to exert ideological control over the passive viewer” (*Television Culture* 93). The full impact of this statement is visible when looking at some of the most popular programs of our time such as the drama series *Breaking Bad* and the sitcom *30 Rock*: both prevent single centralized meanings, but rather encourage the heterogeneous audience groups to produce their individual readings of the texts. With regard to the Frankfurt School and pessimistic Marxism, Fiske further underpins his viewpoint when he argues that the “power of the people to make *their* culture out of the offerings of the culture industry is greater than either of these schools of thought realized” (*Television Culture* 93). As a result, the responsibility for which programs reach success and popularity ultimately lies with the audience as they possess the power to reject television productions that do not provide the opportunity to arrive at their very own interpretation.

2.2. *Postmodernism and Television*

In his examination of the term postmodernism, Bignell summarizes the two opposing positions that are usually advocated by researchers who deal with the newness of postmodern television: while those who regard it more positively defend the viewpoint that postmodern

television is “experimental, innovative and exciting” (162), the negative attitude manifests itself in the assumption that postmodern television is “shallow, mindless or trivial” (162). According to Bignell, those who interpret postmodern television rather negatively criticize the lack of “ideological critiques of television” (162) as its primary purpose is to entertain and provide enjoyment for its viewers. The theory of signs plays a crucial role in the study of television and some critics take it as a starting point for their criticism. Collins summarizes this viewpoint with the statement “all signs are supposedly exhausted, mere electronic pulses disconnected from any referent” (760). Television is also criticized due to the technological developments, whereby it is often overlooked that what seems new and unknown at one moment is usually absorbed in the next and becomes something familiar. Collins draws a comparison to the use of a figure of speech which at first use seems odd but is then absorbed by texts and the audiences by which means it is made manageable. With television texts, the absorption process results in more thorough knowledge of their own production history and of its reception (Collins 760).

In terms of the postmodern audience, one has to state that producers and authors attempt to create shows and formats that appeal to more than one prototypical audience group – O’Day calls them “coalition audiences” (115) – that watch the same television show for different reasons. One trend in postmodern studies is to see the audience as a more active participant in the media circus: they have increasing control over their media consumption which does not only affect what they watch, but also when they consume television. Again, two contradictory conceptions in terms of the audience are proposed, which correspond with the two perceptions of television in general: The typical postmodern viewer can be described as a person with a minimal attention span, zapping and hopping between channels, a female viewer who is not interested in the narrative structure of a show but creates her own collage of meanings in a rather bored and distracted mood. The other possibility is focusing on the positive aspects of watching television: a male viewer who deliberately chooses what to watch since he is aware of his preferences not only in terms of the contents but also with regard to the social groups he prefers to watch various programmes with. He is capable of integrating television into his daily routine and is aware of the different levels of attention – from analytic beginning to end consumption to a mere background noise (O’Day 116-117).

Postmodern television is both immediate and conveying a feeling of newness and the now, while at the same time it displays a strong presence of the past in its repetitions and

connections to already existing television genres and formats. With regard to the temporal characteristics of postmodernism, Bignell makes an interesting observation in his analysis of postmodern times. He states that current theorists tend to perceive of the time right now as the modern time which means that everything preceding the now is labelled “premodern” (Bignell 166) and, thus, the space for postmodernism seems to be neglected. He suggests a solution for this problem:

If postmodernism reacts against the modern, one way of establishing a difference from the modern would be to go back to premodern features of culture and recycle them in new ways. So a further implication of labelling television as postmodern is to suggest that the elements of past culture which it recycles from either modern or premodern epochs are plundered equally. (166-167)

Some critics might interpret this recycling process as a means to deprive the past of its past quality. This, however, fails to acknowledge that the elements are not reinstated in the exact same manner in which they were created, but are adapted for the present’s needs.

In the discussion of what differentiates postmodernism from modernism, there are usually two extreme opinions which are adopted by theorists. Collins suggests that modernism is either regarded as “a heroic period of revolutionary experimentation [...] in which postmodernism is seen as a neoconservative backlash” or as “a period of profound elitism, in which case postmodernism signals a move away from the self-enclosed world [...] into the realm of day-to-day life” (759). John Storey connects this second view with postmodernism’s quest for a “new sensibility” (147) which led to its rejection of the cultural elitism of modernism. Consequently, popular culture was re-evaluated and the gap between high art and mass culture was minimized. Furthermore, postmodernism is associated with a new body of theorists who were previously suppressed and excluded in patriarchal modernist environments such as women, members of ethnic minorities, and people from the lower social classes (Storey 147-148).

While the modern period is one of two sources from which postmodern television derives its contents in Bignell’s argument, Collins, on the other hand, argues that postmodern television faces a challenge which most other forms of art do not face, namely that television never experienced a modernist phase which means that there is actually “no point of departure for postmodern television” (759). Obviously, the two scholars prefer different definitions of the term postmodern as Bignell applies the concept “modern”, while Collins favors “modernist”. Consequently, Bignell defines postmodernism as a term concerning a time span

which reaches after the modern period, that is, after the now. Collins, on the other hand, relates to the modernist era which is usually assumed to encompass the time span from the late 19th century until the beginning of World War II.

Another angle from which postmodernism is analyzed and investigated foregrounds intertextual references as the defining feature of the “*hyperconsciousness* of postmodern popular culture” (Collins 763). In terms of postmodern television, Ott accomplishes a definition of the three stages on which hyperconscious television is operating: First, it recognizes the prevalent conventions, models, and formats of media culture and new combinations of these features are created and applied. Second, there is a distinct awareness of and constant allusion to the “already said” (Ott 58) which refers to stories and plot lines of television and other media. The third stage of hyperconsciousness in television concerns its self-awareness on which it regularly comments. To sum up, the three core characteristics of hyperconscious television as defined by Ott are “eclecticism, intertextuality, and self-reflexivity” (58).

With regard to the object of analysis in this paper, *Gilmore Girls*, it is safe to assume that the television series displays all three criteria to a great extent. As a comedy drama, the show blends the two genres comedy and drama into the new hybrid genre dramedy, therefore, the criteria of eclecticism is fulfilled. The lack of a fixed genre classification of the famous series is especially prevalent if one considers the various awards and nominations the series received: the *Internet Movie Database* provides a list which shows that throughout the six years (2001-2006) in which the series and its cast were nominated for awards, *Gilmore Girls* was nominated in both the comedy and the drama category: 14 of the nominations and three awards were won as a drama series. As a comedy series, 29 nominations were received whereby five awards were eventually won (“Gilmore Girls – Awards”).

The second criteria next to eclecticism is self-reflexivity which Ott defines as “a stylistic device in which a cultural text demonstrates an explicit awareness of itself as a cultural text” (71). Besides intertextuality, it is a defining feature of postmodern television and in *Gilmore Girls*, it is the characters’ own frequent consumption of television which can be defined as self-reflexivity most obviously. A more detailed analysis of self-reflexive references in the series is provided in the next chapter. Intertextuality, as the third of Ott’s characteristics of hyperconscious television, is the main issue of this paper’s analysis of *Gilmore Girls*. The theoretical principles of intertextuality are explained in the following chapter and the analysis of the allusions and references in the series is provided in the fourth chapter.

2.2.1. Intertextuality

Attempts to define the concept of intertextuality are multifarious and concerning texts from all genres and sub-genres in literature, television, film, music, and other arts. It is a term which is frequently defined as needed by its user and therefore exposed to severe criticism by those who interpret the term differently. In order to determine the difference between text and intertext, an etymological study of the notion seems reasonable: this suggests that an intertext is a text between texts since “inter” comes from Latin and means “between”. According to Plett, an extreme definition of *text* as a piece of self-contained and self-sufficient coherent writing and an explanation of *intertext* as a text which only consists of building blocks that refer to other texts is too simplistic and gives rise to doubts (6). Rather, a re-definition of reading as a process and meaning as a concept that operate and exist *between* texts, “moving out from the independent text into a network of textual relations” (Allen G. 1) is convincing.

In *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, intertextuality is defined as a concept that

is used to signify the multiple ways in which any one literary text is made up of other texts, by means of its open or covert citations and *allusions*, its repetitions and transformations of the formal and substantive features of earlier texts [...]. (Abrams 317)

This definition of intertextuality shows why the concept is considered essential to the post-modern era. French literary critic Roland Barthes describes a text as “a tissue of citations, resulting from the thousand sources of culture” (“The Death of the Author” 4). One of the crucial assumptions in postmodernism is that a text cannot be marked by originality and uniqueness any more since texts only consist of parts from already existent artistic objects (Allen G. 5).

Since television is regarded as the postmodern medium par excellence, it seems obvious to discuss the importance of intertextuality with regard to television. Also Bignell states that “[i]ntertextuality is essential to television” (164) through its foregrounding of newness and difference. Due to the surplus of channels and programmes, it is essential for every television product to highlight in how far it can be differentiated from other formats. At the same time, however, similarities with other shows must be emphasized in order to simplify its positioning in the media landscape.

To account for this new medium, an additional definition for intertextuality is reasonable according to which intertextuality “describes a stylistic device in which a cultural text gestures to one or more preexisting, and usually pop-cultural, text(s) – its story, plot devices, or characters” (Ott 65). Obviously, Ott assumes that the majority of references in television concern texts of popular culture. Since television is itself regarded as a product of popular culture, Ott’s argument seems reasonable. However, this view can be criticized since the sources of allusions are not restricted to texts of popular culture: from the general, for example titles of movies or songs and names of people, to the particular and most specific details such as certain gestures, facial impressions, or wordings – anything is possible.

2.2.1.1. Parodic Allusion, Creative Appropriation, Self-reflexivity

Ott and Walter propose three intertextual strategies which have great impact on the characterization of today’s media: parodic allusion, creative appropriation, and self-reflexive reference (435). Parodic allusion refers to a caricature of another text, therefore, certain outstanding features of the source text are imitated and exaggerated. Opposed to parody, for which its critical function is essential, there is no critical comment with parodic allusion, but rather humorous juxtaposition (Ott and Walter 436). Furthermore, they argue that parodies are meaningful texts on their own while parodic allusions are always “woven into the fabric of a larger text or narrative” (Ott and Walter 436) and used as stylistic devices by the authors. In *Gilmore Girls*, parodic allusion is the strategy most frequently used compared to the other two devices of creative appropriation and self-reflexivity. A more detailed analysis of Linda Hutcheon’s discussion of parody is provided in the next section.

Creative appropriation, also called “Inclusion” (437) by Ott and Walter, is an intertextual strategy in which a piece of the original text is integrated as a reproduced fragment into a new text. In contrast to parodic allusion, creative inclusion does include comments in terms of the original text, and the function of those commentaries “ranges from critique to celebration” (437). Due to the increased importance of the copyright owner’s opinion on how their material is used, positive comments on the source material have surpassed more critical inclusions in recent years. Understandably, the owners of the original material want to see their material presented in the most positive light, therefore, Ott and Walter argue that with increased frequency, “creative appropriation functions to celebrate and promote texts from

which it steals” (438). The boundaries between creative appropriation (inclusion) and self-reflexivity are blurred since every instance of creative appropriation implies that the television show or movie is conscious of its own status as a media product and as such, self-reflexive. Also in *Gilmore Girls*, these boundaries are blurred since whenever the girls watch a certain television show as if it were live on television, they account for their own status as a television series. In accordance with Ott and Walter’s claim that the original text is more often celebrated than criticized, creative appropriation also functions to speak in favor of the original text in *Gilmore Girls*. The commentary provided by the protagonists on a program they are actually watching at the time of commenting is rather positive; however, their commentary can be rather critical and negative as well whenever they refer and allude to television shows that they are do not watch at the time of talking.

With regard to self-reflexive references, it can be stated that they function as stylistic devices whose purpose is to draw attention to their own status as media products. Mostly, self-reflexivity manifests itself in subtle references which require thorough knowledge concerning the production process of a television series. Furthermore, previous engagements of the actors and actresses as well as earlier appearances of the fictional characters in other television shows are important components when it comes to self-reflexive references and how to acknowledge them (Ott and Walter 439). One of the defining features of self-reflexive references is that those references do not primarily occur in conversations between the fictional characters of a text, but rather concern the interaction between the text and the audience. As Williams rightly observes:

This use of self-reflexivity at once breaks up the audience’s willing suspension of disbelief by reminding them that they are watching television and reinforces their connection with the show through the feeling that this is a joke being shared by audience and character. (92)

This feeling contributes to the bond between television show and audience quite in the same way as the recognition of more or less obscure allusions to other texts creates a feeling of belonging to a privileged group of people of truly devoted fans.

In *Gilmore Girls*, self-reflexivity also plays an important role and manifests itself in exactly those subtle references that require specialized knowledge. One example is the name of Lane’s rock band – Hep Alien – which is an anagram of Helen Pai, the script coordinator, one of the co-producers of the series, and Amy Sherman-Palladino’s close friend. Furthermore, she is assumed to have served as a model for Lane’s character, as she is also Korean

and was raised as a Seventh-Day-Adventist. Moreover, Pai's husband's name was used for Lane's first boyfriend in the series, Dave Rygalski ("Helen Pai").

Another example of self-reflexivity concerns the theme song of the series and the later owner of the music store in the series. Carole King re-recorded her song "Were You Lead I Will Follow" as theme song for the series with her daughter, which is self-reflexive as the series features a mother-daughter relationship in which the theme "Were you lead I will follow" plays a crucial role. In the series, Carole King appears in the second, fifth, and sixth season as Sophie Bloom, the owner of a music store in Stars Hollow. This represents a transition from reality to fiction and as such it constitutes a paratext which in turn makes the movement between the world of the reader and the world of the text easier. Paratextuality is discussed in more detail as one aspect of the analysis of intertextuality in *Gilmore Girls* in the third chapter.

2.2.1.2. *Author or Audience: Who is Responsible?*

A central issue of intertextuality concerns the question whether the main responsibility for intertextuality lies with the authors of texts as producers of intertextuality or whether the consumers and audiences are responsible for intertextuality since they interpret and decode texts. Ott and Walter label these two possibilities "textual strategy" if the producers are in charge and "interpretative practice" in case audiences are responsible (429). In their article on the subject matter, they argue that the "scholarly conflation of these two conceptions has weakened the theoretical usefulness of both perspectives" (429). It is reasonable to agree with this assumption as the two processes require the application of fundamentally different theoretical frameworks in order to analyze a text. Ott and Walter present various examples of analyses in which scholars did indeed mingle the two possibilities of intertextual responsibility, whereby Fiske's interpretation of Madonna's music video *Material Girl* is the most prominent example. They criticize that Fiske on the one hand argues that no specialized knowledge is required to read the video and, therefore, he does not regard it as an example of intertextuality, while on the other hand, he states that the "meanings of *Material Girl* depend upon its *allusion* to *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*" (Fiske, *Television* 108). This entails that a specific reference (namely the one to the Marilyn Monroe movie) and therefore intertextuality is indeed in issue in the music video. Moreover, Fiske advocates the view that the

level of intertextuality is dependent on the quality of the text: he argues that popular culture is permeated by intertextuality to a greater degree than those texts that are traditionally categorized as belonging to high culture, “highly crafted, completed, and self-sufficient” (Fiske, *Understanding* 98) texts that are found in institutions such as universities.

While Fiske’s argumentation follows the assumption that intertextuality is inherent to some texts, culture and literary scholars in the 1980s focused on the idea that meaning is not only created by the text and its author, but also the reader and the audience play a crucial role. The tradition to see the origin of intertextuality in the audience goes back to Roland Barthes who assumes that not the exact message that is intended by the god-like author is conveyed through a text, but rather that a text is a “multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash” (Barthes, *Image, Music, Text* 146). In his essay “The Death of the Author”, Roland Barthes argues that “once an action is recounted [...] the voice loses its origin, the author enters his own death, writing begins” (2). He ascribes to literature a special voice which cannot be assigned any specific source of origin in the form of a person who is responsible for the text.

As a consequence of modern philosophy (empiricism, rationalism) and especially in the in the light of enlightenment, the individual was foregrounded, which eventually affected literature. Barthes criticizes modern literature’s and culture’s centering of the author: he argues that the foregrounding of the author deprives the works of their own explanation because the interpretation of a text in connection with the creator has become the main focus of interest. Furthermore, he recalls the French writer Stéphane Mallarmé who, in his opinion, was a pioneer in altering the view of literature and the image of the author: “it is language which speaks, not the author” (“The Death of the Author” 3). Both writers defend the viewpoint that the work and thus its language have to regain the prime position from the author. Barthes and other thinkers found an ally with tremendous impact in this respect: linguistics. In linguistics, there are numerous possibilities of how the decoding of a text can function, endless frameworks on how the meaning of a text can be derived, and various methods to identify the forces that come into practice when an utterance is stated but none of them require an author. According to Barthes, “language knows a ‘subject’, not a ‘person’” (“The Death of the Author” 3) when he identifies the act of utterance as the only source for content. In his rejection of the author, he subtly hints at the importance of the reader for his argumentation, stating that “the true locus of writing is reading” (“The Death of the Author” 5).

The argument which is most worthy of criticism is Barthes' claim that the reader is a non-personal entity where all threads run together and who is the "destination" where the unity of a text is created. Although it is true that the reader carries the ultimate responsibility for the meaning-making process, Barthes' assumption that "the reader is a man without history, without biography, without psychology" ("The Death of the Author" 6) seems disconcerting. Even if Barthes resorts to such a salient argumentation only to highlight the difference between the author (whose history, biography, and psychology are influencing factors in terms of literary criticism) and the reader, it nevertheless implies that the reader functions as a tabula rasa for the text. To deny that the reader's individual experience, knowledge, and cultural background influence what and how they read and make sense of a text is to fail a modern perception of communication.

With regard to the history of the term, Linda Hutcheon partially agrees with Barthes when she interprets intertextuality as a means that "replaces the challenged author-text relationship with the one between reader and text" (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* 126). She, however, proposes that although it might not be appropriate to talk of authors, sources, and influences any more, the concept of intertextuality even increased in its importance. While for Hutcheon, intertextuality is undoubtedly a notion that was emphasized by the rise of postmodernism and also belongs to the scope of postmodernism, Gray refuses to agree with this perception since he does not regard intertextuality as a concept of postmodernism exclusively. He defines it as "endemic to all textuality" (Gray 5) and, thus, not restricted to modern textuality. This assumption is also valid since intertextuality existed long before the postmodern period and the coinage of the term by Julia Kristeva in the 1960s although it was not labelled "intertextuality" by those who consciously applied the stylistic device. Irwin similarly states that "[s]ince the dawn of literature authors have referred and alluded to other texts" ("Against Intertextuality" 237). Also Plett considers this viewpoint in recalling the possibility that intertextuality is only "old wine in new bottles" (5). With regard to Juvan, this wine would be even ancient: he lists *imitatio* and *aemulatio* as two forerunners for intertextuality which were applied until Renaissance. These two ancient concepts describe two processes in which a work of art was honored by imitation and copy whereby the ultimate goal was to top the original work of art (Juvan 2).

What is commonly considered as a matter of fact in the development of literary studies by various scholars is that since the actual term "intertextuality" was introduced, authors

have been more aware of this concept (Irwin, “Against Intertextuality” 237). As a consequence, the frequency with which references and allusions are included in texts has increased and for that reason, intertextuality is regarded as typical for the postmodern period.

2.2.1.3. *Horizontal and Vertical Intertextuality*

As Ott and Walter already investigated and criticized, Fiske’s interpretation of intertextuality suggests that it has nothing to do with specific allusions but favors the viewpoint that the audience performs an unconscious meaning creation process. He argues that “intertextuality exists rather in the space *between* texts” (*Television Culture* 108) and, hence, highlights the etymological origin of the word intertextuality. What this entails is that our culturally influenced views of the world determine our perception of media far more than single specific allusions. Furthermore, television’s polysemy in terms of how certain texts are read and which meanings are derived from them play a crucial role in Fiske’s discussion of how different cultures and subcultures make meaning of texts. In order to conduct his analysis, Fiske identifies two different dimensions of intertextuality, namely horizontal and vertical intertextuality (*Television Culture* 108) which are elaborated on subsequently.

While horizontal intertextual relations concern links between two primary texts in terms of genre, character, and content, vertical intertextuality refers to the link between the primary text and another text – like newspapers, magazines, reviews – that explicitly refers to the primary text (Fiske, *Television Culture* 108). In the chapter on horizontal intertextuality, Fiske highlights the importance of the notion of genre as the primary means that structures texts and meanings (*Television Culture* 109). With regard to the connection between the parties involved in the production and consumption of television, Fiske states that “[c]onventions are the structural elements of genre that are shared between producers and audiences” (*Television Culture* 110). This implies that both producers and the audience have a common perception of the genre conventions of a television show and share the same expectations regarding a format’s structure.

Vertical intertextuality, on the other hand, refers to the relationship between the primary text (a television show) and secondary texts, such as criticisms or publicity that refer to the primary text in an explicit manner. Fiske argues that those texts that refer to the primary sources function primarily as a means to strengthen the intended meaning of the primary text.

Secondary texts have an important role in activating certain intended readings of a text while other meanings are less emphasized.

However, it depends on both the origin and the quality of the secondary text whether the producers' or the audience's interests are addressed by those writings. While studio press releases clearly address the interests of a show's producers to make the format in question appear in a flattering way, the best opportunity for the audience to receive and process information on a television show is via neutral critics' reviews (Fiske, *Television Culture* 118). The third category of texts that concerns the intertextuality of both primary and secondary texts is labelled "tertiary texts" (*Television Culture* 117) and comprises viewer's gossip about a television show and letters to producers and the press. Fiske regards these texts as most significant when conducting analysis on how texts are perceived and decoded.

Corresponding to Fiske's categorization of horizontal and vertical intertextuality, Plett proposes syntagmatic and paradigmatic intertextuality. While syntagmatic intertextuality results in seriality, paradigmatic intertextuality leads to condensation (23). With regard to serialization, Plett (23-24) proposes four different transformation patterns for syntagmatic intertextuality:

- (1) from one text to one text,
- (2) from one text to many texts,
- (3) from many texts to one text, and
- (4) from many texts to many texts.

The first type is considered the "prototype of intertextuality" (Plett 23) although it seems unreasonable and almost impossible to trace such a one-to-one relationship between two texts. The second transformation pattern describes a common and rather traditional practice in which one work of art is considered worthy of extensive attention and has a greater influence on other works of art than ordinary texts. The most prominent example of this pattern is Thomas More's *Utopia* which was so successful that a new subgenre – the Utopian novel – was created on the basis of his writing. The fourth type of syntagmatic intertextuality, that from many texts to many texts, is considered the "average experience of intertextuality" (Plett 24). The fourth type explains why intertextuality is commonly regarded as an interwoven net consisting of quotations and texts that rely on and refer to one another. In terms of paradigmatic intertextuality, Plett claims that in case two or more different types of intertextuality coexist at the same time, they "engender a paradigmatic condensation of intertextual poly-isotopies" (25), referring to, for example, material and structural intertextuality in opera.

2.2.2. Parody

Although parody is often used as a synonym for intertextuality, its role in postmodernism as an independent concept is undeniably essential. When discussing parody as an element of postmodernism, researchers in the field of media and literary criticism frequently use the terms pastiche, irony, and satire to define parody and what it is not. A differentiation of these concepts is desirable and meaningful in order to conduct reliable analysis in the field. One of the most profound differences lies in the terms' relationship with criticality: while it is true for all of these notions that they refer to events and texts that lie in the past (in the sense that they are already there), parody relies on its critical function – both implicit and explicit – the most.

As one of the most influential researchers in the field of intertextuality and postmodernism, Linda Hutcheon provides compelling insights into art's newly found self-consciousness. Hutcheon correctly observes that the actual word “parody” is rather rarely used by researchers which might be due to its strong connection with humor and ridicule (“The Politics of Postmodern Parody” 225). However, her interpretation of the term parody denies this one-sided connotation as she argues that parody “is not the ridiculing imitation of the standard theories and definitions that are rooted in eighteenth-century theories of wit” (Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* 26). She prefers a multifaceted characterization of the term parody and defines the functions of the term on a continuum “from reverence to mockery” (Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism* 34). Although her categorization and the functions she defines for parody concern postmodernist architecture, both are easily transferable to the analysis of television and media in general. Similar to architects who express their appreciation of certain styles and functions of previous conventions with their new creations, producers of television shows and series assert their appreciation when they revitalize old formats and present them in a new look.

Hutcheon continues her work on the poetics of postmodernism as she creates a connection between the postmodern paradox and parody: “To parody is not to destroy the past; in fact to parody is both to enshrine the past and to question it” (*A Poetics of Postmodernism* 126). While Ott and Walter seem to agree with Hutcheon on the argument that parody intends to question the past when they state that parody is “in a way intended to discredit the original”

(436), they neglect the more positive evaluation of parody. As already mentioned, they execute a differentiation of parody and parodic allusion. Moreover, they claim that parody is treated and regards itself as superior compared to the text it references. Opposed to that, they propose that parodic allusion is a concept that does not claim any kind of superiority over the original text but is a device that plays and creates amusement with juxtaposition. Another crucial observation concerning parody is that its functions resemble those of the genres and texts it mocks: at first, it creates conventions which are then rejected and as such, “it both legitimizes and subverts that which it parodies” (Hutcheon, “The Politics of Postmodern Parody” 230). This stands in opposition to the one-dimensional view of Ott and Walter according to which parody only functions as a means to devalue the original text.

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, there are other terms alongside parody which require thorough analysis, and among them is the notion of “pastiche”. Ott and Walter criticize pastiche primarily due to its use as an overarching term to refer to anything that could be regarded as intertextuality. In this respect, they argue that their colleagues “view pastiche as the failure of art – as an aesthetic practice that is entirely depthless, superficial, and uncritical” (Ott and Walter 435), and they reject what this, in consequence, means for intertextuality: when used synonymously, the conception of pastiche as an uncritical device results in intertextuality losing its criticality as well. Also Gray highlights the critical function of parody when he defines it as “critical intertextuality” (5) in his analysis of the famous television series *The Simpsons* and thus argues against the assumption that parody lost its place in the postmodern era to uncritical pastiche. Gehring goes one step further and accounts for parody’s function as an educational tool when he defines it as “creative criticism” (3). Moreover, he admits that it is essential for anyone who wants to parody another work of art to be well acquainted with the original text.

Another term that needs to be contrasted with parody is satire: while parody focuses on aesthetic conventions, satire concerns social conventions (Neale and Krutnik 19). Gray embraces the difficulties in distinguishing parody from satire and pastiche when he defines the aims of the two concepts as “pure satire bypasses concerns of form and aims straight at content, whereas pastiche alludes to form and/or content, but with no critical comment on either” (47). Parody, however, aims at mocking genre conventions and for parody to be understood, the listener or reader has to be aware of the conventions of the texts and genres that

are mocked. Only when they are able to create the connection between the aim of criticism and the criticism itself, the parodic performance is successful.

Neale and Krutnik also mention parody in their research on television comedy. They discuss various key terms associated with comedy and suggest that “parody is a *mode* of comedy, not a form” (19) and that it “has its own techniques and methods, but no particular form or structure” (19). Since parody lacks a unique form or structure, it is frequently considered a style rather than its own genre. Gray assigns parody the label of “ghost textuality” (45) as he claims that for parody to function as criticism, the text or genre it refers to has to be quoted or referred to as a whole and, therefore, parody itself partly exists as an invisible entity next to the parodied text. However, while it is true that the target text has to be indicated in some way, it is also true that parody can exist on its own and presents meaningful contents. The theoretical concept of parody will be applied for the analysis of paratextuality concerning the episode titles of *Gilmore Girls* in the third chapter.

2.2.3. Allusion and Reference

While it seems obvious that there is a difference between allusion and reference, it is surprising how many scholars in literary theory use the two terms synonymously. Even those who differentiate between the two stylistic devices commonly use the term reference to define allusion, which demonstrates the close relationship between the two concepts. Irwin, for example, broadly defines allusion as an “indirect reference” (“What Is an Allusion?” 287). In *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, allusion is quite similarly defined as a “brief, indirect, and deliberate reference” (42). Both these definitions indicate that only a certain type of reference, namely indirect ones, are labelled allusion. Irwin provides the following explanation of the difference between the two terms: “The point of allusion goes beyond simple reference. We are not just to substitute one thing for another. We are supposed to make unstated associations, and in this sense the reference is indirect” (“What Is an Allusion?” 288). This explanation of allusion will be central to the analysis of *Gilmore Girls* as the determination of the unstated association constitutes the core issue in categorizing the allusions into the different functional categories.

Irwin further distinguishes between covert and overt allusions, whereby the overt type refers to an aesthetically questionable form of allusion: an overt allusion does not only include the allusion itself, but also provides additional information on the original source. To clarify the distinction, Irwin's example is reproduced: while the covert allusion is "I am not Prufrock", the overt allusion reads as "I am not like Prufrock in T.S. Eliot's 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'" (287). Both are still allusions as the full implication of this statement ("I am not an indecisive man who will live with regrets and 'might-have-beens'") still remains to be interpreted by the reader.

In the *Princeton Encyclopedia* entry for allusion, the author refers to the same distinction between covert and overt allusions when stating that an allusion can be "fairly easily noticed [...] or more arcane" (42), which means that for the covert or rather hidden allusions, more of the responsibility concerning the understanding and decoding of the allusion lies with the audience compared to overt allusions. However, there are some scholars who neglect the possibility that allusions occur as overt references such as Abrams, who defines it as a "passing reference, without explicit identification" (10). In a previous volume of his reference book *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, Abrams provided an alternate explanation of the term and described it as a "brief reference" (qtd. in Irwin, "What Is an Allusion?" 288) which was criticized since briefness is not necessarily characteristic for allusions. While it is true that allusions are generally rather short, it must not be overlooked that also forms and styles can be alluded to, and this, in turn, affects a work of art as a whole. Montgomery accounts for this possibility when he argues that an allusion "is a form of intertextuality that works largely through verbal echoes between texts; however, texts may also interact with one another through formal and thematic echoes" (161). As a consequence, it would be wrong to regard brevity as a central and defining feature of all allusions. It depends on the function of allusions whether briefness is essential or not: in case allusions serve the purpose of humor, briefness is an essential aspect of allusions. As Norrick points out, "[b]revity is the soul of wit, precisely because wit must catch the audience off guard" (119), and in order to make a punch line work, it must be surprising and, in the best case, unpredictable.

Similar to the varied opinions on the characteristic structures of allusions, there are numerous categorizations and classifications of allusions. In *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, a categorization is provided according to which topical, personal, formal, metaphorical, imitative, and structural allusions are possible (42-43).

Michael Montgomery, another scholar who studies intertextuality and allusions, distinguishes the varieties of allusions into the following four categories:

1. a verbal reference to another text,
2. epigraphs (an inscription at the beginning of a text),
3. names of characters, and
4. choice of titles. (157-158)

Although he deals with poetry and written prose in the chapter on intertextuality and allusions in his book, the statements and definitions of terms concerning these stylistic devices can be adopted for television and film. According to Montgomery, an allusion can be defined as an “implicit or explicit reference to another text” (156) which is a simple and very straightforward explanation of the term. While the exact wording of the original text is reproduced and indicated through quotation marks for an explicit reference in written texts, an implicit reference operates more subtly and is usually not signaled.

Bignell suggests that allusions and references fulfill their purpose best if they are “subtle and to some extent hidden” (163), and, consequently, enjoyed by the viewers. Clearly, one of the main functions of allusions is to add cultural value to a text as certain connotations and associations are evoked which help to situate the text in a cultural tradition (Montgomery 156). In this respect, Bignell defends the viewpoint that in order for intertextuality to work, it is necessary that the majority of viewers and text analysts is able to identify allusions and references: “allusions do not enrich a text if only a very small number of viewers will notice them” (Bignell 163).

Without any doubt, the ultimate purpose of all allusions is that someone recognizes them and derives some form of meaning from them. Opposed to simple references, an allusion does not simply substitute its referent but requires the reader, viewer, or listener to make some particular and, most importantly, unstated associations (Irwin, “What Is an Allusion?” 288). This challenge constitutes the appeal of allusions as it is frequently the case that not all people who read a text possess the necessary information and knowledge that is required to fully understand an allusion. Allusions are sometimes defined as a means to flatter the readers which results in a feeling of superiority among those who recognize and understand an allusion compared to those who did not realize it. Additionally, this function helps in establishing a relationship between the audience and the text as the recognition of an allusion triggers the feeling that a certain novel, magazine, movie, or series is especially made for them (Montgomery 157). Some scholars even go as far as to assign an above average level of intelligence

and education to these audiences (Abrams 11) or describe them as “‘highly cultured’ people” (Montgomery 157). Bianculli partly underpins this assumption and demands the same level of appreciation for television viewers that the readers of written literature receive, as they are similarly capable of decoding the most complex references. He states that

[a]uthors of written literature reveal their own enthusiasms and backgrounds when quoting from – or alluding to – previous written works. Why should TV’s viewers, or its writers, behave any differently? When writing or ‘reading,’ the visual and verbal language of television, why aren’t we given credit for processing the often amazingly arcane and complex information and allusions TV throws at us constantly?” (150)

Bianculli gives no answers to these questions but firmly insists on television’s right to be considered a serious object of study. This entails that also television’s form of intertextuality and the allusions found in television shows are seen as equal to literature’s realization of these concepts.

Television shows which are culturally laden through an extensive use of allusions and references frequently feature fan communities that are especially keen on recognizing and “getting” all of these allusions. It is reasonable to argue that the more difficult it is to decode an allusion, the greater the pleasure of the audience when they are successful and derive the right meaning. Ott considers the phenomenon of fandom and fan communities in his discussion of the issue, stating that “the more obscure the references one recognizes, the greater the reward and validation [...] from the community” (96). Usually, fan communities in the 21st century communicate via internet, use websites, blogs, and fan forums to discuss their explanations and solutions for allusions that occur in their favorite television shows and movies. Decoding these allusions is what Bianculli calls an “exercise in teleliteracy” (151) whereby this definition does not only point to the challenge which is involved in deriving meaning from allusions (“exercise”), but also highlights television’s role in the discussion by defining it a task of “teleliteracy”.

As already mentioned in the second chapter on postmodernism and television, “hyperconscious television” is a new key term in television studies, and as such, it affects not only the production of television, but also its consumption. The genre of hyperconscious television is said to create a new hierarchy “in which the interpretative abilities of its viewers are socially valued” (Ott 96). The attitude of previous decades in which watching television was frowned upon or even condemned by some groups in society has changed to mutual

appreciation. To possess a significant amount of knowledge in terms of media and popular culture is not regarded as an evidence for a person's lack of useful employment any more, but rather appreciated by those who produce and consume hyperconscious television. Ott summarizes this argument in the following words:

In privileging and therefore valuing eclecticism, intertextuality, and reflexivity, hyperconscious TV erects an alternative social hierarchy in which heavy media and television consumption is not a source of guilt, but a source of pride. (157-158)

Opposed to Fiske's claim that intertextuality only concerns texts of minor quality and not those of "high literature" which are found in museums and universities, the situation with intertextuality in terms of television seems the exact opposite. Although television itself is frequently treated as a medium of lesser quality compared to books and movies, Collins suggests that the "foregrounding of intertextual references has become a marker of 'quality television'" (762). In his argumentation, Collins does not contrast television with other media, but rather compares so-called "quality television" with another, unnamed, but supposedly less valuable form of television. In this respect, intertextuality plays the most important role in distinguishing valuable forms of television from television of low quality.

To summarize, allusions depend on two fundamental things: an author who produces an allusion and an audience who recognizes and understands the allusion. As straightforward as it seems to agree on these two prerequisites, both have been object to severe criticism. In his discussion on allusions, Irwin categorizes all existing viewpoints on the subject matter into three distinct groups: the internationalist view, the internalist view, and the hybrid view. According to the intentionalist view, the author's intention to include a specific allusion is foregrounded, while the shared features of the alluded text and the alluding text are at the core for those who defend an internalist view on allusions. Those scholars in favor of the hybrid view define the two things mentioned above as equally important features of allusions, namely the author who produces an allusion and the audience who recognizes the allusion (Irwin, "What Is an Allusion?" 289).

With regard to the intentionalist view, it is often criticized that the occurrence of both unconscious allusions by the author and allusions that are recognized as allusions by the audience although the author did not intend them are not taken into account in the discussion. In these cases, Irwin provides the alternative term "accidental association" ("What Is an Al-

lusion?” 291) instead of “allusion” since authorial intent is not simply a by-product of allusions, but rather a defining feature. Moreover, he uses this notion to distinguish allusions from references: the relationship between two texts independent of the author’s intention is defined as reference whereas authorial intention is always needed for allusions. In their most extreme form, allusions are stylistic devices that are so obscure that only the author and no one else is able to recognize them. Irwin addresses this issue and suggests to evaluate allusions in terms of their success dependent on whether someone other than the author recognizes an allusion. In the case described above in which solely the author is able to determine the unstated associations, Irwin suggests to label these allusions “unsuccessful” (“What Is an Allusion?” 292).

The internalist view, according to which the same characteristics that are shared by two texts regardless of authorial intent are the only necessary prerequisites of allusions, is less viable. It is too simple a task to create connections between two texts either on the level of content, form, structure or genre to regard it as a defining characteristic of allusions. It is virtually always possible to create connections between two texts for the simple reason that the same words are used. Thus, this does not qualify as a sufficient condition of allusions. Furthermore, mere coincidence could likewise constitute a form of allusion according to the internalist view, which is to be rejected (Irwin, “What Is an Allusion?” 289). Opposed to the internalist view on allusion, the role of the audience must be considered in any discussion on the issue. In the argument of what constitutes a successful allusion, Irwin rightly describes this case as “an author manages to get the audience to fill the gap in just the way he or she intended” (“What Is an Allusion?” 293). This means that not just any possible meaning should be derived from an allusion, but the one meaning the author had in mind when creating the allusion.

However, it is impossible for the author to immediately evaluate whether the reader, listener, or viewer arrived at the intended meaning at the moment of reading, listening, or watching. Moreover, allusions are again to be differentiated from references as it is significantly more difficult to make the audience understand an allusion than a direct reference. Nevertheless, it is at least to some extent possible to check whether allusions are interpreted in the “correct” way due to both scientific research that is conducted on the respective text and discussions among fans and critics in terms of the allusions.

2.3. *Montgomery's Framework for Analyzing Allusions*

In order to analyze allusions in terms of their formal structure and their thematic and symbolic functions, Montgomery proposes a simple but effective framework. He defines three separate steps: The first step is very basic as it is simply to recognize that an allusion has been made. The difficulties in connection with recognizing allusions depends on whether the allusion is explicit or implicit and whether the reader or viewer is familiar with the source text in case an implicit allusion occurs. With regard to explicit allusions, the clues are rather overt anyway and their recognition (not their understanding) is less dependent on the audience's knowledge of the original text (Montgomery 160).

The second stage is to trace the allusion for which Montgomery suggest for reasons of simplification to "use the Internet" (161). With written texts, the task is even less complex as the written word is permanently accessible to the reader, whereas with spoken texts, one needs to carefully listen to what was said in order to conduct research on the subject. In the case of *Gilmore Girls*, the internet proved extremely useful as dedicated fans of the series created and published transcripts of the whole series which made finding the exact wording of the allusions significantly less complex. Furthermore, the subtitle function of the DVDs further helps to fully understand what is said by the characters although one has to be careful since subtitles are occasionally shortened compared to the actual spoken text. Moreover, the "Guide to Gilmore-isms" – published and included with the DVDs by Warner Bros. – served as the starting point and a prime source to get an overview of the allusions in the series.

For the third stage, Montgomery suggests a "close reading of the section of the source text in which the word or phrase originally appears" (161) which involves determining the differences and similarities of the alluding and the alluded texts. This relationship between the source text and the text in which the allusions occur is either marked by an ironic or a parallel relation (Montgomery 161). Furthermore, more thorough research on the significance of the source text and the impact of the cited words and phrases for the original text might be helpful to arrive at a detailed and comprehensive analysis.

2.4. *The Television Genre*

“Texts are not simply *texts* but come in bundles and groups; and these groups are laden with meanings and functions” (Thornham and Purvis 45). Although they do not explicitly state what these “bundles and groups” are, it is evident that what Thornham and Purvis refer to is genre. To assume that they are “laden with meanings and functions” points to the multiple ways in which genres operate and how they can be used as devices to convey meaning. In general, there are two interpretations of what constitutes a genre: on the one hand, a certain genre is ascribed to a text by some external agent, such as a viewer or a critic, by means of external features, and on the other hand, there is the idea that genres are inherent to texts. Thornham and Purvis advocate the first viewpoint and alongside the already mentioned but rather vague definition of genre, they also provide a more downright explanation of the term when they state that it “is a term used to designate a specific *kind* of fictional, dramatic, filmic or visual-artistic text, *Genre* serves to categorise texts” (Thornham and Purvis 44-45). Opposed to that, Gray defends the second position and explains that a “[g]enre is the grammar of a text, and as such, it is largely internalized” (28). This implies that there are fixed structures and patterns, as well as certain conventions that are inherent to a text.

Obviously, both conceptions of what constitutes a genre are valid and justify their existence as it depends on the angle from which a text is read and interpreted. What remains valid for both viewpoints is that genres help to classify a text and this in turn implies that a formal framework is needed to categorize television texts. According to Lacey, among those categories are “types of character, setting, iconography, narrative and style of the text” (136). This categorization does not only help experts with identifying the genre of a text, but also laypeople become increasingly aware of the genre conventions and are especially versed in identifying different character types. Experienced television viewers have no trouble to recognize, for example, (stereo)typical characters such as the blonde naïve, the nerd, the emancipated business woman, or the bad boy.

While genres are useful tools in order to group and classify texts, its function as a means to convey identity categories is also not to be abandoned. Thornham and Purvis argue that genres are always dependent on the institutions that are responsible for their production and, thus, are object to alteration, modification, and hybridization as the market demands (46). As much as typical genre conventions help to identify a certain television text, they are

also instrumental in distinguishing the numerous genres from each other. From previous experience with different genres and their respective conventions, the categorization of a new program becomes significantly simpler for the audience. Gray argues in this respect that “[e]ach genre has its own ‘common sense’ rules that, by and large, we internalize and use to make sense of future texts” (28). Furthermore, these genre conventions are usually universally applicable and similarly recognized by people all around the world.

Although genres seem to be rather fixed categories, some scholars argue that they are in constant movement and exposed to fundamental changes. When defined as “cultural categories” (29) by Gray, it becomes obvious that genres are not fixed categories, but mirror images of developments in society. One of the most profound changes in recent television history is the new participatory orientation of many television programs. In previous decades, the audience was only able to actively participate in the creation of television in the form of votes for movies that would be shown on the next day’s evening program. Additionally, in international music competitions like the Eurovision Song Contest, viewers were encouraged to call for their preferred contestants.

Nowadays, however, there is a constant and daylong competition between shopping channels, quiz and game shows, lotteries, etc. to attract the audience’s attention. Producers let the audience choose on the reports they want to see as part of certain programs, and votes on all possible questions and issues have become integral parts for many magazine and infotainment programs. Moreover, the role of the World Wide Web in this development cannot be highlighted enough as it has influenced modern television consumption in a twofold manner: the internet made not only appear the participatory layout of television shows in a different light through a more direct connection with the audience, but it also facilitated the simultaneous processes of watching as well as designing and creating television programs.

2.4.1. Series, Serials, Sitcoms, and Soap Operas

Television genres display a strong connection with gender roles in society and, as such, are either associated with masculinity or femininity. Usually, police series, thriller, legal series, and animated sitcoms like *South Park* are considered “manly”, whereas other genres have clear connotations with femininity such as soap operas, costume dramas, and comedy-dramas (Thornham and Purvis 25). In the following sections, a brief outline of the genre

television series is provided, and the differences and similarities between comedy, soap opera, sitcom, and the hybrid genre dramedy are discussed.

The label “television series” has become an overarching term for any program with entertainment purpose that sequentially airs in more or less regular intervals. An essential distinction is the one between television series and serials or miniseries. According to a more general distinction of these terms, serials and miniseries tend to have a previously fixed number of episodes whereas series can be divided into an indefinite number of episodes and seasons. There are, however, exceptions to this categorization and especially experts in the field of television genres perform a more detailed and diversified classification. As Creeber argues, serials can be further divided into those serials that run indefinitely – like soap operas – and others like miniseries that reach a final conclusion. Furthermore, series and serials are distinguished according to the structure of their plotlines as well, which can then reverse the previous categorization: In situation comedies, “characteristics and settings are recycled, but the story concludes in each individual episode” (Creeber 35), which would classify a sitcom as a series. A soap opera, on the other hand, is defined as a serial by Creeber in that the story and plot lines are not resolved in a single episode but stretch over multiple episodes, a whole season, or even more than one season.

With respect to contents, the typical features of soap operas are the strongly interwoven background stories of the protagonists, which “makes dramatic reversals, revelations, and emotional reorientations a constant element” (McCarthy 47). Typical serial plot devices such as cliffhangers, changes in the character of protagonists, and twists concerning the plot lines are habitually deployed in soap operas so that every single episode increases the level of suspension and encourages the audience to tune in again. These devices are occasionally applied in other series formats as well, but less excessively. Cliffhangers, for example, are usually used in the last episode of a television series’ season to both keep the tension high during the time span in which no new episode airs and excite the audience’s curiosity for the new season. Also in *Gilmore Girls*, all the last episodes of the series’ seasons employ cliffhangers for these reasons. More specifically, the last episodes of seasons one to seven either made the audience wait for the response to a marriage proposal, brought chaos into the love lives of the two Gilmore girls, dealt with the end of Rory’s time at Chilton and Lorelai’s time

at the Independence Inn, let the audience participate in some first times, introduced the longest silent period between Rory and Lorelai, made the girls say goodbye to their lovers, and portrayed Rory when she says goodbye to her loved ones to go on an exciting journey.

Opposed to the usually dramatic contents of soap operas, situation comedies are, as the name already suggests, concerned with more humorous plot lines and characters. Another fundamental difference relates to the presence of real-life laughter in the sitcom which either stems from a live audience in the studio, or is added later as canned laughter from a record. Nothing similar is found in other types of series. The social groups that are represented in soap operas are typically whole communities, neighbors, and families (Hartley 66), whereas in sitcoms, they range from traditional and patchwork families to roommates and couples to colleagues. In recent years, however, the most represented group in sitcoms has been friends. The most successful sitcom which featured a group of friends was named *Friends* accordingly and lay the foundation for current hit sitcoms that feature a group of friends such as *The Big Bang Theory* and *How I Met Your Mother*.

2.4.2. Dramedy

As the discussion above proves, the television genres sitcom and soap opera follow rather strict guidelines and it becomes evident that over the last decades, almost nothing has changed concerning these two genre's conventions. In general, the vast majority of programs can be easily identified according to its genre and as Thornham and Purvis argue, "very few programmes are seen to fall outside established genre categories – 'drama', like 'sport' or 'news', is a category which is clearly marked" (16). Although it now serves as an overarching term for many sub-genres, television drama initially functioned as a rearrangement from a theatrical production on the small screen. These first dramas strictly adhered to typical theatrical conventions, featured historic contents, and were seen as high-quality products. Only later, when the entertainment purpose became central, television dramas transformed into serials either in the form of mini-series or ordinary drama series (Casey et al. 72-73). Among the sub-genres of television drama are hospital drama, police drama, action series, police series, science fiction, drama-documentary, teen series, costume dramas, and the mini-series. The plots in these series are predominantly concerned with serious subjects such as illnesses, crimes, and the daily dramas of people. In some cases, however, the producers and writers

decided to break this predominantly rather depressing atmosphere and they introduced a counterbalance, usually in the form of a less serious character who helped to lighten the mood when necessary. This, in turn, paved the way for a new hybrid genre – dramedy. Dramedy blends the two well-known genres of comedy and drama and was introduced with series such as *The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd*, *Frank's Place*, *Hooperman*, and *The Slap Maxwell Story* in the 1980s (Sewell 235).

An attempt to categorize *Gilmore Girls* would result in its classification as a dramedy without any doubt. As already mentioned in the second chapter on postmodernism and television, critics and producers were not sure where to place the series in terms of nominations for awards, so the cast and the series were nominated in both the comedy and the drama categories over the years. Giada Da Ros provides an excellent summary of why *Gilmore Girls* is one of the best examples of the hybrid genre dramedy:

As a drama, the program tackles a variety of serious themes regarding family relationships (parenthood and motherhood in particular), friendship, love, generational schisms, cultural affinities, independence and dependency, mistakes and remedies, personal goals and career objectives. However, as a comedy, it revels in jokes, rapid-fire dialogue, unrestrained banter, flippant cultural references, sarcasm, irony, hyperbolic situations, the exaggeration of eccentric supporting characters, and narrative events that are one step short of farce. (57)

Moreover, not only the contents, settings, and the narrative style blend comedic and dramatic features, but especially the characters themselves epitomize dramedy. Although they display tendencies to one or the other, a binary classification of the protagonists in *Gilmore Girls* into either dramatic or comedic characters is almost impossible. The primary serious characters are allowed to live out their “occasional frivolousness” (Da Ros 57) and all comedic characters are capable of unexpected but honest seriousness as well.

As a “recombinant genre” (264), a term introduced by Weerakkody, *Gilmore Girls* is remixing and combining two or more existing genres into a single text. Its genre conventions were indicated right at the beginning of the series through the theme song and the visuals of the opening credits, which is common practice for series. As already mentioned, the *Gilmore Girls* theme song “Where You Lead, I Will Follow” plays a crucial role and functions as an indicator of the main theme of the series: the relationship between Lorelai and Rory who are according to the characters’ own description “best friends first and mother and daughter second” (“There’s the Rub” 02-16).

3. *Gilmore Girls*

The following section provides some basic information concerning the production of the dramedy *Gilmore Girls* and an outline of the plot of the series. The third subchapter introduces a more general analysis of intertextuality in *Gilmore Girls*, paying special attention to paratextuality wherefore episode names are investigated, and interfigurality which concerns the names of the main protagonists.

3.1. *Basic Information on the Series*

Gilmore Girls was created by Amy-Sherman-Palladino and was produced by her own production company Dorothy Parker Drank Here Productions, Hofflund/Polone and Warner Bros., whereby the latter also distributed the series. The seven seasons of *Gilmore Girls* ran from 2000 until 2007 on the WB/CW network and in total, 153 episodes aired, each of them 45 minutes long. In contrast to the vast majority of television series for which only a handful of writers is employed, there were more than 30 different writers involved in the creation of the series. Also remarkable is the unusual ratio of male and female writers: 92 of the 172 writing credits were given to women and 67 episodes were directed by women, whereof 15 were directed by Amy Sherman-Palladino herself (Lavery 10).

Gilmore Girls is set in the fictional village Stars Hollow in Connecticut which is located 30 minutes away from Hartford, the home of the Gilmore grandparents and the location of Rory's high school Chilton. Later in the series, New Haven also becomes one of the central locations as Rory attends Yale University. Although located on the east coast of the United States, the actual filming of the series took place in Burbank, California, except for the pilot which was shot in Toronto, Canada.

3.2. *The Plot*

The dramedy deals with the lives of single mother Lorelai Gilmore, aged 32 at the beginning of the series, and her daughter Lorelai, "Rory", aged 16. Since Lorelai became pregnant as a teenager, the relationship to her daughter rather resembles that of friends than that of mother and daughter, which is one of recurring issues in the series. Estranged from

her wealthy parents Emily and Richard Gilmore, Lorelai left high school when Rory was born and moved to the eccentric town of Stars Hollow to work at the local inn as a maid. When the series starts, Lorelai had already worked her way up to the manager of the Independence Inn, and she lives with her daughter in a small house in Stars Hollow. Lorelai's best friends are Sookie, chef at the Independence Inn and future partner to open their own inn, and Luke, owner of the local diner. Rory's best friend is the daughter of Korean Seventh-day Adventist Mrs. Kim, Rock'n'Roll-addicted Lane with whom she attends Stars Hollow high school. However, Lorelai and Rory maintain close relationships with the many quirky and colorful characters that inhabit Stars Hollow: the unlike neighboring couple Bette and Morey, dance studio owner Miss Patty, weirdo Kirk, and Town Selectman Taylor Doose.

During the first episodes of the series, Rory's ambitions to study at Harvard to major in journalism and become a foreign correspondent lead to her change of school from public Stars Hollow high school to prestigious private school Chilton. At the same time, this induces a reappraisal between Lorelai and her parents as she has to seek for financial aid from them in order to pay for Rory's new school. In return, Emily demands to be more strongly involved in the girls' lives and attaches one condition to the loan: Friday night dinners.

In terms of their romantic relationships, both girls are shown with various lovers. Throughout the series, Lorelai has a handful of more or less serious relationships, most notable the one with Rory's teacher, Max Medina, whom she almost marries. A recurring issue in the seven seasons is whether Lorelai and Christopher, Rory's father, will be able to eventually reunite and live as a happy family. They get married in the last season but separate again towards the end of the series. However, the central male character in Lorelai's life is Luke, owner of the local diner and the man who is expected to marry Lorelai in the end.

With regard to Rory, it can be said that at the beginning, she behaves like a typical teenager in terms of her romantic relationships. Rory's first and third boyfriend Dean can be described as a nice and charming but simple young man, whereas her second boyfriend Jess, Luke's nephew, is the exact opposite: a bad boy who smokes, plays pranks to the people of the town and drops out of school. Her fourth and most serious relationship is the one with rich newspaper heir Logan Huntzberger. Rory starts dating him in the fifth season during her time at Yale University but the relationship ends in the penultimate episode of the series when Rory rejects his marriage proposal.

3.3. *Analysis of Intertextuality in Gilmore Girls*

This chapter deals with the analysis of intertextuality in the dramedy *Gilmore Girls* and consists of three subchapters: First, the literature review provides an overview of the results of previous studies on intertextuality and allusions in the series. Second, an analysis of paratextuality, that is, intertextuality in paratexts such as titles, is conducted for a selection of seven episode titles from the first three seasons of the series. The third subchapter addresses intertextuality in names as an aspect of interfigural and provides insights into how the name Lorelai for both main protagonists affects the series and the relationship between mother and daughter.

3.3.1. Literature Review

Intertextuality is considered one of the defining features of the television series *Gilmore Girls* as it significantly influences the series' dialogues and the interactions between characters. However, the study of references has mainly focused on how these allusions on the whole influence the perception of the series, disregarding the meanings of single allusions. Some studies investigate the difficulties that arise for translators in terms of how to incorporate the references into the translated language as many of the references are especially difficult to comprehend for non-American audiences. Although they focused on single references, there remains a lack of research concerning the impact of the references on the characterization of the protagonists as women. Furthermore, it is necessary to determine the extent to which the relationship between the characters of the series is influenced by understanding and not understanding the allusions and what intertextuality in general means for the series.

Eugénie Brinkema examines *Gilmore Girls* with respect to its popular postfeminist representation of female discourse in her article "More *Gilmore Girls*: Rory, Lorelai, Donna, Stella, and Lucy". In her discussion, Brinkema stresses that postfeminist readings of media texts merely focus on detecting positive and negative representations of women, whereas she prefers to address and consider the way we are *looking* at media products. For her study, Brinkema chose the episode "That Damn Donna Reed" from season one of the television

series to convincingly argue that Rory's position during the episode cannot be labelled feminist whereas her mother Lorelai's can be. While Rory performs an ironic re-enactment of a dinner in Donna Reed style in pearls and 50s dress, Lorelai performs a different charade. Brinkema concludes that Lorelai's intertextual knowledge concerning the movie *Streetcar Named Desire* and the sitcom *I Love Lucy* receives a different quality – that of “feminist coherence” – when she screams “Stella” in order to refer to Rory's lost chick. What Brinkema fails to include in her study is the level of maturity that is attributed to both characters: this makes the performances of both characters more plausible and, thus, needs to be considered in a study on their expression of feminist attitudes.

Another postfeminist reading of the series' dialogues and allusions is conducted by Linda Beail. In her examination of *Gilmore Girls* and other popular television series, she focuses on allusions to music and musical intertextuality in general. Her argumentation is based on the claim that “music is said to be a site of third-wave activism” (107), and convincingly concludes that the female characters of the series are partly characterized through their use of allusions to music. Beail emphasizes the fact that while other shows and soap operas from the past particularly relied on the sound track to create moods and underpin character's emotions, these new television series are more rigorously utilizing music as a means to consciously position the series as a postmodern one.

Johns and Smith address the use of allusions and intertextuality as instances of the hyperreal, a term coined by Jean Baudrillard. He defines hyperrealism as the key characteristic of postmodernism, which means that the distinction between the actual subjects and objects and their representation on the screen has disappeared, resulting in a merger of reality and simulations. The hyperreal – an excessive reality – in which “media-generated images function independently of any reality external to them” (O'Day 112) and which extends beyond traditional representations on screen became prevalent. In their discussion of the hyperreal, Johns and Smith provide an example from the pilot episode of *Gilmore Girls* in which Rory says to Dean (her future boyfriend): “I know it's kind-of cliché to read *Moby Dick* as your first Melville”. They interpret this utterance as her being aware of conventions and norms that concern reading the classics which results from “the established hyperreal in education and academia” (ch.2). Johns and Smith make the necessary connection between the emphasis on the hyperreal that is found in those references and the interpretation of allusions and intertextuality as markers of a utopian sphere in the show. They read Rory's and Lorelai's

use of the references as an imitation of the relationship between audience and show: the audience watches the show as if it were real in the same way Lorelai and Rory refer to fairy tales, movies, and other texts which in turn constitute the character's hyperreal. Johns and Smith only mention the impact of the allusions on the representation of the mother-daughter-relationship in the television series in a side note, while Brinkema treats this aspect as the core issue in one of her works on *Gilmore Girls*.

In contrast to Johns and Smith, Eugène Brinkema interprets intertextuality and allusions in *Gilmore Girls* less as a blurring of the boundaries of the fictional, the real, and the hyperreal, but rather as signs of mother-daughterness. She prefers another term when investigating the series, namely "intertextelasticity", in order to indicate the elasticity that is connected with rabid work on texts and which extends beyond mere resort to references to other texts. It seems highly reasonable to regard the investigation of pop culture and other allusions in *Gilmore Girls* as stretching the limits of the term "intertextuality" as self-reflexivity, paratextuality (e.g. the episode's names frequently refer to works of literature, music, etc.), and parody also play crucial roles. Although Brinkema articulates that the series shares an interest in "substituting an external real with simulacrum" ("A Mother Is a Form of Time" 10) and, thus, agrees with Johns and Smith in their interpretation of the allusions as hyperreal to some extent, she logically argues that the opacity of the totality of references makes it unique and differentiates it from other series such as *The O.C.* or *Gossip Girl* in which pop culture references frequently occur as well. Brinkema succeeds in establishing the connection between missed allusions and the positioning of the audience as either daughter or mother, but fails to acknowledge in how far references to current affairs, politics, literature, television and films, and books characterize the main protagonists of the television series.

Karin E. Westman partly accounts for this lack of examination in her study "Beauty and the Geek" in which she conducts an analysis of the allusions in *Gilmore Girls* as markers of the female protagonists' "geekiness". She recalls critics and reviewers and agrees with them in distinguishing the series from other shows, such as *The X-Files* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, as *Gilmore Girls* does not deal with contents that are usually considered geek (the supernatural, science, comics, etc.). What is regarded geek, however, is their obsession with knowledge. Westman succeeds in contrasting this geeky characteristic of both Rory and Lorelai with non-geeky features such as their ability to socialize easily and their funny and witty character traits. Another crucial point which is addressed by Westman concerns how

Gilmore Girls manages to bring “geekiness” to the female realm. She emphasizes that the author of the series, Amy Sherman Palladino, performed a redefinition of the term “geek” by creating the character of Rory in whom outstanding intellect and beauty coexist. Moreover, “geekiness” is not a feature ascribed to only a single character, but rather swamps the whole series as almost all of the series’ characters frequently utter obscure and complex references: from the community in the girls’ home town Stars Hollow to Rory’s private school Chilton to Yale. The only flaw in Westman’s outstanding analysis is that she does not account for those allusions that are usually not considered to require an extraordinary amount of intelligence to be recognized and decoded by both the other characters in the series and the audience. It remains to be investigated what the functions of those references are, whereby it seems reasonable to explain their occurrence with every television show’s primary purpose: entertainment.

Although allusions and intertextuality in *Gilmore Girls* have been investigated either as a means to emphasize the series’ postfeminist character, as a means to create a suburban utopia, as central markers of the mother-daughter-relationship in the series, and as features to characterize the main protagonists as geeks, proper research investigating the role of allusions as core features in determining the role of the protagonists as women in the series has not been conducted yet.

3.3.2. Paratextuality

An aspect that has been subject to extended amount of research concerns intertextuality in connection with titles and is discussed as an aspect of paratextuality, a term coined by Gérard Genette. A paratext consists of two elements: first, the “peritext” (Genette 16) – cover page, titles, content pages, prefaces – and second, the “epitext” which is not materially related to the text but comprises texts “outside the book” (Genette 344) such as interviews or reviews on the text itself. The paratext functions as a smooth transition between the world of the text and the world of the reader and makes movement between these two worlds easier (Genette 408).

While the peritext has more or less remained the same in its function and appearance, the epitext was object to tremendous changes due to the development of the new media landscape. While in previous decades critic’s reviews and word-of-mouth advertising were the

only ways to inform oneself about media products in advance, nowadays a flood of previews, sneak peeks, trailers, and teasers provide the audience with ample information and insights. Moreover, there are various shows and even distinct television channels which dedicate almost a hundred per cent of their screen time to previews of unpublished books, unreleased movies, television series, new episodes and seasons of television series, and music. The influence of these paratexts is significant as those who produce them can shape and determine the meanings that are conveyed and received by the audience. Gray summarizes this view when he states that “[a]uthors and producers can attempt to hem in certain readings, to keep readers away from others and, overall, to authorize and legitimate their own favored reading strategies” (37).

Hebel categorizes allusions into paratextual allusions, allusions in the external system of communication, and allusions located in the internal communication system (146). Internal allusions are those references that emerge in the narration of a story and affect the characters directly since they make use of them. While allusions in the realm of external system concern the communication between the narrator and the reader, allusions as elements of the paratext reach beyond this scope and are thus not considered part of the narrating process. Karrer conducted research on this issue and reviewed previous analysis on the subject matter which resulted in the label “intertitularity” (Hoek qtd. in Karrer 122) to refer to title intertextuality. The simplest way to create title intertextuality is by literally quoting another text, which recreates the unique combination of words from the source text and, thus, makes it identifiable as a quote.

Another significant term in the discussion of title intertextuality is “overcoding” (Karrer 123) which refers to the hierarchical structure of titles and mottoes on the one hand, and parts of a text and whole texts on the other hand. Title intertextuality overrules simple text quotations as allusions in titles function as all-pervasive codes of the texts they precede. In the following sections, an analysis of the *Gilmore Girls*’ peritext in the form of a selection of episode titles is presented. The analysis of episode titles primarily serves the purpose of demonstrating that the writers refer to a great variety of texts such as movies, novels, songs, and fairy tales and that this stylistic device is applied for various reasons. For the analysis, episode titles from the first three seasons were chosen as it is the aim to provide an overview of the range of texts that are referred to. These are also the seasons that are examined for the analysis of allusions and references in the fifth chapter, which adds to the overall quality of

the analysis. As already mentioned in the second chapter on parody, it will be indicated whenever one of the episode titles features a scene or a sequence of scenes that can be interpreted as a parody, and the functions of the parodies will be elaborated on.

3.3.2.1. *The Deer Hunters*

The fourth episode of *Gilmore Girls*' first season is called "The Deer Hunters", which is a reference to the 1978 drama *The Deer Hunter*, a movie about the service of three American men in the Vietnam War. Since both the episode and the movie are not primarily concerned with the subject deer hunting, the parallels between the two media products must be more arcane. At the outset, it seems impossible to detect a connection between the series and the movie, but upon closer examination, the deer plays a central role in both works: In the war drama, the deer stands for freedom and represents calmness in contrast to the war scenes that appear in the movie. Furthermore, it is during deer hunting that Mike, the main protagonist of the movie, realizes that he cannot carry on with his life when his two friends are still lost. In *Gilmore Girls*, the changes induced by the deer that hits Rory on her way to an extremely important test at school is less fundamental but still crucial to the series' development.

At Chilton, it seems that Rory cannot continue to be the straight-A-student that she used to be at Stars Hollow high school, which worries her and makes her think again about her decision to change school. In order to prove that she fits in at Chilton, she studies hard to excel at a test on Shakespeare but she and her mother oversleep, so she has to rush to school and on the way there, her car is hit by a deer. Due to her lateness, she is shut out from writing the test which leads to her ranting and raving in the classroom about all the things that bother her such as her classmate's nickname for her or her classmate Paris who is constantly bullying her. This behavior adds a new facet to Rory's character and turns her into more than the average good girl who stoically endures life's flaws. During her outburst in the headmaster's office, also Lorelai is in disbelief that her daughter did not behave as the even tempered girl that she knows. After this episode, there is no mention of any problems concerning Rory's performance at school anymore, which allows for the conclusion that hitting the deer represents the starting point of her success at Chilton.

In a later season, Rory has troubles keeping up with her colleagues at Yale University and complains to her mother about what she has to catch up on. The incident with the deer and the causality with her achievement at Chilton is brought up again and to some extent verified by Lorelai: “No, I say that like it’s what you’re going to do. You’ve done it before. You were behind at Chilton – you remember? And then you hit a deer, and everything was fine” (“Norman Mailer, I’m Pregnant!” 05-06). Rory, however, disagrees with her mother and denies any causal connection between the two events. Nevertheless, she seems confident that although it does not seem reasonable to associate hitting a deer with a sudden improvement concerning school performance, something changed after her car was hit by the stag. Quite similarly, the plot in the movie *The Deer Hunter* receives a sudden twist after Mike failed to get down the deer with the notorious “one shot” as this incidence initiated his search for his two lost friends.

3.3.2.2. *Star-Crossed Lovers and Other Strangers*

This episode title alludes to the 1970 comedy film *Lovers and Other Strangers*, whereby the adjective “star-crossed” is most certainly a reference to the Stars Hollow Firelight Festival which is shown in this episode: at the beginning of the sixteenth episode in season one, Miss Patty tells the tale of Stars Hollow’s founding according to which two lovers were led to each other by the stars, and at the place they eventually met, Stars Hollow was founded.

In the comedy film, there are various plotlines which all focus on the relationships of different couples and the difficulties they face – may it be an extramarital affair, a lack of passion, inconsolable differences, or divorce. Only Susan and Mike, the couple at the center of the movie *Lovers and Other Strangers* is more or less unaffected by the chaos surrounding them as they are only focused on planning their wedding. What constitutes the parody in the episode title is the obvious similarity that also all plotlines in the episode feature a couple: Rory and Dean, recent single Lorelai and her blind-date Chase, Luke and Rachel, Lane and the new set-up her mother arranged for her, Sookie and Jackson, Emily and Richard, Michel and his love-interest, Tristan and his current conquest, and finally, Lorelai and her ex-lover Max. Another resemblance is that all of these couples stand at different points in their relationships: While Rory and Dean celebrate their three-month anniversary, Luke and Rachel

pursue an on-off relationship, Lorelai misses her ex-lover and has to deal with her mother's set-up quite similar to Lane and her Korean future doctor. With Sookie and Jackson, some kind of wedding vibe lies in the air, which is an implicit allusion to Susan and Mike in the original movie, while Emily and Richard are married for almost forty years. However, since the events that take place in *Gilmore Girls* are significantly less severe concerning drama and tragedy, the episode is, although a parody, best identified as an episode that features a down-graded and less excessive version of the original.

As explained in the introductory section of this chapter, title intertextuality provides the all-pervasive code of the text that is to follow the title, which is definitely the case with this example. Opposed to "The Deer Hunters" in which the deer is crucial to the plot line but not the all-pervasive theme, star-crossed lovers and strangers are indeed essential and the main issue throughout this whole episode. However, a comedic aspect is added to the series: at the beginning of the episode, Lorelai is almost clocked by a huge papier-mâché star that serves as a decoration for the festival, which adds to her grumpy moody concerning all the seemingly happy couples surrounding her. The "Strangers" in the title refer to both Lorelai's and Lane's blind dates as well as Rachel, Luke's on-off-girlfriend, who is a stranger to Lorelai although many of the people in the town know her.

The low-point of the plot, however, does not deal with Lorelai, but with Rory who surprisingly arrives at home from her romantic date with Dean as a single girl. To further increase the dramatic aspect of this situation, the episode ends with the exact same shot as the next episode begins. This is quite unusual for *Gilmore Girls* as it is rather a feature of soap operas than of comedy dramas but given the dramatic moment of the scene, it seems appropriate. What further reinforces this merger of genres is the next episode's title, "The Breakup Part 2". This is not only a reference to the series' previous episode in which the breakup was illustrated, but it also mocks television's and cinema's genre conventions by naming it "Part 2" as is commonly done with sequels, even though in *Gilmore Girls*, the previous episode (that is, the prequel) is neither called "The Breakup" nor includes "Part 1" in its title.

3.3.2.3. *Emily in Wonderland*

This episode deploys one of the most obvious allusions as it concerns the famous novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, usually shortened to *Alice in Wonderland*. The popular tale features the girl Alice who is seeking an adventure and falls through a rabbit hole into a fantasy world in which she meets absurd and surreal characters. As a viewer who is already familiar with 18 episodes of *Gilmore Girls*, one can imagine that a day trip to Stars Hollow feels quite similar for Emily Gilmore and in this sense, the episode title is clearly a parody of the tale. It is, however, crucial to interpret parody as the broad concept as it is defined by Hutcheon in order to apply it to "Emily in Wonderland". This means that the dramedy's episode contents are most appropriately defined as a playful and softened adaptation of the original text in order to fit the structure and the set-up of the series. Besides the intentions to account for the context of the events of the episode, that is, a wealthy woman who explores the unconventional life of her granddaughter, the alterations were also needed as there are no explicit fantasy elements in the series.

The original intention behind Emily's visit is shopping for antiques at Mrs. Kim's but Rory takes the opportunity to spend the day with her and shows Emily around their house, the town, and Lorelai's workplace. Among the numerous curiosities that Emily discovers during this day are her daughter's dishes with the portraits of Charlie's Angels, wearing tennis socks and sneakers with her expensive lady's suit, rummaging around and buying expensive antiques in a shop that looks like a storeroom, getting along well with stern Mrs. Kim and usually unfriendly concierge Michel, and lunch at a fast food restaurant.

The cheery mood of the episode changes, however, when Rory shows Emily the place in which she and Lorelai lived for more than ten years after Lorelai left her home at Hartford. Emily finds out that the two girls lived in a garden shed on the grounds of the Independence Inn, which is less a curiosity, but more a shock for her. Opposed to the tale in which Alice wakes up at the most horrible moment of her adventure to find out that all that happened was only a dream, Emily can do nothing but flee from the situation. Although she also returns to her own world, meaning her home in Hartford, the effects of her encounter with her daughter's and granddaughter's lives are far-reaching. She decides to furnish a room for her granddaughter in her house which should serve as a special place for Rory whenever she visits her grandparents. Although Emily makes great efforts to furnish and decorate the room in a way

that she thinks appeals to Rory, the room with posters of popular boybands and kitschy, flowery curtains, bed linens, and pillows represents a similar wonderland to Rory as Stars Hollow to Emily. Comparable to the tale in which Alice reports on the events of her dream to her sister, Emily confronts her daughter Lorelai with her experiences and the insights she gained during the day with Rory.

3.3.2.4. *A-Tisket, A-Tasket*

In this episode, a new and special Stars Hollow tradition is introduced to the audience, an event called “Bid-a-Basket”. In episode 13 of the second season, the female residents of Stars Hollow pack picnic baskets which are then auctioned off to the male inhabitants, and usually, the basket is bought by the respective husbands, boyfriends, or other love interests. After the auction, the couples find a spot and eat the food from the basket together.

The reference in the episode title concerns a nursery rhyme which was recorded by Ella Fitzgerald and is called “A-Tisket, A-Tasket”. In her version, the original lyrics were changed to some extent and more lines were added to make the song more mature and less childish. The original version of the song deals with a girl who wrote a letter to her love but accidentally dropped the letter which is then found by a little boy who puts it in his pocket (“A-Tisket, A-Tasket”). This is what constitutes the parody of the original text. Opposed to the previous example of paratextuality, however, the contents were not downgraded compared to the original, but transformed into more mature, but still rather traditional, events in the series.

Again, the episode title introduces the main theme of the episode since almost all of the plotlines are concerned with the “Bid-a-Basket” festival in Stars Hollow and the consequences of the events that take place. While Lorelai hopes to make some men bid on her basket who in turn carry out some repair work on her house, Rory had a fixed idea of who should bid on her basket: her boyfriend Dean. However, Jess interferes with this plan in his outbidding Dean at the auction and since Rory refuses to break the tradition of the festival, she also rejects Dean’s request to skip lunch with Jess. Rory and Jess spend the afternoon together during which Rory loses the bracelet Dean gave to her as a birthday present. Jess sees the bracelet lying on the footbridge and puts it in his pocket, which constitutes the most explicit parallel to the alluded text. More implicitly, the whole incident can be interpreted as

a reenactment of the events described in the nursery rhyme as Rory originally packed the basket for her boyfriend, quite similar to the girl in the song who writes a letter to her love. Then, there is a twist in the plot and the letter is found by another boy than previously intended, which is exactly what happens to Rory when Jess instead of Dean buys the basket. Moreover, Lorelai's plot line in the episode can be interpreted likewise. Although she had planned to let some town craftsmen bid on her basket, she ends up with Luke in the town gazebo as she forced him to buy her basket at the auction. She prefers his company over some men's who were invited and instructed by Miss Patty to bid on Lorelai's basket.

3.3.2.5. *I Can't Get Started*

The last episode of the second season is again named after a song that became famous through Ella Fitzgerald's version of it. Opposed to all the previous paratextual references analyzed so far, this episode title does not only allow for conclusions on the contents of the episode but is actually present in the series.

Sookie is busy organizing her wedding and debates with Lorelai, Michel, and Rory on the song that should be played when she walks down the aisle. Sookie favors Ella Fitzgerald's "I Can't Get Started" and in order to convince the others, she plays the song from a CD and all four listen to it. The protagonists start an argument whether the song is appropriate for the intended purpose given its melancholic and depressing content. The lyrics deal with a woman who complains about her inability to pursue a successful relationship with a man while she succeeds in all other areas in her life like her profession and social status. Sookie argues for the song as it a classic by Ella which suffices for her to consider it for one of the most important music choices in her life. With regard to Sookie's occasional unconventional behavior and style, the song choice seems slightly less inappropriate.

Although the episode title seems to refer to Sookie, the person who actually "can't get started" is Lorelai. In the scene before she walks down the aisle as her friend's bridesmaid, Lorelai found out that Christopher breaks up with her. He decided to return to his fiancée who recently found out that she is pregnant. Consequently, he cannot keep his promise that he wants to stay in Stars Hollow and live with Lorelai and Rory as a family. Like the woman in the song who is successful in all areas of her life but romantic relationships, Lorelai is disappointed by a man as she cannot make him stay. In the song, it says "I've got a house, a

show place/ But I get no place with you” (Alexander), which is an exact description of Lorelai’s situation. Sookie, on the other hand, has no reasons to doubt her relationship and even goes one step further in her relationship with Jackson when she marries him. This implies that her choice of music is an instance of eccentricity rather than a reference to her own life.

If the lyrics of the song are interpreted more generally as dealing with love affairs and relationships, then Rory’s plotline fits the paratextual reference as well. She is successful at school and gets along with her family and friends but she is not perfectly happy in her relationship with Dean any more. At the same time Lorelai is informed by Christopher that he is leaving her and their daughter again, Rory cheats on her boyfriend Dean and shares a romantic moment with Jess. Although there were signs that Rory wanted to be more than just friends with Luke’s nephew throughout the previous episodes, this is the first specific situation in which the teenagers give vent to their feelings and kiss. Consequently, the title of the episode refers to Rory in this respect that although she probably wants to start a romantic relationship with Jess, social conventions and her upbringing forbid her to get started with him at the moment. Even though she already made the first move, she needs to break up with Dean before she can start a new relationship with Jess.

3.3.2.6. *They Shoot Gilmores, Don’t They?*

The seventh episode of the third season received ample academic attention through Eugénie Brinkema’s article “A Mother is a Form of Time: *Gilmore Girls* and the Elasticity of In-Finitude” in which she investigates intertextuality as a marker of the mother-daughter relationship in the series. The episode title is an allusion to Sydney Pollack’s film drama *They Shoot Horses, Don’t They?* from 1969, which is in turn based on a novel with the same name by Horace McCoy from 1935. Both texts are set during the Great Depression and feature Robert Syverton, a young man with aspirations to become a film director. A dance marathon is about to begin in the town where he lives and he decides to participate as the partner of a woman named Gloria. In order to get the \$ 1,500 dollar prize, numerous couples sign up for the competition which is expected to last for several weeks. Robert’s dance partner has some mental problems and at the end of the movie, she points a gun at herself but she cannot pull the trigger. She wants Robert to help her and he does as asked and shoots her. When asked about his motives by the police, he recalls an event from his youth when he saw how

a horse that had a broken leg was shot to end its pain. He uses the same excuse the doctors used to defend his decision, namely “They shoot horses, don’t they?” and, thus, he refers to Gloria’s pain that he ended.

Since the entire *Gilmore Girls* episode almost exclusively deals with the dance marathon – its preparation, its realization, and its aftermath – it is rather obvious that the parody of the original pervades the whole episode. While some instances constitute rather straightforward imitations of the original text, other events were intensely downgraded from the movie, such as the murder, to fit the genre conventions of the dramedy. In *Gilmore Girls*, there is no one shot at the end of the dance marathon, although Dean breaking up with Rory at the end of the episode comes as a bombshell. Upon closer examination, there is a situation similar to Gloria’s “cannot-pull-the-trigger” situation when Rory is not able to end the relationship with Dean on her own accord. Consequently, she assigns him the responsibility to end their romantic relationship, which is accepted by him. He is the one who triggers their break-up and finally finishes it off.

Although the episode title clearly refers to the occurrences concerning Rory and Dean, there are also other, more explicit, references to the movie with regard to the organization of the event. These constitute the already mentioned copy and re-enactment of the original text: The competitors are dressed in vintage clothing to fit the whole style of the dance marathon and in order to resemble the protagonists in the movie more closely. Moreover, the ceremonial master, the stage, the live orchestra, and the gym-like venue are reenacted almost identically. Furthermore, the additional challenges in order to get rid of the weaker couples in the dance marathon are also the same as there is a roundabout in both the film and the television episode, which is similarly enjoyed and encouraged by the ceremonial masters Taylor (in the series) and Rocky (in the movie) respectively. The effect of this exercise where the contestants run rounds around the gym is, however, incomparably worse in the film: in the movie, one of the contestants dies from a heart attack after the exercise, whereas Lorelai only briefly addresses the respective issue when she states “Okay, okay, heart returning to normal” (03-07).

3.3.2.7. *Those Are Strings, Pinocchio*

The last episode title under examination concerns the final episode of the third season and refers to a well-known literary character. The wooden animated marionette named Pinocchio and his creator Geppetto are the protagonists of a children's book written by the Italian author Carlo Collodi who published the work in the late 19th century.

Similar to the episode title "The Deer Hunters", the paratextual reference concerning this episode is restricted to a rather small subplot but the words from the episode title are actually uttered by Lorelai in the series. The events that invoke the reference receive less attention compared to the main plot of the episode, Rory's graduation from Chilton, but are important driving forces for the plot of the next season.

To fully grasp the contents of this episode, it is useful to recall one of the previous episodes: The audience is informed that when Lorelai was born, her father made a real estate investment in her name. The government decided to build a road where the investment is located, which means that all investors receive a check worth \$75,000 dollars and since she is an investor, she also receives a check. Lorelai immediately pays back the loan she received from her parents for Rory's school fees, which also meant the end to Friday night dinners. With the rest of the money, she decided to finally purchase an old inn at Stars Hollow.

These events from a previous episode affect the episode under consideration as Rory is denied any financial aid from Yale due to this payment. In light of this situation, Lorelai puts her career plan on hold again and wants use the money to pay for Yale instead. Rory, however, decides that her university tuition fees should not prevent her mother from pursuing her dream so she decides to contact her grandparents and negotiate a loan for herself. In return, she agrees to reinstall Friday night dinners, which is a special treat for Emily and ensures that she agrees on her offer. When Rory later informs Lorelai about this arrangement, they discuss Lorelai's concerns that her parents would manipulate her and Rory:

LORELAI. Rory, honey, do you understand, the Gilmores do nothing altruistically. Strings are attached to everything.

RORY. There are no strings.

LORELAI. No strings?

RORY. No. I just have to pay them back starting five years after I graduate, and I have to start going back for Friday night dinners.

LORELAI. Um, hello, Pinocchio, those are strings. ("Those Are Strings, Pinocchio" 03-22)

That Rory agreed on having dinners with them again makes Lorelai believe that this is the reason why they gave her the loan and she fears that they will resume to exert influence over their granddaughter and, hence, over her. The symbolism in calling Rory “Pinocchio” fits with the strings that were attached when Lorelai asked for the money for Rory’s school, which made Lorelai a kind of marionette as she had to bow and agree on their conditions. Moreover, ascribing the role of the marionette to Rory makes apparent what Lorelai thinks the hierarchy in the situation looks like: her parents are superior to Rory, pull the strings, and make her do whatever they want and due to Lorelai’s close relationship with Rory, she assumes that they will try to manipulate her as well. Rory assures Lorelai that she is not concerned with the conditions of the loan and that she is not obligated to attend Friday night dinners. At the end of the episode, however, there is evidence that Lorelai’s concerns were justified: Emily states that they (she and Richard) expect them both, and not only Rory, for dinner on the Friday after they have returned from their trip to Europe.

The metaphor concerning the marionette and the strings is actually no novelty in the series as Lorelai resorted to quite similar symbolism in a previous episode. In the eighth episode of the third season, Rory is tricked into a trip to Yale by Richard. Lorelai starts a discussion and tries to prevent her from going but Rory weakens her mother’s argument in that she expresses her knowledge of Richard’s plans:

RORY. I know, I am being manipulated. This is part of Grandpa’s evil plan to take over my life, abolish my free will, pull me in into the Gilmore world, dress me in pearls, and ruin my life. Did I leave anything out?

LORELAI. Mm, let me see. . . manipulate, evil plan, no free will, pearls – no, I think you about covered it. Oh, wait – did you call my father the Puppet Master?

RORY. No, I did not.

LORELAI: Always call him the Puppet Master. (“Let the Games Begin” 03-08)

This reference to the main character in the horror movie *Puppet Master* expresses the horror Lorelai is expecting whenever her father interferes in her life. Again, the motifs of manipulation, persuading, and superiority are evoked.

3.3.3. Interfiguralität

Similar to the allusions occurring in the episode titles of the television series, the main protagonists’ names can be interpreted as special instances of intertextuality as well. Müller argues that names are especially significant in linking characters from different texts and he

concludes that shared names are in fact comparable to quotations (102-103). Names, however, are not simply copied into a new text but often altered and transformed. In *Gilmore Girls*, the two main characters share the same name, Lorelai, which is an alteration of the German name Lorelei. According to Greiff-Gossen, the name Loreley (Lorelei) refers to a rock headland in the Rhine River and was used in a German legend as the name for a siren who lures fishermen and sailors to their death with her singing. The spelling of the name Lorelei is obviously changed to Lorelai in *Gilmore Girls*, which can be regarded as an instance of “internymic transformation” (Müller 105). The German spelling of the name is changed into the English version as the diphthong /ai/ is not spelled as <ei> in English.

In the dramedy, it is implied that Lorelai was named after her paternal grandmother, “Lorelai I” (“The Third Lorelai”), as her parents, Richard and Emily Gilmore, decided to carry on the tradition of naming the firstborn after a grandparent. Furthermore, Lorelai’s second middle name is Victoria, which can be interpreted as a reference to her family’s British ancestors and the famous British Queen Victoria. Throughout the whole series, Richard’s family in the United Kingdom is repeatedly mentioned and the two girls are also aware of their ancestry as Rory once explains: “My ancestors came over on the Mayflower!” (“But I’m A Gilmore” 05-19). One generation later, with Lorelai’s daughter Rory whose given name is also Lorelai, the tradition of naming children after close relatives is passed down again but supposedly for other reasons than traditional ones. Already in the pilot episode, Rory explains that her given name is actually Lorelai, and her mother decided to name her after herself for the simple reason that fathers do the same with their sons:

It’s my mother’s name, too. She named me after herself. She was lying in the hospital thinking about how men name boys after themselves all the time, you know, so why couldn’t women? She says her feminism just kind of took over. Though personally I think a lot of Demerol also went into that decision. (“Pilot” 01-01)

This scene is also remarkable as some of the essential defining features of the series are introduced: feminism and wit.

To return to the original source of the name Lorelai – the legend and Rhine River – comparing Lorelai Gilmore to the man-seducing mermaid Lorelei would be inaccurate and goes too far, especially as her performances as a singer are reduced to only a handful of scenes in the series. Rather, the name Lorelai can be traced back to the paternal grandmother; however, also a movie seems to play a crucial role in naming the main protagonists Lorelai, namely *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes*.

In the 1953 movie, Marilyn Monroe plays the character Lorelei Lee, a showgirl who is well aware of the fact that a woman in the fifties is bound to seek marriage with a wealthy man if she wants to climb the social ladder. The full name of Rory is actually Lorelai Leigh which is a homophone of Lorelei Lee. One could detect some parallels between the movie character and the television character: Also Rory dates a very rich man, Logan, for whom she left her lower middle class boyfriend Dean. Furthermore, Logan's wealthy father does not believe that Rory is good enough to marry the heir to the family business, quite similar to Gus' father Esmond who even spies on his daughter-in-law-to-be in the movie. In contrast to Lorelei Lee, however, Rory does not primarily work towards marrying Logan as she rejects his marriage proposal in order to pursue a career as a journalist and foreign correspondent. On the other hand, the similarities of both characters are their multifaceted personalities which evoke surprising twists and create tension in the two fictional worlds. While Rory deviates from her image as well-behaved Ivy League college girl when she steals a yacht with Logan, Lorelei Lee performs a partial transformation from the blonde naïve into a woman of wit towards the end of the movie. Both women's behavior is more diversified than one might expect at the beginning, which adds a certain depth to their characters.

4. Formal Aspects and Functions of Allusions in *Gilmore Girls*

Before the analysis of allusions in *Gilmore Girls* is conducted, a summary of the theoretical framework that is considered during the analysis is provided: First, allusions are always indirect and never direct as they require the reader, listener, or viewer to make specific associations that are not explicitly stated. Whenever an utterance can be defined as direct, we are not concerned with an allusion, but with a reference. Second, allusions can be explicit such as "That is some serious *Great Gatsby* pining" ("I Solemnly Swear" 03-11) or implicit like the allusion to the character Duane in the movie *Annie Hall* when Lorelai rephrases the character's original lines as "I get the sudden urge to turn the wheel into oncoming traffic" ("Take the Devil's Eggs" 03-06). For all allusions to be analyzed, their unstated associations are determined and it is examined whether they are implicit or explicit. Additionally, a special set of criteria is applied for every functional category, which helps to examine how the allusions and references under consideration fulfill the functions of the respective categories.

The analysis of allusions in *Gilmore Girls* focuses on the first three seasons of the series and comprises both a discussion of the formal aspects as well as an examination of the thematic and symbolic functions. Each of the seven subchapters addresses a different function of the allusions in the series: mockery, differentiation, adaptation, ambiguity, lightening the mood, identification with powerful women and finally, initiating an action. However, the boundaries between these categories are occasionally blurred and, therefore, some allusions fulfill more than one of these functions.

4.1. Mockery

Although humor plays an essential role in the dramedy *Gilmore Girls*, instances in which the two girls mock each other or themselves are rather rare, which marks the allusions in this category as highly valuable. This constitutes the reason for establishing this functional category and for choosing these allusions it is the aim to provide a multi-faceted examination of the allusions in the series.

In the second episode of the first season, Lorelai resorts to self-mockery in order to prevent herself from an uncomfortable situation. It is Rory's first day at Chilton and both she and her mother Lorelai are expected to meet the headmaster at school. Unfortunately, Lorelai overslept and could not pick up her business clothes from the dry cleaner's, which makes her only washed clothes a pair of jeans hot pants and an old-fashioned purple shirt with batik effect. When the two girls arrive at Chilton, Lorelai refuses to accompany Rory into the headmaster's office due to her inappropriate appearance and responds to Rory's plea slightly aggressively "I look like the chick from *The Dukes of Hazzard*" ("The Lorelai's First Day at Chilton" 01-02). The comparison with the female main protagonist of the old television series is not flawed as the resemblance concerning the clothing of "the chick" Daisy Duke and Lorelai is significant.

When Lorelai compares herself to this woman, she does not say "I am the chick from *The Dukes of Hazzard*", which would expand the reference to the attractiveness, the character traits, and possibly the environment like their home or her profession. Instead, she states that she "looks like the chick" which creates an allusion that should make the audience only connect her outfit with that of Daisy Duke and nothing else. Although some people might not regard the comparison with this character as an insult, Lorelai clearly performs an act of self-

mockery as she would never voluntarily dress in the way she was forced to do on this day. She alludes to the character this television series in order to prevent herself from an even more uncomfortable situation, namely being mocked by other people: as a woman who attended private school, Lorelai undoubtedly knows about the norms and conventions concerning proper behavior and clothing that are expected from anyone who wants to participate in the school life these prestigious schools. Consequently, she knows that her looks will attract attention, evoke prejudices against outsiders and members of lower social classes, and mark her as someone who is not familiar with the proceedings at Chilton. Her primary concern is not to be branded as a country bumpkin, although one would expect her to be even more anxious about her daughter's image. Surprisingly, this issue is not addressed by any of the characters; on the contrary, Rory quite firmly insists on her mother's company when she meets the headmaster, disregarding her mother's inappropriate apparel. She responds to Lorelai's act of mockery: "This is my first day. You are not getting out of going in there with me. Period" ("The Lorelai's First Day at Chilton" 01-02). It seems that for Rory, it is more important to have her mother by her side than to consider what other people might think of them, and Lorelai, on her part, pockets her pride in order to be supportive of her daughter.

As a conclusion, the allusion can be formally defined as explicit since Lorelai explicitly mentions *The Dukes of Hazzard*, the name of the show in which the character appears. Even though she does not state the name of the character, Daisy Duke, but only labels her "the chick", it is assumed that the audience makes the necessary connection, that is, identify the right person and connects the allusion with Daisy's outfit and no other feature of her appearance. Mockery is only at the surface the primary function of this allusion since actually, Lorelai tries to hide the fact that she failed to act as a good mother and embarrassed herself and Rory.

Another allusion that functions as mockery occurs in episode 19 of the second season. In Stars Hollow, the annual Movie in the Square night is to be staged, which leads to a discussion about the choice of movie between Lorelai and Town Selectman Taylor Dooze. When he informs Lorelai that the same movie which was chosen in the previous three years – *The Yearling* – will be shown, she complains about it, and after a brief dispute, Lorelai is given the eligibility to pick a movie. However, she did not take into account that she cannot pick any movie she wants but has to choose a movie from a preselected folder. After she familiarized herself with all the movies in the folder, she decides that *The Yearling* is the best choice

and will be shown for the fourth year in a row. At the very moment she informs Rory on her decision, there is a knock at the front door and the following dialogue develops:

LORELAI. Oh, that must be Pauline Kael rising from the dead.

RORY. Tell her hey.

[Lorelai answers the door and sees Luke standing on the porch]

LORELAI. Pauline!

LUKE. What?

LORELAI. Never mind. ("Teach Me Tonight" 02-19)

In contrast to the previous allusion in this category, this allusion hides a less serious flaw in Lorelai's personality and truly functions as mockery, which is why an analysis of this allusion is conducted.

As a film critic for *The New Yorker*, Pauline Kael was a controversial, yet highly trusted professional until her death in 2001. During the 25 years she worked for the magazine, her reviews of some of the most famous motion pictures received a great deal of attention, as she frequently judged movies against public taste (Heller). Lorelai's allusion to Kael is clearly linked to her previous decision to show *The Yearling* at the movie night. As the idiom "rising from the dead" signifies some unexpected recovery, Lorelai indicates that the recently deceased Pauline Kael would react to her choice of movie, more specifically, she expects Kael to disapprove of rather than endorse her decision.

This allusion is an act of self-mockery again as both Lorelai and Rory, who immediately grasps the intended meaning, are aware of the debatable movie choice. It is, however, not the quality of the movie that makes them expect Pauline Kael to rise from the dead, but the circumstance that they will show the same movie for the fourth time in a row. As Heller mentions in his article on the famous *New Yorker* critic, it is common knowledge that Kael "almost never saw a picture more than once". That Lorelai's criticism is directed towards the frequency of showing the movie and not the quality of the movie itself is proven by her arguments in the dispute with Taylor. The statements she utters when she complains about Taylor's choice at the beginning of the episode all include hints at the repeated screening of the movie and not the quality of the movie: "You chose *The Yearling* again?", "You've shown *The Yearling* the last three years in a row!", and "Taylor, there's millions of great movies out there. Any one of them would be better than *The Yearling* for the fourth time." ("Teach Me Tonight" 02-19).

The function of the allusion only slightly changes when Lorelai answers the door and greets Luke with “Pauline!” as she must be aware of the fact that Luke lacks any prior knowledge to catch the allusion. Lorelai rather appeals to Rory and continues their mocking when she opens the door and exclaims “Pauline!” as if Kael indeed rose from the dead. Understandably, Luke responds with a confused “What?” which highlights that the allusion is only shared between two characters in the series, namely Rory and Lorelai. Instead of proceeding to a lengthy explanation of the joke for Luke, she resorts to saying “Never mind”. Additionally, it is difficult to determine whether Luke would have grasped the allusion even if Lorelai had explained the events that led to her utterance as he is not known for being a passionate cineaste. Thus, he would probably not be familiar with the name Pauline Kael and the implications of expressing her name in relation to a movie screening. Moreover, Luke is not a character who frequently attends the many festivals in town, which means that he is not acquainted with the circumstances of the Movie in the Square night: first, he probably does not know that *The Yearling* was shown in the previous three years, and second, he has no knowledge of the circumstance that Lorelai is responsible for the movie choice this year.

Concerning the formal aspects of the allusion, the allusion is again explicit, since Lorelai explicitly states the name of the person she refers to. Moreover, the allusion exhibits a great degree of actuality: According to the release information provided by the *Internet Movie Database*, the *Gilmore Girls* episode originally aired on the 30th of April 2002 and Pauline Kael died in September 2001 (“Release Info: ‘Teach Me Tonight’”). Taken into account an episode’s time of production and the editing process, the allusion was truly up-to-date.

4.2. Differentiation

The two female main protagonists in *Gilmore Girls* are rather straightforward in terms of their preferences concerning books, music, movies, and television shows. Both Rory and Lorelai have unrestrained opinions on their favorites as they know exactly which authors’, directors’, and artists’ works they want to consume. At the same time, they do not conceal their feelings on what they consider non-valuable and negligible products of media and occasionally also attack the people who consume these products. The allusions in this category were chosen as they prove that first, Rory is not afraid to distance herself from people whom

she appreciates, and second, Rory's wish to differentiate herself from her mother is prevalent. As this perspective is frequently overlooked by scholars who study *Gilmore Girls*, the allusions in this category provide essential insights into the girls' relationship.

Rory repeatedly discusses her taste in books with her friends, most notably with Dean, Lane, Jess, and Paris. Also in the eight episode of the first season, Rory meets Dean and asks him about a book that she lent him, which leads to the following conversation:

RORY. Oh, how'd you like it?

DEAN. Well, I could tell you, but then I'd have to kill you.

RORY. Aha! You liked it, you liked Jane Austen. I knew you would. Lane, Dean likes Jane Austen.

LANE. Wow, who would've thought.

RORY. I told him he would, but he was all, 'Forget Jane Austen, you have to read Hunter Thompson.'

DEAN. You do have to read Hunter Thompson.

RORY. Not as much as you needed to read Jane Austen. ("Love and War and Snow" 01-08)

Obviously, Rory expected Dean to be more reserved in terms of Jane Austen, but he surprises her with his positive opinion, and she expresses her appreciation for Dean's attitude towards one of her favorite authors. However, Dean does not explicitly state that he likes Austen, but rather alludes to it when he states "I could tell you, but then I'd have to kill you". This is a sentence usually uttered by characters in thrillers and crime movies to refer to the delicate information that a speaker possesses. It functions as a threat directed towards the interlocutor and means that if the other person gains knowledge of this information, the speaker's life is in danger. The implication from Dean's utterance is that it is "dangerous" for him to confirm Rory's expectations not because his life is in immediate danger, but because he sees it as a threat to his face in a metaphorical sense. As a teenage boy, Dean's first associations with Jane Austen are probably rather superficial and concern her role in feminism and the prejudice that her novels are romance novels and for women only. All of these are issues that a young male teenager is possibly not interested in or avoids to be associated with.

When Rory imitates Dean's initial argument against reading a novel by Austen ("Forget Jane Austen. You have to read Hunter Thompson"), the audience is informed that he tried to circumvent the event that led to his positive opinion on Austen. He suggested that Rory should ignore Jane Austen and, instead, accept his advice to read an author he approves of, namely Hunter S. Thompson. Thompson is an enfant terrible of American journalism and

literature, and he achieved fame through his novel *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*. His turbulent private life was characterized by scandals, offenses, and felonies; nevertheless, he is considered “one of the most important US authors of the 20th century” (“Obituary: Hunter S Thompson”). When Dean repeats his advice that Rory should read Thompson’s works, her response “Not as much as you needed to read Jane Austen”, the decisive utterance in this discussion, is triggered. Rory does not intend to say that Dean needs to read a novel by Austen since he has to write an assignment for school, but rather, she implies that his need is more fundamental and also greater than her need to read Thompson. It is this explicit allusion that functions as a distinctive feature and distinguishes her from other people: these people being men and women who prefer to read Hunter Thompson to reading Jane Austen, people, such as her boyfriend Dean, who have failed to read one of the most influential authors of her time, and people who are not aware of Austen’s importance in literature and thus inferior to her. The phrase “not as much” signals that for Rory, Jane Austen is a more important author than Hunter Thompson.

Moreover, this allusion can be interpreted as an attempt to level out an assumed imbalance in the relationship of Rory and Dean. He has to catch up on Rory, familiarize himself with Austen’s novels, and acknowledge the woman’s significance. The discussion between the couple also briefly involves Lane who seems to have read Jane Austen as well. This creates the impression that Rory prefers to surround herself with people who are familiar with the English novelist to keeping company with people who have not read her novels. That Lorelai is also familiar with Austen’s novels is implied in this situation but stated quite explicitly by Rory in her valedictorian speech when she thanks her mother by saying “She filled our house with love and fun and books and music, unflagging in her efforts to give me role models from Jane Austen to Eudora Welty to Patti Smith” (“Those are Strings, Pinocchio” 03-22). This allows for the conclusion that Rory and Lorelai have similar opinions when it comes to role models and women’s rights.

There are, however, situations and discussions when differences between Rory and Lorelai become obvious. The allusions that are analyzed subsequently do not function as means to differentiate the two Gilmore girls from another group of people, but rather emphasize differences between Rory and Lorelai. Moreover, they constitute special cases in the analysis, as the allusions under consideration consist of two parts: the first part is a direct reference, and the second part is the allusion which is either Rory’s or Lorelai’s reaction to

the initial reference. These allusions cannot be analyzed on the basis of the criterion which was applied for the previous allusions – explicitness – since these allusions are never alluding to a separate, external text. Instead, the allusions refer to the utterances that immediately precede them in the dialogue, thus, these allusions are solely analyzed in terms of their unstated associations.

The first allusion to be examined only hints at a dissimilarity between Rory and her mother, whereas the second allusion quite explicitly addresses the difference. In the eleventh episode of season one, Lorelai borrows a book from her then boyfriend Max Medina who works as a teacher at Rory's school. The respective novel is *Swann's Way*, the first volume of Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. Lorelai tells Rory about the book and that she intends to read it, which results in the following remark by Rory: "Aren't we ambitious" ("Paris is Burning" 01-11). Rory alludes to the length and complexity of the novel, and she also implies that the reading will be a challenging task for her mother. She utters this presumption more explicitly later in the episode:

RORY. So how's *Swann's Way* coming?

LORELAI. Oh finished.

RORY. You're kidding! It took me forever to read that. I had to renew it ten times.

LORELAI. The first sentence – I finished the first sentence.

RORY. Aha. ("Paris is Burning" 01-11)

Rory cannot hide her astonishment when Lorelai informs her that she has already finished the book and underpins her disbelief by informing Lorelai (and us) about the circumstances when she read *Swann's Way*. To imagine that Lorelai had less difficulties with reading this novel than her is impossible for Rory and threatens her intellectual superiority. She further implies that when it already took her "forever to read that", then it must require Lorelai a similar long time span or even longer. Lorelai is not insulted or offended by Rory's doubts but resolves the situation by admitting that she only finished the first sentence of the novel, which is in turn willingly accepted by Rory.

Although it seems that Rory is highlighting another similarity between her and her mother in that the reading of a rather ambitious novel takes them equally long, she is actually creating a barrier between her and Lorelai. Rory somehow anticipated the "solution" that Lorelai only finished the novel's first sentence and her assumption is confirmed when Lorelai tells her that she intends to return the book to Max instead of finishing it. Consequently, Rory

is provided with the information she expected and regains a feeling of superiority which was briefly in danger when her mother jokingly tells her that she already finished the novel.

In the episode, this expression of distinction from Rory and even more significantly from Max is further reinforced by an utterance from Louise, one of Rory's classmates. Madeline, Louise and Paris discuss who the girlfriend of their teacher Mr. Medina might be, and Louise states that "I bet she's dumb. [...] Dumb girls crave smart men. It's that whole Marilyn Monroe – Arthur Miller syndrome" ("Paris is Burning" 01-11). Louise and the rest of the girls do not know that Lorelai is Max' girlfriend, but they agree on the prejudice that the woman who dates their teacher is less intelligent than him.

As already mentioned, the allusions concerning *Swann's Way* only hint at the distinctions concerning the interests of the two Gilmore girls, but there are other conversations in which their different attitudes are more evident and in part also addressed by the protagonists. In the penultimate episode of the third season, Rory and Lorelai plan their backpacking through Europe which takes place in the summer after Rory's upcoming graduation. They talk about the different phrase books they will need in order to communicate in Europe in another language than English and argue about whether learning the phrases instead of bringing all those books is an option:

LORELAI. When we're in Spain, we need to know how to say, "Does Antonio Banderas live near here?" When in France, "Does Johnny Depp live near here?"

RORY. When in Rome, "Does Gore Vidal live near here?" ("Here Comes the Son" 03-21)

While Lorelai decides that it is essential to know how to ask for the homes of famous celebrities who live far away from the Hollywood craziness, Rory thinks of an American novelist instead. It is safe to assume that Lorelai received her information on the homes of Banderas and Depp from the yellow press and that her aim is to catch a glimpse on one of these handsome movie stars. Rory counters her mother's intentions by stating her very different purpose for finding the home of a famous person: her aim is not to enjoy a male celebrity's looks, but rather the encounter with an influential personality itself. Rory is aware of the conversation conventions and takes over the whole sentence structure from Lorelai; however, being a fan of a popular person is expressed in two completely different utterances by the girls. The difference manifests when Rory does not fill the placeholder for the person with another handsome movie star, but chooses a man who is elderly and has no business with movie-making. She ascribes the same significance to Gore Vidal that Lorelai attributes to the two beaus and,

therefore, Rory expresses her opinion that for her it is more desirable to be able to ask for Vidal's home in Rome than for Banderas' home in Spain or Depp's home in France.

Lorelai cannot hide her amazement when she hears her daughter utter this statement, as she expected Rory to somehow carry on with the little game and possibly say "When in Italy, 'Does George Clooney live near here?'"'. Instead, she is surprised by her daughter's remark that follows a completely different direction and she responds: "You know, you look like me, yet my ways are completely lost on you" ("Here Comes the Son" 03-21). This statement constitutes the second part of the allusion. The "ways" Lorelai mentions can be interpreted as the behavior that is commonly expected from typical female fans of Hollywood's top-notch stars, namely to be on the look-out for famous men. Moreover, she implies that she enjoys to look at these men who are commonly known as handsome and would even neglect to see the country's sights if she is in turn able to get a sneak peek at them and their homes. Furthermore, Lorelai contradicts her remark with Rory's in terms of their looks: they both have slim figures, blue eyes, and brown hair, which led to her believe that their attitudes on what constitutes a person who is worthy of their fan-like behavior would be equally similar. In this respect, however, Rory surprises her mother and begs to differ. At the back of her mind, Lorelai might also think of the stories and anecdotes she intends to tell the townspeople after her return from the trip to Europe. Obviously, Lorelai assumes that they will share her opinion and react more excited towards her seeing Banderas and Depp than towards an encounter with Gore Vidal. Opposed to that, Rory is less concerned with impressing or pleasing other people but prefers to see a person who wows herself and possibly no one else.

How different their preferences might be in some situations, Rory and Lorelai share most of their interests and are aware of their similarities in the majority of situations. This also concerns the expression and comprehension of the most obscure allusions in their conversations. Similar to the previous examples, the allusion that is analyzed subsequently consists of two parts. This time, however, the first part is an implicit allusion to a famous movie and not a direct reference. The second part – the character's response to it – remains the same and is analyzed in terms of the unstated associations that are evoked. The allusion under consideration constitutes the basis for the title of this diploma thesis.

In episode 14 of the second season, Lorelai and Rory discuss which table they should sit at in Luke's diner:

LORELAI. Hm. Or we could sit in the corner – you know, the Mafia table so that no one can come up behind you and whack you with a cannoli.

RORY. Whack you with a cannoli? Oh, because he left the gun and took the cannoli.

LORELAI. You're so my daughter. ("It Should've Been Lorelai" 02-14)

In this situation, Lorelai wants to check whether she and Rory are really two of a kind and tick as similar as everyone assumes. She is clearly satisfied with Rory's response as she states the appreciatory remark "You're so my daughter". In a sense, Lorelai tests how far she can go with the obscure allusions until no one else but herself understands what she means. At first, it seems that she has finally crossed this line to lunacy since Rory repeats the phrase "whack you with a cannoli" with a questioning look, but then Rory can make sense of it, and she recognizes that Lorelai alludes to the movie *The Godfather*. Rory proves that she is Lorelai's daughter in that she provides the correct explanation ("Oh, because he left the gun and took the cannoli") for the allusion. This functions as a means to demonstrate that she is equal to Lorelai and to ensure her mother that she can count on her in this respect. Moreover, Rory remains in the realm of implicitness that Lorelai introduced at the beginning of the conversation as she does not state "Oh, because Clemenza orders Lampone to leave the gun and take the cannoli" which would make her utterance an explicit allusion.

In the most extreme interpretation, the allusion to the movie and Lorelai's evaluation function as a means to differentiate Lorelai and Rory from everybody else in the world, since Lorelai's response "You're so my daughter" implies that only one person – her own daughter Rory – is able to catch her arcane allusion. This, however, does not happen by chance as *The Godfather* plays an important role in the Gilmore girls' life. If one pays special attention to the word "my" in Lorelai's evaluation, it becomes obvious that she claims a great part of the responsibility for Rory's knowledge. Lorelai literally provided the breeding grounds for her daughter's understanding of the world and undoubtedly influenced her interests in books, movies, television shows, and music. *The Godfather* is mentioned at least five times throughout the second and third season and especially in the fourth season, the movie is a significant marker for transitions in their lives. Before Rory enters Yale University, her mother plans a special event for every day in her last free week, whereby Lorelai suggests that on Monday, they "stock up for Tuesday, the day of all days - *Godfather I, II, and III*, with extra showings of the Sofia death scene over and over as long as the Mallomars hold out" and Rory exclaims

“The perfect day!” (“Ballrooms and Biscotti” 04-01). This proves that the two Gilmores have the same idea of what constitutes a “perfect day” which is for them a day that includes a screening of Coppola’s master piece. Furthermore, Lorelai refers to an important scene in *The Godfather* when she explains to Rory how she intends to solve some serious difficulties in relation to opening her new inn: “Remember in *The Godfather*, Michael telling Sonny how he was gonna kill Tattaglia and Captain McCluskey in that Italian restaurant? He lays out the whole thing very calmly, very unemotionally, ‘cause that’s what you do in business” (“Chicken or Beef” 04-04). Obviously, Lorelai plans to do the same as Michael Corleone (without the killing of course) and inform Taylor Dooze on her plans without freaking out.

4.3. *Adaptation*

Besides their functions of mockery and differentiation, the allusions in *Gilmore Girls* function as instruments to appeal to interlocutors. Lorelai and Rory frequently adapt their use of allusions to the interests of the person they are talking to in order to increase the likelihood that their interlocutor derives the intended meaning. This adaptation process occasionally results in a characterization of their opposite, as Lorelai and Rory use the respective topic areas to express their opinion on the people they address. The following analysis is divided into two subsections, whereby one of them is dedicated to Luke, and the other deals with Emily and Richard. The allusions in the second subchapter constitute exceptions as it is not Lorelai who tries to establish a common ground but her parents. However, all allusions and references in this functional category are evaluated on whether the attempt to create a common ground between the interlocutors is successful and if so, how this was achieved.

4.3.1. **Luke Danes**

As already mentioned, Luke is a character who is no movie enthusiast, but he is also not very keen on reading and his taste in music is rather unvaried. Therefore, allusions uttered in his presence must revolve around comparatively limited topic areas if people want him to understand what they refer to. Besides fishing and baseball, wherein neither Lorelai nor Rory are remotely interested and thus usually not allude to, Luke’s most important field of interest is science fiction. Although both Gilmore girls occasionally allude to *Star Wars* and *Star*

Trek, the frequency of these allusions is increased whenever their interlocutor is Luke. Throughout the first season, the girls refer to *Star Trek* in the presence of other people than Luke: Lorelai alludes to the science fiction series when she refers to Emily's stubbornness as "her Vulcan death grip" ("Rory's Birthday Parties 01-06), Rory refers to the series when she asks Lane about a boy and if he still wears "the Stark Trek T-Shirt" ("Love and War and Snow" 01-08), and Rory jokingly compares a pile of old clothes to "tribbles" ("Concert Interruptus" 01-13), the small and furry creatures from the *Star Trek* universe. Even though Lorelai and Rory allude to the science fiction series and seem to have more than superficial knowledge of it, their attitude towards *Star Trek* is rather reserved. Occasionally, they use it to mock other people, which becomes obvious in the next allusion that is analyzed.

In the eighth episode of the second season, Mia, the owner of the Independence Inn and substitute mother for Lorelai, visits Stars Hollow. She meets the girls and has breakfast with them at Luke's diner, and on this occasion, she tells anecdotes of Luke's childhood. Among other things she mentions that "there was that year you wore the same shirt everywhere you went" which arouses the girls curiosity. Luke slightly panics and pretends that he does not know what she refers to, but suddenly, Mia remembers and she exclaims "Star Trek, that's it!" ("The Ins and Outs of Inns" 02-08). Luke is exposed to severe mocking throughout the rest of the episode as Rory labels him a "Trekkie", Lorelai tells Luke that she "was lucky you had your phasers on stun, huh?", and Lorelai asks a former classmate of him whether Luke was "dressed like Sulu". The incident in which Mia reveals a long hidden interest of Luke can be interpreted as the starting point for Lorelai's explicit allusions to science fiction when she talks to Luke, as she now knows that he is interested in the subject and more likely to understand allusions to this topic.

In season two, episode 14, Lorelai and Rory are having breakfast at Luke's Diner when suddenly the phone rings. Luke answers it and tells Rory that it is for her, which causes amazement as they wonder who might know that they are at Luke's. The following dialogue develops:

LORELAI. This whole morning has been a little *Twilight Zone*-y.

LUKE. Or *Outer Limits*-y.

LORELAI. What?

LUKE. Great show, just as eerie, same era, but no one ever references it.

LORELAI. Oh, I'm sorry, I don't speak geek.

LUKE. Yup, stepped right in it. ("It Should've Been Lorelai" 02-14)

Although Rory is present during this conversation, Lorelai's primary aim is to appeal to Luke and make him respond to her remark. She decides to allude to a science fiction series in order to ensure that Luke understands her allusion and enters into a dialogue with her.

While the fact that she brought up science fiction and her knowledge of *Twilight Zone* do not label her as a nerd, Luke's slightly more advanced knowledge on the subject does. Obviously, this is where she draws the line between normality and geekiness. Lorelai interprets Luke's knowledge of the science fiction series *The Outer Limits* and even more his use of technical vocabulary in his description of it as "eerie" and in the "same era" as reasons to identify him as a geek. Lorelai does so quite explicitly when she states that she, opposed to him, does not "speak geek". Luke, however, is not offended by her judgement but feels superior to her in that he is aware of *The Outer Limits* and its significance whereas Lorelai is not. He implies with his final remark that *The Outer Limits* is not rightfully rejected as it would actually deserve more attention, but Lorelai is not able to appeal to his expectation. Moreover, Lorelai does exactly what he complains about in the utterance "no one ever references it" in that she ignores his suggestion to reference the series. Luke's evaluation of Lorelai's statement at the end of the conversation – "Yup, stepped right in it" – means that he is not satisfied with Lorelai's labelling of the show as "geek". As Luke previously explained, *The Outer Limits* is similar to *Twilight Zone*, which is why he rejects that Lorelai calls one of the two series "geek" and thus counters his definition of it as "great show", while the other series is not labelled as geeky by her.

There are several occasions in which the characters in *Gilmore Girls* allude to and reference *Star Wars*, but *Star Trek* remains their favorite subject for science fiction related allusions. In a later season, Lorelai explicitly alludes to *Star Trek* when she tries to convince Luke to watch her dog for the night as she is in a great hurry and cannot arrange for a dog sitter: "Of course, I'd have to leave now and pick up some dilithium crystals on the way to fix the warp drive in my jeep so that I could drive there and back in time" ("The UnGraduate" 06-03). This sentence constitutes the middle part of a longer monologue by Lorelai, but the allusion to *Star Trek* stands alone, as she does not refer to any other pop culture text in her monologue. This allows for the conclusion that Lorelai adapted her use of allusions to the situation and applied her prior knowledge on Luke's devotion to science fiction series in order to appeal to her interlocutor. Consequently, her proposition is successful, Luke agrees on her suggestion, and he even expresses appreciation for her allusion: "I'll take the dog

home with me. And points for the dilithium-crystal reference” (“The UnGraduate” 06-03). Lorelai responds to this evaluation rather self-ironically “Well, when you sleep with geeks...” which hints at her attitude towards allusions to science fiction. Again, Lorelai associates *Star Trek* with the concept of geekiness, but this time she partially also refers to herself as a geek who is capable of such allusions. She thinks that her romantic relationship with Luke influenced her and probably encouraged her to be interested in the same things as her partner, which turned her into a nerd as well.

4.3.2. Emily and Richard Gilmore

The majority of allusions uttered by Rory and Lorelai in the presence of the Gilmore (grand)parents are used to confuse them or create some kind of ambiguity (see next subchapter). There are, however, situations in which the two Gilmore girls adapt to the interests of the couple, and allusions are made for the purpose of creating a common ground. Since Rory already shares the interest in literature and philosophy with her grandfather, it is usually Lorelai who has to adapt her use of allusions in order to be understood. Since this process is also a mutual one, not only allusions from Lorelai and Rory but also from Emily and Richard are analyzed in this chapter.

In the ninth episode of the first season, Lorelai appeals to Emily when she refers to Ann Taylor, a women’s specialty retailer for clothing and accessories. Emily visits the girls as she wants to help dress up Rory for a dance at Chilton, and she insists on taking some pictures of Rory in full attire:

EMILY. Oh, perfect. I want to be all ready for the big entrance. How’s the light in here? Never mind. I’ll just take one with the flash and one without to make sure we got it right.

LORELAI. Wow, Mom, look at you. You’d think Ann Taylor was having a sale or something. (“Rory’s Dance” 01-09)

Emily is known for her exquisite taste in fashion as she almost exclusively dresses in Chanel suits and wears expensive jewelry. Even for more casual events like a football game at Yale or when she cares for her daughter who has a backache, like in the episode under examination, Emily Gilmore prefers to wear exclusive designer brands. In the reference above, Lorelai combines her knowledge of how women behave when their favorite brands are on sale with the more specific knowledge on her mother’s preferred labels. Although Ann Taylor does not

produce as luxurious goods as Chanel, the designers sometimes try to imitate the clothing of these high fashion houses, and due to the prize, their products are not affordable for everyone. Consequently, it is very well possible that Emily wears clothes from Ann Taylor whenever she intends to save money or dress more casually. Lorelai is aware of this fact and, thus, refers to Ann Taylor in this situation and not a brand that her mother might not purchase such as H&M. An allusion to such a cheap brand might have resulted in Emily wondering and asking “Who?” and would not have created a common ground between Lorelai and her mother. However, Emily understands her daughter’s allusion due to Lorelai’s choice to allude to a designer Emily knows, and she therefore she appeals to her mother’s preferences.

Moreover, Lorelai reacts to her mother’s slightly more casual outfit in this situation and compares her to a fashion victim who is excited about sale and takes pictures of the new collection. This is only a meaningful comparison when she combines the idea of a sale with Ann Taylor and not a high fashion brand like Chanel, as those usually do not have sales like the less expensive retailers. Emily only briefly reacts to her daughter’s comparison and looks at her reproachfully, but then she directs her attention back to Rory’s appearance.

The next allusion in the category “Adaptation” deals with a political topic which is considered a subject area that is frequently addressed by the girls to appeal to both Emily and Richard and their interest in politics. In the first episode of the second season, the grandparents are excited to report the fact that Rory ranks among the most successful students in her class. Although Richard asked her to wait, Emily cannot stand the excitement and instructs the girls about the pleasant news. When Richard enters the room, he is not aware that Emily spoiled his surprise:

RICHARD. Rory, wonderful news. You finished in the top three percent of your class.

LORELAI. Oh yeah, Dad, J. Edgar Hoover over here was just telling us.

RICHARD. What? I told you not to say anything before I got here. (“Sadie, Sadie” 02-01)

With the explicit allusion “J. Edgar Hoover” Lorelai obviously refers to Emily and adds her witticism to the situation.

While Hoover claimed to be neutral in terms of politics, “he admitted privately, he was a staunch, lifelong supporter of the Republican party” (Summers). Although it is stated explicitly only in the third season of the series that Emily and Richard are Republicans, hints at their political tendencies are already included in previous seasons such as the allusion in this case. Hoover is a significant personality in American history and since all Gilmores are

versed in this field, it does neither demand a great deal of Lorelai to create this allusion nor are the other Gilmores especially challenged to grasp the meaning of it. The common ground is established through Lorelai's allusion to the former FBI director who is assumed to have kept extensive files on famous people such as the president, various actors, celebrities, as well as ordinary citizens during the almost 50 years he was in office (Summers).

As previously mentioned, Lorelai frequently accuses her parents of being manipulative and keen on controlling their social environment as was shown with the allusion to the Puppet Master. Her allusion to Hoover implies that Emily keeps similar files of her and Rory, as she had knowledge of such a detail in Rory's life that required at least some effort to get hold of. Moreover, Lorelai ensures that her parents are able to interpret her allusion correctly when she alludes to a famous person in public service and not to another person who might be similarly characterized as a control freak such as, for example, Steve Jobs and Bill Gates, but whom the Gilmores might not know. An allusion to either one of these computer nerds would have rather served the purpose of mockery or differentiation but would not have created a common ground. Although Richard's response "What?" at the beginning of his statement at first creates the impression that he did not understand Lorelai's allusion; however, his facial impression and the movement of his head in Emily's direction allow for the conclusion that he had no difficulties with catching the allusion. Rather, he cannot believe that his wife did not follow to his orders and informed the girls in his absence.

In this situation, the only person who might be overlooked to some extent is Rory. It is a fact that Rory is interested in literature and history, but her knowledge of politics has not been directly addressed in the series so far. Only in later episodes and seasons, politics plays a more important role in her life. However, since she is Lorelai's daughter and public scandals, milestones in history, and significant personalities are discussed in their house as they are part of common knowledge, the odds are that Rory nevertheless catches the allusion.

Lorelai and Richard are also the main protagonists in the allusion that is analyzed subsequently. This time, however, it is Richard who alludes to a television series in order to create a common ground between him and his daughter. In season two, episode 20, Lorelai helps her father with opening his new office which comprises arranging an internet connection, programming the answering machine, and purchasing office equipment. Richard suggests to arrange that the deli across the street, where he will probably buy his lunches in the

future, starts a tab with them instead of letting them pay cash every day. This leads to the following response by Lorelai and evokes Richard's allusion:

LORELAI. Already done.

RICHARD. Amazing. You're like the tiny fellow on that *M*A*S*H* program, always anticipating. ("Help Wanted" 02-20)

This allusion must be evaluated as slightly less aesthetically valuable as the allusions by Rory and Lorelai, since Richard provides the concrete association that shall be made through his allusion, namely that Lorelai is, similar to the character in *M*A*S*H*, "always anticipating". When Richard refers to it as the "*M*A*S*H* program", it is evident that he refers to the television series and not to the novels, the film, or the plays. What is significant is the word "that" in the reference as he could have said "*the* program" as well. However, "that" creates a distance between him and the series, which is obviously intended by him, as the alternative "the" would have meant that he is more familiar with the series than he wants to admit. This impression is further reinforced through his vague reference to the character in the series as "the tiny fellow" and not to the proper name of the character, Walter O'Reilly, or his nickname "Radar" ("Biography for Corporal Walter Eugene O'Reilly from *M*A*S*H*").

Since Lorelai is not shown when she listens to Richard's allusion, it is not entirely clear whether she truly caught the allusion, but from her facial expression when she takes the turn, it is safe to assume that she felt honored by this rare complement from her father. Undoubtedly, Richard and Lorelai are estranged through her early move-out from home and the silence between them except for very rare visits during the holidays. Nevertheless, he seems to be aware of his daughter's basic interests, and he knows that she is a movie enthusiast who loves to spend her free time with watching classic television shows and movies. He assumes that Lorelai is able to understand the allusion to *M*A*S*H*, as it is one of the most critically acclaimed series in television history and as a true fan of the medium, it is almost impossible for Lorelai to have ignored the series.

Another attempt to create a common ground with Lorelai occurs in the third episode of the third season. The context of this conversation is Rory's upcoming application process to the Ivy League universities of the country. Emily researched on the topic and found out that it is immensely difficult to get into one of these top-notch colleges. She fears that other, less-qualified people might get Rory's spot and confronts Lorelai with her anxiety. Emily

tries to appeal to her daughter at least twice in the following conversation through her allusions to Hollywood:

EMILY. And now it's the in thing for young Hollywood celebrities to go to universities. What do they call themselves, the Brat Pack?

LORELAI. About a hundred years ago.

EMILY. They get into wherever they want based on name recognition. I was watching TV and that insipid Kate Hudson was talking about going to a university. If she decides to go to Harvard, she'll get right in over Rory, who we know is more qualified.

LORELAI: How 'bout a drink, Mom? You want a drink, 'cause I sure do. ("Application Anxiety" 03-03)

Emily's attempt to use Hollywood-related jargon in order to refer to the "young Hollywood celebrities" fails, since the "Brat Pack" was a nickname for a group of young actors in 1980s. As it is approximately 2004 in the series, these actors and actresses are not the ones considering attending university now. Lorelai was and is a fan of the actors and actresses that belonged to the Brat Pack, such as Emilio Estevez and Molly Ringwald, which means that she is certainly able to identify who was part of this group of actors and who was not. With her answer "About a hundred years ago" Lorelai informs Emily that the term she used is outdated and that no new group of actors is called "Brat Pack". Emily's knowledge of the term did not help her in establishing a common ground with her daughter as she misused it. However, Lorelai appreciates the attempt as she responds to Emily's foray into Hollywood terminology with a smile.

In the second part of the conversation, Emily rants about the injustice concerning the privilege of young Hollywood celebrities to get a place in any university they want. In this case, Emily explicitly names one of these celebrities – Kate Hudson – of whom she thinks is less qualified than Rory to attend Harvard University. In this situation, Emily correctly anticipates Lorelai's opinion on Kate Hudson when she characterizes her as "insipid" and ascribes her less intelligence than her own granddaughter. While Lorelai's taste in movies ranges from classics, such as *Casablanca*, to iconic trash like *The Brady Bunch Variety Hour*, a movie that features Hudson in a leading role is less likely to make it to her favorites. Lorelai's opinion on starlets like Kate Hudson is assumed to be predominantly negative, because similar celebrities, such as Jessica Simpson and Mariah Carey, are ridiculed by her in previous and future episodes. Consequently, Emily was successful in creating a common ground between herself and her daughter as she anticipated that her daughter also dislikes this young

actress. That she might be the person who threatens Rory's place in Harvard further adds to this hostile basic attitude.

4.4. *Ambiguity*

While some allusions in *Gilmore Girls* create a common ground between the dialogue partners, just as many are used in order to do the exact opposite, namely to confuse the other person and create some kind of ambiguity. Since Lorelai and Rory are so similar concerning their interests and attitudes, this category mainly includes allusions that do not occur in conversations between the two girls but in dialogues with other people. Moreover, the allusions that create ambiguity frequently blur the boundaries between this category and mockery.

Right from the beginning of the series, it becomes obvious that Lorelai and Mrs. Kim favor different conceptions of parenting. While Lorelai prefers a more liberal attitude, Mrs. Kim favors an authoritarian upbringing and is convinced that only control and strict rules ensure her daughter Lane's successful growing up. This, however, does not prevent Lane from violating the rules occasionally. The context of the following allusion is that Rory and Lane lied to both Lorelai and Mrs. Kim as they pretended to go to a movie alone while they were actually on a double date with two boys. When Mrs. Kim is looking for Lane, she catches the two girls with their dates and starts to rebuke Lane. Rory tries to explain the situation to her mother and asks whether Lorelai would have lied to Mrs. Kim about their true intentions. Lorelai denies that and responds: "Look, I know that Mrs. Kim and Robert Duvall in *The Great Santini* share a striking resemblance, but she is Lane's mom. She has the right to tell Lane she can't do something, you have to respect that and I really have to respect that" ("Double Date" 01-12).

The obvious interpretation of this explicit allusion to the movie refers to the resemblance concerning Santini's and Mrs. Kim's intransigence and harshness. The character of the aggressive Marine officer in the movie is described as a person who "runs his family much as a military commander, where they are all to obey his orders without question" ("The Great Santini"). This implies that while the man is successful in his career, there are obvious shortcomings with respect to his family life. It is exactly this implication which creates the ambiguity of Lorelai's allusion: there is a concealed evaluation of Mrs. Kim's educational style which Lorelai regards as inadequate. Similar to Santini and his profession, Mrs. Kim

also pursues a rather successful career as her antique shop is widely popular. What Lorelai does not refer to, however, is Santini's sadistic character trait: Mrs. Kim is never shown in a situation in which she physically harms her daughter, although some of her disciplinary measures are psychologically harmful, for example when she locks her daughter up after the incident described in the dialogue before.

Lorelai counters her negative attitude towards Mrs. Kim's conception of upbringing with the argument that Mrs. Kim is Lane's mother which entitles her to lay down the rules for her daughter, and she also insists on Rory respecting that. However, the verb "respect" in this context creates a distance between Lorelai and Mrs. Kim's behavior, as it only refers to the fact that Lorelai's codex concerning other mothers prevents her from a more explicit judgment, that is, being openly hostile to her. This impression would have been further reinforced if Lorelai had used the even weaker word "accept" in the utterance since this would label a person as even more passive, whereas "respect" entails more active involvement. To conclude, Lorelai's positive basic attitude towards other mothers clashes with her rejection of Mrs. Kim's conception of parenting which leads to her ambiguous allusion.

Another ambiguous allusion occurs in the much discussed fourteenth episode of the first season – "That Damn Donna Reed" – whereby academic research focused on the re-enactment of a 50s dinner in Donna Reed style by Rory. However, the allusion discussed subsequently has not received any scholarly attention yet. The context of the allusion is the regular movie night at the Gilmore house which is attended by Dean. Rory and Lorelai inform him that they will be watching *The Donna Reed Show* which is unknown to him:

DEAN. So, who's Donna Reed?

RORY. What?

LORELAI. You don't know who Donna Reed is? The quintessential 50s mom with the perfect 50s family?

RORY. Never without a smile and high heels? Hair that, if you hit it with a hammer, would crack?

DEAN. So it's a show?

RORY. It's a lifestyle.

LORELAI. It's a religion. ("That Damn Donna Reed" 01-14)

In this verbal exchange, both Lorelai and Rory stress the importance of the show when they define it as "a lifestyle" and "a religion". Since the two girls do not indicate in any way that their utterances are to be taken as ironic statements, it is indeed possible to interpret them as genuine, which is done by Dean at first.

The implicit message concerning Rory's description of the show as a lifestyle is that for many women during the 1950s and 1960s, *The Donna Reed Show* indeed mirrored their life and society's expectations towards them as women. However, Rory's statement is to be taken ironic in terms of her life since she neither lives this life nor seeks such a life. When Lorelai defines it as "a religion", she also refers to the women's great pressure to achieve the life displayed in the show. To remain with religious terminology: these women strived for being the perfect domestic goddesses, conceived of themselves as reincarnations of Donna Reed, and sacrificed their own needs for their husbands and children. Consequently, while the explanation of the show as a lifestyle and religion was true for many women during the middle of the 19th century, neither Rory nor Lorelai view the sitcom in this way with regard to their own lives. The traditional values and the representation of women and married life in the sitcom are rejected by both Gilmore girls, which makes their statements ironic and ambiguous.

Rory and Lorelai are not listening to the dialogues in *The Donna Reed Show* when they continue watching it, but rather create their own exaggerated and pointed versions. For Dean, this is the first hint at what the intended meaning of the girl's evaluation of the series actually is. He briefly laments over the fact that the two girls constantly talk but then provides his surprising evaluation of the show: "I don't know... It all seems kind of nice to me" ("That Damn Donna Reed" 01-14). The first part of the utterance proves that Dean correctly re-interpreted the girls' definitions of the comedy show as ironic statements, since "I don't know" serves as a contradiction to the actual meaning of Lorelai's and Rory's explanations.

In the second part of the statement, Dean quite explicitly states that he approves of the representation of family life in the series when he says "It all seems kind of nice to me". If Lorelai and Rory had been content with Dean's initial definition of the *The Donna Reed Show* – "So, it's a show?" – and had not provided their own definitions of it as a lifestyle and a religion, the reaction towards his statement "It all seems kind of nice to me" would have been less clear. However, as they initially made ironic statements and implied that they absolutely reject the representation of women in the series, their contempt and agitation of Dean's approval of the contents featured in the show do not come as surprises.

Obviously, Dean did not grasp the full impact of the girl's attitude towards the television series and underestimated Lorelai's and Rory's rejection of it. This is further reinforced in an argument between the young couple later in the episode. Dean raises the subject

matter again when he tells Rory that his work at the grocery store was busy due to “Lots of oppressed housewives shopping for their husbands’ dinners” (“That Damn Donna Reed” 01-14). Rory is not amused and takes his utterance rather seriously which leads to a fight between her and Dean. During the quarrel, she explicitly addresses the issues that bother her: “It’s the having to have the dinner on the table as soon as the husband gets home and having to look perfect to do housework and the whole concept that her one point in life is to serve somebody else” (“That Damn Donna Reed” 01-14).

As a conclusion, Dean only partially grasped the meaning of Lorelai’s and Rory’s evaluations as ironic statements during the movie night. Moreover, he underestimated the extent of his girlfriends’ and Lorelai’s disdain of the representation of women in the show. In the later argument, however, Rory straightforwardly expresses her true opinion on the show, which leaves no other option for Dean than to reinterpret the ambiguous allusion and thus infer the intended meaning.

4.5. *Lightening the Mood*

One of the most significant purposes of allusions in the dramedy is lightening the mood in more serious situations which is a function most frequently realized by Lorelai’s allusions. Lightening the mood does not induce an entire change of subject, but means that the tensions which occur in such conversations are briefly put aside to guarantee a short timeout to the interlocutors. The speakers can use this time to take a deep breath and collect their thoughts on the topic and only thereafter resume the discussion on the issue. This function of allusions in *Gilmore Girls* is also explicitly addressed by the characters themselves, most notably by Emily, Trix, but also by Rory and Lorelai. In at least one episode, Emily blames her daughter for making fun of serious issues and states “Everything’s a joke. Everyone’s a punch line” (“Rory’s Birthday Parties 01-06), similar to Trix, Richard’s mother, who is not used to Lorelai’s fireworks of wit and tells her “That’s enough jokes for this evening Lorelai” (“The Third Lorelai” 01-18). Also Rory occasionally addresses this function when she tells her mother “I’m just trying to joke you down off that ledge” (“Take the Devil’s Eggs” 03-06) which is a modification of the phrase “to talk somebody off the ledge”, a phrase used to refer to the serious business of discouraging a person from committing suicide.

The context of this dispute is that Lorelai's house is infested by termites which causes the need for extensive repair work. Lorelai cannot get a loan in order to pay for the repairs and refuses to ask her parents for help which results in an intervention by Rory, who addresses the topic at Friday night dinner. When they arrive back at home, Lorelai confronts Rory with her behavior as she cannot understand that Rory approached Emily although she told her not to:

LORELAI. In fact, I told you several times that asking my parents was not an option. Now yes, I might have made a few quips to lighten the subject matter, but I still think I made my point pretty damn clear.

RORY. Fine, but we have a real problem here.

LORELAI: Oh, you think I don't know that? You think I sit around all day swapping witticisms with Robert Benchley at the Algonquin? No! I am thinking and worrying and using the computer and I hate using the computer!

RORY. Which is exactly why I brought this up.

LORELAI. You had no right to bring it up! ("Secrets and Loans" 02-11)

Obviously, Lorelai not only addresses this function of allusions ("I might have made a few quips to lighten the subject matter"), but she also uses an allusion to lighten the mood in the same conversation through the allusion to Robert Benchley and the Algonquin.

These "quips" Lorelai mentions were on the one hand an allusion to describe her intricate situation according to which "it's time to hang out with the Coreys" – two teen actors who became notorious drug addicts – and on the other hand, a joke that she would rather sell Rory into "white slavery" than ask her parents for the money. For Lorelai, the fact that she tried to "lighten the subject matter" by cracking jokes did not overrule her intentions to clarify that asking her parents is not an option. Nevertheless, Rory feels the need to remind her mother of the seriousness of the situation when she responds "Fine, but we have a real problem here" which infuriates Lorelai. She is upset that Rory did not obey her order and feels misunderstood; nevertheless she tries to explain the situation to her again whereby her allusion to Robert Benchley and the Algonquin occurs.

What Lorelai explicitly alludes to is the Algonquin Round Table, a group of editors, writers, poets, and other creative people from New York City, who gathered each day to luncheon at The Algonquin Hotel. They enjoyed one another's wit and played pranks on each other. One of the members was, for example, Dorothy Parker, and also editor, humorist, and actor Robert Benchley was a member of the group ("Members Round Table"). The allusion to this intellectual group implies that spending the afternoon with witty and interesting people

is a trivial activity for Lorelai compared to the struggles concerning maintaining her house. Moreover, the last sentence, “I am thinking and worrying and using the computer and I hate using the computer!”, and especially the “No!” at the beginning of the utterance indicates that the activity she described beforehand would be more enjoyable to her. She contrasts the “thinking and worrying” with “swapping witticisms” which hints at her preference of the described activity compared to her real misery.

This incidence proves that allusions come about fairly easily for Lorelai in that she is capable of a witty remark albeit the complexity and the seriousness of her circumstances. In terms of the function to lighten the mood, however, the allusion “Robert Benchley at the Algonquin” only partially fulfills its purpose: although the allusion lightened the mood in the situation momentarily, the argument continues. As mentioned at the beginning of this subchapter, the allusions that lighten the mood do not induce a change of topic but give the interlocutors a short timeout to organize their thoughts. Briefly, this function is fulfilled when Rory responds rather calmly “Which is exactly why I brought this up”. However, for Lorelai the allusion does not fulfill this function but another one: The allusion to Benchley and the literary circle functions as a marker of “sanity” for Lorelai since allusions are such a crucial part of her communication. Stating an allusion in such a stressful and emotional situation means that she is able to argue in a manner that resembles her daily conversations and that she is not completely mad despite her excitement and anger.

As a conclusion, Lorelai’s explanation of the prior discussion in which she explicitly states that she tried to lighten the mood with “a few quips” proves that Lorelai is aware of this function of her allusions. However, the actual allusion to Robert Benchley and the Algonquin Round Table that should serve this very purpose is only temporarily successful with respect to Rory, but Lorelai herself proceeds in a rather serious tone.

That not only Lorelai but also Rory is able to lighten the mood with her allusions is demonstrated with the next example. After Rory’s father, Christopher, returned to Stars Hollow for a brief visit, Lorelai questions her daughter about her thoughts and feelings concerning the situation, which triggers Rory’s witty comparison to a talk show:

LORELAI. When you’ve thought about me and your dad – what have you been thinking all these years?

RORY. Um, what do you mean?

LORELAI. I mean, did you ever picture us potentially together, like ‘we are family’ together?

RORY. Well, not really.

LORELAI. But sort of, it crossed your mind?

RORY. I feel like I'm on *The Ricki Lake Show*.

LORELAI. Go Rory, go Rory.

RORY. Well, I'll admit that I have pictured the three of us living together at various times [...] ("It Should've Been Lorelai" 02-14)

Opposed to the previous example, the function of lightening the mood is entirely fulfilled by this allusion. Lorelai even takes over Rory's allusion and continues it with "Go Rory, go Rory" which is an imitation of the audience chanting "Go Ricki, go Ricki!" at the beginning of *The Ricki Lake Show*. As a tabloid talk show in the late afternoon directed at younger viewers, such as students, teenagers, and young adults, the topics discussed in *The Ricki Lake Show* ranged from the troubles of romantic relationships to prejudices to celebrity scandals. The talk show featured Ricki Lake as its host, talk show guests who sat on stage and discussed the subject matter, and a studio audience that was encouraged to participate in the discussion with comments and questions. The methodology of talk shows such as Ricki Lake's is to have people of opposing opinions utter their viewpoints on a sensational topic. The main focus lays on feelings and emotions which are heated up by the host and some surprise guests who bring about revelations and unexpected twists.

The dialogue between Lorelai and Rory that precedes Rory's allusion constitutes a discussion which could actually be carried out on *The Ricki Lake Show* as the respective topics, family matters and an adolescent's feelings, are addressed. Lorelai dissatisfaction and disbelief of Rory's initial answer encourage her to broach the subject again, and this constitutes a practice that is frequently applied in these talk shows and, consequently, triggers Rory's allusion to *The Ricki Lake Show*.

As already mentioned, this allusion is much more successful in fulfilling its function to lighten the mood and make a serious situation more bearable than the previous example, since Lorelai takes over the allusion and adds another humorous dimension. Compared to the previous allusion to Robert Benchley whereby Lorelai had almost no time to take a break but immediately addressed the subject matter again, the situation with Rory's allusion is different. During Lorelai's imitation of the chanting, Rory uses the time to reassess her opinion and plan her response towards Lorelai's question about her feelings. Moreover, the topic is not changed through this allusions to lighten the mood, which conforms to the previously defined function of these allusions.

4.6. Identification with Powerful Women

In the valedictorian speech at her graduation from Chilton, Rory does not only refer to the importance of books for her, but also points to the centrality of strong women as role models in Lorelai's and her life. As a television series which features a predominantly female main cast and even more strikingly a majority of female writers, *Gilmore Girls* stands out and represents an exception to the prevalence of male-dominated series. This is also visible in the main protagonists' many allusions and references to powerful female characters, whether fictional or real, with whom both Lorelai and Rory frequently identify. Especially in Rory's case, allusions to famous politicians such as Hillary Clinton and remarkable journalists such as Christiane Amanpour hint at her interest in politics and her career aspirations as a foreign correspondent.

One of the situations in which this identification process takes place most obviously occurs in one of the first episodes of the series. Lorelai enters the kitchen of the Independence Inn and asks Sookie whether there is fresh coffee, which is affirmed by her. However, when Lorelai picks up an empty pot with remains of coffee dregs, she says "Fresh in my first lifetime as Joan of Arc" ("The Deer Hunters" 01-04). The most obvious function of this allusion is exaggeration in order to express that the coffee cannot be considered "fresh" in the present but might have been regarded as such 600 years ago. The other function of this explicit allusion is analyzed subsequently and focuses on Lorelai's self-identification with Joan of Arc.

At Orléans, the adolescent girl Joan of Arc led the French army in a momentous victory over the English army in 1429 (Lanthers) for which she is considered a French national heroine. Lorelai compares herself to or, more accurately, sees herself as the reincarnation of this heroine when she explicitly alludes to the woman in the remark "in my first lifetime as Joan of Arc". This comparison demonstrates her self-confidence and that she is not afraid of such a comparison, even though Joan of Arc literally fought for her survival, while Lorelai's daily battles revolve around more trivial things such as casual hassles at her work place, Rory's well-being, and her romantic relationships. Sookie knows that for her, the crucial information in Lorelai's statement is that the coffee seems as old as 600 years and that she should make a new pot, but she is also aware of her best friend's attitude and self-conception. Moreover, Lorelai places herself in a superior position to Sookie as she did not compare her best friend to the late medieval heroine in an utterance like "Fresh in your first lifetime as

Joan of Arc”, but herself. The comparison with Sookie would actually make much more sense than the allusion Lorelai favored: in this case, the person responsible for the “old” coffee (Sookie) and the person compared to Joan of Arc would be the same.

Another implication of this allusion is that only Lorelai’s more than superficial knowledge of history provided for this witty statement which is proven through the following three points: First, Lorelai must be aware of the epoch in which Joan of Arc lived in order to create the exaggeration concerning time in her allusion. Second, the allusion would receive a different quality if she chose not to allude a heroine but a more controversial personality from roughly the same period such as Mary Tudor. In this case, however, Lorelai’s intention to point out that the coffee is not fresh would overrule the identification process completely as it is not desirable to compare oneself to such an individual. Third, Lorelai needs to be aware of her friend’s knowledge on history in order to make a successful allusion and achieve the effect that she wanted.

To conclude, Lorelai’s identification process with a French medieval heroine is based on her body of knowledge concerning significant historical people and influential women. This knowledge adds a certain quality to the allusion and allows for the conclusion that her comparison with Joan of Arc, and no other less heroic woman in history, is not accidental but an intended act of witticism. It is a humorous comparison that nevertheless contains a grain of truth according to Lorelai’s self-perception as a woman who meets life’s daily challenges.

In the third episode of the second season, Lorelai performs a similar identification process, although in this case, she does not only refer to herself but also includes Rory. This time, however, she does not allude to real people such as Joan of Arc but to two fictional characters from a television series. The context of the situation is Lorelai, Rory, and Lorelai’s fiancé Max spending the evening with movies and fast food. Max, opposed to the two girls, could not stay awake and dozes at their couch, which triggers the following dialogue:

LORELAI. Max?

RORY. Uh oh.

LORELAI. We wore him out.

RORY. We tend to do that.

LORELAI. Well, we are *Electra Woman and Dyna Girl*. (“Red Light on the Wedding Night” 02-03)

Since the science fiction series is called *Electra Woman and Dyna Girl*, it is not clear whether Lorelai explicitly alludes to the whole series or only to the two characters. The subtitles of

Gilmore Girls are occasionally ambiguous, which means that only a look into the “Guide to Gilmore-isms” for the second season provided support. In the booklet, there is only an entry for the two characters of the science fiction series and not for the series itself, which allows for the conclusion that Lorelai alludes to the single characters.

Lori and Judy work as journalists for a magazine, but they are also Electra Woman and Dyna Girl, two crime fighting characters who sport costumes similar to Superman’s with their gaudy capes and tights. In the 16 episodes of the series, grown-up Electra Woman and teenage Dyna Girl fight against villains of all kinds using devices such as X-rays, freezers and force shields. The series ran in 1976 and since Dyna Girl was the sidekick of Electra Woman, critics interpreted the two women as female versions of Batman and Robin (“Electra Woman and Dyna Girl”).

Lorelai’s explicit allusion to the two superheroines is clearly linked to her previous utterance “We wore him out” which referred to Max. Obviously, she sees Rory’s and her superpowers in their abilities to watch television all night long and eat enormous amounts of fast food. “Normal” people like Max, though, become drowsy during these activities and eventually surrender to sleep. Although Lorelai is the one who alludes to Electra Woman and Dyna Girl, the flow of the conversation would have also allowed for Rory to utter the same allusion. Instead, she only confirms her mother’s previous statement with “We tend to do that”, but it must not be overlooked that Rory lays the foundation for a joint allusion through the “We” which she continues to use from her mother’s remark.

The repetitive sentence beginning “We” which recurs in the allusion blurs the boundaries to the functional category of differentiation, as it creates a contrasting juxtaposition. On the one hand, there is the duo that possesses special abilities concerning food consumption and enduring sleep deficiency. On the other hand, there is the “villain” Max Medina who could not stay awake during two of the girls’ favorite movies, but rather weakened and gave in to his human needs. That Max is not equal to the girls is further reinforced by the proceedings in the rest of the episode: Lorelai at first feels awkward when he stays overnight at their house, then she decides to break off the engagement with him, and on the day she was supposed to marry him, she takes a road trip to Harvard with Rory instead.

Although they probably do not admire the superheroine’s outfits and haircuts, their independence and cleverness is definitely appreciated by both Lorelai and Rory. Through the self-attribution of these characteristics, they feel superior to Max. However, it seems as if

Lorelai again claims the top rank for herself, as she takes the part of Electra Woman whereas Rory occupies the part of the teenager in her allusion. As already mentioned, Dyna Girl serves as a sidekick and as such, she is slightly naïve and frequently dependent on the greater knowledge and bravery of the older Electra Woman.

To sum up, Lorelai's allusion to two fictional superheroines from the 1970s primarily ascribes herself and Rory abilities which other people will never be able to acquire. Max, who is an outsider to their peculiar interests and behavior, cannot claim membership in their exclusive club as he neither possesses the "powers" that are necessary for that nor does Lorelai consider him worthy of permanently entering their home and lives.

4.7. *Initiating an Action*

The final function of allusions in the television dramedy *Gilmore Girls* is probably the one that has most impact on the protagonists. While the allusions previously discussed induce certain feelings and emotions, the statements analyzed subsequently initiate real actions. Whenever Rory or Lorelai utter such an allusion, their primary aim is to motivate each other or other interlocutors – may it be Luke, Paris, Sookie or Jess – to carry out a certain activity which they regard as beneficial for their opposite or for themselves. Although on the surface, these allusions are meant as jokes and aim at mockery or embarrassment, they eventually initiate an action because the dialogue partner interprets the allusion as the serious advice, plea, or request it is actually meant to be. Consequently, the true purpose of the allusion is fulfilled.

The first conversation analyzed in this functional category appears in the ninth episode of the second season and actually contains two allusions – one by Lorelai and one by Sookie – which fulfill the function described above. What makes these two explicit allusions especially significant is that they are aimed at initiating two exactly opposite actions. The context of the conversation between Lorelai, Rory, and Sookie is Lorelai's cancelled wedding and the late arrival of a wedding gift. The three women discuss whether it is acceptable to keep the ice cream maker one of the guests gave her or not:

LORELAI. Okay, once again, I bring up the fact that this is a wedding present, and as I am not getting married, neither God's law nor Emily Post allows me to keep this.

RORY. But isn't there a rule about late presents?

SOOKIE. Like if it arrives after a certain date, the giver forfeits all rights of return.

RORY. Exactly.

LORELAI. Nice try.

SOOKIE. It's true. I saw it on Martha Stewart. [...] she said that if it arrives after ten weeks-

RORY. Eight.

SOOKIE. -eight weeks that you don't have to return it. ("Run Away, Little Boy" 02-09)

As a pioneer in terms of etiquette, Emily Post paved the way for so-called "domestic goddesses" such as Martha Stewart and Nigella Lawson. The lives of these women revolve around cooking and decorating and especially in Post's and Stewart's case, also around appropriate behavior and manners. While Lorelai's allusion concerns a historical person, Post died in 1960, Sookie prefers to allude to a woman who is still alive and whose business was more prominent than ever at the time of filming the series.

Lorelai refuses to keep the present she received, since the wedding had not taken place, thus, it seems right to her to return it. Rory and Sookie, however, argue against Lorelai's viewpoint and try to convince her to keep the ice cream maker. In the same sentence, Lorelai alludes to God and Emily Post to underpin her decision, whereby it is obvious that the two allusions justify different parts of her decision. She uses "God's law" to explain why she would not lie to the person who sent her the gift in that she neglects to inform him or her about the cancelled wedding. On the other hand, Lorelai refers to Emily Post who established guidelines concerning social conventions and appropriate behavior in a situation like this in order to point to the fact that keeping the gift is deemed unacceptable in this respect. The ultimate aim of her allusion is to convince both her daughter and her best friend that she is morally obliged to return the present to the person who sent it.

However, Rory and Sookie regard the situation differently and argue against Lorelai's point as they try to convince her to keep the gift. Sookie takes over Lorelai's structure of argumentation and alludes to a similarly reliable source in order to convince Lorelai to keep the wedding gift. In her explanation, Sookie focuses on the part concerning socially acceptable behavior and refers to the unquestioned queen of decorum, Martha Stewart. However, Sookie's attempt to justify keeping the gift is undermined by her mistake concerning the length of the time span that should pass in order to be allowed to keep a present, a time span in which "the giver forfeits all rights of return". While Sookie at first defines it as "ten

weeks”, Rory has to intervene and reduce it to “eight weeks” as the marriage was supposed to happen eight weeks ago and not ten.

Although it seems to be only a minor issue, Lorelai is infuriated by her daughter’s and friend’s attitude and counters their argumentation with another biblical allusion saying “Okay, clearly this is shaping up to be one of those moments that St. Peter’s gonna show on the big video screen when I die” (“Run Away, Little Boy” 02-09). For Lorelai, belief and religion in general are rather immaterial which makes the two allusions to God and St. Peter even more remarkable. In her perception of what is to be considered a reliable and morally acceptable source for decisions, Lorelai seems to resort to religion and, thereby, she tries to lend weight to her viewpoint. However, as is later revealed in the episode, Lorelai’s religious argumentation was mere pretense in order to hide her true concerns that if she keeps the wedding gift, it will always remember her of the life she almost led with Max. This is proven through a scene later in the episode in which Lorelai wants to donate the unwanted wedding gift to the Independence Inn.

As a conclusion, Lorelai’s attempt to initiate an action is especially significant, as she pushes her claim according to which the late wedding gift must be sent back through two biblical allusions besides the allusion to Emily Post. Sookie, on the other hand, resorts to the most recent source concerning proper behavior and decency through her allusion to Martha Stewart which underpins her argumentation. Since it was never revealed whether Lorelai was actually able to return the gift despite her effort to do so, it cannot be determined whose allusion to initiate an action was more successful.

The situation is different with the allusion analyzed in the following section as this time, Lorelai’s allusion clearly achieves the aim and Luke performs the intended action. The context of the allusion is a fire that broke out at the Independence Inn which forced Lorelai to accommodate some of the hotel guests at her house and in her bedroom. Thereby, she overlooked her own need for a place to stay for the night and, thus, she wanders around the streets of Stars Hollow to find a place. She calls Rory in order to ask her what to do, and she advises her to go to Luke’s and ask him if she can stay. When Lorelai arrives at his place, she throws some stones at his apartment window in order to wake him up. When Luke opens the window, the following dialogue develops:

LUKE. What are you doing down there?

LORELAI. Enjoying some air, getting some exercise, and freezing.

LUKE. Well, go home.

LORELAI. Home? I have no home. Hunted, despised.

LUKE. What?

LORELAI. It's from *Ed Wood*, the movie.

LUKE. Have you gone bonkers?

LORELAI. People are bunking at my place and I need somewhere to stay. ("A Tale of Poes and Fire" 03-17)

The whole episode is swamped with allusions and references to Poe and his works since the majority of guests at the inn are members of the Edgar Allen Poe Society. In this allusion, however, Lorelai alludes to a completely different text, namely the movie *Ed Wood*. Lorelai at first utters an implicit allusion with "Home? I have no home. Hunted, despised" as she provides no background information on the source of this allusions but only recites this line from the movie. In the next statement, however, she mentions the source of the implicit allusion and, thus, transforms the allusion into an explicit one. The action she wants to initiate with this allusion is that Luke offers her an accommodation for the night.

Apparently, Luke is unable to cope with her first implicit allusion, as he utters the confused response "What?". His incapability to comprehend the allusion depends on two circumstances: first, Luke is no movie enthusiast which makes an implicit allusion even harder for him to grasp, and second, he is rudely awakened by Lorelai which is not beneficial for his overall cognitive abilities. She correctly sees the need to clarify and explain her allusion, but Lorelai solely focuses on the formal aspects of the allusion and not on the functional dimension. Through her explanation that the allusion is "from Ed Wood, the movie" she provides interesting background information, but actually, she does not account for Luke's confusion and provides no satisfying answer. Still drowsy and overwhelmed by the surprising situation and Lorelai's ingenious statements, Luke asks her whether she has lost her mind and only thereafter, she explains the whole situation to him.

Lorelai's capability of alluding to texts under the most stressful conditions becomes evident once more when she takes one word from her interlocutors utterance – in this case the word "home" – as the starting point for her witty allusion. Opposed to the character in the movie whose line she recites and who went through hell for more than two decades due to his experiments with atomic supermen ("Ed Wood"), Lorelai's life of suffering has only existed since the "stupid Hatlestadts showed up" ("A Tale of Poes and Fire" 03-17). The Hatlestadts are guests from the Independence Inn and the ones who occupied her bedroom

minutes before her encounter with Luke. Despite this unequal comparison, the allusion is nevertheless appropriate and describes her situation, as she left her home to find a place to stay for the night. In this case, “home” equals “a place to sleep” which means she was actually ousted by a group of strangers. Consequently, she seeks for a new home for the night that she hopes to find in Luke’s apartment.

Eventually, Luke offers Lorelai to stay at his place for the night which means that her attempt to initiate the action was successful. Even though one could argue that it was actually not the allusion itself but her explanation of it which makes Luke perform the action she intended to, it cannot be denied that her allusion to a similarly desperate character put emphasis on her unpleasant situation and raised Luke’s awareness for the subject matter. Ultimately, this results in her achievement of the intended aim as Luke offers her a place to stay for the night.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this paper was to determine how intertextuality and allusions shape the representation of the two female protagonists Lorelai and Rory in the dramedy *Gilmore Girls*. For this analysis, the formal aspects as well as the thematic and symbolic functions of allusions and self-reflexive references in the first three seasons of the television series were examined.

Concerning the formality of allusions in *Gilmore Girls*, the analysis reveals that explicit allusions outweigh implicit allusions. Whenever one of the characters utters an implicit allusion, which are usually more complex to interpret than explicit allusions, either the protagonist herself or the interlocutor resolves the statement and provides a more or less detailed explanation of it. This entails that the titles of the movies, television shows, and songs as well as the names of the fictional or real characters the protagonists allude to are revealed. Consequently, implicit allusions are transformed into explicit ones. Allusions are not limited to specific situations but occur in all kinds of conversations from casual small talk to serious discussions to quarrels, and they appear in dialogues with strangers, family members, and friends. Although this paper focuses on allusions uttered by Lorelai and Rory and only includes analyses of four allusions that were uttered by other characters, the overall number of allusions proves that Lorelai is the character who alludes to other texts most frequently. The analysis reveals that the person who initiates an allusion also controls the conversation concerning turn-taking and having the final say which is why it is also Lorelai who dominates the majority of verbal exchanges.

With regard to self-reflexive references, the first instance of self-reflexivity does not concern a certain event in the series but is to be found in the theme song of *Gilmore Girls*. “Where You Lead, I Will Follow” was re-recorded by its original interpret Carole King as a duet with her daughter. The title of the song alludes to the contents of the dramedy (which is a hybrid of the two genres comedy and drama), and the mother-daughter duet who interpret the song hint at the relationship of the two Gilmore girls. Since Lorelai’s and Rory’s favorite leisure time activity is watching television, the series is actually permeated with self-reflexiveness in that it refers to its own status as a product of television. This status becomes especially prevalent whenever the girls themselves or some other characters refer to the two women as “Gilmore girls”.

In terms of intertextuality, the analysis of the dramedy focused on interfigurality, that is, intertextuality concerning the names of characters, and paratextuality which refers to intertextuality regarding episode titles. The study reveals that although mother and daughter share the same name and are thus closely linked, Rory's nickname hints at their subtle differences. Moreover, the tradition of naming daughters after their grandmothers was continued in their family, but also the movie *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* with its leading character Lorelei Lee influenced the choice of names. The analysis of paratexts reveals that the writers of *Gilmore Girls* derived the episode titles from various different sources such as movies, songs, television shows, novels, and fairy tales. The episode titles provide information on the main themes and frequently hint at the challenges the characters face during the respective episodes.

In order to analyze the thematic and symbolic functions of allusions with regard to cultural codes, seven functional categories were established, namely: mockery, differentiation, adaptation, ambiguity, lightening the mood, identification with powerful women, and initiating and action. The allusions in the first functional category primarily serve the purpose of displaying the character's witty character traits, but a thorough analysis reveals that Lorelai's self-mockery hides the fact that she is actually disappointed with herself. On the one hand, she could not manage to dress appropriately in order to meet Rory's headmaster, and on the other hand, she conceals her incapability to choose a more ingenious movie than *The Yearling* for a town event.

Both Lorelai and Rory maintain a strong desire to distinguish themselves from other people which becomes especially prevalent when they are confronted with snobs, rich people, and people who do not share the same interests. However, in terms of the respective second functional category, differentiation, the analysis points out that Rory's desire to distinguish herself from her mother is more distinct than previously assumed. Even though the representation of Rory's and Lorelai's mother-daughter relationship is predominantly harmonious in the series, the allusions in this category prove that Rory's wish to cut the cord exists. Albeit Rory's teenage rebellion against her mother is not very intense, the symbolic emancipation from Lorelai takes place in her emphasizing of the differences between her and Lorelai. Rory's allusions to a complex work of literature and a novelist contrast with her mother's indifference and less ambitious allusions to Hollywood beaus which means that Rory primarily differentiates herself from her mother through her intellect and her high aspirations.

In terms of adaptation and cultural codes, the analysis reveals that especially Lorelai is aware of social conventions and willing to resort to for her unknown topics and issues in order to appeal to her interlocutors. Her desire to establish a common ground is stronger when she regards her opposite as an amicable and likable person of whom she expects to be respected in return as is the case with Luke. Opposed to that, Lorelai's parents see the need to appeal to their daughter through allusions that correspond with her interests whenever they want to ease up on their otherwise rather tensed relationship.

From the analysis of the allusions that create ambiguity, it can be concluded that although Lorelai is usually rather outspoken about her opinions and thoughts, she occasionally hides her true intentions. The allusion concerning Mrs. Kim conceals Lorelai's even more intense rejection of the woman's educational style. Rory's and her allusions in terms of *The Donna Reed Show* – that the show is “a lifestyle” and “a religion” – that address Dean are actually ironic statements and prove rather difficult for their interlocutor to be interpreted correctly.

Lightening the mood, the fifth functional category, is a function of allusions that serves to counter common prejudices against women that they were emotional and not capable of reasoned decisions in stress situations. The allusions in this category function as short timeouts to guarantee both Lorelai and Rory some time to recollect their thoughts and decrease the level of emotionality before resuming the discussion. However, the allusions analyzed were dissimilar in terms of their success: while Lorelai's allusion to Robert Benchley and the Algonquin Round Table is only briefly successful and lightens Rory's mood, Rory's allusion to a talk show fully achieves its purpose, as both she and Lorelai are able to resume to a thoughtful conversation. Moreover, lightening the mood is one of the functions of allusions that the protagonists themselves are most aware of. This is proven through the explicit mention of the function by more than one character in the dramedy.

Throughout the whole series, feminists, novelists, musicians as well as pioneers in science and other significant women in history are emphasized as female role models of the protagonists. Allusions to Patti Smith, Eudora Welty, and Jane Austen, just to name a few, are central for Rory's and Lorelai's identification processes with them. Even though some of these allusions seem to function only as means to mock and ridicule, such as the allusion to Electra Woman and Dyna Girl, they nevertheless shed light at the girls' perception of what constitutes a modern woman: intelligence, independence, ambition, and uniqueness. Lorelai

does not even shy away from a comparison with a French national heroine, which allows for the conclusion that Lorelai is self-confident and aware of her strengths. In Rory's case, allusions to powerful women, such as famous politicians and journalists, also provide insights into her career aspirations.

For the final functional category, allusions were analyzed in terms of their success to initiate an action. The analysis reveals that Lorelai places great trust in her allusions and ascribes them strong convincibility. While Lorelai's intention to use two Biblical allusions and an allusion to Emily Post in order to justify proper behavior is less successful, her allusion to *Ed Wood* initiates the desired action, as she is offered a place to stay for the night. Again, the boundary between this category and the first category, mockery, is blurred, but the actual function of these allusions is eventually fulfilled since the girls' interlocutors correctly interpret the allusions as advices, pleas, and requests.

It is no exaggeration to state that allusions are crucial elements of *Gilmore Girls* and fulfill a great variety of functions. Most notably, they help to determine the representation of the two female protagonists as multifaceted characters whose interests are wide-spread and frequently expressed through their allusions. Both Lorelai and Rory are intelligent, witty, and not afraid to make fun of each other at times. They enjoy to surround themselves with people who are similar to them, that is, people who understand and appreciate their allusions. The two women are willing to adapt to their interlocutors' interests whenever they deem their opposite worthy of such great attention, but they are similarly prepared to counter arguments that go against their beliefs with more ambiguous allusions. They reject anything mainstream and are proud of their quirkiness and inside jokes. Even though Rory's desire to become independent from her mother occasionally differentiates the two women, they are, however, united in their allusions to powerful female characters. Allusions which aim at initiating certain actions allow for the conclusion that both Lorelai and Rory know exactly what they want.

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German Abstract

Die vorliegende Arbeit beschäftigt sich mit den Auswirkungen von Intertextualität auf die Fernsehserie *Gilmore Girls*. Intertextualität als die Bezüglichkeit von einem oder mehreren Texten auf einen oder mehrere andere Texte wird zumeist entweder als aktiver Interpretationsprozess aufseiten der Zuseher, Leser und Hörer gesehen, oder aber als von Autoren bewusst eingesetztes Instrument zur Textproduktion. Es wird untersucht, wie Intertextualität in Form von Anspielungen, neben Selbstreflexivität und Paratextualität, die Darstellung der beiden Hauptcharaktere Lorelai und Rory in der Serie beeinflusst. Das theoretische Gerüst zur Durchführung der Analyse wurde in der Theorie von Michael Montgomery gefunden, der ein simples aber sehr effektives Modell propagiert. Hierbei geht es zunächst darum, eine Anspielung zu erkennen bevor im zweiten Schritt die Recherche zum Originaltext folgt. Im dritten Schritt werden Unterschiede und Ähnlichkeiten zwischen dem Original und dem neuen Text ermittelt. Das Hauptaugenmerk der Analyse liegt auf den ersten drei Staffeln der Damedy, die als hybrides Genre die beiden bekannten Genres Comedy und Drama verschmelzen lässt.

Die Selbstreflexivität in der Serie zeigt sich nicht nur selbstreflexive Referenzen, wenn etwa die Darsteller in der Serie die beiden Hauptcharaktere als „Gilmore girls“ bezeichnen, sondern auch durch das ständige Fernsehen in der Serie selbst. In Bezug auf Paratextualität, also Intertextualität die die Paratexts wie die Episodentitel betrifft, kann festgehalten werden, dass einige der Episoden als Parodien im Sinne von Hutcheons weiter Definition von Parodie definiert werden können. So finden sich einige mehr oder weniger detaillierte Kopien, wie etwa der Tanzmarathon, neben abgeschwächten und für die Fernsehserie weniger dramatisch adaptierten Imitationen wie beispielsweise die Episode „Emily in Wonderland“, bei der die Abenteuer von *Alice im Wunderland* parodiert werden.

Der letzte Teil der Analyse beschäftigt sich mit den formalen Aspekten und Funktionen der Anspielungen in der Serie. Hierfür wurden die folgenden Kategorien entwickelt: Spott, Differenzierung, Adaptierung, Mehrdeutigkeit, Aufhellung der Stimmung, Identifizierung mit mächtigen Frauen, und Initiierung einer Handlung. Die Analyse zeigt dass, obwohl sich die beiden weiblichen Hauptcharaktere in der Serie sehr nahestehen und eine besondere Mutter-Tochter-Beziehung führen, bei der Tochter Rory dennoch der Wunsch besteht, sich von der Mutter abzugrenzen. Dies wird besonders deutlich durch die Anspielungen in der

Kategorie Differenzierung, bei der Rory wiederholt Unterschiede zwischen ihren Ambitionen und Interessen und denen ihrer Mutter hervorhebt. Auch die Kategorie Spott verweist auf Unterschiede der beiden Charaktere, denn während Lorelai gelegentlich selbstironische Aussagen tätigt, ist dies bei der Tochter nicht der Fall. Die dritte Kategorie – Adaptierung – präsentiert Anspielungen welche dazu dienen, eine gemeinsame Gesprächsbasis mit dem Dialogpartner zu finden. Während dieser Prozess bei den ihr sympathischen Charakteren, wie etwa Luke, von Lorelai selbst ausgeht, versuchen ihre Eltern von sich aus eine Basis mit ihrer Tochter zu finden, indem sie auf von ihr gemochte Serien und Hollywood anspielen. Dass die beiden weiblichen Hauptprotagonistinnen der Serie nicht nur über ihre Interessen und Wünsche, sondern auch über ihre Abneigungen Bescheid wissen, zeigt die Analyse der Anspielungen in der Kategorie Mehrdeutigkeit. Hierbei versucht Lorelai beispielsweise ihre wahre Einstellung zu Mrs. Kims Erziehungsstil zu verschleiern und eine Anspielung auf die *Donna Reed Show* verursacht Verwirrung und ist von dem außenstehenden Dean nur schwer als das zu identifizieren, was sie wirklich ist – Ironie.

Um die Stimmung in ernsthaften Situationen und Konversationen zu erhellen, greifen die beiden Frauen ebenfalls gerne auf Anspielungen jeglicher Art zurück. Die Funktion dieser Anspielungen ist es, sich gegenseitig ein Timeout zu gönnen, um die Gedanken zu sortieren und danach die Diskussion wiederaufzunehmen. Diese Kategorie erfüllt auch den Zweck, das gängige Vorurteil, wonach Frauen zu emotional seien, auszuräumen, denn die kurzen Pausen in denen die Anspielungen gemacht werden sollen auch als Abkühlphase dienen; dies gelingt jedoch nicht immer.

Die Identifizierung mit mächtigen Frauen nimmt einen wichtigen Platz im Leben der beiden Hauptcharaktere ein. Während sich Lorelai jedoch öfter mit allgemein bedeutenden Frauen aus Literatur, Geschichte oder Musik identifiziert, ist bei Rory ein Trend zur Identifikation mit Frauen, die ihren späteren Berufswunsch verkörpern, wie etwa Hillary Clinton oder Auslandskorrespondentin Christiane Amanpour, zu erkennen. Die Anspielungen der letzten Kategorie dienen dazu, den Gesprächspartner zu einer bestimmten Handlung zu bewegen und verweist vor allem auf die Überzeugungskraft, die Lorelai und Rory ihren Anspielungen zuschreiben. Die Untersuchung der Anspielungen auf Martha Stewart und *Ed Wood* zeigt jedoch, dass ihre Anspielungen unterschiedlich erfolgreich sind.

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1996-2000	Volksschule St. Johann in Engstetten

Sonstige Qualifikationen:

Juli-August 2007	Begleitperson einer dreiwöchigen Sprachreise von 14-Jährigen nach London und Südengland
Jänner-April 2008	Organisation und Durchführung einer Sprach- und Kulturreise nach Italien, Tunesien, Spanien, und Frankreich
Juni 2009	Cambridge ESOL 1 First Certificate in English
2008-2012	Private Nachhilfetätigkeit in Englisch