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 Organizing Information
 Dr. Winget
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Descriptive Schema

Joss Whedon's writing for TV and Web series

Description:

This descriptive schema will describe Joss Whedon's writing for both live-action TV series and web series. The set will include all episodes Joss has written for TV or web and will range from his early work on *Roseanne* to his web series work with *Dr. Horrible's Sing Along Blog*. Not included in this set are live-action or animated feature films, animated TV series, motion comics or documentaries. An interesting border case can be seen in *Commentary! The Musical*. This is a commentary of *Dr. Horrible's Sing Along Blog* that was written in part by Joss Whedon and was released with the DVD and Blu-Ray versions of *Dr. Horrible*, but has no live-action video to accompany it. Because this series has no acting or even video to go along with it, it will not be considered in my set.

Purpose:

The purpose of this descriptive schema is to provide new fans of Joss Whedon with a way to find and access his work. The set focuses on Joss's writing since this is what he is best known for and what Joss fans are mostly likely looking for when they seek out his work. The schema will help fan discover specific episodes written by Joss and will give them information like theme and genre that will help them decide if they want to watch a specific episode.

Attributes:

Attribute Name:	episode.title
Definition:	The name the episode was released under, when available. "Untitled" when unavailable. If there are two episodes which have been released as continuations under the same episode title note that in this field. Record the related episodes in the notes field.
Rationale:	The title often reflects some of the content or themes of the episode.
Vocabulary Controls:	The title should be in English, since Whedon's body of work is American in origin. The title should be presented with standard title capitalization rules, and should be enclosed in quotes. For titles which span multiple episodes include the continuation as a part number in parenthesis after the title. Thus the format is: "Title" (Part #)
Obligation/Repeatability:	The episode title is obligatory and non-repeatable.

Example:	<p>“Hush” “Bargaining” (Part 1) “Bargaining” (Part 2)</p>
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Attribute Name:	series.title
Definition:	The name the series was released under.
Rationale:	The series name tell users what series the episode in question was written for.
Vocabulary Controls:	The title should be in English, since Whedon’s body of work is American in origin. The title should be presented with standard title capitalization rules, and should be italicized.
Obligation/Repeatability:	The series title is obligatory and non-repeatable.
Example:	<i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i>

Attribute Name:	episode.id
Definition:	Gives the season number and episode number of the entry.
Rationale:	This allows users to know when the episode takes place in the timeline of the show. Also provides an easy way to search for the show in order to watch or research it.
Vocabulary Controls:	<p>Presented in S##E## format. (no spaces, always two digit number)</p> <p>In cases where the show was only produced for one season, use E## format.</p>
Obligation/Repeatability:	Obligatory and non-repeatable.
Example:	S02E12 S10E01

Attribute Name:	series.genre
Definition:	A genre refers is a category of works that have similar plots, themes, tropes, settings,, characters, etc.
Rationale:	Knowing the genre of a series allows readers to quickly understand some of the basic elements of the show. For instance, if the genre

	is horror the users can expect to to be afraid, while if the genre is musical they can expect to have catchy songs stuck in their head for days after viewing the episode.
Vocabulary Controls:	Should assign no more than four genres to a particular series. Genres assigned to series should remain consistent across episode entries. Should use LCSH (http://www.hahnlibrary.net/libraries/formgenre.html) but leave off the form indicator. For instance, say Science fiction, not Science fiction television programs. Should include the new genre heading Space western, which is not included in LCSH but is needed to describe some of Whedon's work accurately.
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Repeatable up to four times.
Example:	(For <i>Firefly</i>) Space western Science fiction Action Drama (For <i>Dollhouse</i>) Science fiction Mystery Drama

Attribute Name:	series.type
Definition:	This field describes the type of series the episode is a part of. The type can be TV or web.
Rationale:	TV and web series often have different budget concerns, different content, and are held to different standards. Knowing the series type allows viewers to understand more of the context of the episode and the series as a whole. Series type can also affect available formats.
Vocabulary Controls:	Controlled vocabulary. This field is either TV or Web.
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Not repeatable.
Example:	TV Web

Attribute Name:	episode.synopsis
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Definition:	This is a short description of the plot of this episode.
Rationale:	This will help users decide if they want to watch a particular episode by telling them what the entry is about. For instance, some users may love the character Hope on <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i> while others may hate her, so by reading a synopsis that tells you the episode deals primarily with Hope's story line users can make informed decisions regarding whether or not to watch that particular episode.
Vocabulary Controls:	Description should be in English, and should use standard grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Synopsis should be no longer than 500 characters in length. The synopsis should not give away any major spoilers to the show, or ruin any major plot lines. (For instance, it should not reveal a major character's death, or discuss how the plot of the episode is resolved.
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Not repeatable.
Example:	(for "Vows" from <i>Dollhouse</i>) In this episode, Echo is imprinted undercover agent who is trying to bring down an arms dealer. Meanwhile, a senator begins to target the Rossum corporation, and Dr. Saunders struggles with her identity and torments Topher.

Attribute Name:	episode.setting
Definition:	Describes where and when the episode's plot takes place. Should include references to any major flashbacks as well.
Rationale:	Setting can play an important role in an episode, and this field serves to give users another way to understand and judge an entry. They may, for instance, choose not to watch an episode of <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i> that is set outside of Sunnydale, or that is set after Buffy and the Scoobies have graduated from highschool.
Vocabulary Controls:	This field should be in English and should be in the following format when possible: Month, Year: Location Multiple locations for the same time are permissible, and should be separated by semicolons. For flashbacks, repeat the field and use the the following format: Year: Location - Flashback
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Repeatable.
Example:	(for "Becoming" from <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i>) 1997: Sunnydale, CA 1753: Ireland - Flashback

	1860: London - Flashback 1898: Romania - Flashback 1996: Manhattan, NY - Flashback 1996: Los Angeles, CA - Flashback
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Attribute Name:	episode.cast
Definition:	Lists one to five of the main cast of the episode.
Rationale:	Allows users to search for episodes that contain notable actors.
Vocabulary Controls:	Use the actors' names as they appear on IMDB.com. Separate names with a comma. May be repeated to list famous actors with minor roles or cameo appearances.
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Repeatable.
Example:	(For <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i>) Sarah Michelle Gellar, Nicholas Brendon, Alyson Hannigan, Michel Trachtenberg

Attribute Name:	episode.time
Definition:	The running length of the episode.
Rationale:	This field tells users how long the episode is. It is helpful because Whedon has written for shows with half hour, hour and other non-standard run times, so users may not be aware how long episodes from each series are. This field is also particularly important for pilot episodes or special episodes which may be longer than standard episodes.
Vocabulary Controls:	Should be in the following format: ### min. Use ## min. or # min. for shorter episodes. (do not use leading zeros)
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Not repeatable.
Example:	8 min. 29 min. 57 min.

Attribute Name:	episode.date
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Definition:	The date the episode was originally released.
Rationale:	The release date of an episode allows users to place the episode in historical context, and in context with in Whedon's body of work. For example, users may wish to compare modern day episodes with early 90s episode to examine changes in network television constraints, fashion, or themes. Users may also wish to compare Whedon's early writing with his later writing to study his growth as a writer.
Vocabulary Controls:	Should be in DD Month YYYY format, when the information is available.
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Not repeatable.
Example:	07 October 1995

Attribute Name:	formats
Definition:	This field lists the formats in which the episode is available for purchase. This includes digital downloads, DVDs, and BluRays. Instant watch options will not be included due to the inconstant nature of the offerings of instant watch services.
Rationale:	This will allow users to quickly see what formats they can purchase episodes in. This is especially useful for people looking for physical copies of a web series, or for those who wish to purchase episodes in a specific medium, such as BluRay.
Vocabulary Controls:	<p>This field has four options:</p> <p>DVD VHS Blu Ray Digital download</p> <p>For entries that are available for download, specific sites that sell the episode may be listed within this field by using the following format: Digital download - site or store name, site or store name</p> <p>Separate formats by commas</p>
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Repeatable.
Example:	(for <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i> episodes) DVD, VHS, BluRay, Digital download - Amazon.com, iTunes

Attribute Name:	notes
Definition:	This field is for extra notes on the entry and should include any award nominations or notable content.
Rationale:	This field can allow users to learn new trivia about an episode, pick an episode based on its awards or content, or learn if an episode has related episode.
Vocabulary Controls:	Should be written in English, and should be kept brief. (No more than 300 characters)
Obligation/Repeatability:	Not obligatory. Repeatable.
Example:	Nominated for an Emmy Award.

Instances:

episode.title	"Graduation Day" (Part 2)
series.title	<i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i>
episode.id	S03E22
series.genre	Fantasy
series.genre	Drama
series.genre	Action
series.type	TV
episode.synopsis	In this episode Buffy and her friends must face off against the major and his Ascension day plans. Buffy must also attempt to save Angel and cope with her decision in "Graduation Day" (Part 1) to kill Faith.
episode.setting	May. 1999: Sunnydale, CA
episode.cast	Sarah Michelle Gellar, Nicholas Brendon, Alyson Hannigan, Eliza Dushku, David Boreanaz
episode.time	60 min.
episode.date	13 July 1999
formats	DVD, VHS, Blu Ray, Digital download - Amazon.com, iTunes
notes	Related episode: "Graduation Day" (Part 1)
notes	Originally scheduled to release May 25, 1999, but rescheduled due to

	content concerns and the Columbine High School shootings which occurred in April of 1999.
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episode.title	“Act I”
series.title	<i>Dr. Horrible’s Sing-Along Blog</i>
episode.id	E01
series.genre	Musical
series.genre	Comedy
series.genre	Tragedy
series.genre	Science Fiction
series.type	Web
episode.synopsis	This episode follows Dr. Horrible as he films his video blog, attempts to talk to his crush Penny, and faces his nemesis Captain Hammer.
episode.setting	Los Angeles, CA
episode.cast	Neil Patrick Harris, Nathan Fillion, Felicia Day
episode.time	14 min.
episode.date	15 July 2008
formats	DVD, Blu Ray, Digital download - Amazon.com, iTunes
notes	<i>Dr. Horrible’s Sing-Along Blog</i> has won numerous award including the People’s Choice Award for "Favorite Online Sensation", the 2009 Hugo Award for Best Dramatic Presentation-Short Form, and a Creative Arts Emmy Award for Outstanding Special Class – Short-format Live-Action Entertainment Programs. At the 2009 Streamy Awards it won Audience Choice Award for Best Web Series, Best Directing for a Comedy Web Series, Best Writing for a Comedy Web Series, Best Male Actor in a Comedy Web Series (Harris), Best Editing, Best Cinematography, and Best Original Music, and <i>Time</i> magazine named it #15 in <i>Time’s</i> Top 50 Inventions of 2008.

episode.title	“Our Mrs. Reynolds”
series.title	<i>Firefly</i>

episode.id	E06
series.genre	Space western
series.genre	Science fiction
series.genre	Action
series.genre	Drama
series.type	TV
episode.synopsis	In this episode the crew of Serenity find a woman on board who claims to be Mal's wife. Each member of the crew has a different opinion on this subservient and young woman, Saffron, and tensions run high as she travels with the crew.
episode.setting	2517: Space
episode.cast	Nathan Fillion, Gina Torres, Alan Tudyk, Morena Baccarin, Adam Baldwin
episode.cast	Christina Hendricks
episode.time	42 min.
episode.date	04 October 2002
formats	DVD, Blu Ray, Digital download - Amazon.com

episode.title	"Man on the Street"
series.title	<i>Dollhouse</i>
episode.id	S01E06
series.genre	Science fiction
series.genre	Mystery
series.genre	Drama
series.type	TV
episode.synopsis	Echo is imprinted as a the wife of a billionaire whom Ballard is investigating. The two finally come face-to-face, while back in the Dollhouse it seems as though one of the actives may be abusing Sierra.
episode.setting	2009: Los Angeles, CA
episode.cast	Eliza Dushku, Tahmoh Penikett, Harry Lennix, Fran Kranz, Dichen

	Lachman
episode.time	50 min.
episode.date	20 March 20009
formats	DVD, Blu Ray, Digital download - Amazon.com, iTunes

episode.title	"City of"
series.title	<i>Angel</i>
episode.id	S01E01
series.genre	Fantasy
series.genre	Action
series.genre	Drama
series.type	TV
episode.synopsis	This spin-off of <i>Buffy the Vampire Slayer</i> follows Angel as he settles in to Los Angeles after leaving Sunnydale. In this first episode, "City of," Ange sees LA's dark side, and eventually teams up with Cordy and Doyle to help make the city a safer place.
episode.setting	1999: Los Angeles, CA
episode.cast	David Boreanaz, Charisma Carpenter, Glenn Quinn, Tracy Middendorf
episode.time	44 min.
episode.date	5 October 1999
formats	DVD, Blu Ray, Digital download - Amazon.com, iTunes

Reflection:

When I first began to think about this project I realized quickly how tricky it was going to be to come up with ten to fifteen attributes that described a set of content with a specific purpose in mind. In order to get my head on straight I did a lot of brainstorming. I wrote each of the ideas I had for a set (board games, the Whedonverse, etc) in the middle of a piece of paper and tried to create a web with as many attributes as I could possibly think of. Doing this also helped me think about how I would define my set (what counts as a board game?) and led me to pick my final group of entities: tv and web series episodes written by Joss Whedon.

One I had my group of entities set, the definition came pretty naturally. And being a fairly

new Whedon fan I knew that new fans were going to be my target audience. From there I began to write out all of the things about an episode that are important to me. This gave me a list of almost twenty attributes. When I began to go through the attributes to define them and explain my rationale for using them I found a lot of attributes I didn't really need. The definitions for my attributes were edited throughout this process as I tried to think of examples. For instance, when working on the setting attribute I realized I would need a way to deal with flashbacks, as they are common in Whedon's writing.

After all my attributes were defined I began to write out my five instance. This caused a lot more revision to my attribute definitions. I found issues cropping up that I simply hadn't thought of when I was creating my attributes: when fields have more than one piece of information in them (genre, format, etc) should those pieces of information be in one field or multiple? how many cast members should be listed? what happens when there is only one season of a show? if there's one season is it even a series? After thinking long and hard to come up with answers to these questions, I feel I ended up creating a schema that describes my set of entities very well. The schema has its limitations, but overall I think that it achieves my goal of making Whedon's tv and web writing accessible for new fans.

The hardest part of this project was definitely describing and rationalizing the attributes. I found it difficult to describe and rationalize genre for example. I know that it needs to be in the schema, and I know that it is important information for people who may want to watch a specific episode, but it's a difficult concept for me to put into words and explain. Luckily the Library of Congress has already done a lot of that work and I was able to piggyback off of them. I also found it very difficult to know when to stop defining or rationalizing or explaining any given attribute. I felt like I could write whole pages on some of the attributes, but forced myself to be as concise as possible.

For future projects I think I will keep in mind that your attributes are likely to change once you start looking at specific instances. If I did this over again I would create a rough list of attributes and then add more detail to them as I started describing specific instances so that I hopefully wouldn't have to go back and rework things as much as I did for this project.