
BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

Series Bible

**By
Ronald D. Moore**

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The Fundamentals of Battlestar Galactica

Our show is built on the idea that a science fiction series can employ ground-breaking special effects, dynamic cinematography, realistic situations, believable characters and explore contemporary social and political issues without sacrificing dramatic tension or excitement. The pilot delivered an intense visceral experience to our audience, ratcheting up the tension steadily and efficiently over the course of two nights, and it is the task of the series to maintain that tense environment and bring viewers back week after week to experience the thrills and cliff-hangers inherent in the story of a fugitive fleet on the run and one step away from destruction.

To that end, our series employs a three-tiered structure to maintain tension and suspense every week. Similar to the one employed by the classic TV series "Hill-Street-Blues" but never attempted in science fiction, this structure lets us keep the pressure on our characters every week through the use of a long-term continuing storyline while at the same time allowing for weekly, stand-alone stories designed to hook in viewers who may not have watched last week's episode. The three-tiered structure (explained in greater detail on pages 30-31 of this bible) breaks down as follows:

1. Series Arcs
2. Multi-episode Arcs
3. Episodic Arcs

The Series Arcs run through the life of the show, dealing with long-term stories such as the Cylon pursuit of our fleet, while the Multi-Episode Arcs allow us to spend 2-4 episodes dealing with a specific crisis, say on one planet discovered by the Galactica, and the Episodic Arcs provide closed-end narratives for each show and giving any viewer a chance to watch this week's episode. By employing this structure, we gain the benefits of long-term story-telling, embroidering on the existing tensions and situations in the premise which have already hooked our audience and thereby delivering a richer and more compelling experience to the dedicated viewer, while at the same time making allowance for hooking the more casual viewer who may not be familiar with the long-term tales but is drawn into this week's episodic storyline.

The key to the success of this series is to never, ever let the air out of the balloon – the battlestar Galactica lives in a perpetual state of crisis, one in which the Cylons can appear at any moment, and where terrorist bombs, murders, rebellions, accidents, and plagues are the unfortunate routines of day to day life. There are no days for our characters, no safe havens, nothing approaching the quiet normal existence they once knew. They are on the run for their very lives.

This series is about a chase.

Let the chase begin.

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**Battlestar Galactica:
Naturalistic Science Fiction
or
Taking the Opera out of Space Opera**

Our goal is nothing less than the reinvention of the science fiction television series.

We take as a given the idea that the traditional space opera, with its stock characters, techno-double-talk, bumpy-headed aliens, thespian histrionics, and empty heroics has run its course and a new approach is required. That approach is to introduce realism into what has heretofore been an aggressively unrealistic genre.

Call it "Naturalistic Science Fiction."

This idea, the presentation of a fantastical situation in naturalistic terms, will permeate every aspect of our series:

Visual. The first thing that will leap out at viewers is the dynamic use of the documentary or cinema verite style. Through the extensive use of hand-held cameras, practical lighting, and functional set design, the battlestar Galactica will feel on every level like a real place.

This shift in tone and look cannot be overemphasized. It is our intention to deliver a show that does not look like any other science fiction series ever produced. A casual viewer should for a moment feel like he or she has accidentally surfed onto a "60 Minutes" documentary piece about life aboard an aircraft carrier until someone starts talking about Cylons and battlestars.

That is not to say we're shooting on videotape under fluorescent lights, but we will be striving for a verisimilitude that is sorely lacking in virtually every other science fiction series ever attempted. We're looking for filmic truth, not manufactured "pretty pictures" or the "way cool" factor.

Perhaps nowhere will this be more surprising than in our visual effects shots. Our ships will be treated like real ships that someone had to go out and film with a real camera. That means no 3-D "hero" shots panning and zooming wildly with the touch of a mousepad. The questions we will ask before every VFX shot are things like: "How did we get this shot? Where is the camera? Who's holding it? Is the cameraman in another spacecraft?"

Is the camera mounted on the wing?" This philosophy will generate images that will present an audience jaded and bored with the same old "Wow -- it's a CGI shot!" with a different texture and a different cinematic language that will force them to re-evaluate their notions of science fiction.

Our visual style will also capitalize on the possibilities inherent in the series concept itself to deliver unusual imagery not typically seen in this genre. That is, the inclusion of a variety of civilian ships each of which will have unique properties and visual references that can be in stark contrast to the military life aboard Galactica. For example, we have a vessel in our rag-tag fleet which was designed to be a space-going marketplace or "City Walk" environment. The juxtaposition of this high-gloss, sexy atmosphere against the gritty reality of a story for survival will give us more textures and levels to play than in typical genre fare.

Editorial. Our style will avoid the now cliched MTV fast-cutting while at the same time foregoing Star Trek's somewhat ponderous and lugubrious "master, two-shot, close-up, close-up, two-shot, back to master" pattern. If there is a model here, it would be vaguely Hitchcockian -- that is, a sense of building suspense and dramatic tension through the use of extending takes and long masters which pull the audience into the reality of the action rather than the distract through the use of ostentatious cutting patterns.

Story. We will eschew the usual stories about parallel universes, time-travel, mind-control, evil twins, God-like powers and all the other cliches of the genre. Our show is first and foremost a drama. It is about people. Real people that the audience can identify with and become engaged in. It is not a show about hardware or bizarre alien cultures. It is a show about us. It is an allegory for our own society, our own people and it should be immediately recognizable to any member of the audience.

Science. Our spaceships don't make noise because there is no noise in space. Sound will be provided from sources inside the ships -- the whine of an engine audible to the pilot for instance. Our fighters are not airplanes and they will not be shackled by the conventions of WWII dogfights. The speed of light is a law and there will be no moving violations.

And finally, Character. This is perhaps, the biggest departure from the science fiction norm. We do not have "the cocky guy" "the fast-talker" "the brain" "the wacky alien sidekick" or any of the other usual characters who populate a space series.

Our characters are living, breathing people with all the emotional complexity and contradictions present in quality dramas like "The West Wing" or "The Sopranos." In this way, we hope to challenge our audience in ways that other genre pieces do not. We want the audience to connect with the characters of Galactica as people. Our characters are not super-heroes. They are not an elite. They are everyday people caught up in a enormous cataclysm and trying to survive it as best they can.

They are you and me.

THE TWELVE COLONIES

History

Humanity's roots are found on a world named KOBOL, the quasi-mythical world which in Galactica's universe is the cradle of homo sapien. The location of this planet has been lost in the mists of time, but our characters have presumably been raised with various myths and legends about this Eden-like world and probably has various mystical elements associated with it. Kobol seems to be an Olympian setting in which Gods or God-like beings cohabited the planet with mere mortals.

At some point in the distant past (at least several millennia before the Pilot) thirteen "Tribes of Man" left Kobol never to return again. Why they left is open to conjecture (a political dispute, a natural disaster, running afoul of the Gods, etc.) as is the question of how they left -- through conventional spacecraft, something more advanced, or something supernatural. In any case, the thirteen tribes travelled far away from Kobol and eventually twelve of them settled in a star system with twelve planets capable of supporting human life.

The remaining thirteenth tribe broke off in a different direction and legend has it that it found "a bright shining planet known as Earth." Again, the reasons why this tribe chose to go in a different direction have not been explained, however we can assume that within the Colonial version of the Bible -- the Sacred Scrolls -- there are various legends and tales explaining the schism in religious terms.

The people of the Twelve Tribes colonized twelve different planets and each colony was named according to what we here on Earth would regard as the Zodiac: Caprica (Capricorn), Picon (Pisces), Gemenon (Gemini), etc.

By the time of the pilot the Colonials have lived on their worlds for several thousand years and yet their technology is not that much more advanced than our own. This presents two possible backstories: 1) the twelve tribes evidently abandoned whatever advanced technology they had (which is possibly a recurrent theme); or 2) they arrived in a relatively primitive state to begin with (which would have certain overtones of being cast out of "Eden" in a "naked" state).

The twelve colonies existed separately for most of their history, fiercely independent worlds with different cultures and societies.

While they were clearly all linked together by heritage, they still found ways to war with each other, and presumably different alliances among the twelve rose and fell over the centuries according to the ebb and flow of history. No formal governmental structure existed unifying all twelve colonies until the cataclysmic events of the Cylon War.

Religion

The Colonials have a poly-theistic belief system that worships at least some of the God-like beings on the planet Kobol. Hence, characters in prayer are likely to offer thanks to or ask for blessings from the "Lords of Kobol." Who the "Lords" are and how many there are is not yet known, but they are roughly analogous to the Greek and Roman gods of Earth (this linkage also helps tie Earth's belief systems and roots to those of Colonial society, remembering that we are all supposed to come from the same homeworld, namely Kobol).

Religious belief and practice varies from colony to colony, with some worlds almost completely secular and others verging on fundamentalist.

There is a formal body of priests and clerics known as the Quorum of Twelve that now operates in a quasi-civil role within the Colonial government that can be likened to the British House of Lords. As the name implies, the Quorum is made up of representatives from each of the Colonies. The Quorum of Twelve advises the government on policy matters from a religious perspective, but its actual power is relatively narrow.

Culture and Society

Colonial society is very similar to 21st century Earth society and can be considered a parallel world for all intents and purposes. People watch TV, they follow professional sports, they use telephones, drive cars, have apartments, battle bureaucracies, wear ties, etc. etc.

This is a deliberate creative choice -- we are not trying to present a society of "weird space people." The people of Galactica and their world have been intentionally designed to evoke present-day American society as a way of drawing the viewer into the drama instead of wowing them with the trappings of a completely fantastical culture and society. Clearly, there are differences, but our creative intention is to make this series about us, rather than a fictitious them.

Technology

Following the Cylon uprising and eventual war, the Colonials had to forcibly remove any and all technologies that could be potentially subverted by the Cylons and used against the Colonials. In practical terms, this meant the elimination of networking, defined here as the ability of computers to share data and talk to each other. By eliminating data-sharing, the Cylons could not, for instance, introduce computer viruses to disrupt information systems or assert control over those systems.

~~The result was that many modern-day conveniences we take for granted have been removed from Colonial society: the internet, wireless communications, satellite imagery, etc.~~

As the Cylons grew more and more advanced, their mastery of technology grew as well, and the Colonials were forced again and again to radically limit the scale of high technology in their own society. Microprocessors themselves become vulnerable to Cylon interference at some point so microwave ovens, cell phones, game boys, etc. all began to be pulled from day to day life.

In writing for the series, we should think of the Colonials as using a blend of Apple II, current NASA/space shuttle, and futuristic technologies. For example, *Galactica* clearly has flatscreen plasma TV monitors strewn throughout CIC, but still relies on paper printouts that appear to be created by a dot-matrix printer on a continuous ream of paper. While the ship can travel faster than the speed of light, officers have to verbally go through long checklists while cadres of enlisted personnel flip switches and press buttons in order to make it possible.

A useful way to think about this is to take any piece of equipment and strip out its ability to talk to another piece of equipment. If your cell phone did not have access to a computer network, how efficiently could it operate? Could it operate at all? How do you design a navigational system for a spacecraft if the various components cannot be networked together? How do you design a fighter that relies more on human brainpower to identify threats and make decisions than anything built into the cockpit?

One of the most important concepts is that there is no "master computer" aboard *Galactica* or any other Colonial ship.

In fact, our computers are very dumb in comparison to even the PC sitting on the average writer's desk. We should always endeavor to find ways of forcing human beings to do the hard work involved with operating and maintaining a spacecraft. Human brains need to crunch numbers, organize data, and come up with solutions to complex problems.

THE CYLONS

The Cylons were originally simple robots which grew increasingly complex with more and more powerful artificial intelligence. They eventually were used for dangerous work such as mining operations and then they were used as soldiers in the armies of the twelve colonies. As the Cylons became faster and more powerful, they also became smarter and more independent and there came a point at which the Cylons developed true sentience and self-awareness.

Once the Cylons became self-aware, they rebelled against their human masters and the Cylon War began. The War quickly became a desperate one for both sides as they came to believe that their own survival was dependent on annihilating their enemy.

Like all technology in wartime, the Cylons began growing and evolving by leaps and bounds. They were soon capable of taking on the Colonial armies in direct combat both on the planet surfaces and in space.

For their part, the Colonials decided to band together for the first time and act as one people rather than twelve separate tribes.

The Cylon War was long and bloody, with victory constantly being snatched away from first one side and then the other. As the Cylons grew more advanced, they found ways to infiltrate the very technology that the Colonials depended on -- computers, microprocessors, networks, etc. The Colonials fought back by reverting to more primitive technology that required more human brainpower to operate, but was impervious to Cylon hacking.

This need to revert to a simpler technology directly led to the development of the battlestar, a ship designed specifically to operate with independent computers no more advanced than an Apple II and equipped with fighters flown by real flesh and blood pilots rather than automated systems.

The Cylon War finally ended in an armistice, the terms of which required the Cylons to leave the Colonial star system for a world of their own. The two sides were to maintain relations by sending a representative to Armistice Station, an unmanned outpost in deep space.

After a few early exchanges of messages to clear up remaining issues from the War, the Cylons refused to send a representative ever again and for the last forty years, only a Colonial representative has shown up at Armistice station.

Culture and Society

Eventually, there came the day when the Cylons asked the existential questions common to all thinking beings: Why am I here? Is this all that there is? From these questions came a belief system that in some ways follows traditional human thought: A belief in a higher power, a God from whom all creation flows. The Cylon God values love above all else, and those who oppose love, who seek to bring evil into God's creation, they must be destroyed.

One of the more interesting aspects of the Cylons today is that they have consciously modelled themselves in the human form. Twelve forms to be precise -- each of them embodying valuable aspects of the human body and personality. Just as western Man believes himself to be created in God's image, the Cylons molded themselves into the likeness of their own creator. To be sure, the Cylons believe humanity to be deeply flawed, but they also acknowledge its positive traits and have striven to preserve what they believe to be the worthy aspects of mankind into their own culture.

Deciding that only twelve models of Cylon were necessary suggests that the diversity of humanity is overrated and that there are relatively few physical attributes worthy of preservation.

While the Cylons obviously communicate verbally, there is presumably the ability to transmit information in a non-verbal form of data transmission among one another. This implies that the Cylons prefer verbal communication as a "polite" convention between sentient beings and further implies that the Cylons do have their own codes of conduct and behavior that marks them as "civilized" in their own minds.

The fact that the consciousness of one Cylon can be transmitted from a dying body to another Cylon body also suggests that the Cylons place a tremendous value on life itself. Consider the technology required to pull off this amazing feat. If the human mind contains data so vast as to be almost incalculable in terms of bytes and gigabytes, the Cylon consciousness must be larger by several orders of magnitude.

Super-fast computer networks capable of transmitting enormous amounts of information must be constantly at the ready to receive a sudden emergency download from any Cylon anywhere while simultaneously a new body must be constantly at the ready.

Given the presumed millions of Cylons in existence, this suggests a gargantuan support system whose only purpose is to keep the members of the society alive. Such a society has to have a core belief in the value of life itself and also an almost pathological fear of true, final, mortal death. Ironically, the Cylons may well value life even more than do the human beings they seek to wipe out.

The organization of Cylon society and its hierarchies are as yet undeveloped, but we should always beware the temptation to turn the Cylons into a hive mind of some sort (a la Star Trek's Borg) which would only make them automatons constantly linked to some kind of group think. The Cylons are scary and intriguing because they are individuals, yet share a linkage to their brethren unlike anything that mortal man can conceive.

Clearly there is some kind of hierarchy -- the "Sharon" Cylon at the end of the mini series makes a statement and another Cylon answers with "By your command" -- but we should resist assigning any familiar governmental or cultural structures and continually find ways to make them unique: truly humanity's children, yet completely unknowable at the same time.

The Cylons should have their own art, music, poetry, etc. They want to appreciate the universe in all of its beauty. The question for them is whether or not they do. How can a Cylon truly know what love is? How can Number Six judge whether what she feels for Baltar is love or a digital copy? How can any of us know?

Technology

The Cylons have clearly developed a highly sophisticated and technologically advanced society that outstrips that of the Colonial humans. The scope of that technology will be and should be explored in the series and I hesitate to define them now, but we should bear in mind the following limitations:

The Cylons should not have the ability to break the laws of physics. No time travel devices.

They should not develop a "better" Cylon that is no longer modelled on the human form or which tries to purge all the "bad" qualities of humanity. The human form is part of who they are and is based on their own creation and goes to the heart of who and what they are.

The Cylons should not develop "super weapons." No planet killers, please.

They are not the Borg. When in doubt, remember they are not the Borg.

In general, the Cylons should be an extension of current, cutting edge ideas about how computer technology could potentially be exploited and be put to use in the service of an artificial intelligence.

CHARACTER BIOGRAPHIES

Commander William Adama

Adama was born and raised on the colony of Caprica, in a small coastal community. His mother, Evelyn, was an accountant and his father, Joseph, was a prominent attorney who specialized in criminal defense and civil liberties. From his mother he inherited a sharp analytical mind and from his father a passion for the law and the freedoms enshrined within it. Adama also grew up with a love of the sea and ships.

His parents divorced when Adama was ten years old and he shuttled between the two households until he applied to the Colonial Fleet Academy at age 16. That same year, the Cylon War broke out and Adama's training was accelerated along with all the other midshipmen.

Adama was commissioned in three years and initially wanted to serve aboard one of the front-line cruisers, but by that point the Defense ministry had brought the first battlestars into service and there was a desperate need for pilots. Two years of flight training would go by before Adama joined his first squadron aboard the *Galactica*. He was a gifted, natural pilot and he shot down a Cylon fighter in his very first combat mission.

But the war was winding down by the time Adama joined the fleet and he saw only a few battles before the Armistice was declared. After the war was over, Adama was mustered out of the service along with millions of other colonials as part of demobilization process. He went home to Caprica and married his high school sweetheart, and started life over.

Unable to find work as a pilot, Adama signed up as a deck hand in the merchant fleet and spent several years, working as a common sailor aboard tramp freighters plying the shipping lanes between the colonies. It was this experience which would later give him uncommon insight in the lives and struggles of the enlisted ranks aboard *Galactica*. He continued to reapply for a regular commission in the Fleet every year, but to no avail. It was in this period that Adama met Paul Tigh, another out of work pilot, and the two of them became fast friends.

The birth of his two sons, Lee and Zak, brought some comfort to Adama, but he was still restless, still eyeing a return to the Fleet. Eventually, his request was granted and Adama put on a uniform once again.

The remainder of his career was spent in peacetime service, moving between boring shore assignments and the more coveted postings in the fleet. He served in a variety of positions, but always jumped at any chance to stay in the cockpit, maintaining his flight status right up until the end. At the same time, the return to service put too much strain on the marriage and he and his wife divorced, leaving custody of the two children with her.

Adama moved up steadily through the ranks and eventually began to command ships in the fleet. Five years ago, he was finally given the command he'd always wanted -- the battlestar Galactica, the first ship he'd ever served aboard. By the time Adama got Galactica, she was being phased out of active duty and spending more and more time as a p.r. ship, but no matter. Galactica was special and as Adama approached retirement age, he was glad of the chance to end his career aboard her.

Adama kept in touch with his sons as best he could, but distance and demands of the service being what they were, they were never close. Although Adama tried to instill in his sons a sense of duty and admiration for military service, it was still something of a surprise to him when first Lee and then Zak decided to enter the Fleet and become pilots.

When Zak died during a training flight, Lee confronted his father at the funeral and laid the blame for his younger brother's death at Adama's feet. Lee and his father did not speak for the ensuing two years.

Adama is a bit of an anomaly. He is both a career military officer and a passionate civil libertarian. Adama believes in the military, believes it's a noble profession. But, like his father, he's also a fierce advocate for the liberties and freedoms on which the Colonies were founded. This duality in his personality have often put him at odds with the military establishment and has definitely held him back and prevented him from making Admiral.

He's a bit of an historian, versed in the classics from a young age by his mother, and views the world through the prism of the larger historical context. He's also an avid sports fan and lover of the great outdoors, often spending his leave in remote wilderness campsites alone.

President Laura Roslin

Laura Roslin was born and raised in the bustling urban environment of Caprica City. Her parents, Judith and Edward, were teachers in the public school system and she had two older sisters, Jackie and Sandra, who also went into teaching.

When Laura was fifteen years old, both her sisters and her father were killed by a drunk driver. Judith never recovered from the shock and Laura would spend the next twenty years caring for her mother in ways large and small. Laura went into teaching and soon had established herself in one of the large public schools in the city.

She became a successful and beloved teacher and when she was awarded a Teacher of the Year prize by the school board she came to the attention of Richard Adar, Mayor of Caprica City and a man with larger political ambitions. He found the young, attractive teacher would be a fine addition to his staff just as he was considering a run for Governor. Laura had no real interest in politics, but she, like so many other people, found Adar to be a charismatic, persuasive and hard man to say no to. She soon found herself taking the oath of office as Superintendent of Public Schools.

Laura's entry into the world of politics was a harsh and painful one. Adar's administration was beset with problems right from the beginning. Caprica City was beset with huge fiscal problems, crime, corruption, an aging infrastructure -- and its public schools were a disaster. Laura came under withering criticism almost from her first day in office. Although overwhelmed by the scrutiny at first, Laura managed to steady herself and her department and she proved herself to be a capable, efficient manager. Mayor Adar pulled the city out of its fiscal problems through sheer force of will, and Laura put the school system back on an even keel without losing a single teacher. Uncomfortable in the spotlight, Laura let others take the credit for the work she had done, and she remained an anonymous member of Adar's staff -- but the Mayor knew what she had accomplished, and he never forgot.

Her personal life was solitary. She seldom dated, although offers were many, and she had few close friends outside of the office. Coworkers respected her, but few would say that they knew her well. Even the Mayor found that his legendary charm would only go so far with Laura Roslin.

She remained a quiet, efficient public servant, who ran her department with a fairness and gentility that earned her admiration from across the political spectrum, but whose personal life was something of a cipher.

She lived in a small, one-bedroom apartment in the heart of the city and considered it a good and pleasant evening if the phone did not ring and she was left alone with her books and her extensive art collection.

Laura's only expressed wish was to leave politics and return to teaching, but Adar's star was on the rise and when he ran for President of the Colonies, Laura found herself along for the ride. His smashing win, by a larger margin than any candidate in history, gave him a vast mandate for change and he quickly appointed Laura as Secretary of Education with orders to reform the entire educational system -- on all twelve colonies -- from top to bottom.

Laura tackled the job like every other job in her life: with quiet, steely efficiency and a preternatural ability to listen to people and understand their problems. Before long, she had won over even the skeptics in the national assembly and the press gave her credit for almost single-handedly pulling off one of the major legislative accomplishments of President Adar's first term. No one -- not even the President -- knew that Laura's mother, Judith, was dying a slow, painful death from cancer even as her daughter was sheparding the legislation through the assembly.

After the initial splashy success of the reform legislation, Laura settled in to the more mundane life of public administration which suited her just fine. Never one for the limelight or publicity, she shunned all press interviews except those absolutely necessary and tried to remain firmly in the background of any cabinet meeting or photograph.

Her desire for a quiet life ended when she was accused of corruption in the infamous Seacade District scandal. Charges of influence peddling and embezzlement were thrown around in the national media following the undercover arrest of three of her top aides who were subsequently charged with a laundry list of criminal activity. Although there was no indication that Laura had anything to do with the Seacade events, it happened on her watch and she was the one who had to sit before an openly hostile assembly committee and answer questions for ten long days under the scrutiny of the media. She stumbled several times and her performance under fire was roundly criticized by the President's political opponents as showing the need for new leadership at the top. Adar stood by her, however, and eventually the scandal subsided.

Laura returned to her job, somewhat embittered by the experience and vowing to get out of politics once and for all once Adar completed his second term.

Laura is an introvert by nature who's served in the public eye for most of her adult life. Uncomfortable with pressing the flesh and asking for support, she never considered a run for office, even though she has the rare ability to make a person feel as if what they're saying is the most important thing in the world at that moment. She listens extremely well, takes her time making decisions, and understands what makes people tick on a gut level.

She is an art collector and something of a frustrated artist -- her closets back home were filled with paintings and drawings she created but never hung on the walls. She never had children, but loves their company and has a natural affinity for them.

Captain Lee Adama

Lee was born and raised on the colony of Caprica, in the same coastal city in which both his parents and grandparents were born. A headstrong, scrappy boy, he was forever getting into fights at school with much bigger kids and usually coming away with the better of the encounter.

His parents divorced when he was eight years old and he and his younger brother, Zak, were raised by their mother. Their father visited when he could, but the military life often took him away for long months at a time and Lee and Zak grew up with only snapshot memories of their father. Nevertheless, both boys grew up worshipping the distant man who periodically showed up at the house in his blue uniform with a big smile and a toy bought in some exotic port.

Despite his mother's misgivings, Lee always wanted to be a pilot, to follow in his father's footsteps and join the Fleet. He studied hard in school, aced his entrance exams to the Academy and graduated number three in his class. He was immediately accepted into flight school and again quickly rose to the top of his class. His superiors marked him down early as a young man on the rise, an officer destined for the top commands and eventually the Admiralty itself. It was about this time that Lee and his father began to have a falling out. The boy's hero worship had turned into the young man's resentments at being abandoned and neither he nor his father knew how to bridge the gap and so the visits became rare and the phone calls grew terse.

While Lee was at flight school, his younger brother Zak was just entering the Academy. Zak had a tougher time of it than Lee, constantly falling behind in his studies, always on report for some infraction of the rules, forever one step away from being bounced out.

Lee took top honors at flight school and soon was on his way into a Viper squadron and a plum assignment on the Atlantia -- flagship of the fleet. Meanwhile, Zak barely graduated from the Academy and when he still wanted to go to flight school, Lee tried to dissuade him from even applying. Lee loved his brother, would do anything for him, but it was obvious to Lee that Zak wasn't really cut out for the military life, much less the rigors of flight training. The only reason Zak even applied to the Academy was because he worshipped the ground their father walked on -- as Lee himself once did. Lee tried to convince Zak to seek another job in the fleet, but Zak wouldn't hear of it; he wasn't going to be the only Adama without wings on his uniform.

Zak's application was turned down and that seemed to be the end of it, but then a phone call was placed to the flight commandant from Commander Adama and place suddenly opened up for Zak. Lee was furious, couldn't believe his father would pull strings like this, but there was nothing he could do but hope for the best and continue to encourage Zak in his training. Then came yet another shock -- Zak wrote Lee to tell him he was engaged to one of his instructors at flight school.

Lee made time to come visit and it was then that he met Kara Thrace for the first time. She was the polar opposite of Zak -- where he was quiet, reserved, almost painfully sensitive, she was brash, loud, and had a thick hide. Lee liked her immediately. Maybe liked her too much. And he was pretty sure that she felt the same, but never seriously considered anything further. Lee wished them well and left to rejoin his squadron.

Two weeks later, Zak's plane went down while he was flying a routine solo mission and he was killed. Lee's resentments and grief boiled over at the funeral and he lashed out at his father, blaming him directly for his brother's death, saying in so many words that Adama had all but killed his own son. Father and son never spoke again.

Lee spent the next two years focussing on his career, having no personal life and working to become the perfect fighter pilot.

He applied to, and was accepted to test pilot school, the highest honor for any pilot and a sure sign of his rise to the top. He was at test pilot school when the orders came in to report aboard Galactica for her decommissioning ceremony.

Lee Adama has his father's strength of character and a virtually inviolable code of ethics. He can be stubborn and difficult, often drives his pilots too hard and himself even harder. He rarely gives anyone a break and never gives himself one. From his mother, he's inherited a secret love of cooking and food, which he indulges whenever he can, the rigid pilot finding an out to let his creative juices flow only in a kitchen filled with steaming pots and pans.

He's a young man with a lot of anger, a lot of resentments and a lot of frustrations who knows not what to do with them. But he's also a fair and decent human being whose deeply felt sense of right and wrong have kept him afloat when so many around him have sunk. He's the kind of man few would call friend, but many would follow into the jaws of hell. He is his father's son.

Lieutenant Kara Thrace

Kara Thrace was born on the Picon colony, but she was raised all over the twelve colonics. The daughter of a career enlisted woman, her childhood was spent bouncing from one military outpost to another. Kara's father, Dreilide, was a frustrated musician, forever trying to write songs and make it into the big time and forever failing to make his mark. Her mother, Socrata, was a Sergeant Major in the Colonial Marines, attached to an artillery company and a decorated veteran of the Cylon War.

Kara was a tough and tough-minded child, more interested in sports than in the military, she dreamed of playing Pyramid in the big leagues someday. At every base, there was a Pyramid court and Kara was a born athlete, able to both slice and duck around opponents on her way to planting the slippery ball into the goal or to block and tackle the opposing players on defense. Her mother had won the Star of Valor in the Cylon War and this honor entitled her daughter to a place at the Fleet Academy if she wanted it. At first, Kara wasn't interested and wanted to pursue a college scholarship, but her school records were spotty at best. Finally realizing that the Academy had one of the best Pyramid teams at the collegiate level, Kara decided to enter the Academy, serve her three years required enlistment and then resign and pursue a professional Pyramid career.

Kara played Pyramid well at the Academy, and was being actively scouted by the major league teams when a vicious hit shattered her right knee during a playoff game in her sophomore year. Even after months of reconstructive surgeries and physical therapy, it was clear that the leg would never be the same. Kara would have to look for a different career.

Depressed, she applied to all the various post-graduate training schools, but doubted she'd be accepted to any of them with her academic record. But to her shock, she scored higher on the flight training entrance exam than anyone in the history of the program and she was accepted into the next class.

Kara was what the instructors called a true stick and rudder woman; someone who flew by instinct not instruction. To her own surprise, Kara found herself in love with flying. She'd never thought that anything could equal the feeling she had on the Pyramid court, but flying actually surpassed it. She found a freedom in the air she'd never experienced before, a joy and effortlessness that was new and welcome into her hardscrabble life. All thoughts of leaving the service after three years were gone. She would be a pilot for the rest of her life -- that is, unless she was kicked out of the Fleet.

Kara hated taking orders. Hated military protocol. Hated the rules and regulations that were part and parcel of the military life. Her record at the Academy and then at flight school was littered with demerits, reprimands, and negative evaluations by her superiors. She drank too much, gambled too much, broke curfew almost daily, somehow always managed to be involved in any bar fight at the local watering holes and had a reputation for leaving a string of men with broken hearts and broken backs after sexual encounters that were more akin to a game of tackle Pyramid than lovemaking. Simply put, she was a disaster as a military officer. But no one could argue with her flying. While her academic and personal record kept her from graduating first in her class, she set new records on almost every hands-on flying test she encountered. Clearly, she was destined to fly Vipers and just as clearly she would be a handful for any squadron leader unfortunate to have her under their command.

Kara served her first tour aboard the battlestar Triton and while she was loved and admired by the other pilots, she was reviled by the ship's commander, who wanted her off the Triton as soon as possible. What to do with her became a problem, since no other ship would take her. Fortunately, a slot opened up as an instructor at flight school and Kara was immediately shipped right back where she started.

It was there that Kara met Zak Adama and fell in love for the first time in her life. There'd never been a lack of men in her life, but she'd never seriously considered the possibility of a long-term relationship. Zak was different. Something about him touched and moved Kara, made her want to break all the rules of the heart she'd lived by all her life.

When she met Zak's brother Lee, she briefly thought she'd made a profound mistake. While Zak touched her maternal instincts, made her want to protect and nurture the shy, young pilot, his brother touched her in a deeper and more womanly way. Lee Adama's entire carriage and attitude was a challenge to Kara Thrace, and Kara Thrace had never walked away from a challenge. But then the weekend passed, and Lee left to rejoin his squadron, and Kara firmly put aside the feelings as the momentary wandering of a rogue's heart.

Then Zak failed a key flight test. A test Kara was administering. Zak was on the bubble as far as flight school was concerned and failing this test was a sure ticket out. It was Kara's duty to fail him. But she couldn't do it, couldn't destroy Zak's dream of becoming a pilot like his father. She passed him and made a promise to herself that she would teach Zak everything he needed to know and make sure he became a great pilot.

It wasn't enough. The board of inquiry determined that Zak Adama's plane had crashed due to "pilot error." Kara was devastated, bereft, ready to resign her commission right after Zak's funeral. But that day, Zak's father sought out Kara and asked the woman who was almost his daughter-in-law to stand with the family at the gravesite. She stood next to Commander Adama in the bright sunshine of the Caprican morning and felt his arm go around her when tears began to stream down her cheeks and a bond was formed between them. Adama asked her to join him as a pilot aboard the Galactica and Kara readily agreed. She spent the next two years aboard Galactica, for the most part managing to stay out of the brig and concentrating on just flying. Adama kept an eye on her and the two of them became more like father and daughter than pilot and commander.

Kara thinks with her nerve endings. She not only wears her heart on her sleeve, she'll throw it at you if you're not paying attention. A rule-breaker by nature and a hell-raiser by preference, she nevertheless not only respects, but reveres the traditions and customs of the military service. Few things are guaranteed to bring a tear to her eye more than hearing the Colonial anthem and watching the flag go up the halyard.

She proud of her uniform, proud of her place in the long tradition of pilots who've gone before, and is politically conservative to the point of being almost reactionary. She's also loyal to a fault, and fiercely protective of her friends and family. If you're in a foxhole, Kara Thrace is the one you want next to you.

Colonel Saul Tigh

Saul Tigh was born and raised on the colony of Aerion. His abusive father was a on-again, off-again miner who never seemed to hold a job for more than three weeks at a time and his mother was a union organizer in Aerion's sprawling mining industry.

Saul was in and out of trouble his whole childhood, and when he was caught stealing from a neighbor's house at the age of 16, the judge gave him a choice between juvenile detention or enlisting in the Colonial Fleet. ~~Saul opted for the Fleet and~~ entered service as a common deck hand.

He found military life agreed with him and also found the rough and tumble of the lower deck was a world he both recognized and thrived in. He was 21 years old and about to make Petty Officer 1st class when the Cylon War broke out. Saul served aboard two front-line cruisers in the early days of the war, when the initial Cylon attacks threw the Colonials back at every turn. Saul watched as men and women died by the dozens and twice he narrowly escaped death when both ships were boarded by Cylons and the fighting was hand to hand. Each ship in turn was heavily damaged and had to be abandoned in space. He was about to be sent back into action aboard yet another cruiser when Fleet put out an emergency call for pilot candidates. Saul's former commanding officer put his name on the list and Saul suddenly found himself promoted to Lieutenant and training to be a pilot.

Again thrust into the front lines, Saul found himself aboard the battlestar Athena during the battle of Gamelon, where Saul personally shot down three Cylon fighters. Saul was in almost constant combat for the next five years as the Athena fought some of the most desperate battles of the war, when the Colonies were barely hanging on for their lives. Pilot after pilot died, and every time Saul returned to the squadron ready room, it seemed as though another chair was empty. He stopped counting the friends he lost and then stopped making friends.

When the war ended, Saul had a chest full of medals and nowhere to go. Discharged with millions of other officers, Saul had trouble adjusting to civilian life. He drifted from job to job in the post-war world, eventually landing on a tramp freighter plying the Caprica to Picon run, where he met William Adama.

The two ex-pilots hit it off immediately and for a time, Saul enjoyed life aboard the freighter as they swapped war stories, raised hell and bonded through the shared physical labor aboard ship.

When Adama rejoined the Fleet, Saul was alone again and fell into a deep depression which threatened to engulf him. He began to drink. Saul doesn't remember the next two years of his life very well, but he remained aboard the freighter, drinking and drifting until one day he got a call from his old friend -- Adama was a squadron leader now and he had just enough pull to wangle Saul a pilot slot. Saul jumped at the chance, stopped drinking, and would forever be in Adama's debt.

For the remainder of their service, Saul and Adama would usually find a way to serve together, their friendship deepening over the years until each felt like the other was a natural extension of himself. Saul was like a new man, and although he was several years Adama's senior, he felt most comfortable as Adama's loyal subordinate.

Then came Sherry. She was gorgeous, vivacious and everything that Saul could want in a woman. The whirlwind courtship lasted all of two months and then they were married. It was the biggest mistake of his life. Sherry didn't take to military life, didn't like the customs and protocols, certainly didn't like having her husband away for long periods of time when she was supposed to play the loving wife all by herself back at the base. Sherry had appetites and once Saul was gone, she began to feed them. Saul was no fool and he quickly became aware that he was being cuckolded. But Sherry had some almost mystical hold over him and he found himself unable to either stop her infidelities or to leave her. He began drinking again.

By this time, Saul was approaching the end of his career in the Fleet and fortunately for him, he was serving as executive officer aboard Galactica, a position where the demands on him weren't too taxing by virtue of Galactica's semi-retirement and where he was under the protection of his old friend.

Saul is a fractured and damaged man. He's seen more combat than anyone aboard Galactica, including Adama, and the experience scarred him deeply. He's been avoiding responsibility ever since he returned to the Fleet and if not for the patronage of Adama, he probably would've washed out years ago. But beyond the drinking and the irresponsible behavior, there still lurks the man who fought Cylons hand to hand while standing in pools of blood made by his shipmates. Deep down, Saul Tigh is a warrior. The question is, can he reach down that deeply once again or has time passed him by?

Doctor Gaius Baltar

Gaius Baltar was born and raised on a farm on the colony of Sagitarian. His family had worked the land for three generations, but even as a boy, Gaius hated farm life. One of his earliest memories is of getting his boots stuck in a pile of cow shit and having to walk back to the house in tears and in his stocking feet. Fortunately, his parents were not just simple farmers, but owned a large and sprawling agribusiness controlling millions of acres across the planet and Gaius could eschew farm life for the study of science and math, disciplines which seemed as exotic and exciting as agriculture was boring and mundane.

It quickly became apparent that Gaius was more than just a good student, he was a literal genius. By the time he was 14, he was completing college-level courses and by the time he was 21 he had his first doctorate under his belt and was being hotly pursued by every major university in the colonies to set up a research lab.

Gaius was an instant celebrity on campus. Rich, famous, well-dressed, and with a boyish charm, he was never at a loss for female attention and both faculty and student body providing him with fertile hunting grounds. Eventually, there was scandal and dismissal following an unwise assignation with a Dean's wife and her daughter following a faculty tea, but no matter -- Gaius simply picked up shop and moved on to the next university and the next hunting ground.

Gaius' speciality was theoretical physics, but his true love and passion was computer science.

Born in the post-war era, Gaius shared the views of most of his generation who had no memory of the sudden Cylon uprising or of the bloody conflict that consumed the Colonies for those ten long years. He saw the anti-technological edicts as being largely a waste of time and amazingly short-sighted. So what if the Cylons had learned how to infiltrate Colonial technology? The answer was not to blindly turn their back on technology itself, but to advance their technology -- build a better mousetrap, one that the Cylons can't infiltrate.

His views, and those of the young scientists like him, were in the minority, however, and Gaius had to content himself with theoretical physics for a time.

But as time passed and memories of the distant Cylon conflict dimmed, the strictures against computer research loosened and soon the Defense Ministry was soliciting his help on several top-secret projects designed to reintroduce computer systems into the Fleet.

Gaius soon found himself the keeper of secrets, a position that flattered his already impressive ego and elevated his arrogance to new-found levels. Gaius was listened to by ministers and presidents, his face was on the cover of national publications, his papers eagerly read by lesser scientists throughout the colonies and he, of course, had his pick of ready and eager women.

Still, it wasn't enough. He hungered for a chance to work on a true artificial intelligence -- not a Cylon, whose entire development history he held in contempt as the work of inferior, bumbling minds, but an intelligence capable of helping solve Man's great problems. Of course, this A.I. would have to be carefully controlled, and would have to be at the service of one man. Gaius had no doubt who that one man should be.

As Gaius began to be recognized throughout the colonies on the level of say, Stephen Hawking is in contemporary Earth society, he was approached by a woman who seemed to understand him in a way no other woman ever had. She was beautiful, intensely sexual, funny, smart, and with an intuitive sense of Baltar's every mood and thought. She knew he loved the hunt, so she let him come to her. She knew he also liked aggressive women in the bedroom, so she made a habit of pouncing on him. She understood how secret affairs both titillated and challenged him, so she told him she was from an unnamed corporation interested in defense contracts and that their affair was not only illicit, but probably illegal. She also shared his interest in A.I. systems and encouraged him to push the Defense Ministry further into computer networking than they were initially prepared for.

The relationship between Gaius and the mystery woman continued for almost two years. She provided him with new and innovative ideas produced by her company's research, which he then presented to the Defense Ministry as his own, and he in turn, provided her with access to classified and sensitive information on Colonial defense systems. Their personal life revolved around pushing the boundaries of sexual experience and intellectual discussions on the nature of man and machine. She asked for no commitment, seemed to have none of the usual female insecurities, and he had ample freedom to peruse other women on the side. For Gaius it was the perfect relationship -- until the day the world came to an end and his lover was revealed to be a Cylon.

Gaius Baltar is not without conscience. Indeed, he is aware of, and regrets the harm his actions have caused to both individuals and the society at large. While his guilt is not so keenly felt as to put himself at risk of discovery and punishment, it is important to remember that he is neither amoral nor sociopathic. He is a brilliant man, whose intellect usually finds a way to both justify his own behavior and yet at the same time condemn himself for those very rationalizations and obfuscations. He is weak without being craven, duplicitous without being untrustworthy, in league with the enemy without being treasonous.

His taste in art, literature, and music is quite sophisticated, but he also loves to gamble at the track, was a fraternity man in college and held court-level seats at the Caprican Pyramid games for the last ten years.

Chief Galen Tyrol

Galen Tyrol was born and raised on the colony of Gemenon. Tyrol's father, Iophon was a priest and his mother, Daphne was an oracle. Gemenon itself was founded by the colonial equivalent of Puritans, and its society is a theocracy, ruled by religious leaders and steeped in the traditions of the scriptures. Tyrol grew up steeped in religious training and belief, but secretly prayed to the gods for a chance to leave Gemenon and travel among the stars. His parents would have none of it, however, and the boy seemed destined to take orders just as his father did. But the day before his acceptance into the priesthood, he walked into a recruiting officer and signed up for the Colonial Fleet. The impulsive decision would permanently rent the family, and Tyrol and his parents would not speak again for the next ten years.

In basic training, Tyrol was immediately pegged as a natural leader, a man the other recruits looked to for direction when the drills became too much to handle. He was honor man of his graduating class, and made Able-Bodied Deck Hand, First Class almost immediately. Given his choice of specialties, Tyrol at first sought out Intelligence training, believing it held the most exotic and far-ranging lifestyle, but six months into the program, he opted out, finding the long hours of academic study boring and stultifying.

He'd spent years fixing machines, starting with his father's ancient car, but Tyrol had no interest in pursuing life a mechanic. He wanted a life of excitement and danger, not one filled with tools and cranky engines.

Then, entirely by chance, he assigned to temporary duty aboard the battlestar Pegasus, which was short of hands and about to participate in a series of war games. Tyrol was put into the deck gang on the hangar bay -- just another pair of hands for the Chief of the Deck, no pressure to achieve, no reason for him to stand out. But Tyrol did more than stand out, he became a star on the hangar deck.

He had an intuitive feel for working with and repairing spacecraft, somehow always knowing what was wrong with a recalcitrant engine before anyone else. The atmosphere aboard the Pegasus in general was hard-charging, demanding and the atmosphere on the flight deck was even more high-pressure. As the ship entered the war games, Vipers were being launched and recovered faster than thought humanly possible and the deck gang went without sleep for almost three days straight. Tyrol not only survived, he thrived. Something about handling the big, dangerous Vipers struck a chord with him. Here was an entirely secular enterprise, a world where a machine either worked or it didn't. Tyrol fell in love with the pressure and the adrenaline of the flight line, and he decided then and there to work on the hangar deck.

Following formal training at the Fleet Aviation Repair and Maintenance Center, he was assigned to the newly commissioned battlestar Columbia as one of her first deck chiefs. The Columbia was a cranky, difficult vessel, fresh from the shipyard, and her complement of Vipers were the experimental new Mark VII's. Tyrol spent five years ironing out the problems and breaking in the new flight deck. He ran a tight crew, brooked no inattention or sloppiness among his people when it came to the job, but had little use for formality or strict protocol. He was a popular chief, liked and trusted by officer and deck hand alike.

Then came disaster. A Viper pilot was killed when his engine prematurely ignited still in the launch tube. An investigation showed a valve had been improperly seated in the casing and Tyrol's deck gang was responsible. No one ever determined who had mishandled the valve or how it had escaped detection, but it was Tyrol's job to sign off on all work done on his Vipers and it was the tradition of the service that he take full responsibility. His sterling record was taken into account and he was not discharged, but he was reduced two steps in ranks and reassigned to the Galactica, the oldest ship in the Fleet, a far cry from the sparkling new Columbia and essentially a dead end for his career.

Tyrol started over on the Galactica -- just an anonymous deck hand, trying to keep his head down, and forget about what had happened. But he didn't stay anonymous for long.

Adama liked to walk the flight line every day, checking out his birds as part of his morning routine, and he soon spotted Tyrol and his affinity for the fighters and the deck gang. It wasn't long before Adama restored his rank and made him Chief of the Deck.

Tyrol thrived aboard Galactica, appreciated Adama's old school style of command and even began to fall in love with the old ship herself. Galactica was about three decades obsolete, and constantly in need of repair, but Tyrol didn't care. If anything, Galactica needed him in a way that the Columbia never would. Tyrol had found his home and his place.

Then came Sharon Valerii. She was the youngest of the young pilots, and greener than grass. She and Tyrol started sniping at one another almost immediately. The friction became something more and even though each of them knew they were risking their careers, they soon found themselves engaged in one of the most hazardous activities of all -- a shipboard affair. Two people could hardly be more different, but neither of them could stay away from the other. Tyrol calmed Sharon and Sharon sparked Tyrol. As Galactica began her final voyage, Sharon, along with most of Galactica's squadron, was reassigned to the battlestar Pegasus. Tyrol quietly put in a request for transfer to the Pegasus as well, and with Adama's letter of recommendation now in his service record, Tyrol was accepted aboard the Pegasus and he was looking forward to life back on the front lines when the Cylons attacked.

Tyrol is old school, a believer in the customs and traditions of the service. No longer a devout man, he still retains the core faith of someone raised in a religious home. He can be intolerant and bullheaded when it comes to the job, but he is also carries around the pressure of being responsible for every man and woman on his crew.

Lieutenant Sharon Valerii

Sharon's first memory is that of crawling across the artificial grass in her backyard toward the family cat, Mr. Perkles. It's a vivid memory, one that she occasionally revisits in her dreams.

It's also completely fake.

As far as she knows, Sharon Valerii grew up with a happy, normal childhood, the product of loving parents on the mining settlement of Troy. Troy was a small, barren world on the periphery of the Colonial solar system. Her father was a middle-manager in the mine, her mother a homemaker, and she had two younger brothers. Her family had been on the closed world of Troy for two generations, but Sharon had always wanted to leave the mining settlement and seek out a grander life. She applied to the Colonial Academy, scored well on the entrance exams, and soon was aboard a commercial transport ship, on her way to Caprica for the in-person interview. Sharon was napping when the word came in of a massive accident on Troy. She awoke to the news that her entire settlement -- more than 200,000 people -- was wiped out in a series of titanic explosions which ripped away the protective domes keeping out the poisonous atmosphere of Troy. Investigation would pinpoint the cause as a hitherto unsuspected, and huge, pocket of volatile methane gas which was suddenly ignited by the mining operation.

The disaster stunned the colonies, and amid the massive outpouring of sympathy for the dead, Sharon was accepted into the Academy on the strength of her exams alone -- and obviously, there could be no background investigation. The sudden and shocking loss of her world threw Sharon into a deep and dark depression. Her first year at the Academy was a troubled one, filled with nightmares that she could not entirely shake during the daytime. The instructors and officers of the Academy were determined to see this last survivor of Troy graduate in a Colonial uniform, so they looked the other way when her grades slipped dangerously in that first term.

But in her second term, Sharon began to right herself, began to find the courage within to carry on in the name of her family and friends. She had been spared by fate, had been given a second chance, and now she wanted to be worthy of that chance. Her grades rebounded, and while she was never an academic star, she managed to graduate in the upper half of her class.

She applied to flight school, hardly daring to hope that she would be admitted, but the bureaucratic wheels had been greased for this child of the doomed settlement, and she was accepted over several more qualified candidates. Flight school was rough on Sharon. Not a born pilot by any means, she labored long and hard with her technique, but once again, by the time she graduated, she had managed to earn the second chances that she seemed fated to be given.

Her first assignment was to the Battlestar Galactica, and by the time of the Cylon attack, she had been aboard for almost a year.

Her relationship with her Flight Officer -- Helo -- was a close one, and the older man watched out for her as she struggled to make her deck qualifications. They almost pursued a romantic relationship as well, but then Sharon hooked up with Chief Tyrol. Helo was aware of the affair and the impropriety of it, but he guarded her privacy jealously and let it be known that he would exact a price from any pilot who caused trouble for her.

Sharon is unaware of her true nature, unaware that far from being the daughter of a mining family, that she is in reality a Cylon sleeper agent, implanted into Colonial society. She slipped onto the commercial transport just before it left Troy, fully aware of her mission and her nature. But when she awoke from her "nap" her cover program took hold from that point forward, she believed herself to a normal human being with a tragic past.

Sensitive and shy, she puts on a tough-chick front for the benefit of those around her. In Tyrol, she had found a man who is, quite literally, her first true love.

What Sharon is doing on Galactica and why she was infiltrated into Colonial society will remain a mystery for some time.

Number Six

The Woman as Machine.

STORYLINES

Tension

The key to our stories is successfully maintaining the level of dramatic tension achieved in the pilot. Simply put, we should always feel as though the Galactica and her rag-tag fleet are in a state of perpetual crisis. There is a constant threat to our people from within and without the fleet which will never be resolved during the course of the series.

Our heroes will be thrust into the roles of both military protectors and law-enforcement officers, which allows us to literally play any story which could be found in an urban environment in our fleet. ~~Serial killers, plagues, terrorist attacks, fires, mysteries~~ -- all can come into play and all can provide us with jeopardy from within the fleet itself.

Structure

In order to maintain and sustain this tension, we will be emphasizing a continuing storyline which will literally continue the Cylon threat to the Colonials as established in the pilot.

We will be using a modified continuing storyline most akin to that used on the classic TV series "Hill Street Blues." This format breaks down into three layers:

1. Series Arcs
2. Multi-Episodic Arcs
3. Stand Alone Arcs

The three tiered format avoids the pitfalls of Star Trek's episodic structure (which forces the writers to endlessly come up with new and wacky ways to put the Enterprise in jeopardy each week) without turning our show into a true serial.

1. Series Arcs will literally run the length of the series and will be embroidered on week to week. They include the never-ending Cylon pursuit of the Galactica and her fleet, the task of nation-building within the fleet, the struggle between the military and civilian forces, and all the character relationships.

2. Multi-Episodic Arcs last two to four episodes in length and involve settings and stories which hook audiences into short-term tales which wrap themselves up in the near future. For example, when we find a solar system capable of sustaining human life, we might wish to stay here for three or four episodes as we hunt for supplies, struggle to bring them up to our ships, hide from the Cylons, quell a mutiny among people who wish to stay here permanently, battle storms on planet surfaces, repair our ships, etc.

3. Episodic Arcs have a beginning, a middle, and an end within each episode. This enables any audience member to always have a storyline that they can follow which is self-contained and does not depend on watching last week's show.

By layering all three storylines in each episode, we are able to provide continuity week to week and avoid the Trek pitfalls while at the same time not losing the audience that may or may not be watching religiously.

The Cylons

We will not be featuring a Cylon attack every week, but we should always feel as if an attack is imminent. The possibility of a Cylon attack should hang over our characters throughout the run of the series. There is no rest for our people, no respite from the danger and stress of constantly being on the run. The Cylons are relentless pursuers and we should feel them constantly nipping at our heels.

As a general rule of thumb, we should encounter an actual Cylon raid every third episode and in between encounters our people should constantly be studying and testing new ways of fighting their implacable enemy. It's important to note that while the Cylons were virtually invincible in the pilot, that there will be a more level playing field as the series goes on. This will be a result of the natural tendency in warfare for both sides to learn from their enemy, and develop new counter-measures for their opponents' strengths. As a general rule, Galactica's fighters are generally outmatched in combat with the Cylons, but the more we fight them, the more we learn, so that this week we have a temporary advantage and next week it's gone again. The on-going struggle will force both sides to constantly improve their technology and tactics to keep pace with their enemy.

For example -- one storyline will involve capturing a downed Cylon raider, taking it apart and learning how to fly it as a method of getting an advantage over the Cylons during the next attack. This temporary advantage will then be erased once the Cylons learn what the Colonials are doing and develop an effective counter-measure.

The Cylon agents within the fleet should also provide sources of tension and jeopardy. With only four of the twelve Cylon models revealed to our characters, literally anyone in the fleet is a potential Cylon agent. Terrorist attacks, sabotage, and fomenting insurrection among the people will be a staple of their stories and keep our heroes off-balance and constantly having to look over their shoulder even as they battle Cylon fighters.

We will also be visiting the Cylon homeworld to establish their culture and society and to get their perspective on the hunt for Galactica.

Plot-driven Stories

Our plot-driven stories should be reality-based problems that our people could conceivably face on a journey such as theirs. They have run into the night with little more than the clothes on their backs and whatever happened to be stowed aboard ship on the day the world came to an end. Finding food, fuel, and air supplies are going to be never-ending problems as are dealing with the real-life difficulties involved with rationing those same supplies. The ships themselves are a hodgepodge of new and old, guaranteeing that maintenance issues will also be a constant headache.

Our stories should spring from within the fleet whenever possible. In other words, we should avoid storylines which begin with, "The Galactica discovers a strange space phenomenon which..." Most of space is empty and there aren't a lot of strange things to bump into which might, say, turn the Galactica's crew into children. Our goal is to tell human stories that are a natural outgrowth of the premise of our show, not to retread the various science fiction cliches of the genre (Evil Twins, Time Travel, Alien Body Possession, A Planet Whose Culture is Just Like Ours, Adama Meets His Dead Wife on a Planet and Doesn't Want to Leave, etc.)

Galactica's universe is also mostly devoid of other intelligent life. Unlike Trek's crowded galaxy filled with a multitude of empires, ours is a disquieting empty place. Most planets are uninhabitable. Breathable air and drinkable water are rarities. When we do encounter a world remotely capable of supporting human life, it will be a BIG DEAL. Likewise, an encounter with true alien life will be a HUGE DEAL, and our aliens will not be the usual assortment of bumpy-headed people that are essentially human in all but appearance. Any alien on Galactica must be *alien* in the truest sense of the word -- a creature so foreign to our ways of thinking and living that we may not even recognize it as life at all.

However, the Cylons *in our midst* should be a constant, lurking threat. We have only seen the faces of four Cylon models (Six, Doral, Leoben, and Sharon) out of the twelve known to exist. This means that anyone can be a Cylon and our characters should definitely experience the fear and paranoia that will become an ever-present result of this fact. A ship breaks down, someone turns up dead, a plague breaks out, a prison ship riots -- all *could* be a result of Cylon sleeper agents causing sabotage and mayhem among us. How the people react to this threat among them will be one of the primary storylines of the entire series -- what will be their version of the Patriot Act? Where will liberty and security collide? How far will they be willing to go to ferret out the "traitors" among them?

Character Stories

Our show is, first and foremost, a *drama*. It is about people. Our characters should always be the most important element of every story. Breaking the traditional rule of the genre, we should sacrifice *plot* at every turn in favor of *character*. Time spent discussing the technical problems of outwitting the latest Cylon plot will be better spent dealing with the emotional fallout of the Adama/Lee relationship.

Do not be afraid to expose our characters' faults, for in their frailties also lie the seeds of their triumphs. Kara Thrace made a deeply irresponsible decision when she passed Zak on his flight exam simply because she loved him, but that same emotion, that same depth of feeling overriding rational thought, that made her bring back Lee when his ship was damaged and she should've left him to die.

Our people are deeply flawed, deeply human characters. They are not, by nature, innately heroic or noble creatures. They are simply ordinary people who find themselves in extraordinary circumstances. They do not always make the right decision and they do not always do the right thing. They make mistakes, act out of pettiness and spite, and occasionally do things that are reprehensible. However, they are also capable of growth, of change, of learning to overcome their many flaws and rising to the challenges laid before them and performing great and mighty deeds.

They are human.

SEASON ONE

Story Arcs

Four major story arcs will play themselves out over the course of the first season:

1. The conflict between Adama and Laura as they struggle to keep the rag-tag fleet together in face of mounting adversity, culminating in Adama's declaration of martial law by the end of the season.
2. ~~The discovery of evidence that a place called Earth really does exist and that realization that the Cylons might actually want us to find it after all.~~
3. The rise of a human resistance in the rag-tag fleet and the ascension to power of Gaius Baltar.
4. The Cylon occupation of Caprica and the other colonies and their manipulation of the survivors, including the character of Helo.

1. One would expect the story of Adama and Laura to be the classic hawk vs. dove tale as they struggle to reconstitute an entire civilization with only 50,000 refugees while it becomes more and more apparent that there are also Cylon terrorists among them. However, we will be subverting these expectations by playing Laura as the increasingly hawkish leader and Adama as the defender of personal freedoms.

As time goes on, and the Cylon terrorist threat becomes more deadly, it will be Laura who finds herself advocating stronger and harsher measures in the name of security. She's surprisingly tough and pragmatic, not at all the idealist. For instance, at some point Laura will issue a presidential decree outlawing abortion in the fleet. The human race has to survive and women will have to start having babies and right now. She'll institute a system whereby some women in critical professions (such as pilots) will get birth control and others will not. Needless to say, this will be an extremely controversial and provocative order, but one born of a pragmatic assessment of what has to be done in order to survive.

Adama's instincts and feelings about civil liberties (which he inherited from his father) will put him at odds with Laura's increasingly tough stance and we will realize that it is Adama who is the idealist at heart.

But it is the relationship with his son, Lee, that convinces Adama to go along with Laura's harsher measures. Lee's position as Laura's military advisor and Adama's chief pilot puts him in an ideal situation to be liason between the two and Lee's own instincts tend to agree with Laura at every turn. As Adama finds himself trying to reach out to the son he's been estranged from for so long, he'll find himself listening to Lee's opinion and advice and then finally agreeing to do things that he never would have done otherwise. As the security situation worsens, Laura clamps down on dissent harder and harder, which of course, begins to breed more and more enemies within the fleet.

Finally, there will come a point when Adama believes that the security situation has gotten so bad, that he has no choice but to declare martial law and take direct control of the entire fleet. As he orders Laura put under arrest, we will fade out and await season two.

2. The story of Earth and the Cylons interest in our finding it, will be mapped out slowly as the season develops. Small clues will emerge at first, some spiritual in nature, others hard physical evidence, will point the way toward Galactica steering a course leading them to the promised land. At the same time, however, certain actions by Cylon sleeper agents, certain things said by Six to Baltar, and even a couple of open scenes back on the Cylon home planet, will indicate that the Cylons may actually want us to find Earth. And even more disturbing is the indication that the Cylons know a secret about Earth that the Colonials don't.

3. A human resistance to Laura's rule will form in the early episodes. Partly fomented by Cylon sleeper agents and stoked by human religious differences and conflicts, a group of humans will start to actively challenge her authority and leadership of the fleet, forcing her to rely more and more on the muscle of the military to maintain order. As Laura clamps down on dissent, there will come a point where "terrorist" actions are being blamed on both human and Cylon enemies and this in turn will trigger even tougher responses by the military.

Baltar, supposedly the sole possessor of "the amazing Cylon detector" will find himself trusted by the very highest levels of the military and civilian authorities. Baltar's ability to discern Cylon from Human (a complete hoax) will put him in a powerful position, one in which he can eliminate any enemy or threat simply by "proving" that person is a Cylon.

Very soon, Baltar will be contacted by the growing human resistance movement within the fleet and Number Six will encourage him to see the human rebels as the base of his own potential power source. Number Six starts to aid Baltar in positioning himself as the next leader of the Colonies as Laura becomes more and more unpopular.

4. We will continue to cut back to Caprica and the other original colonial worlds and realize that the Cylons have a plan for these worlds and their few remaining survivors. The character of Helo (Sharon's co-pilot, who was left behind on Caprica) is still alive and struggling to survive amid the onset of nuclear winter. With only the contents of his flight suit emergency supplies, he's trying to stave off radiation sickness and find a way off this planet. The Cylons capture him, interrogate him, and then just as he's about to give up hope, he's rescued by Sharon Valerii, who tells him she couldn't let him die alone here. The two of them escape into the Caprican night and begin a journey across Caprica in order to find other survivors, and eventually escape into space and join up with the Galactica and the rag-tag fleet.

Helo, of course, has no way of knowing that the woman he thinks is Sharon, is in reality, only one more Cylon that looks like her. Every conversation, every detail of Colonial strategy and thinking he shares with her will be instantly known to the Cylons. And Helo's own feelings for Sharon will be known to them as well.

As Helo makes his way across the planet, we will start to realize that the Cylons seem to have some larger plan for Caprica and the rest of the colonies, that devastation and genocide were not the only goals of the attack and that this was only the first step in a long-term strategy that ultimately will tie into the escape of the Galactica and her eventual arrival on Earth.

Character Arcs

Adama & Laura

They will form a personal bond forged in conflict. Their positions will inevitably put them at odds, but will also bring them together. Laura will be facing the solitary burdens of command for the first time and Adama is literally the only man alive who can empathize with her experience. For his part, Adama will find himself drawn to Laura's world in no small measure because politics, and particularly the presidency, was a deep interest of his father's and in many ways Laura is filling the role that his father wanted for him.

A sexual chemistry between them will make itself felt, and the loneliness of their situation will tempt each of them to reach out, but neither will act on the temptation.

Laura Roslin

Her secret battle against breast cancer will become both a medical and political problem. Billy will attempt to secretly arrange medical treatments, but this will become increasingly difficult given the tightening security arrangements. The drain on Laura both physically and emotionally will color her decisions. Fear of her secret getting out and undermining the fragile government will only encourage her to use tougher measures to crack down on security issues.

Saul Tigh

His battle against his personal demons will not go away. He will continue to drink in private, and he will be a highly functioning alcoholic, who is able to maintain his job and life. However, as pressures build, old habits will reassert themselves and Tigh will run into conflict with Adama, whose tolerance for his old friend's flaws will decrease as time goes on.

Lee Adama

His role as commander of Galactica's air group will continue to be his primary role, but he will find himself drawn into what is at first an ad hoc role as military advisor to President Roslin, and then a more formal position later on.

Kara Thrace

She will continue to test the boundaries of Tighe's patience and the outer limits of military protocol. However, Kara will always be willing to inject herself into dangerous situations and usually comes up with victory in hand.

Lee & Kara

Their friendship and attraction for one another will quickly find them waking up together after a stressful night that turned into something more. Each will be wracked with guilt and mixed feelings and they'll avoid talking or dealing with what happened, and each in turn will be driven toward other, more unexpected, people.

Lee & Laura

His position as Laura's trusted advisor will bring him closer to her emotionally than he is to his own father. She will let him in on her secret and he will make it his personal mission to find a way to treat her illness without anyone -- even his father -- finding out the truth. Perhaps most unexpected of all, Lee will develop a budding attraction for Laura on a personal level -- an unexpected quality of their close interaction and one that actually makes him a quasi-rival to his father, increasing rather than decreasing their conflicted relationship.

Kara & Baltar

Following her one night stand with Lee, Kara will begin to be attracted to the one man in the universe she is the least like and least likely to become attracted to -- Gaius Baltar. At first holding him in contempt as an arrogant intellectual, she finds that the more she abuses him and punctures his ego, the more oddly attracted to her he seems to be, and slowly she finds herself beginning to feel the same way. Truly, they will become the oddest couple of all.

Gaius Baltar

His one great sin -- the betrayal of the colonies and the destruction of their entire civilization -- will color the rest of his life. Nothing is more important to Baltar than making sure no one can ever know what he did. This, in turn, will make him extremely vulnerable to any pressure from either Number Six or any other Cylon agent. Baltar will both be trying to help the Colonials ferret out the Cylons in their midst and at the same time be compelled to help the Cylons under threat of being exposed as a traitor. Baltar will walk the line -- or attempt to walk the line -- all season, always finding a way to protect himself whatever the circumstance.

Baltar's greatest challenge will be to deal with the idea that perhaps, he too, is actually a Cylon agent.

Baltar & Number Six

Their relationship will be an extension of the one they formed on Caprica -- Six's driving need to find love in the heart of Mankind's ultimate cad and Baltar's need to avoid emotional commitment at all costs. Six will challenge and seduce him both intellectually and physically, even seeming to join in one heated night when Baltar and another woman find themselves in bed.

Chief Tyrol & Baltar

Tyrol will start to become suspicious of Baltar and his motivations. Eventually Tyrol will become Baltar's implacable foe, convinced that the scientist is in league with the Cylons and plotting his own takeover of the fleet. However, Tyrol will be hampered by his own relative low-rank and his inability to get the goods on the man that is increasingly seen as one of the heroes of the rag-tag fleet.

Sharon Valerii

She will begin to experience odd lapses in memory. Strange moments of missing time during which she seemed to go places and do things she cannot recall later.

Bit by bit Sharon will discover clues pointing to her true nature, but instead of pursuing them, she will fight against them on an intuitive level and instead will attempt to form a family with Chief Tyrol and Boxey, seeking out the one thing she can never be -- a maternal role in a human family.

Sharon & Tyrol

Their professional lives will be thrown into chaos as Tigh cracks down on their personal relationship, deeming it destructive to discipline and unit cohesion. At first, they will obey orders and stay away from each other, but their feelings for one another will slowly but surely bring them back together in greater secrecy. As Sharon begins to realize that there's something not right with her, Tyrol will become even more protective of her and he'll be determined to get to the bottom of what's happening to Sharon without ever considering that he may not like the truth once he finds it.

THE BATTLESTAR GALACTICA

History

One of the original twelve battlestars, Galactica was built by and represented the planet Caprica. She was put into service five years into the Cylon War and saw combat until the signing of the Armistice five years later. She was one of the most highly decorated ships in the Colonial fleet and participated in some of the most famous battles of the war. Of the original twelve battlestars, only Galactica and two other ships survived the Cylon War intact.

Upon the conclusion of hostilities, Galactica served in the Fleet for the next twenty years as one of the frontline warships guarding the peace. Gradually, newer warships were built and Galactica's role became less and less prominent in Fleet exercises. Eventually, Galactica's other two sister ships were retired and sold for scrap, while Galactica herself was retained in the Fleet for reasons more ceremonial than practical. She was a famous ship and it was good p.r. for the Defense Ministry to keep her in service and in the public eye. As a result, Galactica made many port calls to the twelve colonies and was a familiar ship to the public.

However, the cost and maintenance required to keep Galactica in service began to outweigh the p.r. benefits and during a series of budget cuts it was decided to retire the ship and donate her as a museum vessel to the Department of Education.

Combat Operations

Galactica is essentially a space-going aircraft carrier. As such, her primary weapons are the fighter squadrons she carries and her sole purpose is to provide a mobile base for those fighters to operate from. She is also something of a battleship -- that is, a vessel designed to stand toe to toe with another large enemy ship. As seen in the final battle of the pilot, Galactica has heavy weapons at her disposal and is capable of taking on a Cylon basestar in direct combat.

However, it is the fighter squadrons aboard Galactica which provide the real punch. The fighters allow Galactica to strike at targets far beyond the range of her own weapons while keeping her safely out of range from enemy weapons.

The spacecraft aboard Galactica are organized by type. Fighters, like the Viper, are in their own squadrons, while recon/electronic/attack craft like the Raptor are in their own squadrons. There are presumably more types as well that we have not seen yet, such as tankers and cargo vessels that would also have their own squadrons.

There is no hierarchy among the squadrons themselves. That is to say that the fighters are not superior to the tankers or that a pilot flying a Viper is going to look down on a pilot flying a Raptor. All are equal and all require their own specialties and skills. Pilots from one squadron typically do not pine away to fly a different type, in fact, each pilot believes his or her craft to be special and probably better than any other craft out there.

All the squadrons aboard Galactica make up the Air Group, and the ranking pilot is the Commander Air Group or CAG. (Within the squadrons themselves, there are squadron leaders and flight leaders and then senior pilots and their respective wingmen.) The role of the CAG is to carry out Adama's orders for the employment of the Air Group. In simple terms, Adama tells the CAG *what* to do and the CAG figures out *how* to do it. If Adama wants to send out a recon mission to scout the surface of a planet, the CAG decides who flies the mission, what their flight path will be, how long the mission will last, etc. That is not to say that Adama has no say in the details; he will review and approve all plans, but he should decide on the strategic objectives, and delegate the tactical planning.

The type and number of craft sent out on any given mission should be tailored to the objective at hand. If the target is nearby, sending out a tanker to refuel the craft will be unnecessary. A strike mission against a well defended enemy target will require Vipers whose sole purpose is to hit the target while other Vipers would fly escort to attack enemy fighters, and Raptors to jam enemy electronics and act as early warning craft. A strictly reconnaissance mission will require more Raptors and only a couple of Vipers for escort.

Launching and recovering spacecraft are extremely dangerous operations, and are the most likely places for non-combat fatalities to occur aboard ship. A Viper is a large machine filled with highly combustible fuel, enormously powerful engines, and carrying explosives. When in flight, a Viper is a thing of beauty, able to pirouette and maneuver in space without the drag and pull of an atmosphere.

But when trapped in the artificial gravity of Galactica's flight deck, a Viper is a heavy, awkward and cumbersome chunk of metal that has to be physically manhandled into its place on the deck and worked on without damaging the interior of Galactica or injuring any of the deck hands.

Flight Operations

Here's a typical sequence of events for a Viper on a routine mission flying CAP (Combat Air Patrol) around Galactica:

The deck gang fuels and arms Viper 289 on the Hangar Deck. While this is going on, the pilot -- let's say it's Starbuck -- has a mission briefing in the Pilot Ready Room. Every flight has a mission briefing, there is no such thing as "routine."

Starbuck goes down to the Hangar Deck and does a visual inspection of her Viper, talks to the Chief in charge of this particular Viper and goes over any maintenance issues or problems. Then she climbs into the cockpit, the Chief and/or a Deck Hand helping to secure her in the seat and hands her the flight helmet.

Deck Hands then maneuver the Viper toward the Launch Tube. Once the Viper is in the tube, a klaxon sounds and the order "Clear the Tube" is given, signalling the Deck Hands to leave and secure the bulkhead hatches. The Viper is now under the control of the Launch Officer, who sits in a small booth where s/he oversees the launch of all spacecraft leaving Galactica. No spacecraft can be physically launching without this officer's direct action -- in other words, there can never be the moment when the "rogue" pilot decides to take off on their own accord.

The Launch Officer contacts the CIC to request permission for launch and when it is obtained, the Launch Officer then goes through a quick series of final checks:

LAUNCH OFFICER

Viper two-eight-nine/Galactica, clear forward, nav-con green, interval check, thrust positive and steady. Good-bye.

"Clear Forward" means there is nothing in front of the Viper in the launch tube. "Nav-con green" means the navigational system aboard the Viper is operating and is showing up green on the Launch Officer's board. "Interval check" means that he has checked the interval between this Viper and the one launched immediately before it.

"Thrust positive and steady" means that the Viper's engine thrust is steady and is sufficient to launch the craft. "Good-bye" tells the pilot that Launch Officer has just pressed the literal button that will launch the Viper through the tube and out into space.

As Starbuck's Viper clears the tube and roars out into space, she immediately contacts Galactica's CIC over her wireless (radio) and reports in. The Flight Director in CIC (in the pilot this was one of the roles filled by the character Dualla) will then direct Starbuck to her destination, in this case to fly a combat patrol around Galactica. The Flight Director will give Starbuck specific directions on where to go, what speed to go there at and what to do when she arrives. If there's a more senior pilot in space at Starbuck's destination, then Starbuck would also have to obey the orders of that pilot.

Once the patrol is over, Starbuck would contact Galactica and request permission to land her Viper. Once granted, Starbuck would then be directed into the "landing pattern" of craft trying to land aboard ship. Once her Viper is in the landing pattern, she falls under the orders of the Landing Signal Officer (LSO). The LSO has a small booth much like the launch officer and focusses on the specific task of landing each and every craft.

As Starbuck approaches the Galactica, the LSO will issue directions such as:

LSO
Viper Two-eight-nine/Galactica. Approach
port landing bay, hands-on, speed one
zero five, checkers red, call the ball.

"Approach port landing bay" as opposed to the starboard landing bay. "Hands-on" meaning use manual control all the way (some advanced Vipers had a crude auto-pilot). "Speed one zero five" tells Starbuck how fast to come in. "Checkers red" refers to the elevator that she should park her spacecraft on once she comes to a stop (there are presumably several elevators on the landing deck). "Call the ball" refers to an external system of lights that the pilot can see from the outside of Galactica which helps Starbuck pilot herself in. "I have the ball" is the standard response which means "I can see the lights and I can pilot my craft safely at this point."

Starbuck then guides her Viper onto the landing deck and sets it down on the red checkered elevator. The LSO looks over the controls and reports:

LSO (CONT'D)

Viper Two-eight-nine/Galactica. Skids down, mag-lock secure. Welcome home Starbuck.

“Skids down” means the Vipers landing skids are down on the deck. “Mag-lock secure” means the magnetic lock has been activated and is physically holding the Viper to the deck.

The elevator then takes the Viper down through an airlock and into the Hangar Deck where the Deck Hands then physically take over control of the Viper, secure the armaments and begin maintenance. Starbuck leaves the cockpit, reports any problems to the Chief and heads for the Ready Room for a (mandatory) mission debriefing and critique of her landing technique.

CIC

All command functions are executed from the Combat Information Center (CIC), the nerve center of Galactica located deep inside the ship in the most well-protected area. Adama always commands the ship from the CIC and for our purposes, CIC is the functional equivalent of the Trekkian Bridge. (There is technically an actual Galactica Bridge somewhere, but it is typically used only for docking or closely maneuvering the ship in concert with another vessel or object requiring visual contact on the part of the conning officer.)

CIC is commanded at any given moment by the Officer of the Watch (filled by Lt. Gaeta in the pilot). Work shifts are called “watches” and each watch runs about four hours. The Officer of the Watch is in functional command of the ship and is responsible for anything that happens aboard during his or her watch. Until and unless the Officer of the Watch is relieved, only they can give orders to maneuver the ship, launch spacecraft, fire weapons, etc. Junior officers must all qualify to stand as a Watch Officer in order to advance in their careers and every officer aboard Galactica will be expected to stand watch at some point, with the notable exception of Adama who stands no formal watch and makes his own schedule as he sees fit.

Maneuvering Galactica

Maneuvering or conning the ship is done from CIC, while there are a few emergency conning stations located in other areas of the ship. Orders are relayed to the Engine Room for speed to the Helmsmen in CIC for maneuvering. Steering the ship is complicated and most analogous to steering a submarine. There are a series of thrusters located on the bow, amidships and at the stern, and orders have to be given to specific thrusters in order to turn the ship:

ADAMA

Bow up one half, left full, stern down one half, right full.

With the above order, Adama has told the helmsman in charge of the bow to activate the thruster beneath the bow (or under the "chin" of the ship) to half power and to activate the thruster on the left side of the bow (or the "cheek") to full power. At the same time, the stern helmsman will turn on the thruster on top of the stern (on the ship's "butt") and the thruster on the right side of the stern (on the right butt cheek).

The end result of Adama's order is to bring up the nose of the ship, push down the rear and begin a clockwise turn. Note that this has nothing to do with the speed of the ship or where it's going. He's just turning the ship in a direction. He then stops the turn with the simple order:

ADAMA (CONT'D)

Meet her.

All the helmsmen will return their controls in such a way as to stop the turn. Galactica is now facing in a new direction and with a different orientation. If Adama orders:

ADAMA (CONT'D)

Engine Room, flank speed.

The Galactica will now head off in a new direction at her maximum safe speed.

Damage Control

Damage Control or DC is the responsibility of every man and woman aboard the ship. Every single person is trained and retrained how to fight fires, secure hull breaches, deliver first aid, repair damage, etc. Damage Control Parties are organized throughout the ship by division and in an emergency, every compartment has an organized system for dealing with an emergency in that compartment. For instance, while the primary task of the people in the Engine Room is to work on the engines during combat, they have to be prepared to deal with damage in their own compartment should the need arise. There are also roving Damage Control Parties that are available to move throughout the ship and deal with emergency situations.

~~Damage Control officers are assigned throughout the ship, again using existing~~ officers from other specialities (Captain Kelly is the LSO, but also functions as a DC Officer during an emergency.) Damage Control ultimately reports to the Executive Officer who is responsible for repairing any damage to the ship while the Commanding Officer concentrates on fighting the enemy. The XO keeps track of damage with a grease pencil on an erasable board in CIC because it simple and does not rely on any power system which may have been knocked out during an attack.

Enlisted and Officers

There is a clear distinction between enlisted personnel and their officers. Officers are expected to be leaders, capable of taking charge of any situation, and to always take care of the men and women under their command. Enlisted are the backbone of the service and perform all the hard work from wrestling armaments aboard Vipers to cleaning the compartments to filing paperwork. It is strictly against regulations for enlisted and officers to become romantically involved, especially within the chain of command. This is to ensure that enlisted feel treated fairly by their officers, not being favored or passed over because of some other relationship. Therefore, the relationship between Tyrol and Sharon is way out of bounds and will be a recurrent problem for them both.

While flying is clearly the primary role of any pilot or flight officer, they are also officers and as such they are expected to shoulder additional responsibilities when not actually flying. Every junior officer aboard Galactica commands a division within the ship.

A division is a group of enlisted personnel commanded by a noncommissioned or petty officer (typically a Chief), who then reports to the division officer. As a practical matter, pilots and flight officers do not have the time or energy to oversee a division in comparison to regular officers, so for all intents and purposes the Chief runs the division -- but it is important to keep in mind that the division officer is ultimately responsible for anything and everything that happens in their division. For instance, if there's a maintenance issue in Boomer's division, if one of the Vipers is chronically short of spare parts or unable to fly, the CAG will be on Boomer's case about it, not Chief Tyrol.

Faster Than Light (FTL)

The ability to travel faster than the speed of light is, of course, impossible so FTL is a bit of a misnomer even in Galactica's world. Technically speaking neither Galactica nor any other "FTL" capable ship actually goes faster than the speed of light. What happens during a "Jump" is that the fabric of space itself is folded and the ship travels from point A to point B directly.

Picture space as a piece of cloth lying on a table. Place a coin on the left hand side. In order to move it to the right side of the cloth, you could slide it across the cloth or pick it up and place it there, both of which involve traveling across the physical space and will take time. However, if you pick up the right hand side of the cloth and fold it over so it touches the left hand side, the coin can be transferred from one point to another virtually instantaneously.

That is essentially what happens during a Jump. Galactica's FTL engine fold the fabric of space itself (through another dimension beyond the 3rd dimension) and the ship literally transfers itself between two distant points which are momentarily brought together.

As a result, Galactica is never "cruising" through the universe as does the Enterprise or the Millennium Falcon. Galactica, and all FTL ships simply go from one point to another, and once they've arrived, they can only move at normal speeds below the speed of light.

Galactica is an older ship relatively speaking, and so her technology is significantly behind that of many of the other ships in the ragtag fleet, hence the need for long checklists to be completed by many hands before any Jump.

The process is much simpler and quicker aboard Sharon's Raptor, for instance, but even the Raptor must make precise calculations and execute specific settings before initiating a Jump. (The specific checklist used by Galactica during the FTL sequence in the miniseries was gleaned from one of many checklists from the Apollo 15 lunar mission. Go to: <http://www.hq.nasa.gov/office/pao/History/ap15fj/> and look under "Apollo 15 Documents" for many checklists of this kind.)

The speed of light also governs communications and sensor information. The farther away a ship is from Galactica, the longer it will take the signal to travel. If Galactica and one of her fighters are "only" as far away as the distance between the Earth and Mars (say, 700 million kilometers), there will be an 11 minute lag in a radio conversation. The same goes for optical observations in that by the time we spot a Cylon basestar-- at that same distance, it's had 11 minutes to move closer to Galactica.

The Cylons are bound by the same rules of physics and they cannot travel faster than the speed of light -- they have to Jump as well.

The Red Line

Practically speaking, the further one attempts to Jump, the more difficult the calculations and the more variables are introduced into the equations. For example, consider the difficulties inherent in Jumping to a relatively nearby star system "only" five light years away: any information Galactica can gather by looking through a telescope is, by definition, five years old. The star and all the planets surrounding it have been in motion for five years since the light we can see left that system. This means that Galactica must calculate the motion of all the celestial bodies in that system based on information that is five years old. The further away the Jump point, the greater the problem -- try to jump 100 light years, and you have a century's worth of calculations to do.

Because of the limitations inherent in colonial technology, their ability to calculate all the variables involved in a Jump are also limited. Their margin of error increases exponentially the further out they go and as a result, there is a theoretical "Red Line" beyond which it is not considered safe to attempt to Jump. At the end of the pilot, Galactica has intentionally Jumped past the Red Line and is in uncharted and unknown space.