

Criminal Minds: A Cultural Remix "Through the Looking Glass"

Talk about serendipity! Today I went online to watch last week's episode of one of my favorite shows, Criminal Minds, and observed that the title was "Through the Looking Glass"! For those who aren't squeamish, I would recommend watching it here: http://www.cbs.com/shows/criminal_minds/video/ because it really was a thriller.

The episode's basic premise, while all twisted up with crime fighting and psychological mind games, is about being grateful for what you have - especially in regards to family. The show always puts a quote by a famous individual at the end of the episode, and this week's was (as expected) by Lewis Carroll - "One of the deep secrets of life is that all that is really worth the doing is what we do for others".

This got me thinking about why the producers chose to use Lewis Carroll and his story for this week's episode - what is the connection to *Through the Looking Glass* that they are trying to make? Perhaps they were tying in to Carroll's own innate innocence and goodness - telling stories to Alice Liddel and making young girls smile for their own pleasure, not his own. I also hypothesized that they might be trying to indicate that we should be grateful for imagination, something Carroll has in spades and something the production team also needs to make this show. Maybe they're trying to indicate we should be grateful for the world we have because the imagined world can be so much darker? I'm not sure so I turn to you, fellow scholars, for help!

I usually find a very clear connection between the title of the episode and it's meaning, yet the meaning of this title eludes me (perhaps because it goes no deeper than the one-way glass in the abduction room). Any thoughts?

Edit (10/26): Today we were talking about where the 'dark and scary' comes from in Carroll's books - the impulses that come from inside us and our subconscious dark desires - and why it's there. This, I felt, addressed my confusion about how Carroll's books related to this dark, twisted death-filled episode. Perhaps that's what this episode is urging us to see - that Carroll's books address the darker side of humanity, subtly, the scary side of humanity that lies under the beautiful innocence that we first see in imagination. Just as the families seem innocent and perfect in the beginning, as the story progresses and the unsub reveals their dark secrets, so too does Carroll reveal the dark side of imagination.

Does this seem to be asking too much from the producers of the show? Am I finding meaning in something that may not have much meaning?