



Remaking Danish Television Series in the US: **THE SHOWRUNNER EFFECT**

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FOCUS

- The transition from one cultural context to another & from one television system to another
- Introducing the concept of the showrunner effect as a way of explaining some of the changes caused by adaptation

METHODS

- Literature review of culture and system-based approaches to remaking processes
- Interviews with scriptwriters and producers on the remakes
- Analysing American remakes of Danish television drama
 - Forbrydelsen (DR 2007-2012) - The Killing (AMC & Netflix 2010-2014)
 - Bron/Broen (DR/SVT 2011-2018) - The Bridge (FX 2013-2014).
 - Nikolaj & Julie (DR 2003-2004) - Love is a Four-Letter Word (NBC pilot 2015)

WHAT IS THE SHOWRUNNER EFFECT?

The showrunner effect is an umbrella term for the parts of a script that can be linked to the specific showrunner's personal experiences, beliefs and everyday reality. To determine whether a change can be attributed to the showrunner effect, as a rule of thumb, one might ask the question: Had the show been made by a different showrunner, would this particular aspect of the text in all likelihood have been the same?

WHY IS IT A POWERFUL TOOL?

Let's take a look at *Love is a Four-Letter Word*. This remake only amounted to a pilot, but as a case it is illuminating. It was seemingly built around the adapting showrunner's desire to write about modern marriage, and there was very little control exercised from original rights holders. This prompted the showrunner to write about her life and the lives of her friends, only using the original format as a loose framework to do so, and for the various benefits it provided in the pitching situation and in attracting people for the production. In this case, looking to the new showrunner was by far the best way of explaining the changes to the format. This is just one way in which the showrunner effect may interact with existing research on format adaptation.