Getting a Wiggins and Being a Bitca: How Two Items of Slayer Slang Survive on the Television Without Pity Message Boards

[1] It’s not news that Buffy the Vampire Slayer is one of the most verbally creative television shows in history. Seinfeld and The Simpsons are its only rivals in the production of neologisms, slang, and memorable one-liners, and discussions of the linguistic contributions of those shows can be found in Verbatim: The Language Quarterly (see McFedries, 2003 and Peters, 2005). “Slayer slang”—as named by its strongest proponent and primary recorder Michael Adams—has spread beyond BtVS and Angel to Buffy-related books, fan fiction, and Internet communities. This article will look at the continued use of two examples of slayer slang (bitca and wiggins) on the popular message boards of Television Without Pity (http://televisionwithoutpity.com). The survival of these terms is one of many signs of how television has expanded and enlivened the language of its fans and students.

Slayer slang

[2] Adams (2003) has written at length in Slayer Slang: A Buffy the Vampire Slayer Lexicon about the distinctive and innovative language of the show. In this book, Adams distinguishes between slayer slang and slayer jargon, summarizes scholarship on new word formation, shows why studying emerging words is an important and rare opportunity, and presents a delicious glossary of slayer slang terms such as lunchable, break and enterish, cuddle-monkey, fester-free, and wow-potential. Along the way, Adams looks at expressions like give (one) a happy, words like bezoar, suffixes like the -age in whuppage and usages like the much in Control freak much? and Broken-record much.

[3] Most of these words and tendencies have not spread widely in the language, and therefore remain what linguists call “nonce words”—words coined for specific occasions that might be “invented” by different speakers or writers at different times but ultimately do not catch on. If a nonce word is intended as a joke or to show off the virtuosity of its author, then the word is called a “stunt word.” In any case, I prefer Adams’s term “ephemeral language” as a blanket term for both nonce and stunt words. As to the value of ephemeral language, I strongly agree with Adams, who writes:

Most American culture is wonderfully superfluous, and the language that expresses our experience of it is often wildly creative and relatively short-lived; but words thus created are no less important because they are the linguistic
products of living in a particular place, at a particular time, doing particular things, the various threads from which our individual, not to mention cultural, experience is mostly woven. To travel among ephemeral American English and the conversational grammar that accompanies it is simply to participate broadly and deeply in American culture, here and now. The words and linguistic habits one picks up along the way are souvenirs of any one person’s American journey. (114)

[4] Of course, slayer slang is also slang—which isn’t the same thing as ephemeral language, though as slang scholar Connie Eble points out, “[S]lang is ephemeral. A constant supply of new words requires the rapid change characteristic of slang. Most slang items enjoy only a brief time of popularity, bursting into existence and falling out of use at a much more rapid rate than items of the general vocabulary” (1996, 13). Though there is little agreement as to a precise definition of slang, there are several definite factors that distinguish slang words from non-slang words (ephemeral or not)—the first has to do with slang’s dignity-lowering, stuffiness-demolishing effect. In the introduction to the Historical Dictionary of American Slang, Jonathon E. Lighter writes:

[T]he use of slang undermines the dignity of verbal exchange and charges discourse with an unrefined and often aggressive informality. It pops the balloon of pretence. There is often a raw vitality in slang, a ribald sense of humor and a flip self-confidence; there is also very often locker-room crudity and toughness, a tawdry sensibility. Whether slang’s undignified sensibility communicates abrasive disrespect or a down-to-earth egalitarianism depends on one’s point of view. (1994, xii)

This “undignified sensibility” of slang can be seen in slayer slang words such as destiny-free, which takes the wind out of the portentous word and concept destiny, and a similar effect is achieved by Buffy’s oft-quoted “Sacred duty, yadda yadda yadda.” As to how these terms “lower the dignity” of discourse, imagine sticking slayer slang words such as crack-whore-free, butt monkey, or cuddlesome in a CNN broadcast, newspaper obituary, or job application—in each case, the balloon of pretence would be quite popped.

[5] The social aspect of slang is equally crucial and has been much remarked upon in discussions of slang, such as Eble’s book Slang and Sociability. Eble defines slang as “an ever changing set of colloquial words and phrases that speakers use to establish or reinforce social identity or cohesiveness within a group or with a trend or fashion in society at large” (1996, 11) and Lighter touches on the same point: “Like the use of any special vocabulary, unselfconscious and accurate use of an identifiable group’s slang both implies and contributes to a strong emotional allegiance to that group and its values” (1994, xxxv). All language is social, but unlike standard English’s assumption of universal, neutral diction and personhood, different slang vocabularies cultivate and maintain different communities and identities.

[6] Slayer slang is typical slang in that it is characterized by a “raw vitality” and “often aggressive informality” that serves to bond both the characters on BtVS and the fans who watch the show. It’s no wonder then that the distinct social setting of Television Without Pity—which partially overlaps but is not synonymous with Buffy fandom—has been an important site for the spread of slayer slang.
Television Without Pity (TWoP) and language

TWoP—originally known as Mighty Big TV—is a particularly fertile breeding ground for slang, and the slang-happy fans of the Buffyverse have found a home there. With an avowed mission statement of “Spare the snark. Spoil the networks,” the site is made up of witty, sarcastic, humorous recaps of almost a hundred and fifty shows from the recent-past and present, and the message boards discuss these and many more shows. Though it’s not hard to find praise on the site, biting criticism is far more common, and this blurb for the discontinued recaps of Big Brother is pretty characteristic of the site’s tone:

Being a really, really bad show is usually not enough to get you banished to Permanent Hiatus. However, being a really, really bad show that's on constantly, is 80% filler, and includes that skeevy live feed phenomenon? Yeah, that'll do it. We decided to save the money we would have had to spend on carpal tunnel treatment for recappers and redirect it to ... anything else.

TWoP’s prolific recappers and posters are also frequent neologizers—a trait they share with BtVS’s writers. Ephemeral words I have found on the site include ass-owning, badassery, chest-thrustage, crap-diddly-tastic, deadee, double-meh, fluttery-nugget, horrendo-mom, mom-burban, nunliness, ominousity, ovary-style, sexual genius-dar, skankspionage, soap-opery-ness, soulmate-itude, su-diddly-fucking-uck, and super-grope-y. Just like the writers of BtVS, TWoP’s users revel in making up words that communicate and entertain, even if just for one post, one topic, and one day.

To emphasize the shared language of the site, TWoP publishes a glossary of terms that are often used there. Some, like asshat and YMMV (your mileage may vary), are becoming very common slang terms, at least on the net; they can be found on many websites, message boards, and blogs, while other terms are more (though not completely) unique to TWoP, such as for God’s sack—which was created when recapper Sep mistyped for God’s sake. Another of the site’s more distinctive catchphrases is blah blah blah [fish]cakes—an expression used to mock and/or dismissively summarize any tedious speech, conversation, or situation, like so: “I would agree that Sam and her problems seem recycled, but for me they’re recycled from some lazy T.V. movie (Feisty nurse, single mum, teenage pregnancy, vaguely abusive ex, troublesome tow headed son, dark, brooding widower doctor wanting to rescue both she and her child from it all ... blah, blah, blah badromancenovelcakes” (Jenn, 2005). And that’s just the tip of the fishcakes-berg, as the widely varied use of blah blah blah [fish]cakes shows the willingness of TWoP users to experiment and play with language. Just to show the flexibility, I’ve compiled an alphabetical list of forty variations from the site:

- blah blah blah abstinence cakes
- blah blah blah look-at-me-attention-getting-antics cakes
- blah blah blah medical gobbledy-gook-cakes
- blah blah blah pretentiousfashiontalkcakes
- Blah Blah Blah Repressed Feelings for Jack-Cakes
Clearly, the “cakes” can be virtually any flavor or size, providing nearly endless possibilities for dismissive-and-bored-yet-creative-and-clever writers. The “cakes” can be one word (anvilcakes, stalkercakes) or many words (look-at-me-attention-getting-antics cakes). There can be one, two, or three blahs, and the blahs can be separated by commas, hyphens, or nothing—the blahs can also be replaced by yadas or yaddas. TWoP recappers and posters revel in this kind of improvisational, performative language play, and the creativity of shows like BtVS and the cake-baking TWoP users is mutually reinforcing and impossible to separate completely.

The words
[10] As Adams discusses, many of the innovations of slayer slang are of a piece with larger trends in slang; for example, one of the most characteristic tendencies in slayer
slang is making atypical adjectives with the suffix –y, such as heart-of-darkness-y, out-of-the-loopy, stammery, twelve-steppy, unminiony, and crayon-breaky. But increased productivity of --y can be seen far beyond the Buffyverse—even by as unlikely a speaker as Donald Rumsfeld, who was quoted at a 2002 press conference as saying: “I’m not into this detail stuff. I’m more concepty.”

[11] Though adding --y to nouns is not unusual in itself, and concepty doesn’t have an unusually-long root like stiff upper-lippy, I’d say the sound and tone of concepty has more than a touch of slayer slang: concepty wouldn’t seem out of place next to avoidy, metaphory, developmenty, slippy, chickeny, and commandery. I find it remarkable that Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld would choose this word instead of conceptual. Whatever your political beliefs, few would accuse Rumsfeld of being on the cutting edge of anything; I also doubt he’s got a collection of BtVS DVDs stashed away at the Pentagon.³ So if Rumsfeld is capable of making up a word like concepty, then clearly the wider usage of –y has spread beyond both the Buffyverse specifically and youth culture broadly. Since the increasing use of suffixes like --y -and --age is not exclusive to the Buffyverse, I opted against searching for them.

[12] Instead, I picked bitca and wiggins—two Buffyverse neologisms that can’t easily be explained as part of larger trends in American English slang. As most fans will know, bitca is simply a euphemism for bitch that came about when Xander misheard Willow’s spelling-out of bitch in “When She Was Bad” (2001). Adams (2003) has identified related terms such as bitcalet (“diminutive bitch”—a term of endearment) and uber-bitca (“superbitch”), and I have found, through Google searching, examples of super-bitca, mega-bitca, psycho-bitca, bitca-lish, bitca-esque, bitca-like, and the bitca from hell.

[13] Adams defines -wiggins as an “episode of fear, over-excitement, agitation” (279). This word was used several times on the show, and its meaning is quite clear when Buffy uses it in “Welcome to the Hellmouth” (1001): “That place just gives me the wiggins.” The wiggins seem to be a close cousin of the creeps and the willies, and from examples on the show and elsewhere, it’s clear that one can have the wiggins or a wiggins.⁴ Adams has pointed out that wiggins hasn’t spread far beyond the Buffyverse despite the potential advantage of being related to words such as wig, wigged, wiggy, and wig out.

[14] With bitca and wiggins in mind as good candidates for searching, I was curious how (and if) slayer slang had persisted in the absence of new episodes and in a particular place where the Buffyverse is a priority but not the priority. I collected all the appearances of bitca and wiggins on TWoP from June 2004-February 2005—a nine-month period that took place a full year after BtVS’s final episode Chosen (7022) aired on May 20, 2003. In the next section, I will present these citations in the style of American Speech: A Quarterly of Linguistic Usage, though I have added bold for each use of the terms to make skimming easier. Quotations are reprinted as presented on the board; emendations are placed in square brackets, except that quotation marks and dashes are regularized to minimize confusion.

The citations

2005
Jan 17 TeenLibrarian http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
Some stories work better as a series than either a movie or a mini-series; and while I enjoyed the new miniseries I didn’t love it. I thought Apollo was too moody & Starbuck was a bitca; but I have since changed my mind. A lot. I didn’t rewatch the mini so I’m not sure if the writing changed or if they are both better an hour at a time.

Jan 19 kenyaj

My brother also jokingly said Vaughn was was only pretending to be asleep to avoid talking to Sydney (it’s a guy thing, he informs me), but I thought it was sweet that he was finally able to sleep peacefully next to her. Insomnia is a bitch, but especially when it’s Lauren’s worthless mug that’s keep you awake at night. Burn in hell, bitca.

Jan 22 enness2000

It’s strange—I hate season 6 a lot more, but I get way more worked up over the flaws of season 7. I think its because season 6 was so bad it’s pretty much irredeemable in my mind, whereas season 7 started off so promisingly (the final scene of Lessons, Buffy not being a mopy bitca, Selfless, CWDP) only to end up as a total train wreck. I can write off season 6 in my mind, but the wasted possibilites (I’m loathe to use the easy pun here) of season 7 will always annoy me.

Jan 25 minisprout

Well, perhaps shrew was the wrong word. But, there are times when the bitca really emerges from her.

Jan 27 PeachesNCream

We are well aware that these hopeless morons can barely string together basic sentences, and are more preoccupied with sitting on beaches with vapid long-lost stares, engaging in semi-macho-yet-unbelievably-insipid pissing contests, or f*cking their siblings, YET we feel that if you do not come forward and expose yourself for the backstabbing bitca you are, consequences will be dire. Castaways should be informed immediately that you have pulled “babymamadrama” before, and are not above seducing male leads with your doe-eyed looks. Pull it together, Tess, before we mind-meld your ass out of this galaxy.

Jan 28 No Other Way

Sadly, Willow seems to think she’s still dealing with the best friend she had in S1 and S2, and not the selfish bitca Buffy is being transformed into. How is Willow supposed to know that Buffy isn’t actually concerned about their friendship, that she’s only come to Willow because she wants Willow to make her problems with Faith (the same Faith she “dumped” Willow for) go away? [This citation was quoted by both Stargazer and namrog on January 28.]
Feb 2 wounded
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3122740&view=findpost&p=2472983 I’ll start off with the Emily issue: I
hate her for what she did, yes, but to rub this off as character assassination? Hell no! I
remember at the beginning of the season when we were all, “Why is Emily acting so
rude towards Luke? She’s always liked him!” leading to the conclusion that while it was
fine and dandy that she knew that Lorelai perhaps had a thing for him, it was a whole
other story when Lorelai began dating him. She was threatened by it, and had to do
something, and was a bitca at dinner. (Kind of like she and Richard being manipulative
assholes by trying to break Rory and Dean by throwing her the Male Yale party.)

Feb 9 jase-bot
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=2932285&view=findpost&p=2502299 The only thing that can salvage
Evangeline for me - and this was true long before John/Van began—is if they own her
hypocritical bitchiness and go for making her a career—oriented villainess. I would love
it if Natalie was what made her little internal screw turn all the way over to Evil Bitca,
scheming against Natalie, etc.

Feb 11 musetta
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3123062&view=findpost&p=2508781 This episode was a mixed bag, some
highs and some lows. Loved the return of Julie, and her just being a blunt bitca to
everyone.

Feb 18 PeachesNCream
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3120113&view=findpost&p=2541116 Dear J.J. Abrams, [¶] Stop stealing
my writers, bitca. [¶] Love, Joss Whedon.

2004
June 6 kat_may
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=603319&view=findpost&p=1521133 I always thought Nathan was the best
thing that would ever happen to Grace, as Harrelson was to the show—he was hilarious
and she wasn’t such a selfish shallow bitca when they were together. While I like Harry
Connick, Jr. I hated him on this show, and he brought out the worst in Grace. She’s
shrill and unlikeable, IMO; I kept hoping that Nathan would come back.

June 8 Paris Madeleine
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=2285194&view=findpost&p=1526472 I recently discovered Buffy durning
my vacation and went on an all-out marathon of seasons 1-3. I was in love! But then I
started watching F/X reruns on season 7 and I can barely comprehend that it’s the
same show. Bitca Buffy? Obsessed-insane Spike? Spike has a soul? Xander as a prop?
Willow as the crazy Yoko? I could only bring myself to watch 2 eppies yesterday (7.2
and 7.3) ... that was enough.
June 8 Peachy Keen
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3090924&view=findpost&p=1528771 Don’t worry, we’ve all defended that crazy **bitca**. I blame it on Ryan’s white knight complex carrying into real life.

June 10 gr8red
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3113070&view=findpost&p=1536845 It seemed to me that putting Cara with Steven was supposed to redeem her. She was such a **bitca** earlier in the series, and once Steven “saw the real Cara,” she was ready to show everyone else that she was good. Just my HO.

June 11 Mamalita
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3115076&view=findpost&p=1543083 Raquel’s wardrobe was truly unfortunate and Pati was indeed a raving **bitca**. Angela seemed relatively normal but her boyfriend was too old for her and sleazy, which was fun to watch, but she was obviously slumming.

June 12 Shika
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3117165&view=findpost&p=1544100 It is SO not just you. I had this feeling about her at last years awards where she seemed to show up tanked (which really didn’t bother me i guess) and had this holier-than-thou attitude about things. I seem to remember her making some crack about the “Daredevil” movie stealing the upside down “Spiderman” kisss and a cut to Jennifer Gardner looking like she wanted to wipe the floor with that snotty little **bitca**. I know she thinks she’s all cool and indie but darlin’ get ovah yourself.

June 16 Endeavour
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3106028&view=findpost&p=1560410 **Bitka** or **bitca** means b**itch**. I first heard it on *Buffy*. I think they were spelling out the word for some reason, and Xander replied “**bitca**?”

June 21 TenPea
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3100820&view=findpost&p=1575215 I was actually hoping to find the Menopause Monitor in my store. It will give me a bona fide reason to be a **bitca**. I can wave the test-stick-or-whatever at my boyfriend and say “See, THIS is why I’m yelling at you, I have no control!”

June 28 Hitwoman
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=2060075&view=findpost&p=1603441 Coleburg, that’s a scenario I can live with. I just didn’t care for the implication that Joey was some kind of heartless **bitca** by forcing Pacey to wear a condom. Birth control should be the responsibility of both
partners, and Pacey as the experienced partner should at the very least be just as responsible as Joey. And honestly, no matter what adults choose to do or say or believe, I’d be pretty disappointed if any show marketed at teens chose to show two kids having sex without using a condom. It’s the most easily acquired and user-friendly form of birth control, and as such I’d expect to see it at least implicitly stated that one was used.

July 5 boardnow
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=497846&view=findpost&p=1625475 Good job we’re talking about Xander’s lines in S2 (kinda), as watching my DVDs last Friday, I finally got the B-I-T-C-H/bitca line. Yeah, I’ve seen the ep (“When She Was Bad”) about a million times, and never got it, but it finally clicked last week – it’s in the pronunciation, y’see. Next week, I’m going to learn how to use a knife and fork.

July 7 EONdc http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=576641&view=findpost&p=1635433 Me too. While I think Buffy is a bitca in The Yoko Factor, I think her friends meet her by exhibiting their own worst personality traits too.

showtopic=1878967&view=findpost&p=1789938 Is your keyboard Cordy after Cordelia? And if so, is it named after early Buffy Cordy, late Buffy Cordy, early Angel Cordy, or that character on later Angel who was named Cordy but actually bore no resemblance other than the physical to the snarktastic bitca we knew and loved? [This citation was quoted by healing fish on August 11.]

showtopic=3113416&view=findpost&p=1828021 About the capitalization, I use it to separate the different roots. For example: [¶] PhoeBitca: “Phoe” for “Phoebe” and “Bitca” because I’m a Buffy fan and that’s the only way I can say “Bitch.”

showtopic=1754944&view=findpost&p=1836845 Word, word, word. I liked Val because I love some good bitca, but she was no Brenda.

Aug 27 Just’sin
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3113416&view=findpost&p=1861473 Persephone—smart and bookwormish, clean, and eager to learn the ways of the wicca and bitca.

Aug 27 Just’sin
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=95288&view=findpost&p=1861400 A young woman named Persephone, smart and bookwormish, clean, and eager to learn the ways of the wicca and bitca.

showtopic=3118758&view=findpost&p=1915514 Didn’t like her on sight. I fear she’ll
alternate between cutesy-pooing it up and being a snide little bitca in an attempt to get! tough! I have no real clue why I get this from her. Buts I do.


Oct 8 amani http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=2984473&view=findpost&p=2034297 Ugh, jcp ... er, retr, that sucks. She’s a bitca and don’t let her bring you down. How rude and unprofessional of her. Do you think you could report her or would that be too tattletaleish? There’s no excuse for behavior like that in the workplace.

Oct 13 Brahmsian http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3119141&view=findpost&p=2055961 Our girl hasn’t turned into an overly cynical bitca *yet*, but she is in some danger of becoming one. She needs a guy who can help her avoid going down that road, and Weevil doesn’t seem a very likely candidate for that job.

Oct 26 huntergrayson http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3119482&view=findpost&p=2109975 If the Teri rumors are true, that would support the blind item being her (or vice-versa). It’d be especially grating because she doesn’t turn 40 for another two months. Yet, (a) TH was nice to the other gals on Oprah (watch her body language) and (b) she got the role because she’s not a diva. The TH-as-bitca seems entirely media invented since they are adoring the SATC-comparisons way too much. Another possibility is the rumours were drummed up by NBC for LAX interest. Hey, it makes sense if you live here and know how weird the publicity machine is. Then again, the A-list mentions a grudge held against her by every single person involved in Lois & Clark.

Nov 3 jo_tornblade http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3086685&view=findpost&p=2140688 I missed the Shannen Doherty interview because the show was pre-empted for election coverage. I think I’m one of the few people who likes Shannen Doherty, but I tend to like strong women. Or Bitca’s, if you will.

Nov 16 TAPhD http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3120499&view=findpost&p=2190899 Rory, you’re a self-centered bitca. Marty is awesome and he’s sitting there on your bed and after you’re done talking about your own issues you just fall asleep in 2 seconds flat. You didn’t even attempt to stay awake and listen to him. Unacceptable. [This citation was quoted by Polter-Cow on November 16 and Summer InA Bowl on November 17.]
Nov 21 caltrask55 http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3117444&view=findpost&p=2203268 heh. I’ve heard that about her too. Apparently she has bitca qualities. [This citation was quoted by gleebo on November 21.]

Nov 21 raen http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3016155&view=findpost&p=2204842 Yeah Marcia is a total bitca and I agree that last night at the start of her song she was either taking the piss out of Chanel or copying her because she wants to be young and interesting too.


Dec 3 fishboots http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3120931&view=findpost&p=2248345 Eliza has book smarts, but she is emotionally needy. She would never have voted for Ami if Ami hadn’t been such a smug bitca last week. She would have wanted to sit at the popular girls table FOREVA! It’ll be interesting, if the previews are to be believed, if Eliza’s upbraiding Twila has any consequences. Personally, all of the parroting of Ami’s opinions and imagined moral superiority has made me hate her more than I could ever hate Ami ... at least Ami had a reason for buying the bullshit.

Dec 4 Perfect Xero http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=2830122&st=2925&p=2250899&#entry2250899 Eh? The episode implies that Buffy doesn’t know about the pendant. Aside from her insistence that there’s no option other than killing Anya, there’s also the scene where she runs her though with a sword and then just stands there (rather than making a grab for the pendant) while Anya has a flashback to OMWF then wakes up and pulls the sword out. Buffy even seems surprised by this, in spite of the fact that Halfrek pulled the same stunt in Season 6. So Buffy is either just being a vindictive bitca looking to prolong Anya’s suffering before her death, or she genuinely doesn’t know (and this is just a product of bad writing/continuity).

Dec 6 babybluez http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=1154497&view=findpost&p=2256982 Yeah, Serena was a total bitca tonight. FOSH!

[16] wiggins n. A feeling of dread similar to the creeps, the willies, the heebie-jeebies, or the whim-whams.

2005
Jan 1 kariyaki
I also liked it because I didn’t really like either Chakotay or Seven with their respective other options. J/C? Nope. Dr/7? Negatory. In fact, I found the Doctor’s infatuation with Seven to be pretty creepy because his instruction throughout her journey from Borg to Human seemed more paternal. For him to start crushing on her gave me the *wiggins*. I was glad that Seven seemed to have the same reaction I did.

Jan 23 BottomLine

I’ve actually never watched this show before, mostly because The Donald gives me The *Wiggins*. But, I was assured by some friends it was a good show, so I am giving it a shot. For someone like me who is just finding the show, it was a good start.

Feb 1 DrShell

The kid smacking dude gave me a serious case of the *wiggins*. He just looked like he could go off and hit you any time. Ugh.

Feb 7 LennoxHC

ETA: Traci Lords wasn’t just a porn star, but an underage porn star. If I think too much about that, I just get the *wiggins*.

Feb 8 Andeely

I still get the *wiggins* thinking about that movie.

Feb 16 DrShell

God, no lie. What a sleazeball. And he had those watery, glassy drug-abuser eyes. He gave me a serious case of the *wiggins*. What did Mr. Plaintiff ever see in him?

2004

June 1 Beelzebubba

The “girthy” hot dog guy. That has to be the filthiest, dirtiest commercial on TV. It’s not even funny dirty, it’s just creepy watching this guy fellate a hot dog before visciously biting into it. It gives me *wiggins*.

June 8 Set

Although it would have been Worse. Thing. Ever. material had they treated Tara the same way, as a walking queer joke. Fortunately, they dealt with the whole Tara / Willow thing respectfully, almost hypersensitively so, with the whole gangs reaction being glossed over, save for a 10 second *wiggins* from Buffy, a “Tara’s you’re girlfriend?!” and a “ Bloody Hell!” from the
funny drunk. I would have dreaded someone as much a woman-hater as Marti was a man-hater getting their hands on the whole lesbian story arc and making Tara into a grotesque cliche like Andrew.

June 20 Bent137
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3116452&view=findpost&p=1572910 I got bit by a tick this morning, and this episode was seriously one of my first thoughts. I even said to my parents, “But I don’t WANT to start seeing GOD!” (Dad watches the show, so he got it.) I was, however, bit by a LoneStar Tick, which isn’t known to carry Lyme Disease. Instead it carries “Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever” which really sounds like a similar thing. There’s even rash and hallucinations! As well as fever, head aches, muscle pains, nausea, vomiting, diareha and loss of appetite. Sounds fun! Only not. Really hoping this tick was NOT a carrier. It didn’t get a chance to bed itself in me so maybe I caught the stupid little bugger in time. Seriously though, they’re gross and evil and painful and did I mention gross? They look ... *shudder* Creepy. Gave me the **wiggins**. So watch yourselves when you’re outside everyone!

June 25 IcyLuna
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=762743&view=findpost&p=1594916 I know the story sounds like the lamest thing that ever was. It seriously creeped me out at the time though. It was night. My lights were turned off. I had a few porcelain dolls at the time. I suddenly realized that I had all these beaty little doll eyes starring at me from their shelves. It scarred me for life! Plus, the doll on the TV show really did look like it was posessed. It looked nasty and mean. To this day, just thinking about it gives me the **wiggins**.

July 1 Lillilux
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3116197&view=findpost&p=1614604 Yes! I felt that, too. I always felt like a police raid was going to burst in on them and arrest Marina. Truly. It grossed me out. At least with the boy they seem the same age, and the trapeze artist as well. Marina feels like my contemporary so it just gave me the “**wiggins**” that she’d be doing DBJ™

July 4 jazmyne
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=1625083 Ooh! Kittens! Yes, Miss Kitty Fantastico was black and white. I’ve had several black and white cats—Stanley, Mrs. A- **Wiggins**, and Bogie. None of them are Buffyverse names, but they are all inspired by various entertainment media. I like Riley as a name for your kitten, though. It also hearkens back to Dawn telling Riley that Buffy liked that he was “weak and kittenish.” Kitteny? One of those, anyway.

July 9 Sureshot26 http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3117219 &view= findpost&p=1645331 Personally, Nicole creeped me out way more than Brandon did. He’s merely a dipshit, whereas she has this very “I’m an evil robot” vibe that gives me the **wiggins**. During the infamous “God’s plan” interview
where Brandon pats her shoulder, she had this incredibly disturbing look that I can’t
even describe adequately. It seemed like a combination of “Touch me again and you
can say goodbye to your nutbunches,” “Oh, so this is how humans behave when
they’re being totally patronizing,” and “Note to self: Pick up milk.” Cree-pee.

showtopic=3117766&view=findpost&p=1663116 Speaking of eye candy, I think that
was quite possibly the hottest Phil has ever looked. I’m still having palpitations. That
smile that he gave Charla at the pit stop made me all melty. But yeah, I think Mirna
may have given him the **wiggins** last week. Hee!

July 16 Boliver
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=1675713 valny, I don’t think that’s just you-
Egyptian stuff is creeptastic. It doesn’t help that a good portion of the PC game Heretic
2 was in Egypt, and it had scary Pharoah-panthers and spiders. When I go to the Luxor
in Vegas I still get a wiggins, but it’s the good kind of creepy and cool **wiggins**. I’ll get
the creeps in a scary movie, but it doesn’t keep me away.

showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=1676572 But **Scream** I love. I’ve probably seen
it 20 times and the part with Drew still gives me the good creepy **wiggins**.

showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=1679535 Do clowns give anyone the **wiggins**?
If they do, don’t watch the horror movie, **Clownhouse** I did like it though. Marionettes
and some puppets for some reason also give me the wiggins.

July 18 LittleVoice
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=1683436 hobbit, your **Exorcist** experience
would have given me the **wiggins**.

showtopic=3112420&view=findpost&p=1692871 I hated the sisters (piper excluded) in
that one. They couldn’t understand why Piper was freaking. **HELLO!** She’s taking on the
demon who KILLED HER MOTHER!!! [¶] I think she was entitled to some **wiggins** on
that one.

showtopic=3118038&view=findpost&p=1730767 And I frequently use the word
“**wiggins**” and the phrase “that’s not of the bad.”

Aug 2 Boqueisha
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=762743&view=findpost&p=1753235 I followed that link for **Bad Ronald** and
was severely disturbed. Not quite so much by the story of the movie, but because I
was following a link to a horror movie and a page opens up with my name on it. “Loren” isn’t a very common name, I almost never see it, so it gave me a bit of a \textit{wiggins}.

Aug 12 nqllisi http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=927368&view=findpost&p=1794483 In fact, her speech at the end makes more sense in that context. She might be saying that Trill society, because of its inclusion of the symbiotes, has a more fluid understanding of such things than the society that Bev grew up in. In effect, she’s saying, “I can’t cope with you being a woman now, because the society I grew up in didn’t provide a lot of examples of sexual relationships being continued after a sudden gender switch. Frankly, I can’t conceive of myself in such a situation—it gives me the \textit{wiggins} because I’m heterosexual. After continued exposure to species such as yours, perhaps my culture will adopt the same understanding of the fluidity of gender as yours, but that’s just not where I’m coming from.”

Aug 16 valny http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=1813006 Oh man, I don’t care how small the spider is, that would squick me out AND give me the \textit{wiggins} all at once.


Aug 23 NickChick http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3111912&view=findpost&p=1846552 Speaking of gymnastics, did anyone else’s ped-o-meter go off with all the \textit{inappropriate touching} going on between Carly Patterson and her coach? They gave me the \textit{wiggins}.

Aug 24 Knee High Boots http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3100820&view=findpost&p=1846761 I don’t even know how the damn thing ends because the first time I caught it (on TiVo), I was so terrified by the mass o’ skin with the blinking eye that I immediately fast-forwarded through it. Thanks a whole lot, Milk Pimps, for giving me a severe case of the \textit{wiggins}. You bastards.


read. It succeeds in being a completely insane piece of crack and, yet, a highly emotionally effective dramatic work at the same time. Annakovsky seems to have the entire piece plotted from the beginning: every twist and turn in the story is completely surprising, until you realize that hints were dropped all along. I love the parallels she creates amongst the “characters,” particularly between Xander and Dom. The author has a beautiful writing style, with detailed descriptions of settings and genuinely human reactions. Plus, the story is balanced by a wicked sense of humor. Even if RPF usually gives you the wiggins, Annakovsky is very respectful of the actors, who she appears to understand very well; the fic is not exploitative in the least.

Aug 27 Mr. Pointy
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=721445&view=findpost&p=1862917 I agree that Annakovsky is a great writer, but will have to disagree that A Critique of Pure Reason doesn’t give you the wiggins if you don’t like RPF

Sept 3 IcyLuna http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=394850&view=findpost&p=1887525 I think Abby is precious and she’s far better than most of the child actors I see on the television screen. I love her scenes with the Bradbot. They are so sweet. It brings out a sort of vulnerable and tender side to the Bradbot. Yet, the actress kind of freaks me out. It’s the Dakota Fanning Syndrom from the mini series Taken. She seems so poised and ladylike. There’s no 5 or 6 year olds like that. I guess we’re supposed to believe it’s because she’s spawned from TheSpermPig who is the epitome of grace *gag*. It just gives me the wiggins to see children act beyond their age. Even Cassie squicked me out when she was acting too mature for her age. Child genuises disturb me slightly too for the very same reason.


Sept 29 Putli Bai http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3119213&view=findpost&p=1992672 Dude, no kidding. That, followed by “it has been playing for sixteen years” has given me some serious wiggins.

Sept 30 zoeyblue13 http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=1995712 Mr. ZB was telling me about some helicopter crash in Hawaii recently, but I can’t find any reference to it in the news. Did anyone hear about this? I think he was just trying to give me the wiggins. He lives to creep me out and play jokes one me. Its pretty funny ... for him.

Oct 4 Rhea13
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3119295&view=findpost&p=2014396 I also agree with this. That being said, Amy had a point too - you shouldn’t complain about not having friends if you’re not willing to give anything. of course, Hannah is still giving me subliminal wiggins,
Oct 13 Katrinawitch
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=2828258&view=findpost&p=2056991 Speaking of game show hosts, I could never stand the smarm that is/was Richard Dawson on Family Feud. His fake tan, his pinky ring, his Julius Caesar haircut, the way he called all the women “darlin” and had to kiss all of them, right down to the blue-haired grannies. I’m getting a **wiggins** just thinking of him now! Shudder! However, I always loved his character on Hogan’s Heroes. Go figure.

Oct 15 SiameseCatLady
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=1763083&view=findpost&p=2067917 Great description—glad to know I’m not the only one who gets the **wiggins** from Shill’s handsiness and attitude toward young girls. He’s like that teacher in junior high or high school who goes right to the line of being inappropriate, but never quite crosses it – at least not in front of anyone. He just seems a little bit too fascinated with the psyches and souls of these girls and a little too anxious to be their White Knight/Saviour/Protector.

Oct 21 NickChick
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3119812&view=findpost&p=2099790 The doc was creepy. When he was ratling off his, “I give women ...” items, I thought, “You’re giving me the **wiggins**.”

Nov 4 zoeyblue13
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=2891151&view=findpost&p=2143335 Chyna, I can’t even tell you how happy I was that Obama won. Though I don’t think he had much of an opponent in Keyes. Keyes is creepy, gives me the **wiggins**. [This citation was quoted by Chyna on November 4.]

Nov 4 kariyaki
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3120169&view=findpost&p=2146146 To add to the creepiness, they had to hire Harriet Sansom Harris. I still get the **wiggins** from that actress ever since I saw her in that “Eve” episode of *The X-Files*.

Nov 11 Bean9879
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3113300&view=findpost&p=2170489 I watched it ... and actually enjoyed the way it was edited together. It did some skipping between her time in France & her making the same sorts of food at home. The did a cocktail party, a luncheon for two, and a late supper for her & the hubby. As an aside—something about her and her husband together gives me the **wiggins**. Just me? Okay then.

Nov 16 SiameseCatLady
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?
showtopic=3117693&view=findpost&p=2187806 Anne-Marie made my head hurt and my blood sugar level hit dangerously high spikes. I know a fair amount of born again
Christians, some I like, some I don’t, but that woman and her associates gave me the **wiggins** with a capital-W (as in her fave president). I always say, if you have to keep telling people what a good Christian you are, then you probably aren’t. Kudos to whoever came up with the candy is better after the wrapper is removed and you don’t share your candy with the whole football team analogies!

Nov 24 angryhamster
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3120566&view=findpost&p=2217831 As an aside, Koontz is one seriously creepy dude. I realise he’s probably gonna be the closest thing this show has to an exposition fairy, and while his interaction with Veronica was excellent, I’m not really sure if I want to see more of him on the show —he really gives me the **wiggins**.

Nov 25 triumveratex http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3119440&view=findpost&p=2220630 ok now i know im new to the thread and about to give a few people a **wiggins** but i was thinking that one of the reasons for chris leaving san fran could be a moment of weakness, like say “borrowing” one of raiges friends, [¶] i was thinking of a scene where the GL return to the manor and hear a noise from upstairs, (boys rooms or attic) and without thinking paige would orb up to investigate and find chris getting sweaty with, i dont know maybe glenn.

Dec 8 NickChick
http://forums.televisionwithoutpity.com/index.php?showtopic=3111912&view=findpost&p=2268603 A friend sent me a creepy clown bday card as a laugh—and it’s definitely a generational **wiggins**. My mom thought he was cute while I blame *Poltergeist* for stripping me of any notion clowns might ever mean well.

**Looking at the citations**

[17] As I collected the preceding citations, some of the questions that interested me were:

- Are the terms being used in relation to non-Buffyverse shows? If so, are there patterns to the types of shows?
- Were just a few prolific users using the terms or were many users familiar with *bitca* and *wiggins* and comfortable enough to use them?
- Have the terms shifted in form or meaning at all? Have any new shades of meaning or new usages developed?
- Are there any good signs for the success of these terms in the future? Could they make the leap from slayer slang to a more established vocabulary?

[18] From June 2004-February 2005, there were a total of forty-six *TWoP* posts containing *bitca* and forty-seven posts containing *wiggins*. Bitca was used to discuss twenty-five different shows while *wiggins* was used to discuss twenty different shows, and both were used in the “TV Potluck” area for miscellaneous chatter.
I was pleased to see the terms used in reference to so many shows; this confirmed my hope that they had moved beyond the Buffyverse to some extent. It’s not surprising that slayer slang would have migrated over to discussions of supernatural shows like Charmed and The X-Files, arc-heavy shows like Alias and Lost, sci-fi shows like Star Trek and Battlestar Galactica, or witty shows like The O.C. and Gilmore Girls, but there is little to connect the Buffyverse with The 2004 MTV Movie Awards, cop shops like C.S.I., or reality shows such as The Apprentice, Starting Over, Survivor, and Wife Swap. Buffy and Judge Judy may both be strong women with a fondness for wielding blunt objects, but I would never have guessed that a word like wiggins would be used (twice) to discuss Judge Judy (though the good judge has probably given more than her share of the wiggins to viewers and defendants). I was equally surprised to note that the large and active Angel boards included not a single bitca or wiggins for this time period. The BtVS-related areas included eight bitcas and fifteen wiggins, so of the two terms, it seems that wiggins remains more closely tied to BtVS and may be used slightly less widely than bitca on TWoP. Given the “without pity” slant of the site, I think bitca has an inherent advantage—folks who prize snark and lack pity could probably avoid talking about the creeps if they wanted, but they would have a harder time avoiding a word like bitch, so the synonym/euphemism bitca may fill a strong need/desire. Since there isn’t an obvious need for wiggins, I’m impressed that the word is holding its own.

Of the 40 versions of bitca, many were accompanied by an adjective, which is obviously similar to how bitch is used; these included: backstabbing bitca, blunt bitca, cold bitca, crazy bitca, Evil Bitca, heartless bitca, mopy bitca, raving bitca, self-centered bitca, selfish bitca, smug bitca, total bitca (twice), vindictive bitca, overly cynical bitca, selfish shallow bitca, snide little bitca, and snotty little bitca. These modifiers, along with the near-bitch spelling, make it easy for readers not familiar with slayer slang to understand bitca in context, (though I wonder if some users may believe the word is merely a typo).

Bitca was used four times in commands or imperatives (Burn in hell, bitca; Stop stealing my writers, bitca; The woman just cooked you dinner, bitca!; and Hmm ... nice try bitca) three times in names (Bitca Buffy, PhoeBitca, and TH-as-bitca), and once as an adjective (bitca qualities). Users discuss bitca’s status as a word three times, which indicates a little self-consciousness about its status as a “real word.” Only one user discussed wiggins’s status as a word, indicating a solid level of acceptance. Since relatively few users discussed or questioned the words, one can assume that bitca and wiggins were generally easy to understand based on prior knowledge or context.

Adams (2003) has written about variability in how wiggins is introduced—some folks get a wiggins, others get the wiggins, and still others avoid the whole mess by getting something along the lines of serious wiggins (107). Of the 45 original citations for wiggins, thirty-one used the article the before wiggins, indicating a strong preference among users. Most of these thirty-one citations were some version of gives me the wiggins or get the wiggins, though modifiers were sometimes added to create usages such as the good creepy wiggins and the good kind of creepy and cool wiggins. The a article didn’t fare nearly so well, with only five examples: Two users simply used a wiggins, and this version had longer variations such as a 10 second wiggins, a bit of a wiggins, and a generational wiggins. Users who avoided the “a vs. the” issue altogether described some wiggins, some serious wiggins, subliminal wiggins, your wiggins, major
wiggins, and in one case simply wiggins. This variation may indicate, as Adams has noted, that wiggins is still searching for a stable idiomatic form (107).

Do these words have a future?
[24] I am a fan of both these terms, and I would love to see them graduate from slayer slang to a wider category of American English slang. Is this possible? Allan Metcalf’s (2002) FUDGE scale may be helpful here—this tool for predicting the success of new words assigns a 0, 1 or 2 to five factors: “Frequency of use,” “Unobtrusiveness,” “Diversity of users,” “Generation of forms and meanings,” and “Endurance of the concept.” So a score of 10 would indicate a word with the highest possible chance of success, and a zero would indicate a word unlikely to catch on (152).
[25] I don’t need to crunch or otherwise harm the numbers to see that neither term would fare well in Metcalf’s system: both would get low marks for frequency of use, unobtrusiveness, and diversity of users. Bitca might score a little better in the “generation of forms and meanings” category, but wiggins would do poorly; both would do fine in the “endurance of the concept” area, though I doubt this would help overcome the other low scores. Concepts may endure, but words usually do not, and I believe bitca and wiggins have little chance of approaching the popularity of asshat and batshit (two slang terms used very widely on the web), much less the broader usage of slang terms such as apeshit and dude.
[26] However, the place bitca and wiggins have carved out on TWoP is promising in many ways. “Standard American slang” may be out of reach, but movement from strictly BtVS-related web spaces to a broader television-related site like TWoP shows that these terms can infiltrate the vocabularies of non-Buffy fans. Who knows which fans of Lost, Gilmore Girls, or Judge Judy might see the words, like the words, and use them elsewhere? It’s also promising that of the 43 bitca users and 37 wiggins users, there was no overlap. For eighty different users to employ such distinctive slayer slang while causing so few raised eyebrows might indicate the terms are becoming equal parts slayer slang and TWoP lingo. This migration is reason to hope that other migrations are possible: perhaps the terms have a shot at crossing over to other slang subsets, maybe even to online discussions of non-BtVS, non-TV-related obsessions.
[27] It wouldn’t in the spirit of slayer slang to end with a clichéd, “further research is needed” but … only time will tell how many bitcas will be named in the future, and if the wiggins will be embiggened or not.

Notes
1. A classic example of stunt words is Rich Hall’s (1984) “sniglets,” such as choconiverous, or the “tendency when eating a chocolate Easter bunny to bite off the head first” (22).
2. Naturally, other rapidly spreading slang terms, such as batshit, can be found frequently on TWoP, too; see Peters (forthcoming).
3. Though someone might, as indicated by the existence of Anthony Cordesman’s “Biological Warfare and the ‘Buffy Paradigm,’” a post-9-11 report on homeland defense from the Center for Strategic and International Studies (see Adams 2003, 100-101).
4. On Angel, another, much less successful Whedonverse synonym for the creeps was coined when Cordelia Chase answered the question, “What have you got?” with “The weebies” (“Sense and Sensibility,” 1006).
5. Six of the bitca posts were quotations of other posts, and this was the case for two of the wiggins quotes, as well; so the actual number of original uses are forty for bitca
and forty-five for wiggins. Unless otherwise noted, I will count the quotations as equal to non-quotations for the bulk of this article, since this repetition is very much like one person echoing another in conversation and, in my estimation, should “count” as a use.


7. Oddly enough, bitca has only appeared in six Angel posts and wiggins in one. All of these posts were in 2003 or early 2004.

8. The message boards of several other shows featured bitca and wiggins more than once. Bitca appeared multiple times in discussions of Arrested Development (2), Charmed (2), Gilmore Girls (8), Lost (3), and The Apprentice, while wiggins showed up more than once for Amazing Race (2), Charmed (2), CSI (2), Everwood (2), Judge Judy (2), and The X-Files (3)—plus six uses in the “TV Potluck Area.”

9. I focused on the message boards but searched the TWoP recaps as well: bitca has been used only four times in recaps that appeared from 1997-2001, and wiggins has appeared in eight recaps from 1998-2002. The most notable usage I found in all of these is a combined Buffyism/Simpsonism written by Sep in a recap of “Conversations with Dead People” (7007): “I’m so glad I’m watching this in daylight this time around because this scene really embiggens the wiggins.”

Works Cited


A subreddit for chronicling how Advanced Capitalist Society is not only dystopic, but also incredibly boring. If your post is mostly text or otherwise low quality, it will likely be removed and you will get a short term ban. Reposts within the past 24 hours will be removed and temporary bans issued. Please check the new submissions before posting. Following is a list of 100 English slang words that are commonly used today. I bet Sue gave you an earful when you got home. Bitch – complain/gossip about something. Whenever the girls get together, they always find something to bitch about. Bonkers – mad/insane. The man must be bonkers to take such a risk. Break – chance/opportunity. Never give a sucker an even break. How are we going to get ourselves out of this jam? Slang dictionary | Infographic. Pin. This is true to a lesser extent with the inferior vena cava, which is a vein and is therefore a lower pressure system than the aorta, but a full knife-thickness injury into that vein will also likely prove (somewhat less) rapidly fatal. It's a good thing both of these vital blood vessels are well-shielded by all the other organs in the abdominal cavity. These wounds are dangerous, but without thorough examination the situation is uncertain. That area where the two cuts were made is also potential injury for stomach, duodenum, small or large intestines, gallbladder, and right kidney. And, of course, there are large vessels in that area, particularly aorta, liver vessels, stomach and intestines vessels, renal vessels. If any of those vessels were damaged, condition would be highly dangerous. The first two items on their hierarchy of survival were sorted for now. One of the factors that contributed so significantly to the Robertsons’ survival in the moments immediately after they sank would also start to become a complication. The heat would make them sweat. What anyone hoping to survive must never do, however, is drink seawater or urine. There are a few recent examples of rescues which show how far our understanding of the damage that extreme survival can do to the body has come: the 12 Thai boys who spent 18 days trapped in a cave in 2018 and the 33 Chilean miners rescued in 2010. In both cases, all survived. When they came out they were put on broad spectrum antibiotics, says Tipton.