

**CULTURAL IMPERIALISM AS REFLECTED IN
AMERICAN TV SERIES
CRIMINAL MINDS: BEYOND BORDERS (2016)**

UNDERGRADUATE THESIS

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CULTURAL IMPERIALISM THROUGH AMERICAN TV SERIES *CRIMINAL MINDS: BEYOND BORDERS* (2016)

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ABSTRACT

This research investigates the representation of American cultural imperialism in the television series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016). The study focuses on how American culture is depicted as dominant, particularly through the FBI's International Response Team (IRT) and its role in solving crimes in various countries. By analyzing the series, the research aims to understand how American law enforcement's portrayal in international crime-solving reflects broader narratives of cultural dominance.

A qualitative method is applied, utilizing theories of cultural imperialism and transnational crime to dissect the series' narrative. The data collection involves watching episodes of *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), identifying and classifying key dialogues, and analyzing cultural representations. The theoretical framework is grounded in Edward Said's concept of cultural imperialism, which explains the Western portrayal of other cultures in a hegemonic light, and Gerhard Mueller's transnational crime theory, which highlights the complexities of cross-border crime.

The findings demonstrate that *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) reinforces American cultural superiority, often positioning the IRT as the central authority in resolving global issues. The portrayal of non-Western countries and their cultures tends to be stereotypical and exoticized, reflecting a Western-centric worldview. This research provides insights into how popular media shapes perceptions of global crime and reinforces American dominance in international relations.

Keywords: *American Cultural Imperialism, Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders (2016), FBI International Response Team, Transnational Crime*

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INTISARI

Penelitian ini mengkaji representasi imperialisme budaya Amerika dalam serial televisi *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016). Studi ini berfokus pada bagaimana budaya Amerika digambarkan sebagai dominan, terutama melalui peran Tim Respons Internasional FBI (IRT) dalam memecahkan kasus-kasus kriminal di berbagai negara. Dengan menganalisis serial tersebut, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami bagaimana penegakan hukum Amerika yang ditampilkan dalam pemecahan kejahatan internasional mencerminkan narasi dominasi budaya yang lebih luas.

Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan menerapkan teori imperialisme budaya dan kejahatan transnasional untuk membedah narasi dalam serial tersebut. Pengumpulan data dilakukan dengan menonton episode *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), mengidentifikasi dan mengklasifikasikan dialog kunci, serta menganalisis representasi budaya. Kerangka teoretis penelitian didasarkan pada konsep imperialisme budaya dari Edward Said, yang menjelaskan bagaimana budaya Barat digambarkan secara hegemonik, dan teori kejahatan transnasional dari Gerhard Mueller, yang menyoroti kompleksitas kejahatan lintas negara.

Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) memperkuat superioritas budaya Amerika dengan sering menempatkan IRT sebagai otoritas utama dalam menyelesaikan masalah global. Penggambaran negara-negara non-Barat dan budaya mereka cenderung stereotipis dan dieksotisasi, mencerminkan pandangan dunia yang berpusat pada Barat. Penelitian ini memberikan wawasan tentang bagaimana media populer membentuk persepsi tentang kejahatan global dan memperkuat dominasi Amerika dalam hubungan internasional.

Kata Kunci: *Imperialisme Budaya Amerika, Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders (2016), Tim Respons Internasional FBI, Kejahatan Transnasional*

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the study

Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders (2016) is a crime television series that follows the FBI's International Response Team (IRT) in solving crimes involving American citizens abroad. Each episode showcases the team navigating diverse geographical and cultural landscapes. However, the series has faced criticism for misrepresenting cultures, particularly those in Asia and Africa, and perpetuating stereotypes that reflect America's dominance and cultural bias.

The portrayal of American superiority aligns with the concept of cultural imperialism, where dominant cultures impose their values and narratives onto others. This concept, discussed extensively by Edward Said, emphasizes how media, literature, and other cultural platforms contribute to legitimizing the dominance of powerful nations like the United States over less influential cultures. The series reinforces such dynamics by depicting American law enforcement as the ultimate authority in global crime-solving.

American popular culture, including television, has historically been a powerful tool for spreading American values and lifestyles. While often consumed as entertainment, such media can also serve as subtle propaganda, influencing global perceptions of modernity and superiority. This is particularly evident in the series' narratives, which often portray Western ideals as universally applicable, sidelining local cultures and perspectives.

Cultural imperialism, rooted in historical colonialism, continues to manifest in modern media representations. Said's theory of Orientalism highlights how Western portrayals of the East create exoticized and stereotypical images, reinforcing Western dominance. In *Criminal*

Minds: Beyond Borders (2016), these representations appear in the characterization of non-Western cultures as mysterious, underdeveloped, or in need of Western intervention.

Additionally, the series engages with the theme of transnational crime, a global issue that demands international cooperation. The United Nations defines transnational crime as criminal activities involving more than one country, such as human trafficking, drug smuggling, and cybercrime. By dramatizing these issues, the series sheds light on the complexities of addressing such crimes while often prioritizing Western perspectives.

This study examines how *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) represents both cultural imperialism and transnational crime. Using Edward Said's Cultural Imperialism Theory and the Theory of Transnational Crime, the research analyzes Season 1 to identify patterns of stereotyping, exoticization, and the depiction of American dominance in international law enforcement.

The analysis aims to uncover how the series influences perceptions of cultural diversity and global crime-solving. It contributes to broader discussions about the role of media in shaping narratives of power, culture, and international cooperation.

B. Problem Formulation

1. How is the American cultural imperialism represented in the TV series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016)?
2. What is the role of FBI's International Response Team and cross-border cooperation in addressing transnational crime as revealed in the series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016)?

C. Objectives of the study

1. To investigate the American Cultural Imperialism through TV series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016).
2. To examine the role of the FBI's International Response Team in addressing transnational crime in the series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016).

D. Review on Related studies

This research is related to research conducted by Tamsila Naeem, Mohsin Hassan Khan, and Faiqa Abdul Khaliq from University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia entitled **Cultural Imperialism through Hollywood Cinematic Media on Pakistani Youth (2020)**. This study discusses about the impact of Hollywood cinematic media on Pakistani youth. The research contends that cinematic media serves as a potent tool wielded by developed nations in the contemporary world, intentionally employed to transmit their cultural heritage by showcasing a diverse array of appealing features aimed at influencing the minds of the younger generation. It also highlight the influential sway of Western media on Third World nations, asserting that it imposes Western cultural norms, thereby eroding indigenous cultures. The authors conclude that Hollywood films exert a significant impact on the youth in Pakistan, who notably captivated by the American lifestyle. The study recommends that it is the responsibility of the Pakistani populace and media authorities to attentively address and regulate such films, recognizing them as a serious threat to their cultural values.

The second study related to this research is **American Cultural Imperialism in 1960s Japan as Seen in Haruki Murakami's Norwegian Wood** by Bhakti Satrio Nugroho (2020) from Gadjah Mada University, Indonesia. This research focuses on the "Americanization" that occurred in the lives of teenagers in 1960s Japan as presented in Haruki Murakami's *Norwegian Wood*. The author argues that many of the Japanese people at

the time adopted western culture especially what was popular in America such as music and movies. This research focuses on the imposition and glorification of American culture in Japan in the 1960s which is celebrated as part of the main storyline. American cultural imperialism can be seen in the spread and glorification of American popular culture and American lifestyle among Japanese youth. In addition, they created many social and cultural changes. According to the author, this is due to Japan's post-war inferiority factor after losing to the United States in World War II. Thus, the postcolonial historical relationship between Japan (as the colonized party) and the United States (as the colonizer) massively supported the "Americanization" in the 1960s in Japan that resulted in the loss of Japanese identity and cultural dependence on the United States.

Another related study titled, **The Representation of Cultural Stereotypes in Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders (2016)** by Meily Helena Kardinya Gultom (2017) from the University of Indonesia, Indonesia. This study explains that the representation of cultural stereotypes in television drama series has become a common practice. Many television drama series attempt to incorporate elements of cultural stereotypes into their narratives. In *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders*, the stereotypes depicted subsequently give rise to a negative portrayal of a particular country's culture through the separation of two major groups, namely Americans and individuals from the East (Asia, Africa, and the Middle East). Stereotypes are portrayed through three different elements: dialogue, characters, and plot. By applying orientalism as an analytical framework to interpret and examine the cultural stereotypes present in the corpus, this research argues that *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) portrays America as superior in its relationship with Eastern partners, and this has been detrimental to Eastern countries.

The last related study was conducted by **Adi Saputra Rusli, Yanwar Iswahyudi, Nisrina Arumdanie, and Biky Uthbek Mubarok** from Universitas Indonesia (2023) titled **Kejahatan Transnasional Di Indonesia: Studi Kasus Yakuza Sebagai Organisasi Kejahatan Internasional**. This study discusses the impact of the Yakuza as a transnational organized crime group in Indonesia. It examines the historical roots of the Yakuza in Japan, their development into a significant crime network, and their operations on a global scale, particularly their influence in Indonesia. The research highlights that the Yakuza's operations extend beyond Japan, contributing to issues such as human trafficking, drug smuggling, and money laundering in Southeast Asia.

The authors conclude that the infiltration of the Yakuza into Indonesia presents challenges to national security. They recommend stronger international cooperation and enhanced local security measures to combat the presence of transnational criminal organizations like the Yakuza, which threaten Indonesia's resilience against crime. The study underscores the importance of coordinated efforts to mitigate the negative impacts of global criminal network

This study differs from previous studies in several ways. Firstly, like the first study, it focuses on the impact of American cultural imperialism on Pakistani youth. Secondly, similar to the second study, it primarily examines how Americanization has affected Japanese society in the 1960s. Finally, it differs from the third study in the theory used. Although the object of study is the same, the theory used to analyze it is different. Consistent with other research, the fourth study also differs in focus from the research that the researcher will

conduct, as this study focuses on the Yakuza as an organized international crime group in Indonesia.

E. Research Method

The research method employed in this study is qualitative research. According to Robert K Yin (2016) in his book titled *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish*, qualitative research is used with the purpose of allowing researchers to have a profound understanding of the context and phenomena under investigation. Therefore, the objective of this study is to systematically address issues by describing and identifying textual elements, including but not limited to words, phrases, idioms, sentences, and dialogues.

1. Data and source of data

The study's data were categorized into two main types:

- a. Primary Data, derived directly from the series itself, focusing on dialogues and cut scenes extracted from the series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) Season 1 from Episode 1-13.
- b. Secondary Data, serves as supporting information and is sourced from articles, scripts of the series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), international journals, books, and thesis that bear relevance to the study.

2. Data collecting technique

- a. Watching the film

As the subject of this research is a TV series/film, the fundamental step in collecting data involves watching it. The American series titled *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) was watched repeatedly so that the dialogues and cut scenes could be examined to gain a profound understanding of the series.

b. Identifying the data

After being watched repeatedly, the next step is to identify and discover the crucial parts of this series that are related to the theory used, based on both the dialogue and cut scenes.

c. Classifying the data

In the data classification stage, the researcher will create a list of dialogues and scene excerpts from the script of the series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), along with supporting data. These will then be organized into a table with numerical columns named Appendix. These appendix consist of the data format and the source from which the data is derived.

d. Reducing the data

Data reduction involves the process of selecting, abstracting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming data until final conclusions can be drawn and verified.

3. Data analyzing technique

Robert K. Yin, in his book *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (2016), advocates for an adaptive and iterative approach to data analysis. It is employing five key phases of analysis, such as:

a. Compiling

This phase involves organizing all collected data, such as interviews, field notes, documents, and artifacts. This can be done through digital recording, physical cataloging, or a combination of both. The goal is to make the data easily accessible and manageable for the next stage.

b. Disassembling

This phase is about breaking down data into the smallest meaningful units. It could be individual statements, themes, events, or other relevant categorizations related to the research questions. The aim is to identify core units that will serve as the basis for further analysis. In the context of analyzing series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), statements or dialogues related to the theories can be separated and analyzed individually to understand how characters, motives, and the storyline contribute to the main theme. Similarly, events like the discovery of a victim, interactions between agents, or the revelation of the criminal's motive can be broken down into smaller parts to gain a clearer picture of how the crime was designed and how the team responded.

c. Reassembling and Arraying

This phase involves restructuring the uncovered core units into patterns, themes, and larger categories. It includes grouping, comparing, and contrasting data to generate a comprehensive overview. During this phase, the researcher groups, compares, and contrasts the data to create a comprehensive overview of how both transnational crime and cultural imperialism are portrayed. For example, themes related to the influence of American culture on foreign societies or the imposition of American values during investigations are identified and grouped together. Techniques such as matrices, discourse analysis, and coding are employed to organize and present findings systematically.

d. Interpreting

This phase is about reorganizing the core units that have been dissected into patterns, themes, and larger categories. It involves grouping, comparing, and

contrasting data to create a comprehensive overview. Techniques such as matrices, discourse analysis, and coding are used to systematically organize and present findings.

e. Concluding

This final phase is about drawing valid and reliable conclusions from the research. It involves summarizing the main findings, connecting them to the initial research questions, and discussing the limitations and implications of the study. Researchers also consider generalizations to broader populations as well as recommendations for further research and actions.

CHAPTER II THEORETICAL APPROACH AND FRAMEWORK

A. Theoretical Approach

This research is grounded in American Studies, an interdisciplinary field that explores complex issues through multiple perspectives. The study employs two key approaches: the cultural approach and the legal approach, enabling a comprehensive analysis of *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016).

The cultural approach, informed by Clifford Geertz's theory of symbols, examines culture as a system of shared meanings reflected in media like film. This approach focuses on how the series portrays American culture and its interactions with other cultures, particularly through Edward Said's theory of Cultural Imperialism. Said's framework highlights how Western media often reinforces stereotypes and power imbalances, depicting non-Western cultures as exotic and inferior while positioning American culture as dominant.

The legal approach explores the role of law in addressing transnational crimes, as depicted in the series. It draws from the comparative study of legal systems, emphasizing the complexities of cross-border law enforcement. Gerhard O.W. Mueller's theory of Transnational Crime is central to understanding how differing legal systems and international cooperation influence the portrayal of crimes and justice in the show.

The combination of these approaches allows for an in-depth analysis of the intersection between cultural representations and legal frameworks in the series. By examining cultural narratives and legal dynamics, the research uncovers how *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) reflects broader global power relations.

Using Edward Said's theory, the study investigates how cultural stereotypes and Orientalist perspectives shape the portrayal of non-Western societies. The series often

projects an image of American superiority, framing other cultures through a Western-centric lens that emphasizes their dependence on American intervention.

Mueller's Transnational Crime Theory provides insights into the challenges of addressing crimes that span multiple jurisdictions. The show highlights the complexities of international cooperation, such as differences in legal systems and operational barriers, while also portraying the FBI's International Response Team as a symbol of American leadership in global justice.

Through this dual framework, the research critically examines how *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) navigates themes of cultural imperialism and transnational crime, offering a nuanced perspective on the implications of its narratives for cultural and legal discourses.

B. Theoretical Framework

This research employs Edward Said's Cultural Imperialism Theory and Gerhard O.W. Mueller's Transnational Crime Theory to analyze *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016). These frameworks allow for a critical exploration of how the series represents cultural dynamics and transnational crime.

Said's Cultural Imperialism Theory examines how dominant cultures impose their values and narratives onto others through media. The theory emphasizes concepts like Orientalism, where non-Western cultures are depicted as exotic and inferior, reinforcing Western hegemony. This framework is applied to understand how the series portrays cultural stereotypes and positions American values as superior.

Central to Said's argument is the role of media in shaping perceptions of power and identity. By analyzing the series, this research identifies patterns in how Western culture is framed as universal, while non-Western cultures are reduced to stereotypes or simplified narratives. This aligns with the idea of cultural dominance embedded in global media narratives.

Mueller's Transnational Crime Theory provides a legal perspective on the series, focusing on the complexities of addressing crimes that cross national borders. Transnational crimes involve multiple jurisdictions and require international cooperation, making them a challenging but vital area of study. This theory helps interpret how the series depicts global crime networks and the role of law enforcement.

The integration of these theories highlights the interplay between cultural narratives and legal challenges. The series portrays the FBI's International Response Team navigating cultural and legal differences, often framing American intervention as necessary to solve crimes and restore order. This reinforces narratives of American leadership in global justice.

By combining Cultural Imperialism and Transnational Crime theories, the research explores how *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) constructs its narratives. It reveals the influence of cultural and legal frameworks on the depiction of international crime-solving, offering insights into the broader implications of these portrayals for global perceptions of culture and law.

Ultimately, this theoretical framework provides a comprehensive lens to examine how the series reflects and perpetuates global power imbalances. It underscores the role of media in

shaping cultural and legal discourses, offering valuable perspectives on the intersection of culture, crime, and justice in popular entertainment.

CHAPTER III ANALYSIS

A. Cultural Imperialism

1. Cultural Representation

In his theory of Cultural Imperialism, Edward Said emphasizes how Western culture is often represented as superior and universal in media and popular culture. This representation effectively obscures the cultural diversity across the world and reinforces stereotypes about non-Western countries. This is evident in how American culture, as a center of civilization and popular culture, often becomes the standard used to evaluate other cultures. The series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) frequently portrays non-Western cultures in a way that reinforces stereotypes and positions Western culture, particularly that of the United States, as superior. In certain episodes, for example, the FBI's International Response Team (IRT), composed of American agents, travels to various countries to solve crimes involving American citizens. Often, local cultures are depicted as exotic, dangerous, or chaotic, reinforce a narrative of Western cultural dominance.

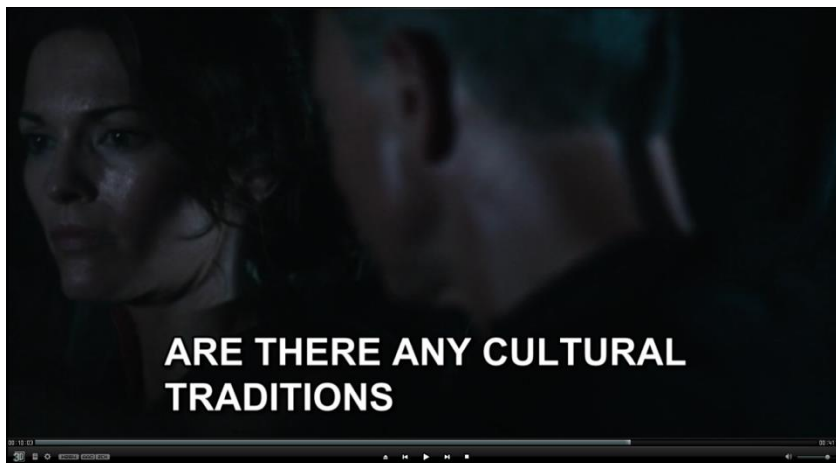


Figure 3.1 Jack Garrett asks Clara Seger if there are any specific cultural practices performed by the Thai people when they lose a family member.

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 1, 31:47)

Jack Garrett : "Are there any cultural traditions for the last remaining member of a family?"

Clara Siger : "This could be Ullambana"

Matt Simon : "Come again?"

Clara Seger : "It's a Mahayana festival. When followers believed the gates of hell open and ghosts of ancestors visit the living, traditionally, offerings are made to the departed."

Jack Garrett : "The Unsub, sacrificing humans to his dead family."

Jack Garrett is seeking to understand whether there are any specific rituals or customs in Thailand related to family members who are still alive after a tragic event. This question implies that in Thai culture (or other non-Western cultures), there may be different or "unique" traditions when dealing with death or loss.

Garrett's question can be seen as an example of how Western media often portrays non-Western cultures as exotic or mysterious. This reflects an orientalist perspective, where non-Western cultures are frequently reduced to stereotypes or traditions that captivate Western audiences because they are considered different or unusual. In this case, Thai culture is presented through a lens that looks for "uniqueness" or "difference," which often serves to reinforce the dominant position of the West.

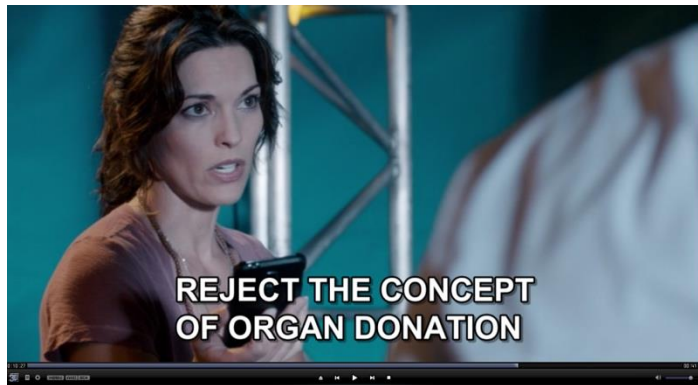


Figure 3.2 Clara Seger draws a different conclusion about the missing organs of the victim, suggesting that it is not due to organ trafficking but rather related to the Hindu concept of reincarnation.

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 2, 31:00)

Clara Seger : “Well, some Hindus reject the concept of organ donation because they don't believe a body should move on to the next life incomplete. Maybe The Unsub is rushing to complete or make someone whole before he cremates them.”

India Police : “It's the responsibility of the eldest son. The hospital releases the body to the families so that they can wash and prepare the body for cremation.”

Jack Garrett : “That's it.”

Clara Seger attempts to provide cultural insight by mentioning that some Hindus refuse organ donation due to their belief that the body must remain "intact" when transitioning to the next life. This statement reflects how Western media often simplifies complex beliefs into brief and often inaccurate explanations. It also illustrates the tendency to depict non-Western cultures in contexts related to "exoticism" or "strange rituals," aligning with Said's critique of Orientalism. The implication here is that the perpetrator (Unsub) might be acting based on beliefs tied to local culture, reinforcing the idea that this crime is rooted in eccentric or "foreign" cultural practices.

By mentioning specific cultural practices (such as the refusal of organ donation and the eldest son's responsibility in cremation) and then linking them to a heinous crime, the episode risks reinforcing the view that non-Western cultures are inherently "mysterious," "dangerous," or "exotic," supporting the narrative structure of cultural imperialism critiqued by Edward Said. This dialogue demonstrates how Western media narratives often position themselves as superior observers who have the right to judge or explain other cultures, often in unfair or inaccurate ways.

2. Knowledge and Power

In *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), this concept is often depicted through the use of advanced technology possessed by the FBI's IRT agents. This technology, such as sophisticated surveillance devices, forensic software, and access to international databases, illustrates Western dominance in terms of knowledge and capabilities. These advanced tools are used by American agents to solve cases in non-Western countries, which are portrayed as lacking the same resources or technological skills.

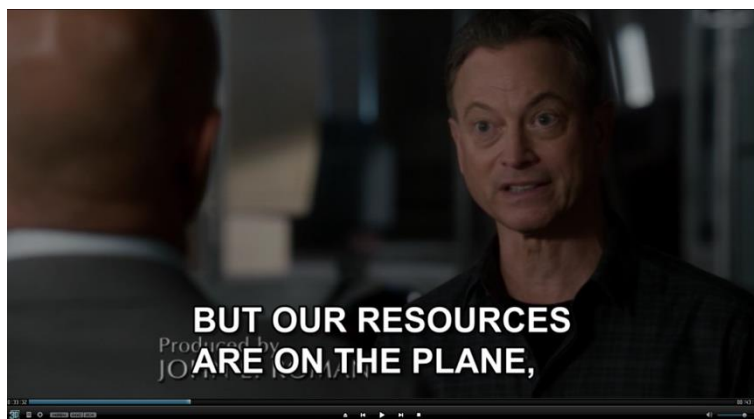


Figure 3.3 Jack Garrett rejects the facilities provided by the local authorities.

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 3, 09: 35)

Deputy Minister : “You are more than welcome to use any of our facilities if need be.”

Jack Garrett : “Well, thank you, Deputy, but our resources are on the plane, and seeing as the airport is central to the rest of Cairo, it makes sense to use this as base camp.”

This dialogue underscores the dominant attitude of the FBI character, Jack Garrett, who prefers to use their own resources and facilities brought by plane rather than utilizing the local facilities offered by the Egyptian Deputy Minister. This decision reflects a belief that the technology and equipment they have brought from the United States are more advanced or more reliable than what is available in Egypt.

This attitude exemplifies Western dominance in terms of knowledge and technology. Jack Garrett, as a representative of the FBI, implicitly communicates that American resources are superior and more efficient to use compared to local facilities. This reinforces the idea that the West possesses superior knowledge and capabilities, aligning with Said's theme of Orientalism, where Western cultures often look down upon the capacities or technologies of non-Western cultures.



Figure 3.4 Jack Garrett states that the IRT team will solve the case in their way.

(Source Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders Season 1, Episode 4, 08: 14)

Chief Kazumi : “What can we assist the FBI with?”

Jack Garrett : “We believe your findings on the recent American suicides have been investigated with proper care, but we have American families back home who have lost loved ones, and they need closure. So, with your permission, we'd like to take a closer look at these cases.”

Jack Garrett acknowledges that the Japanese police have conducted their investigation with "good attention" regarding the recent suicides of American citizens. However, he also emphasizes that the FBI needs to conduct further investigations to provide certainty or "closure" for the American families who have lost their loved ones. Although Garrett uses polite language and shows respect for Japanese authority, his request to re-examine the cases already investigated suggests a lack of trust or doubt about the Japanese police's ability to handle the case adequately.

This demonstrates a cultural bias, where Western investigative methods and expertise are considered superior or more accurate. It reflects Western knowledge dominance, the FBI, as a representative of the United States, feels it has the authority or obligation to investigate the case further, even though it has already been investigated by local police. This implies that the local investigative knowledge or methodology may be seen as insufficient compared to Western standards, necessitating FBI intervention to ensure more reliable results.

3. Cultural Resistance

In the context of analyzing the series *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), cultural resistance against Western dominance becomes evident through how the series portrays various countries and cultures. Although the series often highlights Western superiority, particularly

through the perspective of the IRT team as they travel internationally to solve crimes, there are also moments that underscore cultural resistance. This resistance is depicted through local efforts to maintain cultural practices, challenge Western assumptions, and assert an independent cultural identity.

For example, local authorities and residents often emphasize their cultural norms, traditions, and legal practices, which may conflict with the Western methods brought by the IRT team. This clash can be seen as a form of cultural resistance, as it highlights the desire to preserve cultural identity and independence rather than simply adopting Western norms. Thus, the series provides a platform to explore how "marginalized" societies, as described by Said, resist the erosion of their cultural identities amidst cultural imperialism.



Figure 3.5 The Japanese officer questions why the FBI thinks that this case might not be a suicide.

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 1, 08:36)

Japanese Officer : “What makes you think that these suicides are anything but?”

The IRT Team : “One of our agents spoke to the families of the deceased, and all of the victims seem to have had everything to live for. Dee brown was to be married, Bobby freeman's blog posts were being picked up by major sites around the world and Damian hall was young, successful, about to close on a house. And none of

them had a history of mental health challenges. Even their latest social media posts were very positive, no sign of what was to come.”

Japanese Officer : “It's been our experience when someone had committed themselves to the whispering death, they show an uptick in happy behavior. They believe they have finally found a direction. Even though it is death, it is comforting to them.”

Jack Garrett : “Your continued expertise in this area is welcome, but three American suicides in a week deserve a closer look.”

The Japanese police officer and the IRT team demonstrate cultural resistance against the FBI's intervention in the investigation of a case that local authorities have already classified as a "suicide." The Japanese police question why the FBI believes these cases might not be suicides, highlighting their skepticism and distrust toward foreign perspectives and assumptions about the causes of death. This resistance also reflects a defense against external judgments that are perceived to undermine or challenge local authority and expertise.

The Japanese police have an understanding of local phenomena such as "Whispering Death," where individuals who decide to commit suicide may display happier behavior before their death, a nuance that might not be understood or considered by the FBI agents. While the FBI feels the need to validate the local investigation, the Japanese assert their own understanding and experience of local phenomena, showing resistance to foreign interpretations and dominance. This illustrates how cultural differences and understandings can create tensions in international investigations and how local authorities can maintain their cultural sovereignty in the face of external influence.

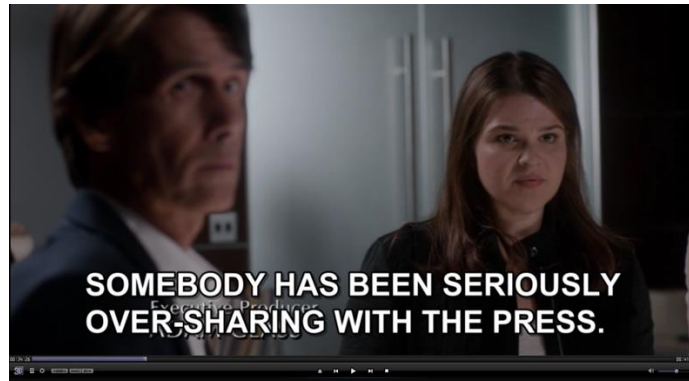


Figure 3.6 Mae Jarvis is shocked by the case being broadcast on television

(Source Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders Season 1, Episode 5, 07: 10)

Mae Jarvis : “*Somebody has been seriously over-sharing with the press.*”

Lead Inspector : “*Well, that would be me, Mademoiselle. In my experience, sharing with our journalists often has a way of...shaking the fruit out of the tree.*”

Matt Simons : “*And smacking you on the head, right?*”

Jack Garrett : “*Let's just say that your faith in the press corps is a little stronger than ours.*”

This dialogue highlights the differing viewpoints between the FBI team and the French authorities regarding the role of the media in criminal investigations. Mae Jarvis and the IRT team express their disapproval of the Lead Inspector's decision to share information with the press, voicing concerns that too much information given to the public could jeopardize the investigation by tipping off the perpetrator or causing confusion. In contrast, the Lead Inspector defends his actions, stating that sharing with journalists can often "shake the fruit from the tree," a metaphor for obtaining valuable clues or information from the public through media reporting. This reflects a more open approach to media involvement, where local authorities believe that disclosing information to the public can aid the investigation by encouraging witnesses or those with information to come forward.

Cultural resistance is demonstrated by the IRT team's reaction to the French investigation methods. Jack Garrett and Matt Simmons express skepticism toward the Lead Inspector's reliance on the press. This resistance also reflects cultural differences in terms of trust and reliance on the media as an investigative tool. The FBI, with a more closed and controlled approach, often views public disclosure as a risk that could compromise operational security and affect the outcome of the investigation. In contrast, the Lead Inspector represents a more inclusive approach, where media involvement is seen as a legitimate means to advance the investigation.

4. Critique of Globalization

In this series, the FBI team, representing a Western worldview, particularly that of America, travels to various countries and often employs Western methods, technology, and values to solve crimes. This can be seen as reinforcing criticisms of globalization by promoting Western cultural dominance and marginalizing non-Western cultures. The portrayal of Western methods and technology as solutions to global problems implies a form of cultural homogenization, where diversity is absorbed under a dominant Western narrative.



Figure 3.7 The Belize police acknowledge their limitations in resources
(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders*, Season 1, Episode 6, 08: 53)

Belize, a small country in Central America with strong ties to the United States, is portrayed in this episode as exotic and lacking the resources to handle serious cases without the FBI's assistance. This depiction can be viewed as a critique of globalization, where Western standards, values, and methods are promoted as the primary solutions to problems in non-Western countries. By having the FBI take over the investigation from local authorities, the show reinforces the notion that Western investigative methods and technology are superior or more effective than local approaches.

By highlighting the limitations of local resources and presenting Western intervention as the solution, the series underscores the process by which local cultures and practices are marginalized, and Western values and methods are promoted as superior or more effective. This aligns with criticisms of cultural homogenization often associated with globalization, where local diversity is overlooked in favor of Western-centered solutions.

B. Transnational Crime

1. International Cooperation in Law Enforcement

The concept of international cooperation in law enforcement is highly relevant and serves as one of the main themes in the narrative of this series. The show depicts how the FBI's International Investigations Unit collaborates with law enforcement agencies from various countries to solve criminal cases involving American citizens abroad. This cooperation highlights the importance of global collaboration in tackling complex, transnational crimes that cross borders. Each episode of the series shows the FBI team having to work with local authorities in the countries where the crimes occur.

For instance, when there are cases of kidnapping, human trafficking, or terrorism involving American citizens overseas, the FBI team must coordinate with local police,

governments, and other law enforcement agencies. This demonstrates that international cooperation is a key element in addressing crimes that cross national borders, where perpetrators may be involved in global criminal networks or operate across multiple jurisdictions.

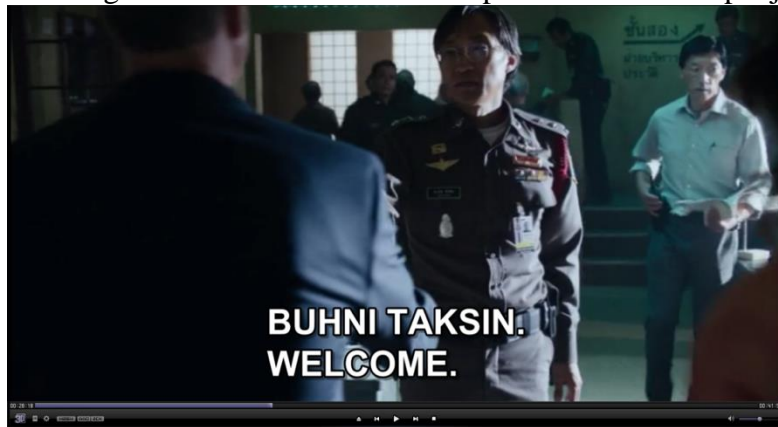


Figure 3.8 Collaboration between the IRT Team and the Royal Thai Police
(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 1, 13: 33)

Collaboration with local law enforcement allows the IRT team to overcome cultural and language barriers that could slow down the investigation process. With assistance from local authorities like the Royal Thai Police, the IRT team can quickly obtain relevant information and communicate more effectively with witnesses or other involved parties to solve the kidnapping case involving American citizens.



Figure 3.9 The Turkish police and the IRT team discuss tactics for apprehending an international terrorist network.
(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 9, 34: 57)

The IRT team, led by Jack Garrett, collaborates with Turkish authorities to carry out an arrest operation. They must coordinate with the local police in planning the raid strategy, sharing intelligence, and conducting arrest operations in locations suspected to be hideouts of the terrorist network. Additionally, one of the key factors for successfully apprehending the terrorist network is the effective sharing of intelligence information. In this episode, the IRT shares their data and analysis with the local police, including information about the terrorists' modus operandi, communication networks, and possible target locations. In return, the Turkish police provide local data and their insights on terrorist activities within their region.

2. Operational Challenges in International Law Enforcement

In this series, the FBI team often encounters differences in legal systems between the United States and the countries where they are conducting investigations. This complicates the cross-border investigation and prosecution process, as the team must navigate the differences in legal standards and procedures applied in other countries. As explained by Gerhard O.W. Mueller (2021), the complexity of transnational crime is influenced by the varying economic, social, and political factors in each country.

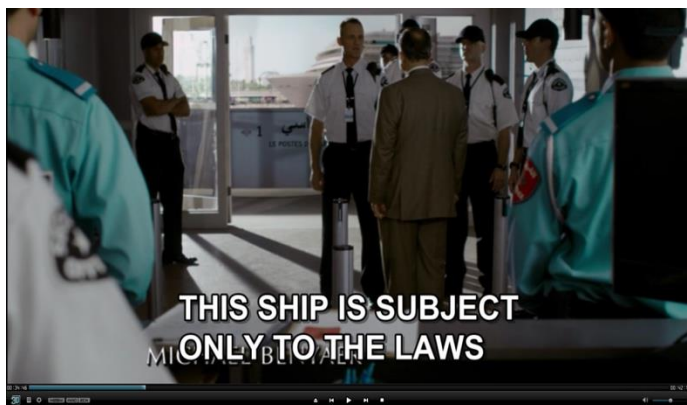


Figure 3.10 The Cruise authorities and local Moroccan authorities debate over the enforcement of international law.

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders*, Season 1, Episode 7, 07: 23)

The scene above provides a clear depiction of the operational challenges faced in international law enforcement, particularly in the context of overlapping legal jurisdictions and conflicts of authority between law enforcement agencies from different countries.

Cruise Authorities: "No, Sir. According to international law, this ship is subject only to the laws of the country under whose flag she flies."

Moroccan Authorities: "Not while you're in port. Here, I am the rule of law."

Cruise Authorities: "If you think i'm letting you or any of your thugs onboard this, you heard me. The crime happened in your square. Why won't you let my men come into town and investigate?"

Moroccan Authorities: "Because you are visitors."

Cruise Authorities: "And you're incompetent."

The cruise authorities stated, *"Based on international law, this vessel is solely governed by the laws of the nation whose flag it flies."* This refers to the international legal principle that a ship on the high seas or in a foreign port remains under the jurisdiction of its flag state. However, the Moroccan authorities responded, *"Not while you're in port. Here, I am the rule of law,"* they were emphasizing that local laws apply while a vessel is within their port.

This conflict reflects a common clash in international law enforcement, where national and international law can collide. In this case, the Moroccan authorities asserted their right to

enforce local laws while the ship was within their jurisdiction, while the ship's crew insisted on their rights under international law.



Figure 3.11 Jack Garrett from the IRT team takes over the debate
(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 7, 08: 20)

Later, amidst the ongoing dispute between the ship's crew and local Moroccan authorities, Jack Garrett emerged as the "hero" who defused the tension. He then used his diplomatic and leadership skills to navigate the operational challenges of international law enforcement in Morocco. His strategic and collaborative approach helped to defuse tensions, clarify jurisdictions, and ensure a sharp focus on the primary objective of rescuing the victims. By showing respect for local authorities and maintaining order, Jack successfully managed a complex situation and fostered the cooperation necessary for a successful cross-border investigation.



Figure 3.12 The IRT team was not welcomed warmly in Cuba

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders*, Season 1, Episode 11, 07: 51)

Apart from differences in legal systems, the historical background between the United States and other countries is also one of the operational challenges faced in international law enforcement. For example is in the episode in Cuba. Tense diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba affected the investigation. The FBI team's arrival was not warmly welcomed by local authorities, reflecting political tensions between the two countries.

3. Globalization and Its Impact on Transnational Crime

The impact of globalization on transnational crime is very relevant and one of the main themes in this series. Globalization has facilitated the expansion and intensification of transnational crimes, both in scale and complexity. Increasingly close interconnections between countries, international trade and cross-border capital flows have created more opportunities for transnational crime to thrive. The series depicts how globalization influences the way these crimes are organized and committed, and how it poses challenges to international law enforcement.



Figure 3.13 Background of Crimes at the Running of the Bulls Event in Spain

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 12, 01: 07)

This episode illustrates how a local tradition, such as the Running of the Bulls in Spain, can serve as a backdrop for transnational crime. The Running of the Bulls, one of Spain's most renowned traditions, attracts thousands of visitors from around the world. The event holds deep cultural significance for the local community and has become a global icon, drawing many international tourists who view it as an exotic and adrenaline-filled experience.

However, this episode highlights the darker side of the global fascination with this tradition. The disappearance of several American tourists and the discovery of their severed ears serve as clues that criminals have exploited this event as a cover for their illegal operations. By leveraging the global status of the Running of the Bulls, the perpetrators can easily target victims from different countries, complicating investigations and involving multiple jurisdictions.

Globalization has made cultural events like the Running of the Bulls increasingly well-known worldwide, attracting tourists eager for authentic and unique experiences. Yet, this interest also makes tourists vulnerable targets, especially when they do not fully understand the hidden dangers of participating in such a hazardous tradition. In the context of globalization, criminals can easily exploit tourists' enthusiasm, luring them into dangerous situations.



Figure 3.14 The IRT team suspects the case is related to international organ trafficking

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 2, 04: 11)

Jack Garrett : With Tommy missing and Will's attackers at large, They have asked us to investigate and prepare a threat assessment.

Clara Seger : You know, Mumbai is known for transplant tourism, where rich foreigners come to buy organs from India's poor.

Jack Garrett : Sounds like an urban legend, but it's not. It's actually an elaborate market that involves brokers, forgers, and human trafficking of live donors.

The dialogue between Jack Garrett and Clara Seger in this episode highlights how globalization affects transnational crime, particularly organ trafficking. Globalization has expanded and complicated this illegal market by creating intricate networks involving various international actors.

Clara Seger mentions "transplant tourism," referring to the phenomenon where wealthy individuals from developed countries travel to developing nations to purchase organs from potentially impoverished donors. This illustrates how globalization creates a market for organized crime. Globalization enables an interconnected global marketplace, where brokers, forgers, and human trafficking networks can operate across borders. This underscores how globalization can exacerbate economic and social inequalities, with the wealthy exploiting the circumstances of the poor in other countries.

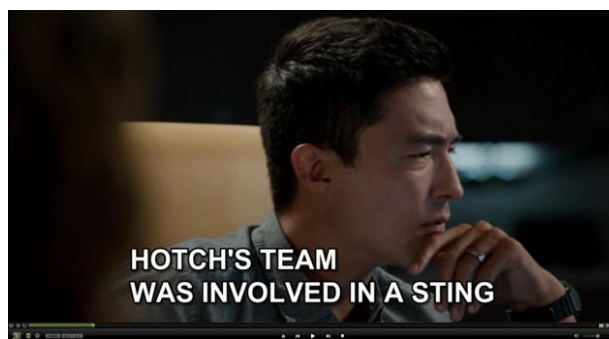


Figure 3.15 An organ trafficking network was caught in America
(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 2, 04: 30)

Matt Simons : "Hotch's team was involved in a sting in New York City in 2009. I think they arrested an organ broker."

Clara Seger : "Yeah, He was selling organs to Americans for upwards of 100 grand."

Mae Jarvis : "and we have no question of demand. In most countries, an organ can only be donated between family members or received via the transplant registry."

The dialogue between Matt Simons, Clara Seger, and Mae Jarvis provides further insight into the dynamics of globalization and transnational crime, particularly in organ trafficking. This scene emphasizes that organ trafficking is not a problem confined to one country but is instead a widespread transnational criminal network. The mention of Hotch's team being involved in the capture of an organ broker in New York City in 2009 shows that organ trafficking involves multiple countries, including developed nations like the United States. Globalization facilitates the movement of criminals and victims across the world, enabling the illegal organ market to operate in various countries.

Clara Seger notes that the broker sold organs to Americans for over \$100,000. This underscores how globalization influences the prices and demand for organs in the illegal market. With increasing global connectivity and economic disparities, people from wealthier nations can access organs from less developed countries, creating a lucrative yet highly exploitative market.

Mae Jarvis reveals that the demand for organs is extremely high, but in many countries, laws only allow organs to be donated between family members or through official transplant registries. This highlights how strict regulations in many nations often become a barrier for those in need of transplants, pushing them to seek solutions in the black market. Globalization enables people to circumvent these restrictions by seeking organs in countries where the laws may be less stringent or more easily bypassed.

4. Human Rights Aspects in Transnational Law Enforcement

In the context of *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016), human rights issues are often highlighted when the International Response Team (IRT) faces complex and ethically challenging situations in various countries. The series frequently portrays the delicate balance that law enforcement must maintain between apprehending dangerous criminals and ensuring that the rights of both suspects and victims are protected during the investigative process.



Figure 3.16 The Victim's husband, who is suspected of being the murder suspect, must be detained in Mexico.

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 8, 19: 07)

CI Ruiz : “Since Puerto del Santos doesn't have a Police Force, it also doesn't have a jail. So, in order to look after our new prisoners we've had to make some special arrangements nearby. Playa Diablo Penitentiary. They say that even the devil himself would prefer death over Diablo.”

Ruiz's statement that "even the devil would rather die than go to Playa Diablo" highlights the notorious reputation of the prison, suggesting the likelihood of fundamental human rights violations. It depicts an inhumane detention system where prisoners are likely subjected to torture or other cruel treatment. In the context of international law enforcement, this clearly

violates human rights principles, such as the prohibition of torture outlined in the UN Convention Against Torture (1984).

Given that the primary suspect (the victim's husband) is sent to this prison without sufficient evidence, the dialogue underscores the IRT team's urgency to prove that the suspect may be innocent before he endures dangerous conditions in the prison. This reflects the need to ensure that the suspect receives a fair trial and humane treatment throughout the investigation process.

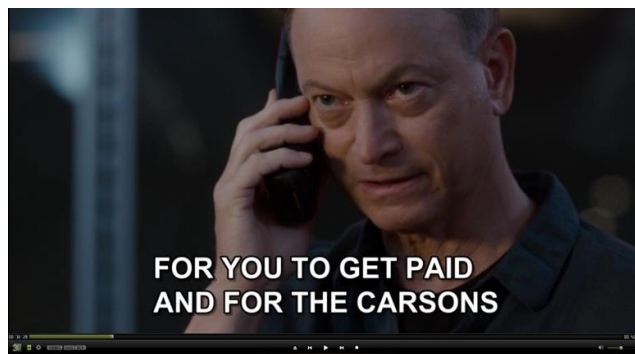


Figure 3.17 The IRT team's negotiation with the kidnapers of the Carsons couple

(Source *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* Season 1, Episode 7, 06: 08)

Jack Garrett : “*We both want the same thing here – for you to get paid and for the Carsons to be returned safely to their family,*”

This dialogue reflects the diplomatic and strategic approach often employed by the International Response Team (IRT) in transnational situations involving serious legal violations such as kidnapping. Jack's statement highlights that his top priority is the safety of the victims, the Carsons couple. In transnational law enforcement, particularly in kidnapping cases, the rights of the victims must be carefully safeguarded. Jack emphasizes that the IRT's primary goal is to return the Carsons safely to their family, demonstrating the team's commitment to protecting the

human rights of victims, including their right to be free from violence and threats to their lives. This aligns with international principles that stress the importance of safeguarding life and personal security in serious crimes.

The dialogue also shows that Jack aims to de-escalate potential violence by offering a peaceful solution. Through a measured negotiation approach, the IRT seeks to avoid extreme actions, such as the excessive use of force, which could result in violations of both the suspects' and victims' rights. This can also be seen as the IRT's effort to bridge differences in law enforcement standards between countries. In many nations, including Morocco as depicted in this episode, law enforcement may take a more forceful approach toward kidnappers.

CHAPTER IV CONCLUSION & SUGGESSTION

A. Conclusion

This research has thoroughly analyzed the portrayal of *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) through the theoretical lens of cultural imperialism and transnational crime. The findings demonstrate that the series perpetuates American cultural dominance by frequently positioning the FBI's International Response Team (IRT) as the central authority in solving global crimes. The representation of non-Western countries often reflects Orientalist perspectives, portraying local cultures as exotic, inferior, or incapable of handling crimes without Western intervention. This reinforces narratives of American superiority in global law enforcement.

The researcher has found that *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) demonstrates how American cultural imperialism is represented through the actions and dominance of the FBI's International Response Team (IRT). The series portrays American values and authority as superior, often showing other nations as dependent on U.S. intervention to solve complex crimes. This research concludes that American cultural imperialism is reinforced by consistently framing the FBI as the ultimate solution to international crime, regardless of local expertise or practices.

The first finding reveals that the series portrays American law enforcement, particularly the FBI, as the primary authority capable of solving international crimes. This reinforces the notion of American cultural and institutional superiority, where other nations are often depicted as lacking the necessary resources or knowledge to handle crimes effectively without The US intervention.

The second finding emphasizes the role of the FBI's IRT in addressing transnational crime. The series showcases how the FBI's advanced technology, expertise, and methods are applied in various international contexts, further illustrating American dominance in global crime-fighting. This portrayal suggests that without American intervention, other countries may struggle to address criminal activities that cross borders.

The third conclusion is significant in understanding how the series depicts the relationship between the U.S. and other countries. The recurring theme of the FBI solving international crimes highlights American influence in global affairs and reinforces the image of the U.S. as a global enforcer of justice, reflecting cultural imperialism through law enforcement.

The fourth finding relates to the depiction of other countries' legal systems and cultural practices. The series often portrays non-Western nations as inferior or incapable of solving crimes without American guidance. This representation underscores the dominance of American cultural and legal standards over those of other countries, aligning with the theory of cultural imperialism.

The fifth conclusion highlights the operational challenges faced by the FBI's IRT when working across different legal systems. While the series shows cooperation between the FBI and local authorities, it often reinforces the superiority of American methods, further embedding the notion of cultural imperialism in international crime-solving contexts.

The sixth finding is significant in illustrating the complexity of transnational crime and the FBI's role in addressing it. The series portrays transnational crime as a global issue that only American law enforcement can effectively handle, reinforcing the perception of the U.S. as the ultimate authority in combating such crimes.

The final conclusion emphasizes the broader implications of the series in terms of cultural representation and power dynamics. The research underscores how *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) perpetuates American cultural imperialism by consistently positioning the FBI as the leading force in solving international crimes, reflecting a Western-centric worldview and marginalizing local capabilities.

In conclusion, the analysis reveals that *Criminal Minds: Beyond Borders* (2016) serves as a cultural artifact that both reflects and reinforces the ideologies of cultural imperialism while offering insights into the nature of transnational crime in a globalized world.

B. Suggestions

The research suggests that popular media can be used to present a more balanced view of the law enforcement capabilities of other countries. Instead of consistently highlighting American institutions as the sole authorities in solving international crimes, producers should emphasize the strengths and expertise of local agencies. Future research should focus on how media can more fairly and nuancedly portray global law enforcement cooperation.

The research also highlights the importance of reducing the use of stereotypes when depicting non-Western countries. Incorporating cultural consultants from the regions portrayed can help ensure more accurate and respectful representations. Future studies are recommended to explore how media can avoid reinforcing harmful stereotypes and ensure more authentic and culturally sensitive portrayals.

The research recommends that media narratives should highlight the critical role of local authorities in addressing transnational crime. While international cooperation is necessary, the focus should shift to showcasing the central role of local law enforcement in solving crimes

within their own jurisdictions. Future research should investigate how media can better feature local contributions to global law enforcement efforts.

The research underscores the need to depict equal cross-border collaboration between countries in narratives about international crime-fighting. Instead of portraying American law enforcement, particularly the FBI, as dominant, media should highlight how collaboration with local authorities leads to successful outcomes. Future research should explore how media can promote respect for diverse legal systems and practices across different countries.

The research also recommends that ethical considerations should be prioritized in media storytelling, especially in narratives involving transnational crime. Producers and writers should avoid sensationalizing or showing cultural bias and instead focus on storytelling that respects the realities of global justice systems. Future research should investigate how media can integrate ethical considerations into their narratives to produce more balanced and respectful portrayals.

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