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[illegible]

Townsend first appeared at the start of the third season, but apparently had been going to the same school as the main characters for the entire time. Indeed, in a later flashback revealed she had been friends (or at least on name terms) with Summer since they were in elementary school. The weird thing is, watching the first two seasons again on DVD, it really does appear that her actress may have been an extra in earlier school scenes. Or maybe it's just someone who looks similar. Lampshaded at one point when Taylor is talking to Summer about Seth's declaration of love in the first season: "Oh, you didn't see me, but I was here" Retool. The first half of Season 2 had the writers slow down all the storylines (Josh called it My So-Called OC), not have Ryan punch anyone, not have any wild teen parties, and split up all the couples. Viewers weren't very receptive, and this era ended at Episode 14. Season 4, however, can be considered a genuine Retool as it became more of a lighthearted comedy without many soap opera plotlines. Aside from one Prostitution Ring, most storylines revolved around quirky plotlines like slutty aliens, offbeat French authors, sleep therapists, and freeing bunnies. Revisiting the Roots: Season four was an attempt to recapture the feel of season one following the darker and more dramatic seasons two and three. The show's focus returned to the characters of Ryan, Seth, and Summer, and the overall tone of the show became more upbeat and funny. However, by that point the show's popularity had declined dramatically from its first season, and season four was cut short due to low ratings. Roaring Rampage of Revenge: Ryan goes on one against Volchok after Marissa's death. Romantic False Lead: Anna & Alex for Seth. Theresa & Lindsay for Ryan. Zach for Summer. Luke, D.J. & Johnny for Marissa. Running Gag: Nothing good ever happens at a Cohen party. Screw the Rules, I Have Money! - Julie. Caleb too, although arguably to a lesser extent. Second Love: Ryan actually had three true loves. Theresa The First, Marissa The Second, and Taylor The Third. Sensitive Guy and Manly Man: Seth and Ryan. Ship-to-Ship Combat: Occurs in-universe in Season 4 - after it becomes apparent that Bullit & Frank Atwood are both in love with Julie, the show gives us Team Bullit (Kaitlin) & Team Frank (Ryan & Taylor). Julie initially chooses Bullit, but Kaitlin encourages her to go to Frank instead after realising that Julie was only choosing Bullit because of Kaitlin's fondness for him, when she was really in love with Frank. Then the Time Skip occurs, during which Julie gets pregnant & Frank freaks out, leading to Julie to get together with Bullit, who doesn't care she's pregnant. Frank then makes a anguished declaration of love during Julie & Bullit's wedding. Julie chooses to be single instead of date either man, and it's unclear what her final decision is - the last time that the three are seen, Frank & Bullit are cheering for Julie as she collects her college degree in the closing montage. And this all takes place over the last few episodes of the series. Shirtless Scene: Several. It is set in California. Shoo Out the New Guy: Lindsay Gardner; Caleb's illegitimate daughter who occupied the first half of Season Two amid much angst. Ryan, supposedly deeply in love with her, forgot her during the episode after her departure. Shout-Out: Dr. Roberts moves to Seattle Grace, though unfortunately the character never appeared on the show Luke refers to Oliver as The Great Gatsby, which fits very well. Marissa calls Summer as Veronica Mars in an episode of Season 3. The show's theme song is played in season 1 episode "The Secret". Show Within a Show: The Valley", a parody of The OC itself, featuring parodies of the real-life versions of the actors. Sherman Oaks: The Real Valley, the in-universe equivalent of Laguna Beach, the show marketed as "The Real OC". "Shut Up" Kiss: Notably Seth and Summer's first. Ryan and Lindsay too. Similar Squad: Johnny and the public high school gang Marissa starts hanging out with once she's forced to change schools are supposed to be counterparts to Ryan, Seth, and Summer. Lampshaded when Ryan refers to Chillli as Bizarro Seth, which is also a Superman Shout-Out. Small Role, Big Impact: Oliver Trask, who appears for a total of four episodes in the middle of Season One, ultimately triggers a chain of events that shape the series going forward. As noted by Seth in the season one finale - if Marissa hadn't been suckered in by Oliver, then Ryan & Marissa would have still been together when Theresa turned up in Newport & that subsequently Ryan wouldn't have slept with her, so there would be no debate over who the father of her unborn child would be, and subsequently Ryan wouldn't be about to leave Newport. Smoking Is Cool: Ryan and Marissa share a smoke in the Pilot. An agreement between Fox and the writers said they could have this scene, so long as the characters never smoke again - hence Sandy telling Ryan "No smoking" a minute or so later. Sorry, I Left the BGM On: Played with in that you can usually hear the switch in volume when it goes from soundtrack music to scene music, and characters may or may not draw attention to it by lowering the radio/changing the channel/telling X to turn it off. Spiritual Successor: Josh Schwartz's subsequent series both served as such - Chuck in terms of dialogue, characters, and humor, whilst Gossip Girl is the spiritual successor plot and setting-wise. Spoiled Brat: Marissa, for much of Season 2 & the end of Season 3. Made especially bad when Lindsey, who lives in a tiny bungalow and grew up without a father, shows up to contrast with her. And yet the audience is still meant to have sympathy for Marissa simply because she doesn't like her mother, who Marissa manages to make look sympathetic in the process. Spotlight-Stealing Squad: When Oliver and Johnny were on the show, it seemed like all of the plots started revolving around them. Even Christmukkah was taken over by Johnny's issues. Stalking Is Funny if It Is Female After Male: Taylor stalks Ryan early in their relationship. But it's played for laughs rather than being depicted as creepy. Stalking is Love: Oliver to Marissa. Taylor to Ryan, albeit Played for Laughs due to Taylor's adorableness. Staging an Intervention: A by-the-book version for Kirsten in the season two finale. Stealth Parody: The show wasn't self-aware enough to qualify as a deconstruction of the teen drama, but someone in the writer's room was at least content to flirt with the possibility. A bit more than a flirtation, as the show is widely credited with ushering Postmodernism into the teen drama mainstream. The Stoner: Luke Ward & Summer Roberts in the first few episodes of the series. It was quickly dropped & never mentioned again. Seth Cohen in Season 3, after failing to get into Brown. Stoners Are Funny: Seeing Seth Cohen under the influence of drugs was a highlight. Suicide as Comedy: Oliver fakes a suicide attempt, and after making the phone call, dances around flinging pills everywhere. Survivor Guilt: Marissa's constant moping after Johnny's death. Take That!: Josh Schwartz doesn't seem to be very fond of his time slot competitor Grey's Anatomy. Tangled Family Tree: Oh, Sweet Jesus. Caleb Nichol, father of Kirsten and Hailey, had an affair with Renee Wheeler while his wife was dying and fathered Lindsay Gardner; Kirsten marries Sandy Cohen & they have a son, Seth before adopting Ryan Atwood. Caleb eventually marries Julie Cooper. This subsequently makes Julie stepmother to Caleb's daughters, stepmother-in-law to Sandy and step-grandmother to Seth and Ryan, and this means that Julie's daughters Marissa & Kaitlin are stepsisters to Caleb's daughters and aunts to Seth and Ryan, the later of whom dates both Marissa & Lindsay during Julie's marriage to Caleb, on top of that, Jimmy Cooper dated Kirsten in high school, married Julie, and eventually dated Hailey. After Caleb's death, Julie becomes engaged to Neil Roberts, who's daughter Summer is Seth's long-time girlfriend and eventual wife, and eventually Julie has a baby with Frank Atwood, Ryan's father. The AU in "Chrimukk-huh" would have only worsened things, as Sandy & Julie and Kirsten & Jimmy have married. Their First Time: Seth Cohen and Summer Roberts. They lost their virginity together. Theme Tune: "California" by Phantom Planet There Are No Therapists: Subverted a bit. Marissa does attend a therapist and seems to be getting better... until life crashes on pretty much everyone after Oliver appears. Then psychotherapy is pretty much dismissed, although Lord knows it would have done her (and most of the other characters) some good. This Is for Emphasis, Bitch!: "Welcome to the O.C., bitch!" - #83 on a TV Land's Best TV Quotes list. Time Skip: Of around six months between show's penultimate & final episodes. Took a Level in Jerkass: As mentioned above, its arguable whether Seth did this or started as a Bitch in Sheep's Clothing. Took a Level in Kindness: Summer. In the first few episodes she came across as a shallow, spoiled bitch. But then became more of a somewhat ditz, but likable girlfriend for Seth. Trash the Set: The penultimate episode ends on the revelation that the inside of the Cohen's home has been destroyed by the earthquake that ended the previous episode. Unexplained Recovery: In Season One, the Nana has 4 to 6 months left to live due to terminal lung cancer. A year later in Season Two, she's alive and well again (and has mysteriously moved to Miami). Ungrateful Bastard: After Ryan saves Marissa's life, Julie, instead of thanking him, unfairly blames him for Marissa's suicide attempt, and threatens to have him sent back to Juvey if he so much as tries to go near Marissa again. Uptown Girl: Ryan and Marissa. This is the primary storyline for the first half of the show Viewers Are Geniuses: During Season Four, when it was clear the show was being cancelled and the writers were done with writing for ratings, "The French Connection" featured long drawn-out conversations among three characters revolving around David Hume, and a variety of French poets and philosophers. Some of this conversation is in unsubtitled French. Vitriolic Best Buds: Frenemies Julie and Kirsten. They tend to bicker over Julie's Alpha Bitch behavior, not to mention her goldigging ways, especially after Julie's marriage to Kirsten's father. Julie is often mocking Kirsten for being such an Ice Queen. However, they are best friends, and often describe each other as "my only friend in Newport". Wham Line: In "The Earth Girls Are Easy" Frank delivers "I'm Ryan's father" Wild Teen Party: Many. Almost once an episode in early Season One, Season 2's "The Rager" and Season 4's "The Summer Bummer". World of Snark: Virtually every major character (and many minor characters) is a Deadpan Snarker. Yiddish as a Second Language: Sandy Cohen is fond of "schmeering" bagels. You Mean "Xmas": Christmukkah, due to Seth growing up with a Jewish father & Presbyterian mother.

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