Boston University Study Abroad London

Boston University Study Abroad London
British Film and TV Since 1960
COM FT 316 (Core Course)
Spring 2016

Instructor Information

A. Name Dr Christine Fanthome and Ms Kate Domaille
B. Day and Time Wednesdays and Thursdays, 1.15-5.15pm. Commencing Thursday 14 January (NB additional later evening sessions on Thursday 14 January and Wednesday 20 January)
C. Location Wetherby Room (2nd Floor), 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU
D. BU Telephone 020 7244 6255
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G. Office hours By appointment

Course Description

This course aims to provide students with an overview of media in Britain within a social context. Special emphasis is placed on the relationship between media, citizenship and democracy in the context of post-War British society. Consideration will also be given to the relationship between British and US media culture.

Methodology

Each teaching session will involve a lecture, illustrative material and a class discussion based on the set reading. Students should absorb as much film and television as they can out of class in order to participate fully in seminar discussions.

**Please note: no laptops to be used in class.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will able to:
• Understand the cultural context of British film and TV since the 1960s
• Show awareness of the international economic underpinnings of these industries
• Consider the role of politics in media production, distribution and consumption
• Show awareness of historical controversies surrounding British film and TV’s relationship to the US
• Conduct their own research in the field
(Please note that this course does not focus on the corporate structure and ecology of the British broadcasting organisations such as the BBC, ITV, Channel 4 etc. This material is covered in FT318).
Textbooks/Supplies
You can read selected chapters on Blackboard: http://learn.bu.edu

Assessment
Essay 50% (graded by Dr Christine Fanthome)
Exam 50% (graded by Ms Kate Domaille)

Report: This should consist of a 2,000-word essay on a topic covered in class (details to follow from Dr Fanthome). There should be a minimum of 5 academic sources (text books, journal articles etc) not including websites. Websites may be used in addition to more traditional sources but not instead of them and only academic or industry websites should be used. All quotations and citations should be referenced and include appropriate page numbers. The deadline for essay submission is 8.50 am Friday 12 February 2016. (50%) Please hand in a hard copy of your essay to the Academic Office at 43 Harrington Gardens. Electronic copies will not be accepted.

Exam: This will be a take home paper issued to you on Monday 15 February 2016 by Ms Domaille and will consist of a range of essay questions which will test you on your knowledge of the course. You will select just one of these questions to produce a single essay of 1250 words (10%+/-), written over a single day. The essay must show evidence of drawing upon reading set in the course and additional reading/research you have undertaken in the selected area you write about. All quotations and citations should be referenced and include appropriate page numbers. Further details of this component will be issued to all students in the course. 50%

Please note that all work submitted by students is bound by the BU code of Academic Honour as defined in the Academic Handbook.

Grading
Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria, attendance requirements and policies on plagiarism: http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester
* Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.

Teaching Methods
There will be lectures/seminars and screenings. Students should absorb as much British media as they can, including films, broadcast and print media.

The normal pattern for a class will include a student led discussion of the reading for each session, and a lecturer led session including film/TV clips and small group discussions.

Students must check their email and the weekly Student Newsletter for field trip updates and reminders.

Attendance

Classes
All Boston University Study Abroad London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, tutorial, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

**Authorised Absence:**
Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness, for which students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor’s note as soon as possible). **Please note:** Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:
- Illness, supported by a local London doctor’s note (submitted with Authorised Absence Approval Form).
- Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)
- Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).

**The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.**

**Unauthorised Absence:**
Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a 4% grade penalty to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a ‘Fail’ in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

**Lateness**
Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalised.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE IS AN EXTENDED SESSION ON THE FIRST DAY OF THIS CLASS, THURSDAY 14 JANUARY. STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO REMAIN AT 43 HARRINGTON GARDENS AFTER THE USUAL CLASS FROM 17.30 - 18.15 ON THIS DATE.**

**Session 1a: Thursday 14 January – (Dr Christine Fanthome) – 13.15 – 17.15**

**INTRODUCTION**
Before focusing on ‘Comedy and Englishness’ there will be a short introduction to the British film industry which will include an overview of key box office facts, figures and trends, together with some comparisons with the US Film industry and a short summary of the recent legislative changes in the UK relevant to the industry.
COMEDY AND ENGLISHNESS
Over the years classic comedy films and TV programmes have helped to define our British national identity and the British sense of humour to the outside world. It has been an evolutionary process and we shall attempt to analyse and critique it in this session. We shall look at the different forms of comedy, discuss humour theory, outline the conventions of the sit-com and look at a range of examples of comedy from film and television.

Clips: (will include a selection of the following): The Ladykillers; Carry on Up the Khyber; Four Weddings and a Funeral; The Full Monty; Paddington, Blackadder; The Royle Family; The Office; Little Britain, Miranda, the work of Nick Park

Required reading for the class:

Suggestions for further reading:
Walters, B: (2005) The Office London: BFI

Session 1B Thursday 14 January – (Dr Christine Fanthome) 17.30 – 18.15
FANTASY part 1
Prior to our theatre trip next week to see The Woman in Black, we shall talk about Susan Hill’s original ghost story and view extracts from the 1989 television adaptation (starring Adrian Rawlins; screenplay by Nigel Kneale) and the 2012 feature film (starring Daniel Radcliffe; directed by James Watkins; screenplay by Jane Goldman)

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE TWOSESSIONS ON WED 20 JANUARY

Session 2A: Wednesday 20 January (Dr Christine Fanthome)
FANTASY part 2
Why has the best British fantasy tended to find its outlet through television rather than film? How does it differ from US originated material? In this session we shall attempt to define fantasy, account for the focus of British fantasy on the cerebral, and investigate why audiences find this genre so pleasurable.

Clips: (will include a selection from the following:) Quatermass; Quatermass and the Pit; The Prisoner (original 1960s series plus 2009 remake); Thunderbirds; Dr Who; Harry Potter, Stardust
Required reading for the class:

Suggestions for further reading:

Session 2B: Wednesday 20 January (Dr Christine Fanthome) EVENING SESSION
FAVORITE part 3
FIELD TRIP to see The Woman in Black
Fortune Theatre, Russell Street, Covent Garden, WC2B 5HH
We shall meet at the theatre (nearest tube Covent Garden) – details to be confirmed in the afternoon class

Session 3: Thursday 21 January (Ms Kate Domaille)
REALISM: DOCUMENTARY REALISM AND SOCIAL REALISM
A concern for realism is at the heart of much British film and TV. It’s important to remember that there many different types of realism including documentary realism, social realism, surrealism, docudrama and ordinary cinematic realism. The British Film Institute website has this to say about social realism: ‘Better than any other genre, social realism has shown us to ourselves, pushing the boundaries in the effort to put the experiences of real Britons on the screen, and shaping our ideas of what British cinema can be. While our cinema has experienced all the fluctuations in fortune of Hollywood's first export territory, realism has been Britain’s richest gift to world cinema.’ (http://www.screenonline.org.uk/film/id/1037898/index.html) Nevertheless, as we will see, ‘realism’ is always a problematic term because everything we see and hear via the media has been framed, edited, pre-interpreted and post-produced.

Clips: Focused around a single documentary television series this session will explore the roots of contemporary reality TV in a long-standing tradition of realist filmmaking dating back to The British Documentary Movement; ‘kitchen sink’ realism, such as Saturday Night, Sunday Morning (1960), and through the auteur cinema of Ken Loach, Andrea Arnold and Clio Barnard. Clips will include reference to these filmmakers work.

Required reading for the class:

Suggestions for further Reading:

Hill J (2011) Ken Loach: The Politics of Film and Television BFI/Palgrave Macmillan
Scott Anthony and James G. Mansell, The Projection of Britain: a History of the GPO Film Unit. Basingstoke: British Film Institute/Palgrave Macmillan, 2011, 352 pp

Session 4: Wednesday 27 January (Ms Kate Domaille)

ART FILM AND TV:
For much of its history, British film and TV has differed from its US counterpart in the emphasis that has been placed on artistic success. Many notable British actors, writers and directors have considered financial success less important than peer recognition for their artistic achievements. Although art film and TV tends to appeal to a small niche audience it is nevertheless influential and frequently attracts international interest. From time to time it also enters mainstream consciousness, for instance with the success of the TV series Sherlock.

Clips: If (1968); Performance (1971); The Draughtsman’s Contract (1982); Orlando (1992), A Cock and Bull Story (2005); Shame (2011); and Sherlock (2010).

TBC: It is possible we will be joined by a Guest Speaker from Soda Pictures) Soda Pictures is renowned for its eclectic catalogue of independent and world cinema, releasing films in the UK for Directors such as Mike Leigh and Michael Winterbottom. Soda Pictures pride themselves on releasing challenging films, with a particular focus on independent children’s titles and a commitment to new British Cinema.

http://www.sodapictures.com/

Required reading for the class:


Suggestions for further reading:


Session 5: Thursday 28 January (Dr Christine Fanthome)

CRIME
We shall look at developments in the crime genre since 1960, and the key changes in social attitudes and perceptions that they reflect. Starting with an assessment of the early depiction of the ‘bobby on the beat’ and its links with the English national identity, we shall then track the subsequent quest for greater realism, the emergence of the ‘rogue cop’ theme in the 1970s, the blurring of boundaries between law enforcement and lawlessness in what has been called ‘the
alternative tradition’, and the effects of gender politics, genre hybridisation and nostalgia on mediated crime.

**Guest Speaker** (subject to availability): Alison Chard, former Head of Casting, *The Bill*

**Clips:** (will include a selection from the following): *The Blue Lamp; Get Carter; The Long Good Friday; Lock Stock and Two Smoking Barrels; The Sweeney* (1970s TV series and 2012 film); *The Bill; Prime Suspect; Life on Mars; Broadchurch; Happy Valley*

**Required reading for the class:**


**Suggestions for further reading:**


**Session 6: Wednesday 3 February (Dr Christine Fanthome) – 13.15 – 17.15**

**HERITAGE DRAMA**
What is heritage drama? How does it attempt to re-present the national past? In this session we shall look at the heritage debate and the wider questions of commodification of heritage and nostalgia. We shall study the characteristics of the ‘classic’ heritage films of the 1980s and 1990s and assess the importance of heritage to the UK economy. Are the stylistic conventions of ‘classic’ heritage drama an essential component or can today’s period film and TV dramas still be considered part of this genre?

**Clips:** (will include a selection from the following): *Brideshead Revisited; Chariots of Fire; Howard’s End; Elizabeth; Gosford Park; Bleak House; Lost in Austen*

**Required reading for the class:**


Vidal, B. (2012) *Heritage Film: Nation, Genre and Representation*, chapter 1, pages 7 - 51

**Suggestions for further reading:**
Session 7: Thursday 4 February (Ms Kate Domaille)
NEW DOCUMENTARY, CITIZEN JOURNALISM AND REALITY TV
Along with its stress on realism, Britain places much emphasis on news and current affairs programming. The BBC World Service is the most trusted news service in the world. However, some of the most entertaining and thoughtful British TV of the past decade has involved a comic or ironic deconstruction of the conventions which structure journalistic reporting. This ‘postmodern’ turn in the media is also bound up with the rise of ‘populism’ (more of an ideology shared by media executives than a reflection of what people actually want to see on TV), ironic humour about the media and the ‘decline of deference’. These factors, along with the rise of so-called ‘citizen journalism’ have had a profound effect on so-called serious news reporting. This session will introduce the debate about citizen journalism and the role of social media and how this has impacted on news reporting through specific reference to the case study of the 2011 British riots and how twitter and BBM messaging became part of the story as well as part of the storytelling.


Required reading for the class:
Hamo M, Kamp and Schifman (2010) ‘Surviving the ‘mock interview’ challenges to political communicative competence in contemporary televised discourse Media Culture & Society 32 (2) 247-266


Suggestions for further Reading
Daniel Briggs (2012) The English Riots of 2011: A Summer of Discontent Hampshire: Waterside Press (worth having a look at this through the BU library stock on line. This is held as an ebook)


Creeber G (2013) Small Screen Aesthetics from TV to the Internet London: BFI/Palgrave Macmillan


John Corner, Kay Richardson and Katy Parry (2013) ‘Comedy and the Civic Subject, and Generic Mediation’ Television & New Media 14 (1) 31-45
*Contingency Class Date: Friday 5 February 2016. Students are obligated to keep this date free to attend class should any class dates need to be rescheduled.

**Session 8a: Wednesday 10 February (Dr Christine Fanthome) 13.15 – 14.45**
**FILMING IN LONDON - PART A**
In the last tax year there were 750 different filming events across London, which comes close to the levels of filming in New York! The Metropolitan Police Film Unit, comprising 217 police officers, plays an essential role in supervising, coordinating and facilitating commercial film and TV production across London so that these events run smoothly and safely.

**James Waller**, Head of the Metropolitan Film Unit, and a member of the International Association of Police Film Units which includes representation from London, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and San Francisco, will outline the best approach to be taken when filming on location on the streets of London.

**Required reading for the class:**
Metropolitan Police Film Unit, (2014), Guidelines to Filming on Location

(14.45 – 15.30 – Travel to Blackfriars tube station and walk to Tate Modern side of Milennium Bridge)

**Session 8b: Wednesday 10 February (Dr Andy Charlton) – starting 15.30**
**FILMING IN LONDON – PART B**
**FIELD TRIP**: Southwark and Bankside Film and TV walk. 15.30 start, meet on the Tate Modern side of the Millennium Bridge, led by Andy Charlton *(mobile number 07768 655 597)*. Nearest tube station is Blackfriars *(District/Circle Line)*.

Andy's guided walk will take you around Southwark and Bankside, an area that has attracted film makers, news crews, documentary makers and band video makers throughout the 20th century and now into the 21st. And with good reason; Shakespeare's Globe wasn't located here in the 16th century because this was a genteel, bourgeois, well behaved part of town. Quite the opposite. This was a vibrant, brutal, dangerous, rambunctious quarter full of thieves, pickpockets, wastrels, layabouts and the odd playwright. The main activities to be seen alongside theatrical performances on Bankside in the 16th century were riotous drinking, wild gambling and considerable amounts of, er, "wenching".

In the 20th century one of the attractions of the area for film makers was that if you wanted to blow up a car, stage a shooting, stabbing or a robbery, then what you filmed might well have been indistinguishable from what was going on at the same time a couple of streets away, minus the film crew. It had authenticity.

But that's all changed and the gentrification of Bankside and the opening of Tate Modern led to parts of the area featuring in the definitely not violent and bloody Bridget Jones movies. Likewise the area was safe enough to accommodate a small English wizard with his little round glasses and even a full complement of young British women telling everyone that what they really really really wanted was to ziga zigaaah. There's plenty more besides. The stabblings and shootings now being pretty much a thing of the past, we will aim to finish the walk with more or less the same number of people we start with, and perhaps a greater insight into why locations are chosen and how, and what still attracts film makers to the area today."
** Please note: Students will have their first Internship Seminar meeting on Wednesday 10\(^{th}\) February. Check Internship Tutorial Timetable for time and location.

Session 9: Thursday 11 February (Ms Kate Domaille)
MUSIC AND YOUTH CULTURE ON FILM
British film and TV has long been fascinated by youth culture and representations of youth in the media counters the dominant stereotypes of British people as reserved, undemonstrative and dispassionate. Britain’s contribution to pop, rock and dance music has been rich and varied. The UK has produced many of the best known music acts in the world. Yet to understand why this is, it is necessary to look closely at the relationship between the mainstream values held by middle aged British people and the history of those that have developed through youth subculture, which have gone on to transform the mainstream.

In looking at examples of specific youth programming in Britain in recent years: Skins, and Fresh Meat, you will be able to explore the shift in emphasis from representing the cultural tastes of young people in film/television to representing their social behaviours, with renewed concern about the state of youth in Britain as exemplified in Stan Cohen’s moral panic thesis.

**Clips:** A Hard Day’s Night (1964), Early Top of the Pops (1964); The Man who fell to Earth (1976); Trainspotting (1996), Control (2007); Nowhere Boy (2009); Made of Stone (2013);

From Television: Skins (from 2007 -); Fresh Meat (2013 - )

**Required reading for the class:**
Croft, J (2013) ‘Youth Culture and Style’ in British Cultural Identities, 4\(^{th}\) ed. Mike Storry, Peter Childs Abingon, Oxon: Routledge pp151-170

Deborah H Hunn ‘The dark side of Naomily’: Skins, Fan Texts and Contested Genres Continuum: Journal of Media and Cultural Studies Vol. 26 No.1 February 2012 89-100

**Suggestions for further Reading**


Mike Storry, Peter Childs (2013) British Cultural Identities, 4\(^{th}\) ed. Abingon, Oxon: Routledge

***All students must attend a mandatory drop-in session (to sign Internship Agreement and for any questions about placement, social programmes, travel and academics) on 15\(^{th}\) February in the Boston Room, 43 Harrington Gardens, SW7 4JU. Food will be served! TO BE CONFIRMED AND UPDATED.

**Exam:** Monday 15 February 2016 (Ms Kate Domaille)
Exam times and locations will be posted on the BU London website and in the Student Newsletter two weeks before exam dates.
Exam: This will be a take home paper issued to you on **Monday 15 February 2016** by Ms Domaille and will consist of a range of essay questions which will test you on your knowledge of the course. You will select just one of these questions to produce a single essay of 1250 words (10%+-), written over a single day. The essay must show evidence of drawing upon reading set in the course and additional reading/research you have undertaken in the selected area you write about. All quotations and citations should be referenced and include appropriate page numbers. Further details of this component will be issued to all students in the course. 50%