FI209-15 Television History and Criticism

20/21

Department
SCAPVC – Film and Television Studies
Level
Undergraduate Level 2
Module leader
Michael Samuel
Credit value
15
Module duration
10 weeks
Assessment
100% coursework
Study location
University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

Television History and Criticism aims to enable your further exploration of television as a historical, critical and theoretical object of study and follows on from the work some of you have done on Visual Cultures. The module covers histories of and programming from the earliest days of broadcast television through to the contemporary shift to digital distribution formats.

Module aims

The module aims to develop further your skills in the critical textual analysis of television texts, and to enable you to evaluate critically, and to mobilise a range of theoretical concepts and methodologies in relation to, the study of television as a textual, institutional, historical and cultural object.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

This is an indicative syllabus and subject to variation depending on module tutor, current research and various other factors:

Week One: Introduction to the module: television, history, nostalgia – TV on Trial:1955 (BBC4, 2005); Auntie, The Inside Story of the BBC (BBC1, 1997) episode 2 ‘Growing Pains, 1945-60’; 100 Greatest Television Moments (Channel 4, 1999); An Adventure in Space and Time (BBC2, 25/12/13)
Week Two: Television historiography 1: television production and institutional histories – the BBC – The Hour (BBC2, 2011-13)
Week Three: Television in the museum: curating television history – no screening, field trip to National Science and Media Museum, Bradford
Week Four: Television historiography 2: television programming and its cultural impact – no screening, archive work
Week Five: History television and the celebrity historian - Civilisation (BBC2, 1969) – episode 1 ‘The Skin of Our Teeth’; A History of Britain (BBC1/History Channel, 2000-2) – episode 7 ‘The Body of the Queen’; If Walls Could Talk: The History of the Home (BBC4, 2011)
Week Seven: Family history/Reality history - Who Do You Think You Are? (BBC2, 2004-) – ‘Stephen Fry’; ‘Upstairs Downstairs’ The Edwardian Country House (Wall to Wall/Channel 4, 2002)
Week Eight: Fictions of the Past 1 - Historical costume drama in the 1960s and 1970s - Culloden (15/12/64) Upstairs Downstairs (LWT, UK, 1971-5) – episode ‘The Nine Days Wonder’ (LWT, tx. 2/10/75)
Week Nine: Fictions of the Past 2 - Contemporary heritage drama - Downton Abbey (Carnival Productions for ITV, 2010-11) episode 1, Casanova (BBC3/Red/Power, UK, 2005); The Crown (Netflix, 2016-)
Week Ten: Looking back - Television and the 1970s – the nation as viewing family - The 70s (BBC, 2012), Cradle to Grave, Episode 3 (BBC, 2015-)

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of the module, you will be able to offer clear and precise critical accounts of the theories and concepts studied, both orally and in writing.
- By the end of the module you will be confident in your application and assessment of different types of television historiography.
- By the end of the module you will be able to textually analyze a range of different forms of television.
- By the end of the module you will have a clear understanding of the history of a range of different television genres, concepts and debates.

Indicative reading list

Reading lists can be found in Talis

Specific reading list for the module

Subject specific skills

This module develops skills of audio-visual literacy, through close textual and/or contextual analysis in relation to the moving image and sound. It may also develops understandings of historical, theoretical and conceptual frameworks relevant to screen arts and cultures.

Transferable skills

- critical and analytical thinking in relation
- independent research skills
- team work
- clarity and effectiveness of communication, oral and written
- accurate, concise and persuasive writing
- audio-visual literacy

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Other activity	27 hours (18%)
Private study	105 hours (70%)
Total	150 hours

Private study description

Weekly reading and viewing in preparation for classes, plus work preparing for essays and exams

Other activity description

screening

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
Assessment component			
Essay 1 - 1,000 words	20%		Yes (extension)
A writing task relating to the cultural status of television (e.g. a review, recap or short discourse analysis)			
Reassessment component is the same			
Assessment component			
Essay 2 - 3,000 words	80%		Yes (extension)
Reassessment component is the same			

Feedback on assessment

Written feedback plus an annotated essay document are provided via Tabula

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Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UFIA-W620 Undergraduate Film Studies
- Year 2 of UFIA-QW25 Undergraduate Film and Literature