

# LA3B6-15 Cinematic Explorations of Public Law

**24/25**

**Department**

School of Law

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 3

**Module leader**

Mara Malagodi

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

Legal actors, institutions, and problems have fascinated filmmakers since the early days of cinema. This module examines the ways in which Public Law and the legal system have been represented in a variety of films, and also considers the ways in which films engage with debates and controversies in this area of law. It aims to encourage reflection on the cultural lives of the law and also on a central theme in film studies, legal actors and legal processes. The module is organised thematically and analyses film and Public Law themes from a variety of jurisdictions across the globe. It explores how key legal issues, procedures, and actors are represented on film and how these representations in popular culture in turn influence understandings of the law, and in certain circumstances even its development. In particular, the module will focus on the genre of documentary film because of its commitment to authenticity and investigation of reality, while giving the students the freedom to explore feature films, TV series, and podcasts.

### Module aims

This module aims to give students a systematic understanding of Public Law and Film – an innovative interdisciplinary area of socio-legal research. Over the course of study, students will acquire coherent and critical knowledge of the subject of Public Law and Film; students will be

given a conceptual understanding that enables them to devise and sustain arguments and to comment upon current legal developments and academic research in this area; and be supported in their analysis of Public Law and Film at in-depth level with guidance towards particular sources, so that self-guided, student-led learning can occur.

## **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.

1. Introduction to Law & Film
2. Colonial Law and Film: Concerning Violence (class screening and discussion)
3. Colonialism, Law, and Reparations: Kenya's Mau Mau litigation in the UK
4. Torture, Law, and Film: The Pinochet Case
5. Torture and Filmic Intervention: The Troubles in Northern Ireland
6. The Holocaust in Law and Film
7. Holocaust Denial, Law, and Film
8. Law, Gender, and Sexuality on Film
9. Law, Surveillance, and Film: From 1984 to Snowden

## **Learning outcomes**

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

- Demonstrate knowledge of key areas and debates in the study of Public Law and Film
- Acquire the critical tools needed to analyse current films dealing with Public Law and legal processes
- Draw on a range of theoretical perspectives in order to determine an approach to unfamiliar films
- Demonstrate knowledge of the complex relationships between film text and legal context
- Be able to define a research topic, develop an argument, support findings with evidence, evaluate primary and secondary sources, and articulate findings

## **Indicative reading list**

Some texts from which module readings will likely be drawn, include:

- S. Greenfield et al, *Film and the Law* (2nd Hart 2010)  
S. Machura and P. Robson, *Law and Film* (2nd Ed, Blackwell 2001)  
P. Robson and J. Silbey, *Law and Justice on the Small Screen* (Hart, 2012)  
O. Kamir, *Framed: Women in Law and Film* (Duke, 2006)  
B. Nichols, *Introduction to Documentary* (3rd Ed, Indiana 2017)  
R. Sherwin, *When Law Goes Pop* (University of Chicago Press, 2000)  
M. Freeman (ed.), *Law and Popular Culture*, (OUP, 2005)  
A. Sarat (ed.), *Blackwell Companion to Law and Society* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2008)

## **Research element**

Independent research for assessment preparation

## Subject specific skills

This module builds on previously acquired knowledge of Public Law by introducing an interdisciplinary perspective to this field through the medium of film.

## Transferable skills

This module enhances the students's legal research, analysis, and writing skills.

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 2 hours (12%)
Seminars	6 sessions of 1 hour (4%)
Private study	1 hour (1%)
Assessment	125 hours (83%)
Total	150 hours

### Private study description

As guided by module leader

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

### Assessment group A

	Weighting	Study time
Final essay	100%	125 hours
Research essay		

### Feedback on assessment

## Availability

### Courses

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of ULAA-M130 Undergraduate Law
- Year 3 of ULAA-M300 Undergraduate Law
- ULAA-M105 Undergraduate Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M131 Undergraduate Law (4 Year)
- ULAA-M106 Undergraduate Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M106 Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of M106 Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M104 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M132 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
- ULAA-M108 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of M108 Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of M108 Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M133 Undergraduate Law with French Law
- Year 2 of ULAA-M134 Undergraduate Law with German Law
- Year 3 of ULAA-M110 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M136 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year)
- Year 3 of ULAA-M113 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (4 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Unusual option for:

- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 4 of ULAA-M10A Undergraduate Law with French Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M10C Undergraduate Law with German Law (Qualifying Degree)

- Year 4 of ULAA-M113 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (4 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
- ULAA-M115 Undergraduate Law with Social Sciences (3 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M115 Law with Social Sciences (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M115 Law with Social Sciences (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)

This module is Option list B for:

- Year 4 of ULAA-ML34 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 5 of ULAA-ML35 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree) (with Intercalated year)
- Year 4 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology