

Liverpool Film Seminar

2016 – 2017 series

Every year, Liverpool Film Seminar invites experts to deliver a series of talks. Topics vary greatly and the series does not focus on a specific aspect of film. Instead, a range of genres and approaches are celebrated, from historical reach to the internet's impact on cinematic material.

Professor Paul Grainge (University of Nottingham)

Paratexts and the promotional imagination of on-demand viewing

This talk connects work on media paratexts to studies that consider how promotional and advertising materials contribute to the social construction of new media technology and consumption practice. Jonathan Gray suggests that paratexts such as trailers, intros, promos, and bonus materials help audiences to anticipate, interpret and engage with movies and television shows. However, media paratexts also help frame the meaning of the platforms that distribute, aggregate and curate film and TV content.

Using the case of on-demand television, this talk considers the promotional imagination of BBC iPlayer in a period when the Corporation was striving to communicate its digital identity and broaden iPlayer within mainstream use. Drawing on interviews with industry practitioners, and examples of key short-form promos, the talk analyses transitions in the BBC's representation of iPlayer in the 2010s, captured in the move from 'pink portals' to 'mainstream Mums'. If, as Gray suggests, paratexts 'attempt to create interpretive communities and hermeneutic recipes for daily living in a media-saturated world', I consider how promos for iPlayer have established themselves as a means of creating 'hermeneutic recipes' for living with the new experiences of film and television in the digital era, specifically as delivered by the BBC.

Biography:

Paul Grainge is Professor of Film and Television Studies at the University of Nottingham where he is a member of the Institute for Screen Industries Research. His books include *Promotional Screen Industries* (co-authored with Catherine Johnson, 2015), *Ephemeral Media: Transitory Screen Culture from Television to YouTube* (ed.) (2011), *Brand Hollywood: Selling Entertainment in a Global Media Age* (2008), *Film Histories: An Introduction and Reader* (2007), *Memory and Popular Film* (ed.) (2003) and *Monochrome Memories* (2002). He is on the editorial advisory board of *Cinema Journal*, *Screen and Memory Studies* and is currently Director of the AHRC Midlands3Cities Doctoral Training Partnership.