

Institution: University of St Andrews



Unit of Assessment: School and Department: Philosophical, Anthropological and Film Studies:
Department of Film Studies

UoA: 35

a. Overview

The Department of Film Studies is an autonomous department in the School of Philosophy, Anthropology, and Film Studies. Formed in 2004 with the primary goal of creating a rigorous research practice in an emerging field, the Department has pioneered the study of film as a transnational form that cuts across traditional boundaries of nation, centre, and periphery. In the current REF cycle the Department has initiated a number of new scholarly projects that extend the transnational emphasis of our research in new directions, including projects in film festival research that provide a strong platform for future development. With the Centre for Film Studies as an organizational hub for our research, we have developed areas of strength in non-mainstream cinemas noted in our excellent RAE2008 results, consolidated the leadership of the Department with the arrival of Professor Robert Burgoyne, and expanded our postgraduate programme. We experienced robust growth during this cycle. In the RAE2008 the Department comprised 1 Professor and 4 Lecturers; we now number 2 Professors, 1 Senior Lecturer, 4 Lecturers, 2 fractional Professorial Fellows (Richard Dyer and Jean-Michel Frodon) and a fixed term Research Coordinator. Our growth and achievement owes a great deal to the support we receive from the University's central administration and the School, and to the collegial environment of the Arts Faculty, which the Times Higher Education ranked 20th in the world in 2010.

b. Research strategy

In our submission to RAE2008, we compared ourselves to an 'early career scholar,' as our Department had been in existence for only four years. Building on the core intellectual project we set forth in RAE2008 -- 'research that favours the study of transnational, marginal, and non-Hollywood cinemas' -- we have expanded our scholarly practice in new directions, while maintaining our distinctive research profile, one that is unique in the UK and has attained international prominence. The overall research strategy of the Department can now be summarized as the exploration of the global significance of film in all phases of its cultural life.

For the current research cycle, we identified 3 strategic priorities, outlined in RAE2008: 1) enhancing our scholarly strengths and our range of expertise by doubling the number of permanent staff, including Professorial appointments; 2) developing the Post Graduate Research programme by providing increased opportunities for professional engagement and development; 3) expanding the reach and sustainability of our research activity by establishing a publishing house and postgraduate journal, and by fostering grant activity across all levels of staff and PGRs.

As a result of sustained planning and research practice, we have accomplished these strategic goals. Moreover, we have developed an innovative research theme for this REF cycle entitled '**The Transnational Life of Film**,' that builds on the core intellectual project we set out in RAE 2008. Encompassing three interrelated research areas – **Representation, Circulation, and Preservation** – The Transnational Life of Film provides a coherent intellectual framework for the various research emphases of the programme. As a research department, we explore the life of film from its creation as a representational form through its circulation as a cultural text to its rebirth in archival form. Our scholarly work now extends from early film and film technology, to alternative forms of film exhibition and circulation, to the representation of western and minoritarian identities.

We have enhanced the vitality of our programme by expanding the range of cinemas we consider, embracing Latin America, East and South Asia, and Hollywood and deepening our coverage of global film histories. Building on the innovative research on transnational cinema set out in RAE

2008, we have launched a field-defining project on film festivals led by Professor Dina Iordanova, a project that constitutes the leading edge of our work in the area of **circulation**. We have also initiated major new research projects on **representation** in the areas of film and sexuality, activist documentary and media practice, testimony and witnessing, and war and cinema. In addition, we have developed innovative **archival** projects on local film history and early film colour. This range of research interests has generated an international presence and visibility for the Department, offers opportunities to develop research in a large number of contexts, and provides a powerful platform for future work. Over the next five years, we will continue to develop our distinct research identity by expanding our research in these three cluster areas. This coherent and sustainable framework will guide the department's development in our publications, our grant applications and in our hiring.

There are several reasons for continuing to develop our research in the three cluster areas, **representation, circulation, and preservation**. First, our early and recognized role as a research leader in transnational cinema gives us an important position in what is now one of the dominant areas of growth in Film Studies. Increasingly, the discipline of Film Studies incorporates non-mainstream, non-Western films and film cultures in its core research and teaching programmes. We have led the field in these areas since our inception in 2004, and will continue our path-finding work in the coming years. Second, our three research clusters give us a broad base and sufficient flexibility of emphases to enable us to develop collaborations with international scholars, arts organizations, museums, schools, and historical societies. Collaborative research will create new scholarship and funding opportunities. Third, the circulation and preservation strands of our research culture give us a presence in two of the most exciting developments in the field. Our contributions in these areas, including research on film festivals and the archival projects we are developing -- 'Cinema St Andrews' and 'Colour Film in the 1920's' (shared with the University of Bristol) are influential and highly visible examples of scholarly work.

We have developed many of these initiatives through **The Centre for Film Studies** <http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/filmstudies/cfs/> which serves as the intellectual hub of the Department. The Centre for Film Studies has produced a vibrant programme of conferences, symposia, lectures, and publications, and provides an effective public face for our research. Among the many activities organized by the Centre, a semi-monthly lecture series brings leading international scholars into direct contact with our growing PGR population, which now averages at 14 students in any given year. The Centre also organizes and hosts international symposia and conferences, visits by filmmakers, and serves as a resource for the St Andrews Film Studies Publishing House. The Centre plays a key role in reinforcing the thriving research environment in the Department, and has led to numerous collaborations and professional relationships. It also provides a valuable public forum for the early-stage development of research initiatives.

The recognition we received in RAE2008 has allowed us to become the UK leader in transnational cinema studies. Further recognition in the current REF period will allow us to strengthen our field-defining projects. First, we plan to extend the work of the **Centre for Film Studies**, augmenting our lecture series and the symposia we offer with seminars led by leading international scholars who will offer short, open enrolment courses geared to the wider community. We will continue to sponsor international symposia on a regular basis, expanding on the important symposia we have presented in this cycle on War and Cinema, History on Film/Film on History, Waves of Revolution, and Commies and Indians. The symposia and lectures have brought many important scholars to campus, including Laura Mulvey, Rosalind Galt, Sarah Street, Ian Christie, Hermann Kappelhoff, and Mark Cousins. Second, we plan to build on the early success of **St Andrews Film Studies Publishing** by creating additional publishing lines, using the successful *Film Festivals Yearbook* series as a model. We also intend to develop our online student-run journal, *Frames*, by seeking accreditation with learned societies. Third, we plan to increase the number of permanent staff at both the professorial and mid-career level. Our goal is to hire at least one additional senior staff member and two junior staff members in the coming REF cycle. We also intend to expand the number of postdoctoral research fellows we host by securing additional funding for support.

c. People, including:**1. Staffing strategy and staff development**

The Department has pursued a staffing strategy that develops our strengths in transnational film studies and provides leadership for our programme. We have appointed senior academics who are internationally recognised leaders in film and history (Burgoyne) and identity and film culture (Dyer, Frodon). Additionally, we have benefited from several short term Visiting Professorships awarded to such high profile figures as American film and history specialist Robert Rosenstone, renowned critic Jonathan Rosenbaum, and transnational film scholar Mette Hjort. We have also appointed several junior scholars during this cycle, including specialists in world cinema (Rice, Hanlon) and early cinema (Yumibe, Jacobson). Maintaining our existing methodological approach to a decentred world of cinemas, we have expanded the range of cinemas we consider and the ways in which we do so, pioneering new studies in film festivals (Iordanova), sexual identity (Girelli), historical representation (Burgoyne) and media activism (Torchin), an expansion that has allowed us to attract a wider range of PGRs.

With excellent University and external support, we have strengthened our research infrastructure, adding a fixed term Research Coordinator from 2010-2013 (Dr Alex Marlow-Mann 2010-12, Dr Stefanie Van De Peer 2012-14) whose principal role is to maintain and enhance our research environment by collaborating with staff on various ongoing projects. In addition, we added a postdoctoral researcher (Dr Bregt Lameris) to assist with a large Leverhulme-funded multinational study of Colour Film in the 1920s. As a result, we have created a centre for research in transnational film studies that is unrivalled in the discipline.

We recognize that staff development is critical to sustaining the Department's research endeavours and crucial to the future prospects for the programme. We emphasize formal and informal mentoring as a fundamental component of staff development. A key feature of our programme is the regularly scheduled Research Meeting (two per semester), in which a member of staff presents their research profile, explaining how their work has developed and changed over the course of their career. Senior and junior staff members learn from each other's successes in research, and discuss opportunities for funding, publication plans, and upcoming conferences and symposia. These meetings provide an intellectual coherence to the unit's research, and encourage cooperation on mutually beneficial projects, with senior staff regularly providing opportunities for junior staff to collaborate in publishing and in conference presentations. The Research Meetings have served as particularly productive forms of in-house networking, in which ideas and advice are generated and exchanged in a spontaneous, informal way.

Our staff enjoy high levels of support for travel and research; the School provides a travel stipend of £1,300 per annum. Staff also benefit from a generous leave policy; all staff are afforded the opportunity to apply for a single semester of sabbatical leave after every six semesters in service. With the exception of colleagues appointed in 2012, every member of the department has received at least a semester of supported research leave during the current REF period. New staff may be credited with up to two years of service accumulated in a previous full-time position.

The University of St Andrews values its PGR and research staff as key cohorts in its research community. The University meets all the key principles of the *Concordat* regarding the recruitment, selection and retention of researchers; the recognition of the value of researchers to the institution; the development of generic and flexible skills; the promotion of personal and career development; the promotion of diversity and equality practices; and the regular review of progress. The success of St Andrews in this area has recently been acknowledged by an Athena Swan Bronze Award, and a European Commission HR Excellence in Research Award. It also actively promotes our Stonewall membership and LGBT Charter Mark, and supports Women in Science networking events as a means of ensuring equality across all our practices.

The positive sense of teamwork and the culture of mutual support that sustains our work are enhanced by our diversity, which we see as a positive value in its own right. The full-time staff of

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the Department is comprised of 3 female staff and 4 male staff. Our commitment to equality is reflected in the wide range of ages, national origins, and professional backgrounds represented, including staff who have entered academia as a second career. All staff have equal opportunities for travel, professional exposure, and professional advancement in accordance with the University's policies.

2. Research students

We have built a thriving research-intensive student programme through a combination of close mentoring, rigorous annual reviews, and a comprehensive process of professionalization that exposes students to all elements of a professional academic career. Our current PhD programme typically consists of between 12-16 students, with an average annual intake of 4 new students, enabling a good working balance with the number of available supervisory staff. Each year we offer full and fee waiver scholarships by competition. Our community includes students from the UK, USA, Europe, Asia and Latin America. (Our department, because of its newness and its small size, was not included in the AHRC Block Grant scheme, nor were we eligible for individual AHRC grants to incoming research students in the current REF cycle.) In this REF cycle, 9 PhD and 1 MPhil students have completed the programme, and 17 more PhD students are continuing into the next cycle. The completion rate for students who have progressed past the second year of PhD study is 100%. Several of our graduates have secured employment in academic teaching or research positions.

We place a high value on supporting our PhD students through extensive academic training. All students have two named supervisors, either a primary and a secondary (pastoral) supervisor or joint supervision. Close contact with staff within an intimate department is the foundation of our professionalization process. Students meet twice monthly with their supervisors throughout their first year, and once or twice monthly thereafter, with additional meetings during the final stages of the PhD. Students also have access to the Director of Postgraduate Studies either through student representatives or in person. There are numerous opportunities to discuss matters with other members of staff in more informal contexts. We also formally evaluate our PhD students annually, a process that involves a written self-evaluation and a detailed review by their research supervisors. The students submit their recent chapters, along with a report on generic skills training. The process concludes with an in-depth interview with two members of staff who are not formally involved with the students' work, followed by a final written report.

One of the most distinctive aspects of our academic training is the experience in teaching that PhD students receive. PhD students in good standing are offered a teaching assistantship midway through their second year, a position that involves active participation in almost every aspect of the module for which they serve as tutors. To ensure that PhD students have opportunities to learn from full time staff, each tutor meets weekly with the staff member convening the module so that ideas can be exchanged and guidance given. We also provide opportunities for advanced postgraduate students to give occasional lectures to our large subhonours classes, lectures that are developed in consultation with full-time staff.

Two of our most useful and important innovations are the annual **Postgraduate Conference** and the annual **Study Day**, both of which are led and organized by PhD students. The annual Postgraduate Conference in May (in its 8th year in 2013) is a conference in which all PhD students participate. Each student presents a conference paper drawn from their research work and receives feedback from an invited scholar from outside the University (in this cycle, external scholars have included Prof Martine Beugnet (Edinburgh), Dr Sarah Cooper (Kings College London), Dr Lee Grieveson (UCL), and Dr Rosalind Galt (Sussex)). Film Studies postgraduates also host an annual Study Day each March (in its 7th year in 2013), coinciding with the Open Day, a symposium in which they devise a theme and invite a guest speaker. Several postgraduates have organized or co-organized additional conferences and symposia, including symposia on War and Cinema, History and Film, and Japanese Film. In addition, postgraduates run a twice-monthly seminar series where they present their work to their peers.

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The supervision, training and opportunities outlined above are enhanced by targeted financial assistance. The Department provides each PhD student with an annual travel stipend of £300, and an annual library budget of £100 for book and DVD purchases.

As a result of these combined forms of support, our students have been very successful in publishing their work, obtaining grants, organizing symposia, and actively participating in the professional world of Film Studies. Our students have had their work accepted at a number of leading conferences, including SCMS, Screen, NECS, The Annual History of Film Theories Seminar, Visible Evidence and Film-Philosophy. In addition, one PhD student was invited to speak at the 'Languages of Emotion' symposium at the Free University of Berlin in October 2012.

We emphasize the value of early publication, and our PhD students have responded by publishing refereed essays in competitive journals such as *Jump Cut*, *Short Film Studies*, *Journal of War and Culture Studies*, and *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*. Research students are also afforded a wide range of further opportunities for publishing and editing in Department-led projects. One of our most significant new endeavours is the postgraduate film studies journal, **Frames**, which was established in 2012. This initiative grew out of a stimulating Postgraduate Study Day dedicated to online, open-access publishing conducted by Dr Catherine Grant (Sussex). **Frames** now serves as the publishing outlet for the BAFTSS student writing competition award winners. In addition, *The Film Festivals Yearbook* series has featured work by several postgraduate students. Each year two research students in the Department are also responsible for editing and publishing the twice yearly **Centre for Film Studies Newsletter**, a publication with an international mailing list of over 400 scholars that has brought us a great deal of attention worldwide. Students have also programmed local film festivals and series, and annually organize and host an innovative film competition, The 60 Hour Film Blitz, which last year attracted over 30 film entries. The success of the Film Blitz competition and festival, dedicated to amateur filmmakers in the St Andrews community and University, is manifest in its popularity: more than 300 people attended the gala screening of competition winners in 2013.

The department has become a magnet for Pre and Postdoctoral researchers, having attracted 6 during the current REF cycle. Pre and Postdoctoral researchers are invited to participate fully in the life of the Department, and are encouraged to attend all Centre for Film Studies activities, to participate in symposia and conferences, and to contribute to publications that coincide with their research focus.

While much of the specialist PGR and research staff training and career development is conducted at School level, this training is augmented via an award-winning generic skills training programme (GRADskills) which is run the by University's Centre for Academic, Professional and Organisational Development (CAPOD). GRADskills aims to develop and support the acquisition of generic transferrable skills with a view to increasing research effectiveness and widening the potential employment opportunities of young researchers.

In summary, one of the most impressive accomplishments of this cycle is the development of a highly engaged postgraduate research culture, distinguished by an exceptional number of student-led initiatives, publications, and conference presentations. Our postgraduates take an active role in all aspects of Department life, and contribute to the intellectual project and the reputation of the University. In addition to receiving careful and thorough research supervision, PhD students in the Department of Film Studies emerge from the programme with teaching experience, publishing experience, and the experience of organizing and running conferences and symposia. They are also encouraged and mentored in grant and fellowship applications. The environment for research among postgraduates in Film Studies is characterized by active participation in a range of professional activities.

d. Income, infrastructure and facilities

The Department has generated a steady stream of research income, led by a large Leverhulme Trust Research Grant of £241,011 awarded to Professor Dina Iordanova for a project entitled 'The

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Dynamics of World Cinema' (2008 - 2011). The funding supported two post-doctoral researchers, Dr Ruby Cheung and Dr Ragan Rhyne. We have also received a large Leverhulme Trust Research Grant of £246,243, awarded to Dr Joshua Yumibe and Professor Sarah Street of The University of Bristol, entitled 'Colour in the 1920s: Cinema and Its Intermedial Contexts' (2012 - 2015). This grant is shared between The University of St Andrews (£103,809) and The University of Bristol (£142,434). The funding allowed the hiring of a post-doctoral researcher, Dr Bregt Lameris, who is based at St Andrews. We have also received a number of smaller research grants from organizations such as The Royal Society of Edinburgh, The Fulbright Foundation, and organizations such as The Carnegie Trust, AHRC and Creative Scotland. (Our grant activity may be measured against the junior composition of our staff. Three of our staff -- out of a total of seven full-time -- are early career researchers. As our staff matures, our grant activity will increase).

The University has supported the Department through extensive library acquisitions. The collection consists of over 2,000 books classified under Film Studies and related subjects (from a collection of over 1 million print monographs and 32,000 electronic books); approximately 100 film, television and media-related journals from a collection of 33,900 (over 65 available electronically); and there is also networked access to various databases, including *Box of Broadcasts*, *Film Indexes Online*, and *Film & Television Literature Index Full-Text*. The DVD collection has been a priority, with over 8,200 films available, including holdings of extremely rare reference materials such as ethnographic films and documentaries by filmmakers like Frederick Wiseman and Jean Rouch.

One of the most important and visible improvements to our physical facility is the recent addition of a second office building for staff. In 2012, the University provided us with a handsomely refurbished building directly adjacent to our main Departmental building. With the addition of this second building, all staff now have individual offices and are in physical proximity to the secretarial office, the postgraduate study centre, and the main meeting and conference room. A large purpose-built lecture hall and a dedicated Film Studies classroom have been provided by the University. A dedicated study centre for postgraduate students, with a high-end Apple Mac Pro (8-core processor) coupled with professional video editing software and hardware, seven computer workstations, a printer, DVD players, and a VHS player, is housed in our main Departmental building, and serves as a central research space.

e. Collaboration and contribution to the discipline or research base

The Department of Film Studies at St Andrews has established a leading role in the discipline in a very short period of time, and can claim a number of important and influential publications, collaborative projects, and scholarly initiatives that provide strong evidence of our growing stature in the field. In terms of research outputs, the Department is clearly world leading: our staff has published 10 monographs, 2 co-authored books, 15 edited collections, and many refereed journal essays and book chapters in the period covered by the REF cycle. 10 essays or books have been translated or published in languages other than English, including Chinese, Portuguese, Spanish, Korean, Danish, and Croatian. Our recent success in the annual BAFTTS and SCMS awards competition further demonstrates the quality of work the Department produces: two St Andrews researchers were shortlisted for the inaugural book, article and postgraduate essay awards from BAFTTS (Yumibe for article, and Burgoyne's doctoral student John Trafton for essay), the only Department in the UK to do so. In the recent SCMS awards cycle, two of our staff received major awards for scholarship, with Brian Jacobson winning the Best Dissertation Award and Joshua Yumibe winning Honorable Mention (second place) for Best First Book. Both the BAFTTS and the SCMS awards are stringently competitive. Moreover, several of our staff members have given major keynote addresses, including Robert Burgoyne, Dina Iordanova, Richard Dyer, Leshu Torchin and Dennis Hanlon.

One of our most significant contributions to the discipline is the establishment of **St Andrews Film Studies Publishing**. This new publishing project has produced 11 books since its inception in 2009. Under the direction of Dina Iordanova, St Andrews Film Studies Publishing has developed an innovative and well-regarded Film Festivals Yearbook series that has published a number of unique, valuable volumes of critical scholarship, including *Film Festivals in East Asia* and *Film*

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Festivals and Activism. Three of the books in the series are being translated into Chinese. Another series, established in 2013, is entitled *Films Need Festivals, Festivals Need Films*, and includes books such as *Coming Soon to a Festival Near You* (Ruoff 2012) and *Sustainable Projections* (Fischer 2013).

Our leading role has been recognized with appointments to leading professional organizations and honorary societies. Dina Iordanova, for example, has been appointed to the Board of Trustees of the Centre for the Moving Image, the parent company of the Edinburgh International Film Festival, a significant recognition of her scholarly leadership. She has also been named a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. Her work on behalf of the Film Studies community in Great Britain is illustrated by her role as a founding member and former treasurer of BAFTSS, which began its life during this REF cycle. Richard Dyer, professorial fellow and Wardlaw Professor at St Andrews, was recently elected to the British Academy in recognition of his outstanding contributions to British culture and arts. Robert Burgoyne is a member of several editorial and advisory boards, including the official Brazil Society for Cinema Studies journal, *Rebeca*, and serves as an active member of the editorial board of the Film and Television series published by Wayne State University Press. He served as a Fulbright Senior Specialist at The University of Southern Denmark in 2008. Joshua Yumibe was elected to the executive committee of Domitor, the International Society for the Study of Early Cinema in 2011.

We also participate in several joint research initiatives and collaborative projects. Iordanova's Dynamics of World Cinemas project involved a co-researched publication with a leading Australian scholar, Stuart Cunningham, entitled *Digital Disruption*, published by St Andrews Film Studies Publishing. Joshua Yumibe co-leads a joint Leverhulme funded project with Prof Sarah Street (Bristol) on colour film and colour processes in the 1920s that will bring together research conducted in France, Italy, the U.S. and Great Britain. Dr Yumibe also co-directs the Davide Turconi Project, co-sponsored by Le Giornate del Cinema Muto, the Cineteca del Friuli, the George Eastman House, and the L. Jeffrey Selznick School of Film Preservation. Leshu Torchin served as an invited senior scholar for a year-long appointment at the prestigious Carnegie Mellon Humanities Center for her work on 'Media and Social Change.'

In sum, the Department of Film Studies has created an innovative approach to research that is recognized throughout the discipline. We have shaped a new set of research questions, and have influenced the way Film Studies perceives its global role in the 21st century. Above all, the broad range of research we conduct, linked to our central theme of the transnational life of film, provides flexibility and outstanding potential for development.