T W MAY

A HISTORY AND INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS OF PLAY FOR TODAY (BBC1, 1970-84)

Ph.D.

Volume Two

Appendix 1A. List of Plays for Today and unofficial Plays for Today with viewing figures

Contained within this table are two categorised groups of TV plays. Firstly those I am officially counting as Plays for Today and, secondly, those which may have been classified by others at some point as Plays for Today. Please see **Appendix 5** for a detailed explanation of my justification for deciding upon the categorisations.

Those titles in **bold** are ones I have watched (or read the Camera Script of, for those not existing); **bold and underlined** means they were watched within the duration of my PhD study.

PfT title (with series and episode #)	Aesthetic	Held in archive? * = available on DVD/BR	Dir	Writer	Producer	DURATION (mins.)	DAY	Tx. date	START TIME	END TIME	Viewing Figures (millions)	Audience Share (%)	Reaction Index (%)
01.01: The Long Distance Piano Player	**Vf**	**Y**	Philip Saville	Alan Sharp (also radio play)	Irene Shubik	*80*	Thu	15/10/ 1970	21:20	22:40	**5.45**	***37.5***	***37***
01.02: The Right Prospectus	**F**	**Y**	Alan Cooke	John Osborne	Irene Shubik	**77**	Thu	22/10/ 1970	21:20	22:40	**6.06**	***39.5***	***35***
01.03: The Largest Theatre in the World: The Lie	**F**	**Y***	Alan Bridges	Ingmar Bergman; Paul Britten Austin (trans.)	Graeme McDonald	**90**	Thu	29/10/ 1970	21:20	22:50	**9.60**	***55.7***	***67***
01.04: Angels Are So Few	**Vf**	**Y**	Gareth Davies	Dennis Potter	Graeme McDonald	**64**	Thu	05/11/ 1970	21:20	22:25	**6.97**	***44.4***	***38***
01.05: I Can't See My Little Willie	**Vf**	**Just audio**	Alan Clarke	Douglas Livingstone	Irene Shubik	*74*	Thu	19/11/ 1970	21:20	22:25	**6.16**	***39.7***	***29***
01.06: A Distant Thunder	**V**	**N**	James Ferman	Maurice Edelman MP	Irene Shubik	*50*	Thu	26/11/ 1970	21:20	22:10	**6.01**	***38.5***	***71***
01.07: Hearts and Flowers	**Vf**	**Y**	Christopher Morahan	Peter Nichols	Irene Shubik	**75**	Thu	03/12/ 1970	21:20	22:35	**8.13**	***52.8***	***65***
01.08: Robin Redbreast	**Vf**	**Y***	James MacTaggart	John Bowen	Graeme McDonald	**77**	Thu	10/12/ 1970	21:20	22:35	**8.64**	***56.3***	***64***
01.09: The Hallelujah Handshake	**F**	**Y***	Alan Clarke	Colin Welland	Graeme McDonald	**76**	Thu	17/12/ 1970	21:20	22:35	**5.40**	***35.3***	***68***
01.10: Alma Mater	**Vf**	**N**	James Ferman	David Hodson	Irene Shubik	*85*	Thu	07/01/ 1971	21:20	22:45	**6.36**	***33.7***	***60***

01.11: Circle Line	**Vf**	**N**	Claude Whatham	W. Stephen Gilbert	Graeme McDonald	*65*	Thu	14/01/ 1971	21:20	22:25	**5.40**	***29.8***	***48***
01.12: Hell's Angel	**V**	**N**	Alan Cooke	"David Agnew" (Hugo Charteris)	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Thu	21/01/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**7.68**	***41.6***	***50***
01.13: The Piano	**Vf**	**Y**	James Cellan Jones	Julia Jones	Graeme McDonald	**62**	Thu	28/01/ 1971	21:20	22:25	**6.06**	***35.3***	***N/A.***
01.14: Billy's Last Stand	**V**	**N**	John Glenister	Barry Hines (also radio & stage play)	Graeme McDonald	*50*	Thu	04/02/ 1971	21:25	22:15	**5.35**	***29.6***	***N/A.***
01.15: The Largest Theatre In The World: The Rainbirds	**F**	**Y**	Philip Saville	Clive Exton	Irene Shubik	**65**	Thu	11/02/ 1971	21:20	22:25	**4.34**	***25.6***	***N/A.***
01.16: The Foxtrot	**Vf**	**Y**	Philip Saville	Rhys Adrian	Irene Shubik	**71**	Thu	29/04/ 1971	21:20	22:30	**6.97**	***47.0***	***50***
01.17: When the Bough Breaks	**Vf**	**Y**	James Ferman	Tony Parker	Irene Shubik	**75**	Thu	06/05/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**7.63**	***44.4***	***86***
01.18: Orkney	**F**	**Y**	James MacTaggart	John McGrath; George Mackay Brown (short stories)	Graeme McDonald	**92**	Thu	13/05/ 1971	21:20	22:50	**8.23**	***53.8***	***N/A.***
01.19: The Rank and File	**F**	**Y***	Ken Loach	Jim Allen	Graeme McDonald	**78**	Thu	20/05/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**3.48**	***25.2***	***65***
01.20: The Man in the Sidecar	**Vf**	**N**	James MacTaggart	Simon Gray	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Thu	27/05/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**7.22**	***45.0***	***54***
01.21: Everybody Say Cheese	**V**	**N**	Alan Clarke	Douglas Livingstone	Irene Shubik	*73*	Thu	03/06/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**3.28**	***22.7***	***48***
02.01: Traitor	**Vf**	**Y**	Alan Bridges	Dennis Potter	Graeme McDonald	**59**	Thu	14/10/ 1971	21:20	22:20	**5.40**	***34.8***	***63***
02.02: Edna, The Inebriate Woman	**F**	**Y***	Ted Kotcheff	Jeremy Sandford	Irene Shubik	**90**	Thu	21/10/ 1971	21:20	22:50	**9.44**	***53.9***	***80***
02.03: Evelyn	**V**	**Y**	Piers Haggard	Rhys Adrian (also radio play)	Graeme McDonald	**51**	Thu	28/10/ 1971	21:20	22:10	**6.21**	***40.6***	***55***
02.04: O Fat White Woman	**Vf**	**Y**	Philip Saville	William Trevor	Irene Shubik	**67**	Thu	04/11/ 1971	21:20	22:30	**4.24**	***29.4***	***58***
02.05: Thank You Very Much	**Vf**	**Y**	Claude Whatham	N.F. Simpson	Graeme McDonald	**41**	Thu	11/11/ 1971	21:20	22:00	**3.84**	***26.3***	***36***

02.06: Michael Regan	**F**	**Y**	John Gorrie	Robert Holles	Irene Shubik	*70*	Thu	18/11/ 1971	21:20	22:30	**4.85**	***25.0***	***77***
02.07: Skin Deep	**V**	**N**	Michael Lindsay-Hogg	Michael O'Neill & Jeremy Seabrook	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Thu	25/11/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**5.40**	***37.1***	***68***
02.08: Pal	**V**	**N**	Silvio Narizzano	Alun Owen	Irene Shubik	*55*	Thu	02/12/ 1971	21:20	22:15	**4.14**	***26.7***	***43***
02.09: The Pigeon Fancier	**Vf**	**Y**	James Ferman	Peter Hankin	Irene Shubik	**68**	Thu	09/12/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**5.05**	***32.6***	***72***
02.10: Still Waters	**F**	**Y**	James MacTaggart	Julia Jones	Graeme McDonald	**56**	Thu	13/01/ 1972	21:20	22:15	**6.92**	***47.2***	***67***
02.11: Stocker's Copper	**F**	**Y***	Jack Gold	Tom Clarke	Graeme McDonald	**85**	Thu	20/01/ 1972	21:20	22:45	**6.31**	***41.1***	***84***
02.12: The House on Highbury Hill	**V**	**N**	John Glenister	Piers Paul Read (also radio play)	Graeme McDonald	*60*	Thu	27/01/ 1972	21:20	22:20	**6.36**	***33.4***	***66***
02.13: In the Beautiful Caribbean	**V**	**N**	Philip Saville	Barry Reckord	Irene Shubik	*75*	Thu	03/02/ 1972	21:20	22:35	**3.84**	***23.5***	***46***
02.14: Ackerman, Dougall and Harker	**F**	**Y**	Ted Kotcheff	Don Shaw	Irene Shubik	**73**	Thu	10/02/ 1972	21:20	22:30	**3.79**	***24.0***	***59***
02.15: The Villa Maroc	**Vf**	**Y**	Herbert Wise	Willis Hall	Irene Shubik	**76**	Thu	17/02/ 1972	21:20	22:35	**5.91**	***40.9***	***66***
02.16: Cows	**V**	**N**	John Gorrie	Howard Barker	Graeme McDonald	*65*	Thu	24/02/ 1972	21:25	22:30	**4.65**	***31.2***	***47***
02.17: The Fishing Party	**F**	**Y***	Michael Simpson	Peter Terson (also radio play)	David Rose	**58**	Thu	01/06/ 1972	21:20	22:15	**6.36**	***42.7***	***77***
03.01: The Reporters	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Apted	Arthur Hopcraft	Graeme McDonald	**78**	Mon	09/10/ 1972	21:25	22:40	**3.23**	***19.2***	***71***
03.02: A Life is For Ever	**V**	**N**	Alan Clarke	Tony Parker	Irene Shubik	*75*	Mon	16/10/ 1972	21:25	22:40	**6.06**	***33.8***	***72***
03.03: Carson Country	**V**	**Y**	Piers Haggard	Dominic Behan	Graeme McDonald	**64**	Mon	23/10/ 1972	21:25	22:30	**2.78**	***16.4***	***68***
03.04: Man Friday	**V**	**N**	James MacTaggart	Adrian Mitchell	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Mon	30/10/ 1972	21:25	22:40	**2.83**	***18.1***	***63***
03.05: Triple Exposure	**Vf**	**Y**	Alan Cooke	David Halliwell	Irene Shubik	**66**	Mon	06/11/ 1972	21:25	22:30	**2.58**	***15.8***	***56***
03.06: Better Than the Movies	**V**	**N**	Roy Battersby	John Elliot	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Mon	13/11/ 1972	21:25	22:40	**4.90**	***28.5***	***76***

03.07: The General's Day	**Vf**	**Y**	John Gorrie	William Trevor (also short story)	Irene Shubik	**60**	Mon	20/11/ 1972	21:25	22:25	**5.30**	***28.6***	***69***
03.08: The Bankrupt	**Vf**	**Y**	Christopher Morahan	David Mercer	Graeme McDonald	**77**	Mon	27/11/ 1972	21:25	22:40	**2.58**	***16.3***	***39***
03.09: Just Your Luck	**Vf**	**Y**	Mike Newell	Peter McDougall	Graeme McDonald	**65**	Mon	04/12/ 1972	21:25	22:30	**6.06**	***35.2***	***N/A.***
03.10: The Bouncing Boy	**F**	**Y**	Maurice Hatton	John McGrath	Graeme McDonald	**72**	Mon	11/12/ 1972	21:25	22:35	**5.50**	***30.9***	***67***
03.11: Shakespeare - Or Bust	**F**	**Y***	Brian Parker	Peter Terson	David Rose	**74**	Mon	08/01/ 1973	21:25	22:45	**5.86**	***34.2***	***85***
03.12: Land of Green Ginger	**F**	**Y**	Brian Parker	Alan Plater	David Rose	**49**	Mon	15/01/ 1973	21:25	22:15	**4.70**	***21.9***	***68***
03.13: Kisses At Fifty	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Apted	Colin Welland	Graeme McDonald	**69**	Mon	22/01/ 1973	21:25	22:35	**7.47**	***42.8***	***81***
03.14: Highway Robbery	**V**	**N**	Michael Apted	Michael O'Neill & Jeremy Seabrook	Graeme McDonald	*80*	Mon	29/01/ 1973	21:25	22:45	**5.25**	***28.2***	***73***
03.15: Song at Twilight	**V**	**N**	Herbert Wise	Willis Hall	Irene Shubik	*75*	Mon	05/02/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**5.40**	***30.6***	***67***
03.16: Only Make Believe	**V**	**Y**	Robert Knights	Dennis Potter	Graeme McDonald	**74**	Mon	12/02/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**3.48**	***18.5***	***48***
03.17: For Sylvia, or the Air Show	**V**	**N**	Barry Davis	John Burrows & John Harding (also stage play)	Kenith Trodd	*55*	Mon	19/02/ 1973	21:25	22:20	**1.62**	***9.2***	***39***
03.18: The Operation	**F**	**Y**	Roy Battersby	Roger Smith	Kenith Trodd	**82**	Mon	26/02/ 1973	21:25	22:50	**5.50**	***30.7***	***63***
03.19: Access to the Children	**Vf**	**Y**	Philip Saville	William Trevor (also short story)	Irene Shubik	**65**	Mon	05/03/ 1973	21:25	22:30	**6.62**	***34.1***	***69***
03.20: Hard Labour	**F**	**Y***	Mike Leigh	Mike Leigh (dev.)	Tony Garnett	**71**	Mon	12/03/ 1973	21:25	22:35	**4.24**	***23.3***	***69***
03.21: Man Above Men	**V**	**N**	Alan Clarke	David Hare	Mark Shivas	*73*	Mon	19/03/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**4.14**	***24.5***	***44***
03.22: Speech Day	**F**	**HD**	John Goldschmidt	Barry Hines	Graeme McDonald	**51**	Mon	26/03/ 1973	21:25	22:15	**3.13**	***15.4***	***67***
03.23: Steps Back	**F**	**HD**	Brian Parker	David Halliwell	David Rose	**48**	Mon	14/05/ 1973	21:25	22:15	**2.27**	***13.9***	***N/A.***

03.24: Three's One	**Vf**	**N**	Alastair Reid	Penelope Mortimer	Graeme McDonald	*60*	Mon	04/06/ 1973	21:25	22:25	**2.37**	***15.1***	***34***
03.25: Edward G: Like the Film Star	**V**	**N**	James Ferman	John Harvey-Flint (also stage play)	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Mon	11/06/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**2.83**	***20.9***	***46***
03.26: Blooming Youth	**F**	**Y**	Les Blair	Les Blair (dev.)	Tony Garnett	**71**	Mon	18/06/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**3.69**	***25.1***	***50***
03.27: The Stretch	**Vf**	**N**	Peter Dews	Julia Jones	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Mon	25/06/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**3.03**	***21.1***	***62***
03.28: Making the Play	**V**	**N**	Michael Hayes	Charlotte Bingham & Terence Brady	Kenith Trodd	*65*	Mon	02/07/ 1973	21:25	22:30	**2.07**	***14.3***	***30***
04.01: Mrs. Palfrey at the Claremont	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Lindsay-Hogg	Ray Lawler; Elizabeth Taylor (novel)	Graeme McDonald	**85**	Thu	18/10/ 1973	21:25	22:50	**5.25**	***32.1***	**73**
04.02: Her Majesty's Pleasure	**V**	**Y**	Barry Davis	Jimmy O'Connor	Kenith Trodd	**82**	Thu	25/10/ 1973	21:25	22:45	**3.74**	***24.4***	**44**
04.03: Jack Point	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Apted	Colin Welland	Kenith Trodd	**84**	Thu	01/11/ 1973	21:25	22:45	**5.45**	***39.8***	**64**
04.04: The Emergency Channel	**V**	**N**	Robert Knights	John Bowen	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Thu	08/11/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**4.65**	***29.6***	**44**
04.05: Mummy and Daddy	**Vf**	**Just film sequences**	Barry Davis	Douglas Livingstone	Kenith Trodd	*70*	Thu	15/11/ 1973	21:25	22:35	**7.68**	***46.5***	**46**
04.06: Private Practice	**V**	**N**	Peter Cregeen	Peter Hankin	Mark Shivas	*70*	Thu	22/11/ 1973	21:25	22:35	**7.32**	***43.8***	**46**
04.07: Shutdown	**F**	**Y**	John Mackenzie	Tony Perrin	Kenith Trodd	**65**	Thu	29/11/ 1973	21:25	22:30	**7.12**	***46.5***	**52**
04.08: Baby Blues	**Vf**	**Y**	James MacTaggart	Nemone Lethbridge	Kenith Trodd	**74**	Thu	06/12/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**6.97**	***41.0***	**50**
04.09: Jingle Bells	**Vf**	**N**	Claude Whatham	Arthur Hopcraft	Graeme McDonald	*75*	Thu	13/12/ 1973	21:25	22:40	**6.92**	***52.9***	**45**
04.10: The Lonely Man's Lover	**F**	**Y**	Brian Parker	Barry Collins	David Rose	**56**	Thu	17/01/ 1974	21:30	22:28	**9.04**	***52.6***	**58**
04.11: All Good Men	**V**	**Y**	Michael Lindsay-Hogg	Trevor Griffiths	Graeme McDonald	**66**	Thu	31/01/ 1974	21:25	22:28	**4.55**	***38.7***	**53**
04.12: Joe's Ark	**Vf**	**Y**	Alan Bridges	Dennis Potter	Graeme McDonald	**67**	Thu	14/02/ 1974	22:45	23:52	**3.33**	***45.1***	**57**
04.13: Hot Fat	**V**	**N**	Derek Bennett	Jack Rosenthal	Graeme McDonald	*53*	Thu	21/02/ 1974	22:40	23:33	**3.08**	***39.1***	**33**

04.14: Easy Go	**F**	**Y**	Michael Tuchner	Brian Clark	Graeme McDonald	**51**	Thu	07/03/ 1974	21:25	22:15	**5.96**	***37.1***	**70**
04.15: Headmaster	**V**	**Y**	Anthony Page	John Challen	Graeme McDonald	**57**	Thu	14/03/ 1974	21:25	22:25	**7.32**	***43.7***	**67**
04.16: Penda's Fen	**F**	**Y***	Alan Clarke	David Rudkin	David Rose	**89**	Thu	21/03/ 1974	21:25	22:55	**4.85**	***31.7***	**39**
04.17: Pidgeon: Hawk or Dove?	**V**	**Y**	David Rose	Michael Sadler	David Rose	**76**	Thu	28/03/ 1974	21:25	22:40	**4.09**	***29.9***	**43**
04.18: Three for the Fancy	**F**	**Y**	Matthew Robinson	Peter Terson	David Rose	**54**	Thu	11/04/ 1974	21:25	22:20	**6.41**	***36.1***	**66**
04.19: The Cheviot, the Stag and the Black, Black Oil	**F**	**Y***	John Mackenzie	John McGrath (also stage play)	Graeme McDonald	**90**	Thu	06/06/ 1974	21:25	22:55	**4.19**	***30.5***	**70**
04.20: Schmoedipus	**V**	**Y**	Barry Davis	Dennis Potter	Kenith Trodd	**68**	Thu	20/06/ 1974	21:25	22:35	**4.39**	***38.6***	**38**
04.21: The Childhood Friend	**Vf**	**Y**	Mike Newell	Piers Paul Read	Graeme McDonald	**71**	Thu	27/06/ 1974	21:25	22:35	**7.02**	***51.1***	**56**
04.22: A Follower For Emily	**V**	**Y***	Alan Clarke	Brian Clark	Mark Shivas	**64**	Thu	04/07/ 1974	21:25	22:30	**5.45**	***37.9***	**63**
05.01: Leeds United!	**F**	**Y**	Roy Battersby	Colin Welland	Kenith Trodd	**118**	Thu	31/10/ 1974	21:25	23:20	**6.11**	***41.3***	**64**
05.02: Baby Love	**F**	**Y**	Barry Davis	David Edgar (also stage play)	Kenith Trodd	**59**	Thu	07/11/ 1974	21:25	22:25	**5.71**	***34.4***	**67**
05.03: Back of Beyond	**F**	**Y***	Desmond Davis	Julia Jones	Graeme McDonald	**60**	Thu	14/11/ 1974	21:25	22:25	**7.58**	***41.5***	**65**
05.04: The Bevellers	**V**	**Y**	Moira Armstrong	Roddy McMillan (also stage play)	Pharic Maclaren	**78**	Thu	21/11/ 1974	21:25	22:45	**4.39**	***24.4***	**49**
05.05: Taking Leave	**Vf**	**Y**	John Mackenzie	Joyce Neary	Kenith Trodd	**58**	Thu	28/11/ 1974	21:25	22:25	**6.72**	***36.9***	**53**
05.06: Fugitive	**Vf**	**Y**	Peter Gill	Sean Walsh	Kenith Trodd	**66**	Thu	05/12/ 1974	21:25	22:35	**4.60**	***28.8***	**52**
05.07: Eleanor	**Vf**	**Y**	Barry Davis	William Trevor (also short story)	Irene Shubik	**58**	Thu	12/12/ 1974	21:25	22:25	**7.27**	***39.7***	**58**
05.08: Gangsters	**F**	**Y***	Philip Saville	Philip Martin	Barry Hanson	**112**	Thu	09/01/ 1975	21:25	23:15	**7.32**	***40.8***	**73**
05.09: The After Dinner Game	**Vf**	**Y**	Robert Knights	Malcolm Bradbury &	David Rose	**65**	Thu	16/01/ 1975	21:25	22:35	**2.63**	***14.7***	**52**

				Christopher Bigsby									
05.10: Breath	**F**	**Y**	Matthew Robinson	Elaine Feinstein	David Rose	**60**	Thu	23/01/ 1975	21:25	22:25	**2.37**	***15.4***	**58**
05.11: The Death Of A Young Young Man	**F**	**Y**	Viktors Ritelis	Willy Russell	David Rose	**49**	Thu	30/01/ 1975	21:25	22:15	**2.58**	***14.3***	**61**
05.12: Sunset Across the Bay	**F**	**Y***	Stephen Frears	Alan Bennett	Innes Lloyd	**70**	Thu	20/02/ 1975	21:25	22:35	**4.39**	***22.8***	**63**
05.13: Funny Farm	**V**	**Y***	Alan Clarke	Roy Minton	Mark Shivas	**93**	Thu	27/02/ 1975	21:25	22:55	**2.78**	***18.4***	**58**
05.14: Goodbye	**F**	**Y**	Gavin Millar	Hugh Whitemore; William Sansom (novel)	Kenith Trodd	**79**	Thu	06/03/ 1975	21:25	22:45	**3.84**	***20.6***	**52**
05.15: Just Another Saturday	**F**	**Y***	John Mackenzie	Peter McDougall	Graeme McDonald	**75**	Thu	13/03/ 1975	21:25	22:45	**4.04**	***21.1***	**59**
05.16: Child of Hope	**V**	**Y**	Graham Evans	John Elliot; Joel Carlson (memoir)	Graeme McDonald	**64**	Thu	24/04/ 1975	21:35	22:50	**2.12**	***14.6***	**61**
05.17: The Saturday Party	**V**	**Y**	Barry Davis	Brian Clark	Mark Shivas	**72**	Thu	01/05/ 1975	21:25	22:40	**5.66**	***39.7***	**69**
05.18: Wednesday Love	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Apted	Arthur Hopcraft	Graeme McDonald	**71**	Thu	08/05/ 1975	21:25	22:35	**6.46**	***38.3***	**56**
05.19: The Dandelion Clock	**V**	**N**	John Bruce	Wilson John Haire	Ann Scott	*70*	Thu	15/05/ 1975	21:25	22:35	**3.03**	***19.1***	**50**
05.20: Brassneck	**Vf**	**Y**	Mike Newell	Howard Brenton & David Hare (also stage play)	Graeme McDonald	**81**	Thu	22/05/ 1975	21:35	22:55	**3.33**	***25.5***	**34**
05.21: The Floater	**V**	**Y**	Barry Davis	Peter Prince	Graeme McDonald	**62**	Thu	29/05/ 1975	21:35	22:40	**10.55**	***77.4***	**50**
06.01: Plaintiffs And Defendants	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Lindsay-Hogg	Simon Gray	Kenith Trodd	**64**	Tue	14/10/ 1975	21:25	22:30	**6.11**	***36.2***	**58**
06.02: Two Sundays	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Lindsay-Hogg	Simon Gray	Kenith Trodd	**57**	Tue	21/10/ 1975	21:25	22:35	**3.99**	***22.6***	**45**
06.03: Moss	**Vf**	**Y**	Philip Saville	Bernard Kops	Irene Shubik	**77**	Tue	28/10/ 1975	21:25	22:40	**2.47**	***11.8***	**69**

06.04: 84, Charing Cross Road	V	Y	Mark Cullingham	Hugh Whitemore; Helene Hanff (novel)	Mark Shivas	**68**	Tue	04/11/ 1975	21:25	22:40	**4.39**	***31.6***	**66**
06.05: Keep An Eye On Albert	F	Y	Michael Tuchner	Brian Glover	Ann Scott	**76**	Tue	11/11/ 1975	21:25	22:40	**8.03**	***49.8***	**58**
06.06: Children of the Sun	V	N	Viktors Ritelis	Michael O'Neill & Jeremy Seabrook	Ann Scott	*50*	Tue	18/11/ 1975	21:25	22:15	**5.61**	***35.7***	**34**
06.07: After the Solo	V	Y	Moira Armstrong	John Challen	Ann Scott	**60**	Tue	25/11/ 1975	21:35	22:35	**5.40**	***37.1***	**57**
06.08: Through The Night	V	Y	Michael Lindsay-Hogg	Trevor Griffiths; Jan Griffiths (diary)	Ann Scott	**80**	Tue	02/12/ 1975	21:25	22:45	**11.67**	***66.0***	**76**
06.09: A Passage to England	F	Y	John Mackenzie	Leon Griffiths	Kenith Trodd	**82**	Tue	09/12/ 1975	21:35	23:00	**8.33**	***55.9***	**71**
06.10: Rumpole of the Bailey	Vf	Y*	John Gorrie	John Mortimer	Irene Shubik	**62**	Tue	16/12/ 1975	21:25	22:30	**6.57**	***45.7***	**66**
06.11: The Other Woman	F	Y	Michael Simpson	Watson Gould	David Rose	**71**	Tue	06/01/ 1976	21:25	22:35	**10.71**	***58.7***	**51**
06.12: Nuts in May	F	Y*	Mike Leigh	Mike Leigh (dev., also stage play)	David Rose	**81**	Tue	13/01/ 1976	21:25	22:50	**9.44**	***49.8***	**59**
06.13: Doran's Box	Vf	Y	Matthew Robinson	Eric Colthart	David Rose	**70**	Tue	20/01/ 1976	21:25	22:35	**3.74**	***26.2***	**29**
06.14: Packman's Barn	F	Y	Christopher Menaul	Alick Rowe	David Rose	**59**	Tue	27/01/ 1976	21:35	22:35	**5.05**	***31.7***	**57**
06.15: A Story To Frighten The Children	F	Y	Herbert Wise	John Hopkins	Graeme McDonald	**88**	Tue	03/02/ 1976	21:25	22:50	**12.57**	***62.1***	**70**
06.16: The Happy Hunting Ground	F	Y	Brian Parker	Tom Hadaway	Anne Head	**73**	Tue	10/02/ 1976	21:25	22:40	**8.84**	***57.2***	**65**
06.17: Jumping Bean Bag	V	Y	Alan Cooke	Robin Chapman	Rosemary Hill	**69**	Tue	17/02/ 1976	21:25	22:35	**6.26**	***35.6***	**39**
06.18: Clay, Smeddum and Greenden	F	Y	Moira Armstrong	Bill Craig; Lewis Grassic Gibbon (short stories)	Pharic Maclaren	**84**	Tue	24/02/ 1976	21:25	22:50	**7.42**	***47.4***	**63**

06.19: Love Letters on Blue Paper	V	Y	Waris Hussein	Arnold Wesker (also short story)	Graeme McDonald	**76**	Tue	02/03/ 1976	21:25	22:40	**5.15**	***32.9***	**57**
06.20: Willie Rough	Vf	Y	Robert McIntosh	Bill Bryden (also stage play)	Pharic Maclaren	**78**	Tue	09/03/ 1976	21:25	22:40	**5.76**	***35.2***	**56**
06.21: Tiptoe Through the Tulips	Vf	Y	Claude Whatham	Beryl Bainbridge	Kenith Trodd	**73**	Tue	16/03/ 1976	21:25	22:40	**5.35**	***42.6***	**47**
06.22: The Peddler	Vf	Y	Claude Whatham	E.A. Whitehead	Graeme McDonald	**82**	Tue	23/03/ 1976	21:25	22:40	**6.87**	***40.1***	**55**
06.23: Early Struggles	F	Y	Stephen Frears	Peter Prince	Graeme McDonald	**60**	Tue	30/03/ 1976	21:25	22:25	**5.40**	***33.7***	**58**
06.24: Double Dare	F	Y	John Mackenzie	Dennis Potter	Kenith Trodd	**64**	Tue	06/04/ 1976	21:35	22:40	**8.13**	***56.7***	**45**
07.01: Bar Mitzvah Boy	F	Y*	Michael Tuchner	Jack Rosenthal	Graeme McDonald	**76**	Tue	14/09/ 1976	21:35	22:50	**6.87**	***43.0***	**73**
07.02: Bet Your Life	V	Y	Les Blair	Les Blair (dev.)	Graeme McDonald	**78**	Tue	21/09/ 1976	21:35	22:55	**6.31**	***49.6***	**48**
07.03: Rocky Marciano Is Dead	Vf	Y	Graham Evans	Bernard Kops	Graeme McDonald	**70**	Tue	28/09/ 1976	21:25	22:35	**4.60**	***31.7***	**54**
07.04: The Elephants' Graveyard	F	Y*	John Mackenzie	Peter McDougall	Graeme McDonald	**49**	Tue	12/10/ 1976	21:25	22:15	**5.81**	***37.0***	**49**
07.05: Housewives' Choice	Vf	Y	Chris Thompson	Roy Kendall	Kenith Trodd	**65**	Tue	19/10/ 1976	21:35	22:40	**6.62**	***44.6***	**50**
07.06: Your Man From Six Counties	F	Y*	Barry Davis	Colin Welland	Kenith Trodd	**95**	Tue	26/10/ 1976	21:25	23:00	**6.92**	***47.4***	**68**
07.07: Buffet	V	Y	Mike Newell	Rhys Adrian (also radio play)	Graeme McDonald	**85**	Tue	02/11/ 1976	21:25	22:45	**5.25**	***36.9***	**32**
07.08: Love on a Gunboat	Vf	Y	Robert Knights	Malcolm Bradbury	David Rose	**79**	Tue	04/01/ 1977	21:25	22:45	**6.31**	***34.5***	**55**
07.09: The Kiss of Death	F	Y*	Mike Leigh	Mike Leigh (dev.)	David Rose	**70**	Tue	11/01/ 1977	21:25	22:35	**8.33**	***46.4***	**40**
07.10: Our Flesh and Blood	Vf	Y*	Pedr James	Mike Stott	David Rose	**81**	Tue	18/01/ 1977	21:25	22:45	**9.65**	***51.1***	**64**
07.11: Do As I Say	V	Y	Barry Davis	Charles Wood	Graeme McDonald	**71**	Tue	25/01/ 1977	21:25	22:35	**7.37**	***43.0***	**42**
07.12: Spend, Spend, Spend	F	Y*	John Goldschmidt	Jack Rosenthal; Vivian	Graeme McDonald	**86**	Tue	15/03/ 1977	21:25	22:55	**13.13**	***65.0***	**68**

				Nicholson & Stephen Smith (book)									
07.13: A Photograph	**Vf**	**Y***	John Glenister	John Bowen	Graeme McDonald	**72**	Tue	22/03/ 1977	21:25	22:35	**7.98**	***43.8***	**54**
07.14: Gotcha	**Vf**	**Y***	Barry Davis	Barrie Keeffe (also stage play)	Margaret Matheson	**63**	Tue	12/04/ 1977	21:25	22:28	**6.82**	***35.0***	**55**
07.15: Campion's Interview	**Vf**	**Y***	Barry Davis	Brian Clark (also stage play)	Margaret Matheson	**27**	Tue	12/04/ 1977	22:28	22:55	**3.48**	***31.0***	**64**
07.16: A Choice of Evils	**V**	**Y**	Jane Howell	Jim Allen	Margaret Matheson	**84**	Tue	19/04/ 1977	21:25	22:50	**5.15**	***32.1***	**67**
07.17: The Country Party	**Vf**	**Y**	Barry Davis	Brian Clark	Mark Shivas	**81**	Tue	26/04/ 1977	21:25	22:50	**8.59**	***44.7***	**70**
08.01: Stronger than the Sun	**F**	**Y**	Michael Apted	Stephen Poliakoff	Margaret Matheson	**98**	Tue	18/10/ 1977	21:25	23:00	**7.52**	***46.0***	**68**
08.02: Come The Revolution	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Darlow	Robin Chapman	Rosemary Hill	**73**	Tue	25/10/ 1977	21:25	22:40	**4.14**	***29.1***	**39**
08.03: Abigail's Party	**V**	**Y***	Mike Leigh	Mike Leigh (dev., also stage play)	Margaret Matheson	**103**	Tue	01/11/ 1977	21:25	23:05	**9.09**	***55.0***	**56**
08.04: Oy Vay Maria	**V**	**Y**	Richard Loncraine	Mary O'Malley	Margaret Matheson	**68**	Tue	08/11/ 1977	21:25	22:35	**11.56**	***58.2***	**74**
08.05: Nipper	**V**	**Y**	Brian Farnham	Barrie Keeffe	Margaret Matheson	**78**	Tue	15/11/ 1977	21:35	22:50	**8.79**	***51.6***	**62**
08.06: One Day at a Time	**V**	**Y**	Ronald Wilson	Denis Cannan	Innes Lloyd	**73**	Tue	22/11/ 1977	21:35	22:40	**6.68**	***42.4***	**55**
08.07: The Mayor's Charity	**Vf**	**Y***	Mike Newell	Henry Livings	Richard Broke	**83**	Tue	29/11/ 1977	21:25	22:45	**6.78**	***44.0***	**44**
08.08: Catchpenny Twist	**Vf**	**Y**	Robert Knights	Stewart Parker (also stage play)	Robert Knights	**73**	Mon	05/12/ 1977	21:25	22:40	**2.70**	***14.8***	**54**
08.09: Charades	**V**	**Y**	Roderick Graham	Antonia Fraser	Pharic Maclaren	**54**	Tue	13/12/ 1977	21:25	22:20	**5.30**	***30.3***	**48**
08.10: The Thin End of the Wedge	**V**	**Y**	John Black	Sean McCarthy	Pharic Maclaren	**78**	Tue	20/12/ 1977	21:25	22:40	**5.56**	***34.3***	**40**
08.11: Scully's New Year's Eve	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Simpson	Alan Bleasdale	David Rose	**71**	Tue	03/01/ 1978	21:25	22:40	**10.50**	***61.0***	**59**
08.12: Licking Hitler	**F**	**Y**	David Hare	David Hare	David Rose	**62**	Tue	10/01/ 1978	21:25	22:25	**6.57**	***40.3***	**54**
08.13: Red Shift	**F**	**Y***	John Mackenzie	Alan Garner (also novel)	David Rose	**84**	Tue	17/01/ 1978	21:25	22:50	**5.81**	***33.5***	**45**

08.14: The Spongers	**F**	**Y***	Roland Joffé	Jim Allen	Tony Garnett	**91**	Tue	24/01/ 1978	21:25	23:10	**10.45**	***62.7***	**76**
08.15: Destiny	**Vf**	**Y**	Mike Newell	David Edgar (also stage play)	Margaret Matheson	**110**	Tue	31/01/ 1978	21:25	23:10	**2.93**	***21.6***	**54**
08.16: The After Dinner Joke	**V**	**Y**	Colin Bucksey	Caryl Churchill	Margaret Matheson	**60**	Tue	14/02/ 1978	21:25	22:30	**2.58**	***15.0***	**36**
08.17: The Legion Hall Bombing	**V**	**Y**	Roland Joffé (unc.)	Caryl Churchill (unc.)	Margaret Matheson	**86**	Tue	22/08/ 1978	22:25	23:55	**2.25**	***29.3***	**53**
09.01: Nina	**F**	**Y***	Alan Clarke	Jehane Markham	Margaret Matheson	**76**	Tue	17/10/ 1978	21:25	22:45	**3.45**	***17.0***	**59**
09.02: Victims of Apartheid	**Vf**	**Y**	Stuart Burge	Tom Clarke	Richard Eyre	**79**	Tue	24/10/ 1978	21:25	22:45	**2.45**	***13.4***	**56**
09.03: A Touch Of The Tiny Hacketts	**Vf**	**Y**	James Cellan Jones	John Esmonde & Bob Larbey	James Cellan Jones	**63**	Tue	31/10/ 1978	21:25	22:30	**5.51**	***35.5***	**59**
09.04: Dinner at the Sporting Club	**F**	**Y***	Brian Gibson	Leon Griffiths	Kenith Trodd	**63**	Tue	07/11/ 1978	21:25	22:30	**5.06**	***29.4***	**65**
09.05: Donal and Sally	**F**	**Y**	Brian Parker	James Duthie	Anne Head	**76**	Tue	14/11/ 1978	21:25	22:40	**7.99**	***51.5***	**77**
09.06: Sorry (Private View & Audience)	**V**	**Y**	Claude Whatham	Václav Havel (also stage plays)	Innes Lloyd	**87**	Tue	21/11/ 1978	21:25	22:55	**5.27**	***39.6***	**43**
09.07: Butterflies Don't Count	**V**	**Y**	Kenneth Ives	Wally K. Daly	Innes Lloyd	**77**	Tue	28/11/ 1978	21:25	22:45	**2.92**	***20.7***	**57**
09.08: Soldiers Talking, Cleanly	**V**	**Y**	Alan Dossor	Mike Stott	Richard Eyre	**71**	Tue	05/12/ 1978	21:25	22:30	**3.42**	***20.4***	**40**
09.09: One Bummer News Day	**V**	**Y**	Michael Darlow	Andy McSmith	Richard Eyre	**62**	Tue	12/12/ 1978	21:25	22:30	**2.95**	***19.2***	**54**
09.10: The Out of Town Boys	**F**	**Y**	Robert Knights	Ron Hutchinson	David Rose	**80**	Tue	02/01/ 1979	21:25	22:45	**6.11**	***27.3***	**58**
09.11: Vampires	**F**	**Y**	John Goldschmidt	Dixie Williams	Tara Prem	**50**	Tue	09/01/ 1979	21:25	22:15	**7.83**	***40.5***	**62**
09.12: The Chief Mourner	**Vf**	**Y**	Ben Rea	John Elliot	David Rose	**70**	Tue	16/01/ 1979	21:25	22:35	**7.15**	***41.4***	**73**
09.13: Waterloo Sunset	**Vf**	**Y**	Richard Eyre	Barrie Keeffe	Richard Eyre	**83**	Tue	23/01/ 1979	21:25	22:50	**7.26**	***36.4***	**77**
09.14: Blue Remembered Hills	**F**	**Y***	Brian Gibson	Dennis Potter	Kenith Trodd	**75**	Tue	30/01/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**6.79**	***40.3***	**54**

09.15: Who's Who	**F**	**Y***	Mike Leigh	Mike Leigh (dev.)	Margaret Matheson	**73**	Mon	05/02/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**4.07**	***24.3***	**51**
09.16: The Last Window Cleaner	**Vf**	**Y**	Bill Craske	Ron Hutchinson	Kenith Trodd	**68**	Tue	13/02/ 1979	21:25	22:35	**4.65**	***27.1***	**33**
09.17: Ploughman's Share	**V**	**Y**	Fiona Cumming	Douglas Dunn	Pharic Maclaren	**74**	Tue	27/02/ 1979	21:35	22:50	**4.50**	***32.8***	**59**
09.18: Degree of Uncertainty	**V**	**Y**	Paul Annett	Alma Cullen	Pharic Maclaren	**77**	Tue	06/03/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**5.59**	***39.9***	**63**
09.19: Light	**Vf**	**Y**	Jane Howell	Tony Perrin	Richard Eyre	**78**	Tue	13/03/ 1979	21:25	22:45	**3.08**	***22.7***	**55**
09.20: Coming Out	**Vf**	**Y***	Carol Wiseman	James Andrew Hall	Kenith Trodd	**70**	Tue	10/04/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**5.95**	***37.7***	**57**
09.21: Don't Be Silly	**Vf**	**Y**	Kenneth Ives	Rachel Billington	Innes Lloyd	**74**	Tue	24/07/ 1979	21:55	23:10	**8.35**	***68.4***	**69**
10.01: Long Distance Information	**F**	**Y**	Stephen Frears	Neville Smith	Richard Eyre	**63**	Thu	11/10/ 1979	21:25	22:30	**7.78**	***59.6***	**60**
10.02: Cries from a Watchtower	**Vf**	**Y**	Giles Foster	Stephen Lowe	Richard Eyre	**72**	Thu	18/10/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**9.03**	***63.4***	**64**
10.03: Comedians	**V**	**Y**	Richard Eyre	Trevor Griffiths (also stage play)	Richard Eyre	**95**	Thu	25/10/ 1979	22:00	23:35	**1.36**	***10.8***	**51**
10.04: Even Solomon	**Vf**	**Y**	Roger Bamford	Andrew Taylor	Anne Head	**82**	Thu	01/11/ 1979	21:25	22:50	**6.00**	***34.1***	**68**
10.05: Just A Boys' Game	**F**	**Y***	John Mackenzie	Peter McDougall	Richard Eyre	**70**	Thu	08/11/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**4.91**	***26.9***	**61**
10.06: Billy	**F**	**Y**	Charles Stewart	G.F. Newman (also novel)	Kenith Trodd	**80**	Tue	13/11/ 1979	21:25	22:45	**10.18**	***53.0***	**78**
10.07: A Hole in Babylon	**F**	**Y***	Horace Ové	Jim Hawkins & Horace Ové	Graham Benson	**74**	Thu	29/11/ 1979	21:35	22:45	**3.95**	***26.7***	**53**
10.08: The Slab Boys	**V**	**Y**	Bob Hird	John Byrne (also stage play)	Pharic Maclaren	**74**	Thu	06/12/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**4.55**	***30.1***	**55**
10.09: Katie: The Year of a Child	**F**	**Y**	Barry Davis	Ian Cullen & John Norton	John Norton	**69**	Thu	13/12/ 1979	21:25	22:35	**5.48**	***34.2***	**78**
10.10: The Network	**Vf**	**Y**	Derek Lister	Stephen Fagan	Anne Head	**76**	Thu	20/12/ 1979	21:25	22:40	**5.00**	***35.5***	**71**
10.11: Chance of a Lifetime	**F**	**Y**	Giles Foster	Robert Holman	Richard Eyre	**72**	Thu	03/01/ 1980	21:25	22:40	**12.89**	***70.8***	**69**

10.12: Keep Smiling	**Vf**	**Y**	Paul Joyce	Paul Joyce	David Rose	**84**	Thu	10/01/ 1980	21:25	22:50	**4.75**	***22.8***	**58**
10.13: Dreams of Leaving	**F**	**Y**	David Hare	David Hare	David Rose	**60**	Thu	17/01/ 1980	21:25	22:25	**4.96**	***27.0***	**45**
10.14: Thicker Than Water	**F**	**Y**	Alan Grint	Brian Glover	Tara Prem	**74**	Thu	24/01/ 1980	21:25	22:40	**5.53**	***34.1***	**68**
10.15: Murder Rap	**Vf**	**Y**	Peter Duffell	Michael Hastings	Richard Eyre	**90**	Thu	31/01/ 1980	21:25	22:55	**4.28**	***28.9***	**66**
10.16: Instant Enlightenment + VAT	**Vf**	**Y**	John Bruce	Andrew Carr	Innes Lloyd	**82**	Thu	07/02/ 1980	21:25	22:50	**2.35**	***15.2***	**50**
10.17: No Defence	**Vf**	**Y**	Clive Halls	Chris Kewbank	Innes Lloyd	**78**	Thu	14/02/ 1980	21:25	22:45	**4.07**	***27.0***	**72**
10.18: That Crazy Woman	**F**	**Y**	Bill Craske	David Hopkins	John Norton	**56**	Thu	21/02/ 1980	21:25	22:25	**3.13**	***17.7***	**57**
10.19: A Gift from Nessus	**V**	**Y**	James Ormerod	Bill Craig; William McIlvanney (novel)	Pharic Maclaren	**78**	Thu	28/02/ 1980	21:25	22:45	**4.44**	***29.3***	**75**
10.20: Kate The Good Neighbour	**F**	**Y**	John Bruce	Peter Ransley	Richard Broke	**92**	Thu	06/03/ 1980	21:25	23:00	**4.23**	***22.8***	**79**
10.21: Buses	**F**	**Y**	Tim King	Geoffrey Case	Terry Coles	**52**	Thu	13/03/ 1980	21:55	22:45	**6.42**	***56.9***	**61**
10.22: Shadows on our Skin	**F**	**Y**	Jim O'Brien	Derek Mahon; Jennifer Johnston (novel)	Kenith Trodd	**79**	Thu	20/03/ 1980	21:25	22:45	**4.38**	***19.2***	**77**
10.23: Ladies	**V**	**Y**	Diarmuid Lawrence	Carol Bunyan	Kenith Trodd	**66**	Thu	27/03/ 1980	21:35	22:40	**5.85**	***38.0***	**62**
10.24: Not For The Likes Of Us	**F**	**Y**	Tim King	Gilly Fraser	W. Stephen Gilbert	**57**	Thu	10/04/ 1980	21:25	22:25	**6.73**	***38.4***	**63**
10.25: The Executioner	**Vf**	**Y**	Kenneth Ives	Lionel Goldstein	Innes Lloyd	**78**	Thu	17/04/ 1980	21:25	22:45	**5.06**	***37.0***	**76**
10.26: The Imitation Game	**F**	**Y**	Richard Eyre	Ian McEwan	Richard Eyre	**93**	Thu	24/04/ 1980	21:35	23:10	**5.69**	***42.4***	**67**
10.27: A Walk in the Forest	**F**	**Y**	Jack Gold	Jeremy Paul	Carol Robertson	**95**	Wed	14/05/ 1980	23:05	00:40	**1.99**	***72.4***	**N/A.**
11.01: Pasmore	**F**	**Y**	Richard Eyre	Richard Eyre; David Storey (novel)	Ann Scott	**84**	Tue	21/10/ 1980	21:25	22:50	**8.03**	***50.7***	**63**

11.02: C2 H5 OH	V	Y	James Cellan Jones	David Turner	Innes Lloyd	**69**	Tue	28/10/ 1980	21:25	22:35	**4.35**	***29.3***	**71**
11.03: The Adventures of Frank Part 1: Everybody's Fiddling Something	Vf	Y	John McGrath	John McGrath (also stage play)	Richard Eyre	**67**	Tue	04/11/ 1980	21:25	22:35	**2.72**	***19.0***	**30**
11.04: The Adventures of Frank Part 2: Seeds Of Ice	Vf	Y	John McGrath	John McGrath (also stage play)	Richard Eyre	**79**	Tue	11/11/ 1980	21:25	22:45	**2.29**	***16.5***	**51**
11.05: Minor Complications	Vf	Y	Moira Armstrong	Peter Ransley	Richard Broke	**76**	Tue	18/11/ 1980	21:25	22:40	**7.05**	***39.7***	**80**
11.06: Jude	Vf	Y	Bill Craske	Lesley Bruce	June Roberts	**61**	Tue	02/12/ 1980	21:25	22:25	**3.50**	***17.1***	**60**
11.07: The Flipside of Dominick Hide	Fv	Y*	Alan Gibson	Alan Gibson (also idea) & Jeremy Paul	Chris Cherry	**91**	Tue	09/12/ 1980	21:35	23:10	**5.27**	***39.5***	**75**
11.08: Name for the Day	Vf	Y	Bill Bain	Colin Haydn Evans	Anne Head	**75**	Tue	16/12/ 1980	21:25	22:40	**5.32**	***35.5***	**64**
11.09: Jessie	F	Y	Bryan Forbes	Bryan Forbes	Neil Zeiger	**90**	Tue	23/12/ 1980	21:25	22:55	**7.57**	***45.6***	**80**
11.10: Beyond the Pale	F	Y	Les Blair	Les Blair (dev.); Jon Amiel (story with LB)	John Norton	**100**	Tue	06/01/ 1981	21:25	23:05	**2.65**	***13.1***	**58**
11.11: The Muscle Market	F	Y	Jim Goddard	Alan Bleasdale	Michael Wearing	**78**	Tue	13/01/ 1981	21:25	22:45	**5.21**	***31.2***	**73**
11.12: A Brush with Mr Porter on the Road to Eldorado	V	Y	Baz Taylor	Don Haworth	Michael Wearing	**68**	Tue	20/01/ 1981	21:25	22:35	**6.03**	***36.9***	**49**
11.13: The Cause	Vf	Y	Barry Davis	Derek Lister	Terry Coles	**70**	Tue	03/02/ 1981	21:25	22:35	**2.86**	***24.0***	**50**
11.14: Beloved Enemy	F	Y*	Alan Clarke	David Leland & Charles Levinson (also book)	Keith Williams	**69**	Tue	10/02/ 1981	21:25	22:35	**3.70**	***29.4***	**54**

11.15: The Kamikaze Ground Staff Reunion Dinner	**Vf**	**Y**	Baz Taylor	Stewart Parker (also radio play)	Neil Zeiger	**70**	Tue	17/02/ 1981	21:25	22:35	**2.70**	***21.2***	**34**
11.16: The Union	**V**	**Y**	Ronald Wilson	Tony Perrin	Innes Lloyd	**69**	Tue	24/02/ 1981	21:25	22:40	**2.63**	***19.2***	**68**
11.17: Sorry	**V**	**Y**	Alistair Clarke	Carol Bunyan (also stage play)	John Norton	**97**	Tue	03/03/ 1981	21:25	23:05	**6.80**	***40.2***	**53**
11.18: Shai Mala Khani: The Garland	**F**	**Y**	Horace Ové	H.O. Nazareth & Horace Ové	Peter Ansorge	**90**	Tue	10/03/ 1981	21:35	23:05	**4.33**	***31.8***	**63**
11.19: The Sin Bin	**V**	**Y**	John Gorrie	Tony Parker	June Roberts	**74**	Tue	17/03/ 1981	21:25	22:40	**3.30**	***23.4***	**47**
11.20: Before Water Lilies	**V**	**Y**	Alan Charlesworth	Robert Marshall	Chris Cherry	**64**	Tue	24/03/ 1981	21:25	22:30	**2.80**	***18.1***	**34**
11.21: Bavarian Night	**Vf**	**Y**	Jack Gold	Andrew Davies	Louis Marks	**79**	Tue	31/03/ 1981	21:25	22:45	**5.20**	***28.6***	**60**
11.22: The Good Time Girls	**V**	**Y**	Gareth Davies	Alan Clews	Pharic Maclaren	**74**	Tue	07/04/ 1981	21:25	22:40	**8.10**	***44.3***	**62**
11.23: Baby Talk	**Vf**	**Y**	Derek Lister	Nigel Williams	Anne Head	**66**	Tue	21/04/ 1981	21:25	22:35	**7.31**	***39.2***	**62**
11.24: A Turn for the Worse	**V**	**Y**	Bill Hays	John Bill	John Norton	**65**	Tue	28/04/ 1981	21:25	22:30	**4.60**	***30.3***	**60**
11.25: Psy-Warriors	**V**	**Y***	Alan Clarke	David Leland (also stage play)	June Roberts	**73**	Tue	12/05/ 1981	22:15	23:28	**1.67**	***14.2***	**58**
12.01: Country	**F**	**Y**	Richard Eyre	Trevor Griffiths	Ann Scott	**82**	Tue	20/10/ 1981	21:25	22:45	**5.50**	***30.4***	**55**
12.02: London Is Drowning	**V**	**Y**	Martyn Friend	Graham Williams	Chris Cherry	**71**	Tue	27/10/ 1981	21:25	22:40	**9.30**	***45.9***	**63**
12.03: A Room for the Winter	**V**	**Y**	Jim Goddard	Rose Tremain	June Roberts	**65**	Tue	03/11/ 1981	21:25	22:30	**3.90**	***21.8***	**YTL**
12.04: No Visible Scar	**Vf**	**Y**	Moira Armstrong	Rosemary Davies	Innes Lloyd	**61**	Tue	17/11/ 1981	21:25	22:25	**5.70**	***29.9***	**69**
12.05: Iris In The Traffic, Ruby In The Rain	**F**	**Y**	John Bruce	Stewart Parker	June Roberts	**62**	Tue	24/11/ 1981	21:25	22:30	**6.80**	***34.8***	**YTL**

12.06: Protest	V	Y	Alistair Clarke	Václav Havel (stage play); Vera Blackwell (trans.)	Innes Lloyd	49	Tue	01/12/ 1981	21:25	22:15	4.60	*23.0*	YTL
12.07: United Kingdom	F	Y	Roland Joffé	Jim Allen	Kenith Trodd	147	Tue	08/12/ 1981	21:25	23:55	4.30	*30.2*	YTL
12.08: PQ-17	Vf	Y	Frank Cox	Roger Milner; Captain Jack Broome (memoir)	Innes Lloyd	49	Tue	15/12/ 1981	21:25	22:15	9.40	*46.8*	YTL
12.09: The Factory	V	Y	Gerald Blake	David Hopkins	Innes Lloyd	59	Tue	22/12/ 1981	21:25	22:25	4.90	*21.7*	YTL
12.10: England's Greens and Peasant Land	F	Y	Jim Hill	Rita May	John Norton	74	Tue	05/01/ 1982	21:25	22:45	9.00	*41.9*	73
12.11: A Cotswold Death	F	Y	Tony Bicât	Tony Bicât	Michael Wearing	66	Tue	12/01/ 1982	21:25	22:30	10.40	*49.2*	60
12.12: Under the Skin	V	Y	Tony Smith	Janey Preger	Peter Ansorge	74	Tue	19/01/ 1982	21:25	22:40	7.00	*38.4*	57
12.13: Commitments	V	Y	Richard Wilson	Dusty Hughes (also stage play)	Ann Scott	82	Tue	26/01/ 1982	21:25	22:50	4.20	*25.6*	43
12.14: Life After Death	F	Y	Anthony Simmons	Rachel Billington	Innes Lloyd	71	Tue	02/02/ 1982	21:25	22:40	7.40	*38.7*	67
12.15: The Silly Season	Vf	Y	Alex Marshall	Stephen Mulrine	Pharic Maclaren	75	Tue	09/02/ 1982	21:25	22:40	6.60	*34.5*	55
12.16: Too Late To Talk To Billy	Vf	Y	Paul Seed	Graham Reid	Neil Zeiger & Chris Parr	85	Tue	16/02/ 1982	21:25	22:50	6.30	*33.5*	71
12.17: Willie's Last Stand	Vf	Y	Brian Parker	Jim Allen	Alan Seymour	54	Tue	23/02/ 1982	21:25	22:20	11.70	*53.4*	YTL
12.18: Tishoo	V	Y	Gerald Blake	Brian Thompson (also stage play)	John Norton	84	Tue	09/03/ 1982	21:35	23:00	4.10	*26.8*	47
12.19: Home Sweet Home	F	Y	Mike Leigh	Mike Leigh (dev.)	Louis Marks	88	Tue	16/03/ 1982	21:25	22:55	9.60	*49.0*	60
12.20: A Sudden Wrench	V	Y	Jon Amiel	Paula Milne	Alan Shallcross	60	Tue	23/03/ 1982	21:30	22:30	7.60	*39.0*	YTL

12.21: Eve Set the Balls of Corruption Rolling	**V**	**Y**	David Maloney	Marcella Evaristi	Bob McIntosh	**79**	Tue	30/03/ 1982	21:25	22:45	**8.00**	***42.2***	**YTL**
12.22: Whistling Wally	**V**	**Y**	Gerald Blake	Wally K. Daly (also radio play)	Innes Lloyd	**61**	Tue	06/04/ 1982	21:25	22:25	**7.00**	***35.5***	**68**
13.01: Soft Targets	**F**	**Y**	Charles Sturridge	Stephen Poliakoff	Kenith Trodd	**98**	Tue	19/10/ 1982	21:25	23:00	**5.40**	***33.9***	**YTL**
13.02: 3 Minute Heroes	**F**	**Y**	Michael Custance	Leslie Stewart	Colin Rogers	**61**	Tue	26/10/ 1982	21:25	22:25	**5.00**	***27.4***	**YTL**
13.03: The Remainder Man	**V**	**Y**	Richard Wilson	Philip Martin	Ann Scott	**64**	Tue	02/11/ 1982	21:25	22:30	**3.30**	***18.5***	**YTL**
13.04: Intensive Care	**F**	**Y**	Gavin Millar	Alan Bennett	Innes Lloyd	**80**	Tue	09/11/ 1982	21:25	22:50	**4.77**	***26.8***	**YTL**
13.05: A Mother Like Him	**Vf**	**Y**	Baz Taylor	Frances Galleymore	Alan Shallcross	**54**	Tue	16/11/ 1982	21:25	22:20	**5.20**	***28.4***	**YTL**
13.06: John David	**Vf**	**Y**	Rodney Bennett	Paula Milne (also novel)	Brenda Reid	**80**	Tue	23/11/ 1982	21:25	22:45	**6.98**	***40.5***	**YTL**
13.07: Aliens	**V**	**Y**	David Maloney	Alan Clews	Bob McIntosh	**69**	Tue	30/11/ 1982	21:25	22:35	**4.43**	***24.0***	**YTL**
13.08: Another Flip For Dominick	**V**	**Y***	Alan Gibson	Jeremy Paul & Alan Gibson	Chris Cherry	**84**	Tue	14/12/ 1982	21:25	22:50	**5.30**	***30.6***	**YTL**
14.01: Last Love	**Vf**	**Y**	Nicholas Renton	Reg Gadney	Alan Shallcross	**58**	Tue	01/03/ 1983	21:25	22:25	**6.70**	***35.2***	**YTL**
14.02: Gates of Gold	**V**	**Y**	Jon Amiel	Maurice Leitch	Chris Parr; Andrée Molyneux (Ex.)	**68**	Tue	08/03/ 1983	21:25	22:35	**5.50**	***31.0***	**YTL**
14.03: Wayne and Albert	**V**	**Y**	Sarah Pia Anderson	David Hopkins	Alan Shallcross	**59**	Tue	15/03/ 1983	21:35	22:35	**5.60**	***30.2***	**YTL**
14.04: Atlantis	**F**	**Y**	Les Chatfield	Peter Terson	Colin Rogers	**75**	Tue	29/03/ 1983	21:25	22:40	**5.70**	***31.6***	**YTL**
14.05: The Last Term	**F**	**Y**	Philip Bonham-Carter	Raymond Hitchcock	Rosemary Hill	**70**	Tue	05/04/ 1983	21:25	22:40	**7.10**	***39.0***	**YTL**
14.06: Reluctant Chickens	**V**	**Y**	Gareth Davies	David Cregan	Roger Gregory	**54**	Tue	12/04/ 1983	21:25	22:20	**4.70**	***23.6***	**YTL**
14.07: Shall I Be Mother?	**Vf**	**Y**	Ronald Wilson	Peter Ransley	Anne Head	**90**	Tue	19/04/ 1983	21:25	22:58	**4.30**	***23.2***	**YTL**

14.08: The Falklands Factor	V	Y	Colin Bucksey	Don Shaw	Louis Marks	**55**	Tue	26/04/ 1983	21:30	22:30	**2.10**	***11.5***	**YTL**
14.09: A Matter of Choice For Billy	**Vf**	**Y**	Paul Seed	Graham Reid	Chris Parr; Neil Zeiger (Ex.)	**83**	Tue	10/05/ 1983	21:25	22:50	**3.90**	***19.9***	**80**
15.01: Young Shoulders	**F**	**Y**	Silvio Narizzano	Robert Smith; John Wain (novel)	Bernard Krichefski	**81**	Tue	14/02/ 1984	21:40	23:00	**5.50**	***32.9***	**57**
15.02: A Coming to Terms For Billy	**Vf**	**Y**	Paul Seed	Graham Reid	Chris Parr	**82**	Tue	21/02/ 1984	21:25	22:50	**6.00**	***32.2***	**83**
15.03: Z for Zachariah	**F**	**Y**	Anthony Garner	Anthony Garner; Robert C. O'Brien (novel)	Neil Zeiger	**118**	Tue	28/02/ 1984	21:35	23:33	**6.50**	***41.3***	**74**
15.04: Moving on the Edge	**Vf**	**Y**	Anthony Garner	Rose Tremain	Rosemary Hill	**65**	Tue	06/03/ 1984	21:25	22:30	**5.16**	***28.9***	**57**
15.05: Desert of Lies	**Vf**	**Y**	Piers Haggard	Howard Brenton	Michael Wearing	**84**	Tue	13/03/ 1984	21:35	23:00	**4.53**	***28.9***	**44**
15.06: Hard Feelings	**V**	**Y**	Michael Bradwell	Doug Lucie (also stage play)	Michael Wearing	**82**	Tue	20/03/ 1984	21:25	22:50	**5.60**	***32.4***	**47**
15.07: Under the Hammer	**Vf**	**Y**	Richard Wilson	Stephen Fagan (also radio play)	Michael Wearing	**71**	Tue	27/03/ 1984	21:25	22:35	**6.10**	***33.5***	**YTL**
15.08: King	**Vf**	**Y**	Tony Smith	Barrie Keeffe (also stage play)	Michael Wearing	**80**	Tue	03/04/ 1984	21:25	22:45	**3.59**	***20.7***	**63**
15.09: Rainy Day Women	**F**	**Y**	Ben Bolt	David Pirie	Michael Wearing	**85**	Tue	10/04/ 1984	21:25	22:50	**8.60**	***47.2***	**66**
15.10: Dog Ends	**V**	**Y**	Carol Wiseman	Richard Harris (also stage play)	Andrée Molyneux	**73**	Tue	17/07/ 1984	21:25	22:40	**6.00**	***31.5***	***YTL***
15.11: The Groundling And The Kite	**F**	**Y**	Peter Jefferies	Leonard Preston	Colin Rogers	**61**	Tue	24/07/ 1984	21:25	22:25	**4.05**	***23.0***	***YTL***
15.12: The Cry	**Vf**	**Y**	Christopher Menaul	Derek Mahon & Christopher Menaul; John Montague (short story)	Chris Parr	**54**	Tue	31/07/ 1984	21:25	22:20	**3.90**	***19.7***	***YTL***
15.13: It Could Happen to Anybody	**V**	**Y**	Laurence Moody	Hugh McManus	Bob McIntosh	**54**	Tue	14/08/ 1984	21:25	22:20	**5.49**	***28.9***	***YTL***

15.14: Only Children	**Vf**	**Y**	Michael Rolfe	Judy Forrest	Alan Shallcross	**62**	Tue	21/08/ 1984	21:25	22:30	**3.69**	***20.9***	***YTL***
15.15: The Amazing Miss Stella Estelle	**V**	**Y**	John Davies	Leslie Stewart	Rob Walker	**46**	Tue	28/08/ 1984	21:25	22:15	**7.28**	***36.0***	**49**
PLAY FOR TOMORROW (1982)													
1: Crimes	**V**	**Y**	Stuart Burge	Caryl Churchill	Neil Zeiger	**60**	Tue	13/04/ 1982	21:25	22:25	**4.40**	***24.8***	**35**
2: Bright Eyes	**V**	**Y**	Peter Duffell	Peter Prince	Neil Zeiger	**52**	Tue	20/04/ 1982	21:25	22:20	**4.70**	***24.5***	**47**
3: Cricket	**V**	**Y**	Michael Darlow	Michael Wilcox	Neil Zeiger	**52**	Tue	27/04/ 1982	21:25	22:20	**6.30**	***36.4***	**43**
4: The Nuclear Family	**V**	**Y**	John Glenister	Tom McGrath	Neil Zeiger	**64**	Tue	04/05/ 1982	21:35	22:40	**4.90**	***26.4***	**YTL**
5: Shades	**V**	**Y**	Bill Hays	Stephen Lowe	Neil Zeiger	**59**	Tue	11/05/ 1982	21:25	22:25	**5.90**	***34.4***	**YTL**
6: Easter 2016	**V**	**Y**	Ben Bolt	Graham Reid	Neil Zeiger	**69**	Tue	18/05/ 1982	21:25	22:35	**4.90**	***33.2***	**YTL**
UNOFFICIAL Plays for Today (1970-1985)													
01: The Write-Off	*?*	**Y**	Rudi Dorin	George Salverson	Rudi Dorin & Robert Allen	*75*	Thu	12/11/ 1970	21:20	22:35	**5.45**	***38.4***	**58**
02: Reddick	*?*	**Y**	Mervyn Rosenzveig	Munroe Scott	Mervyn Rosenzveig; Robert Allen (Ex.)	*75*	Thu	18/02/ 1971	21:20	22:35	**3.54**	***22.2***	**YTL**
03: Home	**V**	**Y***	Lindsay Anderson	David Storey	Jack Venza	**87**	Thu	06/01/ 1972	21:20	22:50	**2.83**	***17.1***	**58**
04: The Evacuees	**F**	**Y**	Alan Parker	Jack Rosenthal	Mark Shivas	**75**	Wed	05/03/ 1975	21:35 **[BBC2]**	22:50	**2.88**	***16.9***	**76**
05: By Common Consent	**V**	**Y**	John Robins; Ron Daniels (stage orig.)	Paul Thompson	Kenith Trodd	**87**	Thu	05/06/ 1975	21:25	22:55	**2.22**	***19.0***	**40**
06: Brimstone and Treacle	**V**	**Y***	Barry Davis	Dennis Potter	Kenith Trodd	**74**	Tue	25/08/ 1987	22:10	23:25	**4.00**	**YTC**	**YTL**

07: The House of Bernarda Alba	V	Y	Claude Whatham	Federico García Lorca (play); James Graham-Lujan and Richard L. O'Connell (trans.)	Cedric Messina	**93**	Tue	28/07/ 1976	21:25 **[BBC2]**	23:00	**0.51**	***2.1***	**59**
08: The Price of Coal Part 1: Meet the People	F	Y*	Ken Loach	Barry Hines	Tony Garnett	**77**	Tue	29/03/ 1977	21:35	22:50	**5.00**	***37.7***	**79**
09: The Price of Coal Part 2: Back to Reality	F	Y*	Ken Loach	Barry Hines	Tony Garnett	**91**	Tue	05/04/ 1977	21:25	23:00	**8.38**	***45.3***	**79**
10: Scum	F	Y*	Alan Clarke	Roy Minton	Margaret Matheson	**74**	Sat	27/07/ 1991	23:45 **[BBC2]**	01:20	**0.80**	***17.4***	**YTL**
11: Our Day Out >	F	Y*	Pedr James	Willy Russell	David Rose	**70**	Tue	07/02/ 1978	21:25	22:35	**7.10**	**YTC**	**YTL**
12: Days of Hope 1 >	F	Y*	Ken Loach	Jim Allen	Tony Garnett	**90**	Tue	18/04/ 1978	21:25	23:05	**6.09**	**YTC**	**70**
13: Days of Hope 2 >	F	Y*	Ken Loach	Jim Allen	Tony Garnett	**100**	Tue	25/04/ 1978	21:25	23:05	**5.63**	**YTC**	**79**
14: Days of Hope 3 >	F	Y*	Ken Loach	Jim Allen	Tony Garnett	**78**	Tue	02/05/ 1978	21:25	22:45	**4.09**	**YTC**	**73**
15: Days of Hope 4 >	F	Y*	Ken Loach	Jim Allen	Tony Garnett	**129**	Tue	09/05/ 1978	21:25	23:35	**4.28**	**YTC**	**75**
16: Story without a Hero <	F	?	Micky Dolenz	Maggie Wadey	Graham Benson	*30*	Thu	13/12/ 1979	20:30 **[BBC2]**	21:00	**1.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
17: Pillion	V	Y	Keith Evans	Paul Copley	Richard Eyre	**63**		NB				**YTC**	**N/A**
18: The Black Stuff	F	Y*	Jim Goddard	Alan Bleasdale	David Rose	**110**	Wed	02/01/ 1980	21:25 **[BBC2]**	23:15	**3.40**	**YTC**	**72**
19: The Vanishing Army >	F	Y	Richard Loncraine	Robert Holles	Innes Lloyd	**78**	Tue	03/04/ 1980	21:25	22:45	**3.50**	**YTC**	**YTL**
20: On Giant's Shoulders >	F	Y	Anthony Simmons	William Humble & Anthony Simmons; Marjorie Wallace & Michael Robson (book)	Mark Shivas	**92**	Tue	24/06/ 1980	22:25	23:55	**YTL**	**YTC**	**YTL**

21: Fearless Frank >	**V**	**Y**	Colin Bucksey	Andrew Davies	Louis Marks	**83**	Tue	01/07/ 1980	22:20	23:45	**3.48**	**YTC**	**65**
22: Number On End	**F**	**Y**	Douglas Camfield	Gordon Flemyng	David Rose	**72**	Tue	25/11/ 1980	21:25	22:40	**5.17**	**YTC**	**71**
23: Dear Brutus	*?*	**Y**	Alan Bridges	J.M. Barrie (stage play)	Louis Marks	**80**	Tue	27/01/ 1981	21:25	22:45	**4.17**	**YTC**	**51**
24: Rules of Justice <	**V**	**Y**	Colin Tucker	William Humble	Ruth Caleb; Peter Goodchild (Ex.)	**75**	Sat	14/11/ 1981	21:23 **[BBC2]**	22:30	**1.30**	**YTC**	**YTL**
25: The Grudge Fight <	**V**	**Y**	Mike Vardy	John Hale	Rosemary Hill	**67**	Fri	27/11/ 1981	21:35 **[BBC2]**	22:46	**1.90**	**YTC**	**YTL**
26: Findings on a Late Afternoon <	**V**	**Y**	Richard Martin	Rose Tremain	June Roberts	**67**	Fri	11/12/ 1981	21:30 **[BBC2]**	22:37	**1.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
27: Being Normal	**V**	**Y**	Peter Smith	Brian Phelan	Alan Shallcross	**78**	Wed	27/07/ 1983	22:10	23:33	**4.10**	**YTC**	**YTL**
28: Gunfight at the Joe Kay Corral	**V**	**Y**	Ken Grieve	Alan Shinwell	Bob McIntosh	**81**	Wed	03/08/ 1983	21:25	22:45	**5.30**	**YTC**	**YTL**
29: A Ring of Keys	**V**	**Y**	Baz Taylor	Frank Ash	Bob McIntosh	**68**	Wed	10/08/ 1983	21:40	22:50	**4.60**	**YTC**	**YTL**
30: Bazaar and Rummage	**V**	**Y**	Richard Stroud	Sue Townsend	Terry Coles	**67**	Wed	17/08/ 1983	21:25	22:35	**4.60**	**YTC**	**YTL**
31: Floating Off	**Vf**	**Y**	Nicholas Renton	Stephen Davis	Erika Bond	**68**	Wed	24/08/ 1983	21:25	22:33	**5.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
32: Stan's Last Game	**Vf**	**Y**	Gavin Millar	Willis Hall	Terry Coles	**61**	Tue	25/10/ 1983	21:25	22:28	**4.80**	**YTC**	**YTL**
33: Submariners	**V**	**Y**	Antonia Bird	Tom McLenaghan	Innes Lloyd	*83*	Tue	01/11/ 1983	21:25	22:48	**5.40**	**YTC**	**YTL**
34: Martin Luther – Heretic	**F**	**Y**	Norman Stone	William Nicholson	David M. Thompson	**65**	Tue	08/11/ 1983	21:25	22:33	**4.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
35: Reith - Part 1	**V**	**Y**	Kenneth Ives	Roger Milner	Innes Lloyd	*80*	Mon	14/11/ 1983	21:25	22:45	**YTL**	**YTC**	**YTL**

36: Reith - Part 2	**V**	**Y**	Kenneth Ives	Roger Milner	Innes Lloyd	*90*	Tue	15/11/ 1983	21:29	22:59	**3.40**	**YTC**	**YTL**
37: One of Ourselves	**F**	**Y**	Pat O'Connor	William Trevor	Kenith Trodd	**49**	Tue	22/11/ 1983	21:25	22:15	**4.10**	**YTC**	**YTL**
38: An Englishman Abroad	**F**	**Y**	John Schlesinger	Alan Bennett	Innes Lloyd	**62**	Tue	29/11/ 1983	21:25	22:30	**4.90**	**YTC**	**YTL**
39: The Aerodrome	**F**	**Y**	Giles Foster	Robin Chapman; Rex Warner (novel)	Kenith Trodd	**78**	Tue	13/12/ 1983	21:28	22:59	**5.40**	**YTC**	**YTL**
40: Orwell on Jura	**F**	**Y**	John Glenister	Alan Plater	Norman McCandlish	**90**	Tue	20/12/ 1983	21:28	22:58	**4.10**	**YTC**	**YTL**
41: Keep on Running	**V**	**Y**	Paul Seed	Andy Armitage	Brenda Reid	*50*	Fri	06/04/ 1984	22:00 **[BBC2]**	22:50	**YTL**	**YTC**	**YTL**
42: Long Live the Babe	**V**	**Y**	Bill Hays	Shirley Gee	Terry Coles	**51**	Wed	11/04/ 1984	22:10 **[BBC2]**	23:01	**YTL**	**YTC**	**YTL**
43: Fire at Magilligan	**V**	**Y**	Jan Sargent	Harry Barton	Chris Parr	**45**	Wed	27/06/ 1984	21:32 **[BBC2]**	22:15	**1.90**	**YTC**	**YTL**
44: Terra Nova	**V**	**Y**	John Bruce	John Bruce; Ted Tally (story)	Innes Lloyd	**94**	Tue	13/11/ 1984	21:28	23:02	**2.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
45: The Long March	**V**	**Y**	Chris Parr	Anne Devlin	Keith Williams	**93**	Tue	20/11/ 1984	21:28	23:02	**2.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
46: Punters	**V**	**Y**	Chris Menaul	Stephen Wakelam	Andrée Molyneux	**68**	Tue	27/11/ 1984	21:27	22:36	**3.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
47: Stars of the Roller State Disco	**V**	**Y***	Alan Clarke	Michael Hastings	Michael Wearing	**74**	Tue	04/12/ 1984	21:27	22:41	**1.90**	**YTC**	**YTL**
48: Talk to Me	**V**	**Y**	Tony Smith	William Humble	Innes Lloyd	**83**	Tue	11/12/ 1984	21:27	22:51	**3.10**	**YTC**	**YTL**
49: More Lives Than One	**V**	**Y**	Michael Darlow	John Peacock	Alan Shallcross	**80**	Tue	18/12/ 1984	21:27	22:47	**6.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**

50: The Last Evensong	**V**	**Y**	Jon Amiel	Trevor Baxter	Alan Shallcross	**67**	Tue	08/01/ 1985	21:25	22:35	**3.30**	**YTC**	**YTL**
51: Bird Fancier	**F**	**Y**	Bill Hays	Mal Middleton	Terry Coles	**59**	Tue	15/01/ 1985	21:25	22:25	**7.00**	**YTC**	**YTL**
52: The Exercise	**F**	**Y**	Gareth Davies	Tim Rose Price	Roger Pine	**59**	Tue	22/01/ 1985	21:27	22:27	**6.30**	**YTC**	**YTL**
53: Four Days in July	**F**	**Y***	Mike Leigh	Mike Leigh (dev.)	Kenith Trodd	**96**	Tue	29/01/ 1985	21:27	23:03	**3.80**	**YTC**	**YTL**
54: Brigadista	**V**	**Y**	Chris Lovett	Terence Hodkinson	Bob McIntosh	**67**	Tue	05/02/ 1985	21:27	22:35	**3.20**	**YTC**	**YTL**
55: The Mimosa Boys	**Vf**	**Y**	John Hefin	Ewart Alexander	Keith Williams	*85*	Wed	19/06/ 1985	22:20	23:45	**?**	**YTC**	**YTL**

Key

- For durations, *italics* indicates that the length is estimated, from its scheduling in the Radio Times (BBC Genome) and/or daily viewing barometers or BARB daily viewing summaries.

- ***Italics and bold*** for 04.05 indicate I have seen the filmed inserts, but have yet to read the full Camera Script which exists in the BBC WAC.

- N/A = Highly likely there is no RI/AI figure, having consulted audience research reports and viewing barometers, in the BBC WAC, but there is a slight possibility data may exist in some other documents.

- NB = Not broadcast.

- YTL = Yet to locate this information.

- YTC = Yet to calculate this information.

- > = Shown as a PfT after previously being broadcast on its own or part of another strand.

- < = Never actually shown under the PfT name but are classed as PfT in some places; one of these may be prefaced by PfT title sequence, oddly.

Notes

- 1. To determine aesthetic classification – for those I have yet to watch, I drawn on the Trodd Index (1983) listing filmed productions, as well as Radio Times listings (BBC Genome) and end credits which give a sense of whether film, video or hybrid. However, for those not watched, these estimations of which aesthetic are not to be taken as authoritative.

- 2. Durations have in all cases been rounded up, e.g. *Moving on the Edge* is 64 minutes and 2 seconds long, so is counted as 65.

- 3. It transpires that Library and Archives Canada in Gatineau, Quebec, holds copies of the first two unofficial PfTs made by CBC, *The Write-Off* and *Reddick*. Information from Andrew Burke's tweet, 25 August 2021: https://twitter.com/aabwpg/status/1430642641054572546 [accessed: 13 May 2022]

- 4. Reaction Index measuring levels of audience appreciation changed its name to the 'Appreciation Index' in 1981 with the transition to BARB recording standardised audience figures.

- 5. As explained in chapter 2, RI figures for October 1970 to July 1973 have been calculated using the raw data within audience reaction reports.

- 6. Gathering of AI figures for November 1981 to July 1984 has been far sparser, but in all probability these figures will exist somewhere. E.g. in the ARR for 15.15, it states that 15.10-15.14 achieved an average AI of 69.

Appendix 1B. Series-by-series overview of The Wednesday Play and Play for Today's audience sizes, audience shares and Reaction Indices, 1964-84

STRAND	YEAR	TOTAL PLAYS	existing	Junked	**Audience Size (millions; mean ave.)**	**Reaction Index / Appreciation Index (mean average %)**	**Audience as % of UK population (aged 5+)**	***PfT % Audience Share***	***BBC2 % Audience Share***	***ITV % Audience Share***	***C4 % Share***	**TOTAL TV AUDIENCE millions (mean ave.)**	**BBC1 lead over ITV during TWP/PfT**
TWP	1964-65	**32**	15	17	**6.92**	**56**	**14**	***49.3***	***0.0***	***50.8***	***0.0***	**14.04**	**-1.50**
TWP	1965-66	**33**	21	12	**8.16**	**55**	**16**	***55.4***	***0.0***	***44.6***	***0.0***	**14.74**	**10.72**
TWP	1966-67	**29**	9	20	**7.68**	**58**	**15**	***50.5***	***6.8***	***42.6***	***0.0***	**15.20**	**7.89**
TWP	1967-68	**24**	8	16	**7.52**	**51**	**15**	***44.4***	***10.5***	***45.0***	***0.0***	**16.92**	**-0.59**
TWP	1968-69	**26**	7	19	**7.11**	**54**	**14**	***38.6***	***16.3***	***45.1***	***0.0***	**18.42**	**-6.51**
TWP	1969-70	**25**	14	11	**5.43**	**53**	**11**	***30.0***	***11.4***	***58.7***	***0.0***	**18.13**	**-28.79**
PfT	1970-71	**21**	13	8	**6.40**	***55***	**13**	***42.3***	***19.7***	***37.9***	***0.0***	**15.12**	**4.39**
PfT	1971-72	**17**	12	5	**5.45**	**63**	**11**	***31.7***	***17.8***	***50.5***	***0.0***	**17.17**	**-18.72**
PfT	1972-73	**28**	17	11	**4.12**	***61***	**8**	***30.3***	***20.2***	***49.5***	***0.0***	**13.61**	**-19.17**
PfT	1973-74	**22**	17.5	4.5	**5.67**	**54**	**11**	***37.6***	***18.0***	***44.4***	***0.0***	**15.09**	**-6.81**
PfT	1974-75	**21**	20	1	**4.93**	**57**	**10**	***33.8***	***15.2***	***51.0***	***0.0***	**14.56**	**-17.12**
PfT	1975-76	**24**	23	1	**6.80**	**56**	**13**	***37.8***	***19.5***	***42.6***	***0.0***	**17.99**	**-4.84**

PfT	1976-77	**17**	17	0	**7.01**	**56**	**14**	***40.6***	***13.9***	***45.5***	***0.0***	**17.28**	**-4.90**
PfT	1977-78	**17**	17	0	**6.42**	**54**	**13**	***37.1***	***18.0***	***44.9***	***0.0***	**17.32**	**-7.82**
PfT	1978-79	**21**	21	0	**5.25**	**58**	**10**	***30.2***	***24.9***	***45.0***	***0.0***	**17.42**	**-14.82**
PfT	1979-80	**27**	27	0	**5.37**	***65***	**10**	***33.9***	***16.2***	***49.9***	***0.0***	**15.86**	**-16.09**
PfT	1980-81	**25**	25	0	**4.64**	**58**	**9**	***28.9***	***24.1***	***47.0***	***0.0***	**16.03**	**-18.01**
PfT	1981-82	**22**	22	0	**6.97**	***61***	**14**	***36.2***	***16.7***	***36.2***	***0.0***	**19.25**	**0.02**
PfT	1982	**8**	8	0	**5.05**	**YTL**	**10**	***28.5***	***14.5***	***44.7***	***11.9***	**17.72**	**-16.23**
PfT	1983	**9**	9	0	**5.07**	**YTL**	**9**	***27.0***	***20.6***	***40.2***	***11.6***	**18.74**	**-13.13**
PfT	1984	**15**	15	0	**5.47**	***63***	**10**	***30.5***	***17.9***	***38.8***	***12.7***	**17.93**	**-8.36**
TWP (all)	**1964-70**	**169**	74	95	**7.18**	**54.72**	**14**	***45.4***	***6.9***	***47.7***	***0.0***	**16.06**	**-2.28**
PfT (all)	**1970-84**	**294**	263.5	30.5	**5.63**	***58.60***	**11**	***34.4***	***19.3***	***45.0***	***1.3***	**16.50**	**-10.64**
TWP & PfT (all)	**1964-84**	**463**	337.5	125.5	**6.20**	***57.08***	**12**	***38.4***	***14.8***	***46.0***	***0.8***	**16.34**	**-7.59**

Key:

- YTL = Yet to locate any RI/AI figures for that series.
- Italics for RI/AI figures indicates that this is a mean average of the series' figures that have been located and that some plays did not have RI/AIs or that they are yet to be located.

Appendix 2. Sample of a quarter of Play for Today's Average Shot Lengths

	Year	Director, Writer & Producer	Aesthetic (F = Film, V = Video Vf = Video-led hybrid)	% film	ASL (VS)	ASL (VOB)	ASL (F)	ASL overall
01.03: The Lie	1970	**BRIDGES / Bergman / McDonald**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***8.5***	***8.54***
01.04: Angels Are So Few	1970	**Gareth DAVIES / Potter / McDonald**	**Vf**	**12.6**	***6.3***	***N/A.***	***7.2***	***6.37***
01.08: Robin Redbreast	1970	**MacTAGGART / Bowen / McDonald**	**Vf**	**20.6**	***10.0***	***N/A.***	***6.0***	***8.79***
01.13: The Piano	1971	**CELLAN JONES / Jones / McDonald**	**Vf**	**14.9**	***9.2***	***N/A.***	***6.4***	***8.60***
01.21: Everybody Say Cheese	1971	**Alan CLARKE / Livingstone / Shubik**	**V***	**0.0**	***11.2***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***11.20***
02.04: O Fat White Woman	1971	**SAVILLE / Trevor / Shubik**	**Vf**	**10.0**	***10.6***	***N/A.***	***13.3***	***10.78***
02.08: Pal	1971	**NARIZZANO / Owen / Shubik**	**V***	**0.0**	***6.6***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***6.60***
02.10: Still Waters	1972	**MacTAGGART / Jones / McDonald**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***11.4***	***11.38***
02.13: In the Beautiful Caribbean	1972	**SAVILLE / Reckord / Shubik**	**V***	**0.0**	***14.1***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***14.11***
03.01: The Reporters	1972	**APTED / Hopcraft / McDonald**	**Vf**	**44.2**	***6.4***	***N/A.***	***6.5***	***6.43***
03.02: A Life Is For Ever	1972	**Alan CLARKE / Parker / Shubik**	**V***	**0.0**	***15.1***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***15.05***
03.03: Carson Country	1972	**HAGGARD / Behan / McDonald**	**V**	**0.0**	***9.1***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***9.13***
03.09: Just Your Luck	1972	**NEWELL / McDougall / McDonald**	**Vf**	**9.7**	***10.7***	***N/A.***	***8.4***	***10.39***
03.13: Kisses At Fifty	1973	**APTED / Welland / McDonald**	**Vf**	**41.0**	***4.9***	***N/A.***	***8.4***	***5.92***
03.20: Hard Labour	1973	**LEIGH / Leigh / Garnett**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***6.6***	***6.63***
03.22: Speech Day	1973	**GOLDSCHMIDT / Hines / McDonald**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***7.9***	***7.86***
04.02: Her Majesty's Pleasure	1973	**DAVIS / O'Connor / Trodd**	**V**	**0.0**	***9.5***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***9.51***
04.05: Mummy and Daddy	1973	**DAVIS / Livingstone / Trodd**	**Vf***	**28.7**	***6.3***	***N/A.***	***7.3***	***6.57***
04.10: The Lonely Man's Lover	1974	**PARKER / Collins / Rose**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***7.0***	***7.01***
04.11: All Good Men	1974	**LINDSAY-HOGG / Griffiths / McDonald**	**V**	**0.0**	***8.1***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***8.14***
04.14: Easy Go	1974	**TUCHNER / Clark / McDonald**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***7.7***	***7.72***
04.21: The Childhood Friend	1974	**NEWELL / Read / McDonald**	**Vf**	**2.5**	***8.3***	***N/A.***	***5.4***	***8.20***
05.02: Baby Love	1974	**DAVIS / Edgar / Trodd**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***10.0***	***9.96***
05.07: Eleanor	1974	**DAVIS / Trevor / Shubik**	**Vf**	**19.7**	***7.8***	***N/A.***	***8.5***	***7.91***
05.09: The After Dinner Game	1975	**KNIGHTS / Bradbury & Bigsby / Rose**	**Vf**	**20.2**	***7.9***	***N/A.***	***4.9***	***7.06***
05.10: Breath	1975	**ROBINSON / Feinstein / Rose**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***17.1***	***17.10***

05.11: The Death Of A Young, Young Man	1975	**RITELIS / Russell / Rose**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***7.2***	***7.15***
06.02: Two Sundays	1975	**LINDSAY-HOGG / Gray / Trodd**	**Vf**	**30.2**	***6.6***	***N/A.***	***6.1***	***6.46***
06.05: Keep An Eye On Albert	1975	**TUCHNER / Glover / Scott**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***6.6***	***6.64***
06.08: Through The Night	1975	**LINDSAY-HOGG / Griffiths / Scott**	**V**	**0.0**	***10.2***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***10.19***
06.12: Nuts in May	1976	**LEIGH / Leigh / Rose**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***8.4***	***8.40***
06.13: Doran's Box	1976	**ROBINSON / Colthart / Rose**	**Vf**	**10.3**	***7.6***	***N/A.***	***10.2***	***7.78***
06.15: A Story To Frighten The Children	1976	**WISE / Hopkins / McDonald**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***10.5***	***10.47***
07.03: Rocky Marciano Is Dead	1976	**EVANS / Kops / McDonald**	**Vf**	**12.8**	***8.8***	***N/A.***	***5.2***	***8.04***
07.05: Housewives' Choice	1976	**THOMPSON / Kendall / Trodd**	**Vf**	**31.9**	***9.0***	***N/A.***	***11.7***	***9.72***
07.10: Our Flesh and Blood	1977	**JAMES / Stott / Rose**	**Vf**	**14.7**	***8.0***	***N/A.***	***6.3***	***7.72***
07.12: Spend Spend Spend	1977	**GOLDSCHMIDT / Rosenthal / McDonald**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***8.2***	***8.19***
07.15: Campion's Interview	1977	**DAVIS / Clark / Matheson**	**Vf**	**2.2**	***8.3***	***N/A.***	***8.5***	***8.26***
08.02: Come The Revolution	1977	**DARLOW / Chapman / Hill**	**Vf**	**17.4**	***8.7***	***N/A.***	***5.4***	***7.89***
08.03: Abigail's Party	1977	**LEIGH / Leigh / Matheson**	**V**	**0.0**	***5.3***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***5.33***
08.14: The Spongers	1978	**JOFFÉ / Allen / Garnett**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***19.4***	***19.41***
08.15: Destiny	1978	**NEWELL / Edgar / Matheson**	**Vf**	**7.3**	***9.3***	***N/A.***	***9.2***	***9.29***
08.16: The After Dinner Joke	1978	**BUCKSEY / Churchill / Matheson**	**V**	**0.0**	***14.3***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***14.32***
09.11: Vampires	1979	**GOLDSCHMIDT / Williams / Prem**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***7.8***	***7.78***
09.13: Waterloo Sunset	1979	**EYRE / Keeffe / Eyre**	**Vf**	**18.5**	***19.7***	***N/A.***	***7.8***	***15.34***
09.15: Who's Who?	1979	**LEIGH / Leigh / Matheson**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***4.7***	***4.65***
09.18: Degree of Uncertainty	1979	**ANNETT / Cullen / Maclaren**	**V**	**0.0**	***N/A.***	***7.5***	***N/A.***	***7.54***
09.19: Light	1979	**HOWELL / Perrin / Eyre**	**Vf**	**20.9**	***18.1***	***N/A.***	***12.4***	***16.50***
10.02: Cries from a Watchtower	1979	**FOSTER / Lowe / Eyre**	**Vf**	**47.7**	***8.3***	***N/A.***	***6.6***	***7.36***
10.03: Comedians	1979	**EYRE / Griffiths / Eyre**	**V**	**0.0**	***9.7***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***9.65***
10.04: Even Solomon	1979	**BAMFORD / Taylor / Head**	**Vf**	**16.7**	***9.9***	***N/A.***	***9.0***	***9.77***
10.06: Billy	1979	**STEWART / Newman / Trodd**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***12.1***	***12.06***
10.10: The Network	1979	**LISTER / Fagan / Head**	**Vf**	**18.4**	***15.6***	***N/A.***	***7.5***	***13.01***
10.11: Chance of a Lifetime	1980	**FOSTER / Holman / Eyre**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***6.9***	***6.92***
10.14: Thicker Than Water	1980	**GRINT / Glover / Prem**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***6.9***	***6.88***
11.03: The Adventures of Frank Part 1: Everybody's Fiddling Something	1980	**McGRATH / McGrath / Eyre**	**Vf**	**24.2**	***16.7***	***N/A.***	***3.6***	***8.81***
11.08: Name for the Day	1980	**BAIN / Haydn Evans / Head**	**Vf**	**16.2**	***11.2***	***N/A.***	***17.0***	***11.84***

11.09: Jessie	1980	**FORBES / Forbes / Zeiger**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***10.0***	***9.97***
11.14: Beloved Enemy	1981	**Alan CLARKE / Leland & Levinson / Williams**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***12.3***	***12.32***
11.17: Sorry	1981	**Alistair CLARKE / Bunyan / Norton**	**V**	**0.0**	***13.2***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***13.17***
11.25: Psy-Warriors	1981	**Alan CLARKE / Leland / Roberts**	**V**	**0.0**	***16.3***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***16.31***
12.01: Country	1981	**EYRE / Griffiths / Scott**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***11.9***	***11.90***
12.08: PQ17	1981	**COX / Milner / Lloyd**	**Vf**	**30.5**	***9.4***	***18.0***	***8.2***	***9.04***
12.11: A Cotswold Death	1982	**BICÂT / Bicât / Wearing**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***10.4***	***10.35***
12.16: Too Late To Talk To Billy	1982	**SEED / Reid / Zeiger & Parr**	**Vf**	**24.4**	***12.7***	***N/A.***	***15.3***	***13.23***
12.20: A Sudden Wrench	1982	**AMIEL / Milne / Shallcross**	**V**	**0.0**	***N/A.***	***15.2***	***N/A.***	***15.22***
12.21: Eve Set the Balls of Corruption Rolling	1982	**MALONEY / Evaristi / McIntosh**	**Vf**	**10.9**	***N/A.***	***10.7***	***9.8***	***10.57***
13.02: 3 Minute Heroes	1982	**CUSTANCE / Stewart / Rogers**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***6.1***	***6.10***
13.03: The Remainder Man	1982	**Richard WILSON / Martin / Scott**	**V**	**0.0**	***15.2***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***15.23***
14.02: Gates of Gold	1983	**AMIEL / Leitch / Parr**	**V**	**0.0**	***N/A.***	***10.4***	***N/A.***	***10.41***
14.07: Shall I Be Mother?	1983	**Ronald WILSON / Ransley / Head**	**Vf**	**29.5**	***7.9***	***N/A.***	***6.4***	***7.39***
15.05: Desert of Lies	1984	**HAGGARD / Brenton / Wearing**	**Vf**	**20.0**	***14.0***	***N/A.***	***13.6***	***13.94***
15.07: Under the Hammer	1984	**Richard WILSON / Fagan / Wearing**	**Vf**	**37.1**	***8.8***	***N/A.***	***12.1***	***9.83***
15.09: Rainy Day Women	1984	**BOLT / Pirie / Wearing**	**F**	**100**	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***9.2***	***9.17***
15.15: The Amazing Miss Stella Estelle	1984	**John DAVIES / Stewart / Walker**	**V**	**0.0**	***8.0***	***N/A.***	***N/A.***	***8.02***

Key

Aesthetic:

F = all-filmed
V = all-videoed
Vf = video-led hybrid

ASL:

VS = Video shot in the studio
VOB = Video shot on Outside Broadcast

Notes

- 1. Those with * do not exist in the archives; ASLs have been based on estimates of number of shots in their Camera Scripts, consulted at the BBC WAC. *Mummy and Daddy*'s film inserts exist, so these have been combined with the Camera Script to estimate its total ASL.

- 2. Virtually all 'film' segments in *The Adventures of Frank Part One* are primarily photographic stills which look closer to film than video aesthetics so are counted as film.

Appendix 3. List of all interviewees and correspondents – preserving oral histories of Play for Today and British TV plays

3.1. List of interviewees spoken to via phone call, Zoom, skype, Google Hangouts or in-person

#	Name	Sex	SPECIFIC ROLE	No. In-Person	No. Skype	No. Zoom	No. Phone	No. Google Hangouts	TOTAL NO. OF INTERVIEWS	DATE OF 1ST INTERVIEW	DATE OF 2ND INTERVIEW	DATE OF 3RD INTERVIEW	DATE OF 4TH INTERVIEW	TOTAL DURATION OF INTERVIEWS (mins)
1	**Willy RUSSELL**	M	WRITER	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	27 Mar 2020				**84**
2	**Alma CULLEN**	F	WRITER	0	0	0	3	0	**3**	27 Mar 2020	24 Apr 2020	04 Feb 2021		**170**
3	**Dave HILL**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	2	0	**2**	17 Apr 2020	22 Jan 2021			**165**
4	**John GOLDSCHMIDT**	M	DIRECTOR	0	1	0	0	0	**1**	22 May 2020				**82**
5	**George COSTIGAN**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	28 May 2020				**64**
6	**Linda BECKETT**	F	ACTOR	0	1	1	0	0	**2**	29 May 2020	21 Jan 2021			**200**
7	**Pedr JAMES**	M	DIRECTOR / SCRIPT ED.	0	0	0	2	0	**2**	01 Jun 2020	05 Jun 2020			**230**
8	**Carl DAVIS**	M	COMPOSER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	04 Jun 2020				**61**
9	**Tony ROBINSON**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	12 Jun 2020				**42**
10	**Philip MARTIN**	M	WRITER	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	17 Jun 2020	01 Jul 2020			**100**
11	**Robert PUTT**	M	ACTOR	0	1	0	0	0	**1**	10 Jul 2020				**52**
12	**Paul SEED**	M	DIRECTOR	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	16 Jul 2020	23 Jul 2020			**116**
13	**Keith HOWES**	M	CRITIC	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	21 Aug 2020				**71**
14	**Anne REID**	F	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	10 Oct 2020				**37**
15	**Kenith TRODD**	M	PROD.	0	0	0	2	0	**2**	22 Oct 2020	05 Nov 2020			**221**
16	**Barrie RUTTER**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	27 Oct 2020				**46**
17	**John GLENISTER**	M	DIRECTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	30 Oct 2020				**66**
18	**Richard EYRE**	M	PRODUCER / DIRECTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	16 Nov 2020				**72**

19	**Nicholas GARNHAM**	M	CRITIC	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	20 Nov 2020				**52**
20	**Jemima LAING**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	27 Nov 2020				**58**
21	**Peter ANSORGE**	M	PRODUCER / SCRIPT ED.	0	0	4	0	0	**4**	08 Jan 2021	19 Feb 2021	28 May 2021	29 Oct 2021	**275**
22	**Julie DAVIDSON**	F	CRITIC	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	18 Jan 2021				**83**
23	**Tara PREM**	F	PRODUCER / SCRIPT ED.	0	0	1	1	0	**2**	29 Jan 2021	12 Feb 2021			**206**
24	**Tam FRY**	M	ADVISER	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	15 Feb 2021				**61**
25	**Jehane MARKHAM**	F	WRITER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	19 Feb 2021				**65**
26	**Richard MANTON**	M	SOUND RECORDIST	0	0	0	2	0	**2**	22 Feb 2021	17 Mar 2021			**171**
27	**Meg THEAKSTON**	F	D.A.	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	24 Feb 2021				**79**
28	**Jane WOOD**	F	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	04 Mar 2021				**98**
29	**Claire NIELSON**	F	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	10 Mar 2021				**80**
30	**William RELTON**	M	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	15 Mar 2021				**95**
31	**Stephen DEUTSCH**	M	COMPOSER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	23 Mar 2021				**66**
32	**Polly HILL**	F	MANAGER	0	0	0	0	1	**1**	23 Mar 2021				**47**
33	**Andy BRADFORD**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	24 Mar 2021				**106**
34	**Anthony WORNUM**	M	SOUND RECORDIST / BOOM	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	25 Mar 2021	30 Apr 2021			**181**
35	**Alan CHARLESWORTH**	M	DIRECTOR / P.A. / P.M. / A.F.M.	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	06 Apr 2021				**87**
36	**David HITCHCOCK**	M	DESIGNER	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	14 Apr 2021				**124**
37	**Chrissie COCKS**	F	P.A.	0	0	0	3	0	**3**	23 Apr 2021	01 Jun 2021	11 Jun 2021		**138**
38	**Daryl WEBSTER**	F	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	28 Apr 2021				**76**
39	**John WYVER**	M	CRITIC	0	0	3	0	0	**3**	29 Apr 2021	14 May 2021	11 Jun 2021		**221**
40	**Linda McCARTHY**	F	P.A.	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	11 May 2021				**123**
41	**Ashi ARORA**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	13 May 2021				***83***
42	**Bela ARORA**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	13 May 2021				***83***
43	**Romi ARORA**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	13 May 2021				***83***

44	**Tony PIERCE-ROBERTS**	M	CAMERAMAN	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	19 May 2021				**124**
45	**Dovid KATZ**	M	ADVISER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	24 May 2021				**64**
46	**John TELFER**	M	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	25 May 2021	29 Nov 2021			**128**
47	**Dave GREENSLADE**	M	COMPOSER	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	27 May 2021				**52**
48	**John WILLIAMS**	M	CAMERAMAN	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	02 Jun 2021				**150**
49	**Derek LISTER**	M	DIRECTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	07 Jun 2021				**85**
50	**Doug LUCIE**	M	WRITER	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	09 Jun 2021				**166**
51	**Terry PEARSON**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	15 Jun 2021				**61**
52	**Jenny BREWER**	F	P.A.	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	18 Jun 2021	07 Jul 2021			**266**
53	**Bhasker PATEL**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	*1*	0	**1**	21 Jun 2021				**30**
54	**Roger GREGORY**	M	PRODUCER & SCRIPT ED.	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	22 Jun 2021	23 July 2021			**171**
55	**Jacmel DENT**	F	A.F.M.	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	28 Jun 2021	13 August 2021			**287**
56	**Leslie STEWART**	M	WRITER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	01 Jul 2021				**123**
57	**Edmundo JOHN**	M	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	04 Aug 2021				**103**
58	**Sid SUTTON**	M	GRAPHIC DESIGNER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	09 Aug 2021	18 Oct 2021			**172**
59	**Ram John HOLDER**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	17 Aug 2021				**52**
60	**Marcella EVARISTI**	F	WRITER	0	0	0	2	0	**2**	08 Oct 2021	29 Oct 2021			**138**
61	**Janette FOGGO**	F	ACTOR	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	20 Oct 2021	02 Nov 2021			**254**
62	**Neil ZEIGER**	M	PRODUCER	0	0	0	2	0	**2**	18 Nov 2021	09 Dec 2021			**105**
63	**Jon AMIEL**	M	DIRECTOR	0	0	2	0	0	**3**	18 Nov 2021	18 Jan 2022	22 Feb 2022		**269**
64	**Moira TAIT**	F	DESIGNER	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	10 Dec 2021	31 May 2022			**319**
65	**Jack SHEPHERD**	M	ACTOR	0	0	0	3	0	**3**	12 Jan 2022	23 Feb 2022	03 May 2022		**172**
66	**Chris JURY**	M	ACTOR	0	0	3	0	0	**3**	13 Jan 2022	31 Jan 2022	11 Jul 2022		**287**
67	**Iain LAUCHLAN**	M	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	14 Jan 2022				**112**
68	**Alison STEADMAN**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	24 Jan 2022				**93**
69	**Angela CURRAN**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	27 Jan 2022				**66**

70	**Mick MILLER**	M	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	02 Feb 2022				**57**
71	**Gaylie RUNCIMAN**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	17 Feb 2022				**149**
72	**Ann SHEPHERD [nee SCOTT]**	F	PRODUCER / SCRIPT ED.	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	25 Feb 2022				**116**
73	**Rita MAY**	F	WRITER / ACTOR	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	25 Feb 2022				**64**
74	**Michael WILCOX**	M	WRITER	1	0	0	0	0	**1**	18 Mar 2022				**63**
75	**Nemone LETHBRIDGE**	F	WRITER	0	0	0	1	0	**1**	29 Mar 2022				**54**
76	**Stephen POLIAKOFF**	M	WRITER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	09 May 2022				**115**
77	**Janice RIDER**	F	COSTUME DESIGNER	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	08 Aug 2022	14 Oct 2022			**150**
78	**Paul JOEL**	M	DESIGNER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	25 Oct 2022				**56**
79	**Bridget McCANN**	F	ACTOR	0	0	2	0	0	**2**	28 Oct 2022	25 Nov 2022			**108**
80	**Julie WELCH**	F	WRITER	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	11 Nov 2022				**54**
81	**Roger TONGE**	M	PRODUCER/ DIRECTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	15 Dec 2022				**149**
82	**William HUMBLE**	M	WRITER/ SCRIPT ED.	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	9 Jan 2023				**130**
83	**Sarah COLLIER**	F	ACTOR	0	0	1	0	0	**1**	16 Jan 2023				**92**

3.2. List of all correspondents via letter or email

#	Correspondent name	Sex	**Worked on PfT?**	SPECIFIC ROLE	Method	**Date correspondence began**
1	**David EDGAR**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	21/11/2016
2	**Margaret MATHESON**	**F**	**Y**	**PRODUCER**	Email	20/01/2017
3	**David PIRIE**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	23/04/2019
4	**Alan BENNETT**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Letter	04/03/2020
5	**Andrew DAVIES**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	04/03/2020
6	**David RUDKIN**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	09/03/2020
7	**Paul COPLEY**	**M**	**Y**	**ACTOR**	Email	18/03/2020
8	**Alan CLEWS**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	25/03/2020
9	**Mike WESTBROOK**	**M**	**Y**	**COMPOSER**	Email	26/04/2020
10	**Timothy WEST**	**M**	**Y**	**ACTOR**	Letter	14/05/2020
11	**June WATSON**	**F**	**Y**	**ACTOR**	Letter	17/05/2020
12	**Michael LINDSAY-HOGG**	**M**	**Y**	**DIRECTOR**	Email	20/05/2020
13	**Nick BICÂT**	**M**	**Y**	**COMPOSER**	Email	11/06/2020
14	**Bernard KOPS**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	15/07/2020
15	**W. Stephen GILBERT**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	06/08/2020
16	**Mary KENNY**	**F**	**N**	**CRITIC**	Email	11/09/2020
17	**Richard LAST**	**M**	**N**	**CRITIC**	Letter	26/10/2020
18	**Piers Paul READ**	**M**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	10/03/2021
19	**Nemone LETHBRIDGE**	**F**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Letter	c.08/06/2021
20	**Adam MARS-JONES**	**M**	**N**	**CRITIC**	Email	25/06/2021
21	**Sean FRENCH**	**M**	**N**	**CRITIC**	Email	03/07/2021
22	**Frances TOMELTY**	**F**	**Y**	**ACTOR**	Email	15/08/2021
23	**Wendy COPE**	**F**	**N**	**CRITIC**	Email	05/09/2021
24	**Derek GRIFFITHS**	**M**	**Y**	**ACTOR**	Letter	20/09/2021
25	**Lynne TRUSS**	**F**	**N**	**CRITIC**	Email	28/09/2021
26	**Lesley BRUCE**	**F**	**Y**	**WRITER**	Email	18/11/2021
27	**Lesley MACKIE**	**F**	**Y**	**ACTOR**	Email	20/11/2021

28	**Judy MARSH [Judy LIEBERT]**	**F**	**Y**	**ACTOR**	Email	13/02/2022
29	**Stephen GALLAGHER**	**M**	**N**	**WRITER**	Email	02/10/2022

Notes

1. Transcripts have been produced for all conversations I had with c.67 of the 83 interviewees. Around 20 of these have been checked and approved as final, accurate accounts by the interviewees. This process will continue after the PhD project's completion, with the intention to eventually share transcriptions – and, potentially, some recordings – publicly.
2. Nemone Lethbridge initially contacted me via letter, which eventually led to a phone interview.
3. I did not interview or speak to Bhasker Patel; he submitted phone voice-recorder files of all his answers to my questions.
4. Interviewees #41-43, the Aroras all spoke to me during the same Zoom call.

Appendix 4.

Startling or Seductive? An Analysis of Play for Today's Title Sequences

Tom May

Abstract:
Play for Today has been widely regarded as a prestigious vehicle for one-off dramas on topical issues. Based on accounts by producers, composers and graphic designers, this article will provide a historical analysis of the changing image of Play for Today through the close analysis of its seven title sequences. Focusing on how the different sequences invested the strand with a particular identity and prepared audiences for the plays that followed, it identifies two main modes of address. It argues that the Play for Today image was at its most startling during the periods 1971–3 and 1977–82 when the title sequences signalled to viewers that Play for Today would present important – often politicised – drama with a proximity to the news. Other sequences – during 1973–7 – sought instead to 'seduce' viewers by foregrounding the strand's humanism and eclecticism.

Keywords: BBC; graphic design; musical idents; Play for Today; producers; television drama; title sequences.

Introduction

Play for Today was a long-running strand of 294 one-off dramas from 1970 to 1984 which replaced The Wednesday Play (1964–70) and emphasised its contemporaneity. A mean average of over 20 Plays for Today were shown annually, in a regular BBC1 prime-time slot, usually directly following the news which, by virtue of television 'flow', helped to give the strand an added topicality and importance. While Play for Today became associated with social realism and the left-wing perspectives of some of its creative personnel – such as David Hare, David Edgar, John McGrath, Barrie Keeffe and Trevor Griffiths – the plays were thematically and stylistically varied. Generally, the most radical Plays for Today were commissioned by producers Tony Garnett, Margaret Matheson, Kenith Trodd and Richard Eyre. However, Play for Today's mainstays were much less political and were primarily concerned with home and family. Such humanist – or human-centric – dramas were generally favoured by producers Graeme McDonald, Mark Shivas and Innes Lloyd, and David Rose at BBC Birmingham's Pebble Mill.

According to Play for Today producers, there was no official role of lead producer overseeing the strand.[1] Trodd claims that Play for Today was 'unique for never appointing an Executive Producer credited on air as the mastermind of fiscal and content control' and that it was a sign of the strand's 'eclecticism and integrity ... that despite being for so long the BBC's principal flagship for dramatic originality, it always allowed the artists' voices to speak for themselves'.[2] However, the strand's copious variety posed a significant challenge to its main producers concerning how to introduce such an eclectic range of plays and to signify to viewers

what they might expect. As this article indicates, Play for Today producers could grant extensive creative latitude to musicians and graphic designers to assist in attracting viewers to the plays. However, at other moments, producers asserted their own distinctive visions of the strand and looked for title sequences that would startle as well as seduce viewers.

There were new title sequences in the autumns of 1970, 1971, 1972 and 1973, reflecting a rapid turnover and a strand trying out new identities. This contrasted with The Wednesday Play, which for most of its run retained the same Carl Davis musical ident but used three different visual accompaniments, including the famous chessboard motif. The second and third Play for Today title sequences employed discordant music and startling, confrontational visuals. However, the best-remembered title sequence was introduced in 1973, seducing viewers with its warm, humanist style until its replacement in September 1976 by a short-lived sequence involving a rearranged version of the previous sequence's musical ident. In 1977, incoming producer Margaret Matheson instigated a new title sequence with a startling and radical style which survived for five years. The final change in Play for Today's title sequence was in October 1982 and reflected the strand's unsettled later identity. In the discussion that follows, the seven Play for Today title sequences are analysed chronologically in order to establish how they invested the strand with a particular identity and prepared audiences for the plays that followed. Although critics have often attached reductive labels to the strand, or identified it with particular kinds of play, the main feature of the plays was their variety. In this respect, while the title sequences were often successful in fashioning an identity for Play for Today, the plays themselves would not always match this, both

conforming and running counter to the meaning proposed by the titles.

My analysis of the sequences is grounded in original interviews with Play for Today producers Kenith Trodd, Richard Eyre and Margaret Matheson, who have helped to illuminate the role of producers in moulding the strand's identity through decisions regarding the title sequences. Compared with many other long-running television dramas, Play for Today frequently changed its title sequences. Kevin Donnelly (2005: 145–9), for example, emphasises the significance of Eric Spear's flugelhorn-led 'jazz lament' musical ident for the establishment of *Coronation Street*'s continuing identity (ITV, 1960–). The discussion that follows will, by contrast, consider how decisions concerning sound and images prepared viewers for a strand whose plays, unlike *Coronation Street*, contained different characters and settings each week. The analysis of the role of music and graphic design in creating Play for Today's image also draws on original interviews with some of those commissioned to create idents for Play for Today – the graphic designer Sid Sutton and composers Carl Davis and Nick Bicât – alongside recently published information from the BBC Motion Graphics Archive. Following Len Masterman (1980: 74–5), the discussion will attend to the 'function' of television title sequences and the 'image' of the programme strand that they project. John Ellis (1992: 128) argues that titles are constructed to attract the television viewer who 'glances' rather than, as in the cinema, attentively gazes at the screen. Valentina Re (2016: 156) argues that their main function is to seduce the viewer into entering the textual world by providing a flavour of what to expect. These ideas will be assessed in relation to Play for Today, identifying how far the title sequences seduce the viewer with its images and sounds

or encourage a more detached viewing relationship (Ellis 2002: 14–15).

In considering these questions, the mode of auditory address is crucial. As Ellis (1992: 128–9) suggests, sound is proportionately more important to television than to cinema, given its need to entice a potentially distracted domestic audience. For Philip Tagg (2000: 97), this means that signature tunes and title music possess particular importance. He identifies three main functions which these employ: reveille, [affective] preparation and mnemonic identification. The reveille function involves attracting attention: for example, 'something new!', the 'Oyez!' of street criers, classical overtures or opening numbers in music hall. The affective preparation function prepares the audience for the style of the particular programme ('Ah! This sort of thing!'); the mnemonic identification function makes the programme memorable and gives it an identity (Tagg 2000: 93–7). These are all functions which can be identified, to varying degrees, in Play for Today's changing title sequences and will be considered below.

Title sequence 1 (1970–1): middlebrow sophistication

The first Play for Today title sequence begins with busy low woodwinds, signifying a middlebrow BBC musical habitus. It was composed by Joseph Horovitz, who had lived through cataclysmic

periods of European history and shared an educational background with a number of Play for Today creative personnel.[3] He was subsequently commissioned by Play for Today producer Irene Shubik to compose musical idents for *Wessex Tales* (BBC, 1973) and *Rumpole of the Bailey* (Thames, 1978–91). The musical sequence consists of a J. S. Bach homage: a triple fugue in A-minor, with clarinet playing the higher part, oboe performing a counterpoint harmony and bassoon a lower part. It is broadly akin to Carl Davis's earlier Wednesday Play musical ident in which he had used classical instrumentation and a straightforward melody to create an enticing contemporary mood. Horovitz's sophisticated Baroque ident, while more reserved, also suggests the contemporary through the use of a jazz rhythm section of double bass and brushed drums. In this, he followed the popularisation of Bach's music by jazz groups such as the Swingle Singers and the Jacques Loussier Trio during the 1960s as well as electronic pioneers Wendy Carlos and Delia Derbyshire. Combining the elite and the popular, as well as the cerebral and the sensory, the first Play for Today theme in this way carries a residual trace of the BBC's 'improving' Third Programme ethos.

This is also evident in the leisurely pace of this longest of all Play for Today title sequences. Visually, we see fragmented, animated letters, not synchronised with Horovitz's rhythm, which eventually combine to form the words 'PLAY FOR TODAY'. This three-dimensional logo is composed of solid letter-forms, lit from one side so that they cast shadows.[4] This was photographed in a studio and involved 24 varied lighting set-ups creating abstract patterns from two or more letter forms. The photos were tinted and filmed on a rostrum camera using in-camera dissolves. The 28 shots dissolve briskly into each other while the pace of the editing

increases. The letters themselves evoke the typography used in a 1925 advertisement by Austrian poster designer Julius Klinger, reinforcing the sequence's straddling of high and low culture. Although the sequence suited many of the plays making up the first series, which attracted a mean average audience of 6.4 million, it was not, it seems, sufficiently rooted in the contemporary and lasted only one series.

Title sequence 2 (1971–2): atonal confrontation

In August 1971, producer Irene Shubik approached Delia Derbyshire of the BBC Radiophonic Workshop (1958–98) to work on the Play for Today *O Fat White Woman* (4 November 1971) as well as on a new musical ident to replace Horovitz's existing one. The Radiophonic Workshop's initial remit was to provide experimental sounds for radio; Desmond Briscoe and Roy Curtis-Bramwell (1983: 25) as well as Louis Niebur (2010: 5–7) note its European musical and cultural influences. Derbyshire's resulting fourteen-second studio composition evokes atonal twentieth-century classical music, using extensive tape editing. A quaking, fanfare-like figure or ostinato in a C# diminished enters, with an

A# bass note; this sounds like a tape-manipulated trumpet sound, reversed and sped up. This is repeated a semitone up as D diminished with what may be a manipulated trombone sounding a bass B note. This striking minor-key piece concludes with juddering percussive thuds. Mixing elements of an ostinato and fanfare, Derbyshire creates a reverb-drenched rhythm signifying modernism and a cacophonous urban present while the fanfare fulfils the reveille function of attracting the attention of the viewer in a startling manner.

This is confirmed by the visuals. The first shot presents an unfurling roll of wallpaper against a black background. Then, a patterned paint roller imprints black letters on yellow; there is a cut from a slither of unfolding paper to the finished painting; a dramatic zoom out reveals the words 'PLAY FOR TODAY' in black bold uppercase painted onto the yellow 'poster' attached to a murky brick wall, overlaid with clashing coloured paint, graffiti and printed letters.

Another faded 'poster' reads 'JUMBLE SALE' in archaic commercial typeface, over the words 'SATURDAY' and 'THE YOUTH', suggesting an attempt to appeal to an audience younger than that addressed by the previous title sequence. This matches

various iterations of a generational conflict or generation gap in the second series in plays such as *The Pigeon Fancier* (9 December 1971), *Still Waters* (13 January 1972) and *Ackerman, Dougall and Harker* (10 February 1972). The use of a poster and graffiti, combined with atonal music, indicates a more confrontational relationship with the viewer, setting up the expectation of hard-hitting contemporary drama. The series, however, saw a notable drop in average audiences – to 5.45 million – and this title sequence did not last any longer than its predecessor.

Title sequence 3 (1972–3): syncopated workshop modernism

The electronic musical ident for the third series also emanated from the BBC Radiophonic Workshop. Malcolm Clarke's atonal fragment of *musique concrète* uses an EMS Synthi (also known as the 'Delaware').[5] It opens by thunderously hailing the audience and ends with clanging, stretched-out notes – via tape manipulation – connoting modernism and industrial processes. Even more so than Derbyshire's previous ident, Clarke's composition justifies Philip Tagg's claim that TV title music uses opening fanfares with

attention-grabbing *forte* sounds to fulfil a reveille function (2000: 130).

Visually, 'PLAY FOR TODAY' is presented on a black background, first in contemporary uppercase, black bordered by white, then, gradually, green within white borders. Six rapidly edited shots display the title in segmented letters contained within a broken circle. The final screen reveals the title and segmented circle, stencilled in white. The edits and changes in colour are neatly synchronised with each different sound. This accessible minimalism suggests clattering industrial production line processes and carries connotations of the idea of the workshop employed by Joan Littlewood and Ewan MacColl's Theatre Workshop (1945–78) and other similar cultural groups. The third series of Play for Today also became both more socially critical and experimental in works such as *Hard Labour* (12 March 1973), *Speech Day* (26 March 1973), *Carson Country* (23 October 1972) and *Steps Back* (14 May 1973). However, the average audience continued to drop – to 4.12 million – and Play for Today's title sequence was changed yet again. The ensuing replacement marked a significant change in the way that the Play for Today strand was presented.

Title sequence 4 (1973–6): charming humanism

In 1973, Graeme McDonald was now de facto lead producer on Play for Today, and the BBC Drama Department commissioned Carl Davis to compose a musical ident for a new Play for Today title sequence, having used him previously for The Wednesday Play.[6] As Davis explains:

> They didn't tell me what they wanted. The idea of actually composing something which had to do with many *different kinds of plays* and do something that was *attractive* and seemed *timely*: that was what was called for. And also that the tenor of the series was going to be contemporary to the 1970s. I thought, it is very difficult for me to do something very short. There is an art to this. The people who write commercials and these sort of idents and so on. It's a very special craft because you've got to squeeze into a few seconds what is going to announce the character of the play, in this case the whole series: plays that were really going to *run the gamut*. So, in the end, and again, because of the general friendliness of the people involved, I thought I'd play a little trick on them ... I actually wrote six different themes! I'm just going to test the water here and maybe one of the six will stick, and be [of] the right character. There was a meeting ... And, I played them all and, sure enough, it was number six that I was asked to do. And that's what we recorded.[7]

Davis explains the aims and inspiration behind his theme:

> At the time, there was something [that] had been used [for] a series [of] film reviews ... It was a really jazzy, funky piano solo. I used to think it was by Nina Simone but it wasn't ...[8] I loved it ... It seemed to have just the right thing. It was ... you know, [a] funky piano solo, it was contemporary and charming and very idiomatic.

The new title sequence proved immensely popular and, unlike its predecessors, it was retained for three series and 67 individual plays. Davis's melodious ident, the only one to be subsequently

rearranged, is the most frequently remembered of the Play for Today musical idents and is the most straightforwardly major key. Compared with Horovitz, Derbyshire and Clarke's compositions, Davis's catchy theme fulfils Philip Tagg's requirement for mnemonic identification, proving both memorable in itself and providing Play for Today with a strong musical identity (2000: 96). Unlike previous idents, Davis's composition is played on the piano and supported by a snare drum and organ. Tagg (2000: 185) highlights the importance of having an identifiable melody, and Davis's simple ascending then descending diatonic major key chord progression in F major achieves this. For Davis, the musical key is crucial in establishing any music's 'character', and he chose F major, which conveys the 'pastoral', as in Beethoven's Sixth Symphony. All chords in this key are used in a repeated chord sequence imbued with 'openness and casual charm': F / Gm / Am / B-flat / C / Dm B-flat / Am / Gm C / F.[9] This is the only Play for Today musical ident that it is easy to imagine viewers remembering, whistling to themselves or even dancing to.

The striking visuals were 'shot entirely in-camera without the need for further editing'.[10] It begins with the red uppercase 'PLAY FOR TODAY' stencil typeface on a black background, which shines neon white.[11] This glow effect was created by backlighting a red coloured gel and mixed to a clear version with a camera flare filter. This is followed by a rapid montage of fourteen monochrome production stills from previous or upcoming Plays for Today, functioning as what John Fiske calls an 'intertextual memory jogger' (1987: 100).[12] Visually, there are jump cuts between characters' faces in time with the music, if not exactly to the beat. 'PLAY FOR TODAY' appears again, shining white, followed by more images, from which the camera zooms in and out

consistently. Finally, the title flashes white, then disappears, as Davis's tune abruptly ends. The graphic design foregrounds technology: dramatic and emotive zooms and the motif of illumination replace the paint seen in the 1971–3 titles. Tagg (2000: 97, 127) notes how idents are repeated before each episode 'in conjunction with particular characters, environments and moods', and also communicate 'something specific' about the programme, setting it apart from others in its genre and distinguishing it within the televisual flow. The use of photographs in this sequence focuses on the characters' facial expressions, stressing their individual human agency and departing from the more depersonalised character of earlier Play for Today titles. Its greater length of 32 seconds compared to most other Play for Today titles also enables a greater opportunity to, seduce viewers, in Re's terms, by showing them varied, sometimes familiar, actors' faces. Across 1973–6, Play for Today's audiences grew significantly, averaging 5.84 million, and from December 1975 to February 1976 it achieved an all-time high. The title sequence used from October to December 1975 consists of fourteen stills from all of the ten plays broadcast during the period, and illustrates its wide appeal.

The particular images selected emphasise the democratic range of the strand's dramatisation of contemporary British society. We see nine young and seven middle-aged adults, alongside two young teenagers and two more elderly characters: a cradle-to-grave gallery of British lives with an emphasis on working-age adults. Of the 20 different actors' faces, there are seven women and thirteen men. Fifteen of the actors had either appeared previously in Wednesday Plays or Plays for Today or were to appear again subsequently. Six pictured players appeared multiple times *within* the 1975–6 series: Alan Bates, Dinsdale Landen, Georgina Hale,

Alison Steadman, John Lyons and Geoffrey Hinsliff. Recurring actors included those known for working-class roles – Warren Mitchell, Colin Welland, Dave Hill and David Daker – alongside those associated with playing affluent professionals: Bates, Landen and Leo McKern. The images themselves provide brief glimpses into the mix of stories in which the characters are involved. We see, for example, Joe (Dave Hill) and Christine Potts (Alison Steadman) in Trevor Griffiths's *Through the Night* (2 December 1975), an ordinary couple in an NHS ward concerned about Christine's diagnosis for breast cancer. Joe looks unsure but resigned, whereas Christine's gaze is more defensive and inquisitive, her casual hairdo and intelligent eyes signifying her status as a tenacious everywoman. Next come stills from Leon Griffiths's *A Passage to England* (9 December 1975) in which we see the pensive, expectant Pramila (June Bolton) and Dharam (Renu Setna) with his impassive, clever eyes and furrowed brow. The presence of Asian actors not only signified Britain's increased ethnic diversity but also contributed to a broader sense of community suggested by the conjunction of close-ups of actors Tariq Yunus, Colin Welland and Leo McKern at the climax of Carl Davis's musical ident. Cumulatively, these familiar and unfamiliar faces made an affective appeal to viewers, indicating the range of human stories they might expect. In doing so, the title sequence sought to appeal to those beyond its core 'serious' drama audience, encouraging many viewers of mainstream drama into watching.

Tom May

Title sequence 5 (1976–7): universality

In 1976, Play for Today's unofficial lead producer Graeme McDonald commissioned graphic designer Sid Sutton to design visuals for a new title sequence.[13] He gave Sutton a rearranged version of Carl Davis's 1973–6 musical ident with which to work, but granted him complete freedom to develop his own graphic concept, and this subsequently became the strand's most lavish, optimistic title sequence. McDonald's use of a rearranged version of Davis's ident pays compliment to the original's mnemonic power. In the new version, Davis's chord sequence is still major key but higher: A-flat (Bb) instead of F, creating a sense of jauntiness. Percussion initiates a faster rhythm and trumpet replaces piano, appearing within the title sequence, as Sutton notes, 'when the sun burst through the letters'.[14] The buoyant trumpet-led melody also suggests affinities with mainstream television of the time – such as the rousing sports themes of Barry Stoller's *Match of the Day* (BBC, 1970–) and Keith Mansfield's *Grandstand* (BBC, 1975–2007).

The visual grammar of Sid Sutton's design is simple and economical, yet its realisation was a demanding logistical feat.[15] This single shot time-lapse sequence, shot on 35mm film, progresses from early morning to afternoon. While the use of a

single shot provides a contrast to the fast, 'action'-signifying cutting in *Match of the Day*'s titles, it is still a strongly kinetic sequence (Masterman 1980: 115). Rapidly moving white clouds against the sky provide a backdrop to the bold, black and uppercase 'PLAY FOR TODAY'. As the sky turns blue and the sun finishes its ascent, the typeface turns grey, with a brown border forming a still centre and casting a shadow on the bare surface. Sutton's concept was for the rising sun to symbolise 'Today', while the temporal lighting changes of the sun enhanced the sense of 'Drama'.

Sutton recalls deciding that, in order to capture the requisite clear skies, they would need a seaside shoot. Thus during August 1976, in the hottest summer on record, Sutton negotiated for his three-man crew – himself, cameraman Alan Taverner and assistant cameraman Vic Cummings, both from Caravel Films – to spend the weekend in Southwold on the Suffolk coast.[16] According to Sutton, a one-metre wide, three-dimensional title-logo using Pump typeface was 'cut from cork, painted and set up on a large sheet of white painted block board, protruding from the top floor window of a house on the coast to avoid spill from street lighting'.[17] The resplendent simplicity of Sutton's concept required thirteen-and-a-half hours of stop-motion location shooting from 4 a.m. and took three days to complete due to inclement weather, a plague of ladybirds and the extreme exposure range required.[18]

Following the sense of human particularity evoked by the use of stills in the previous Play for Today title sequence (1973–6), this singleshot title sequence is more universal in character, evoking nature and the passage of time. According to Sutton, Graeme McDonald loved the result, and his design went on to win a Design and Art Direction Wood Pencil award for Television Graphics. It

was the only time that Play for Today titles were afforded the cost-intensive luxury of location shooting and emphasised how highly Play for Today was valued by the BBC and its status as a television landmark amid a changeable televisual landscape.

The BBC's investment in Play for Today was mirrored by public loyalty. The seventh series (1976–7) marked the zenith of the strand's popularity, with audiences averaging 7.01 million. McDonald commissioned writers as stylistically and tonally eclectic as Rhys Adrian, Les Blair, John Bowen, Brian Clark, Bernard Kops, Peter McDougall and Jack Rosenthal, all of whom who carried on the tradition of Play for Today's humanism even though this was not signalled so directly by the universalising character of the new opening titles.

Title sequence 6 (1977–82): 'startling and radical' minimalism

In 1977, Margaret Matheson succeeded Graeme McDonald claiming that, by January 1978, BBC management were used to her 'stirring it up' with controversial, political Plays for Today.[19] With her provocative approach, Matheson rivalled Kenith Trodd for whom she had previously worked: Matheson had originally been a secretary in the BBC's typing pool which, according to David

Hare, gave her a 'caustic' view of the Corporation hierarchy (2015: 147). Matheson immediately put her stamp on the strand with a new title sequence. As she explains:

> I didn't want a slick and soothing title sequence. I wanted something more arresting. When I was small I walked back and forth to school over a narrow road bridge which had a huge red DANGER sign beside it because it was on a bend. I wanted the Play for Today titles to be like the Danger Bridge. Anything could happen. I asked Nick Bicât ... to do the drum roll. I liked the slightly homemade look of the finished sequence but I don't know if anyone else did.[20]

Composer Nick Bicât, brother of Tony Bicât who wrote and directed the Play for Today, *A Cotswold Death* (12 January 1982), describes his role thus:

> [W]hen Margaret Matheson took over as producer of Play for Today in 1977, she commissioned me to write a new musical ident for the logo. She wanted something startling and radical that echoed the French theatre tradition of banging the floor to signal the beginning of the play, so I scored it for solo percussion. I asked for three tympani, four orchestral tom-toms and two cymbals to be delivered to the BBC's Lime Grove Studios and played Margaret the four or five rhythmic patterns and fills I'd written down. Over the next hour or two, I improvised around these, adjusting them according to her comments and reactions until we had the sequence the way she wanted it.[21]

In contrast to Matheson's perception that the title sequence that she had commissioned was 'dumped' soon after she left, it was actually used for five series and 112 episodes: the longest-lasting of all Play for Today title sequences. Richard Eyre, who succeeded Matheson as unofficial lead Play for Today producer in 1978, 'thoroughly

approved' of this 'proprietary credit', retaining it on the grounds that '[it] made you sit up'.[22]

Bicât's musical ident is an unaccompanied drumroll which ends sharply with a cymbal crash. Visually, we see 'PLAY FOR TODAY' in red capitals against an off-white background. After five seconds there is a jump cut into a close-up of the letters, synced with the cymbal, followed by a fade to black. The graphical concept here was to 'enhance the dramatic impact' of the drum roll and 'together to create a short, simple typographic logo'.[23] This eight-second title sequence's brevity and lack of showy visual effects reveals Matheson's refashioning of the titles as more directly confrontational and artistically minimalist than the sophisticated sequence that preceded it. According to Sid Sutton, Matheson 'came in and apparently said ... "I don't like title sequences, I just want a caption"'.[24] The directness of the sequence served as a stark reveille that jolted the viewer and disrupted the smoothness of the televisual flow. It also signalled a confidence that Play for Today had no need to announce itself unduly and that it was what followed that really mattered. The Matheson/Eyre era's 'startling and radical' flavour is exemplified by theatrical and political Plays for Today such as David Edgar's *Destiny* (31 January 1978) and Barrie Keeffe's *Waterloo Sunset* (23 January 1979). Across the 1977–82 period Play for Today's average audience dipped to 5.66 million, although this figure was still above the stand's overall average. The great longevity of the title, however, resides in its forthrightness and ability to introduce a wide range of different plays rather than just the more openly political ones.

Title sequence 7 (1982–4): failing grandeur

This Play for Today musical ident, by an unidentified composer, is the sole modal ident and another fanfare. Initially muted tympani, accompanying low-pitched brass instruments, evoke the 'cinematic'. Its opening G-minor chord is augmented by the ninth and eleventh notes to build tension and grandeur. The minor key melody's lower harmony uses the major seventh which, coupled with the brass, gives it a medieval sound reminiscent of Neil Richardson's *Mastermind* (BBC, 1972–) ident. In a diatonic progression, it transitions to major chords – E-flat (D#) and then F-major, with the brass-played melody hitting the fifth note of each chord so as to convey a triumphant sound. It moves to Gsus4 and resolves, quietly, on G-major, the parallel of the original G-minor.

Visually, 'PLAY FOR TODAY' is present throughout in stately, embossed yellowish capitals. A three-dimensional logo was shot single frame on a rostrum camera as the light was moved to create the animation of the changing shadows from white to black. The sundial-like movements of the lettering's shadows evoke the passage of time in a manner reminiscent of Sutton's 1976–7 design. However, these visuals fail to match the grandeur of the music and feel bland: its rostrum camera aesthetics appear perfunctory compared to Sutton's location shoot on 35mm. The imposing sonic introduction is hampered by bathetic graphics, and the impression

given is that Play for Today is losing its earlier vitality and confidence and resorting to recycling its past glories.

The final Play for Today era's average audience was 5.25 million, slightly lower than 1977–82's overall average. During this period there was a marked decline in the number – 28 per cent – of Play for Today productions made entirely on film. This was ironic, given the 'cinematic' connotations of the music employed in the titles. The last Plays for Today also indicated a gravitation towards private, domestic centred dramas, representing what Carl Gardner and John Wyver discerned as a 'shift away from the social and political issues of today' (1983: 127). Play for Today's domestic turn was epitomised by video productions such as Reg Gadney's *Last Love* (1 March 1983), David Hopkins's *Wayne and Albert* (15 March 1983) and David Cregan's *Reluctant Chickens* (12 April 1983). This also involved a shift towards more middle-class milieux than had been the case in earlier seasons, suggesting a dwindling of the eclecticism and more wide-ranging humanism of earlier seasons.

Conclusion

This analysis of Play for Today's title sequences has shown the strand's consistent seriousness of purpose, but it also dispels perceptions of a single image of the series or an association with only one kind of play. The changes in title sequences for the first three series reveal a degree of uncertainty about how best to welcome the viewer and to provide a clear identity for the series. During the period 1973–6 the strand's image became confidently humanist, combining a montage of stills featuring close-ups of actors' faces with Carl Davis's major key musical ident. Davis's score survived in a rearranged form but was then used to

accompany Sid Sutton's universalising design based on the visualisation of a day's duration. Its aesthetic ambition was reacted against by the producer Margaret Matheson who sought a more austere and arresting image for the strand, employing a musical ident by Nick Bicât that partly recalled the earlier experiments of Delia Derbyshire and Malcom Clarke. By its final phase (1982–4), Play for Today's identity had become confused and diluted, and this was represented by the mismatch in its titles between a grandiose, 'cinematic', musical ident and bland visuals which partly recycled Sid Sutton's earlier single-shot approach (1976–7). Unlike all the others, the 1973–6 title sequence set up clear expectations of recognisable actors whose faces signified Play for Today's humanism and tonal mix of seriousness and humour. In doing so, it sought to seduce viewers with the prospect of engaging drama rather than the more distanced viewing position encouraged by other, more abstract designs.

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Notes

1. Richard Eyre, email to the author, 4 August 2021; Kenith Trodd, email to the author, 10 August 2021; Margaret Matheson, email to the author, 18 August 2021.
2. Kenith Trodd interviewed by the author, 22 October 2020.

3. Horovitz's Jewish family fled Vienna from the Nazis, migrating to England in 1938. He read music and modern languages at New College, Oxford, where Dennis Potter and Jeremy Sandford later studied.
4. These and subsequent technical details cited are from Ravensbourne University's
   BBC Motion Graphics Archive. 'Play for Today (1970). Concept and creative process', available at < https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/bbc-motiongraphics-archive/play-today-1970 >.
5. Pink Floyd's cutting-edge 'On the Run' from *Dark Side of the Moon* (1973) used the similar EMS Synthi AKIS. Earlier in 1972, Clarke had used the Delaware for his exceptionally atonal, avant-garde soundtrack for the Doctor Who serial *The Sea*
   Devils.
6. Kenith Trodd recalls working on the 1960s Wednesday Play as script editor when producer Tony Garnett employed Davis, the 'most upmarket', 'popular' and 'in demand writer of television themes' to compose its ident. Interview with the author, 22 October 2020.
7. Carl Davis, interviewed by the author, 4 June 2020. Davis did not specify who 'they 'referred to but it most likely included Play for Today producer Graeme McDonald, Head of Drama Group Shaun Sutton and Head of Plays Christopher Morahan.
8. This, the ident music for the long-running review show *Film ...* (BBC, 1971–2018), was Billy Taylor's 1967 instrumental version of his and Dick Dallas's jazz number 'I Wish I Knew How It Would Feel to Be Free' which was later performed by Nina Simone at Montreux in 1976. Davis also claims he would have instructed his fixer to hire jazz players to perform his Play for Today ident, though cannot recall who played on the recording session, which he did not attend.
9. Quotes from interview with the author, 4 June 2020; email to the author, 15 June2020.
10. BBC Motion Graphics Archive, 'Play for Today (1973). Concept and creative process', available at < https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/bbc-motiongraphics-archive/play-today-1973 >.
11. When Play for Today initially employed this title sequence in autumn 1973, there was a less striking graphic design for the title caption: white typewriter-like text on a light blue background.

12. The choice of images changed according to the seasonal sub-set of plays being shown. There were nine sets of stills within the three series. Broadly, these consisted of one set each for October to December, January to March and April to July.
13. Sid Sutton, interview with the author, 9 August 2021. Sutton devised vivid title sequence graphics for a number of major BBC series and established a considerable reputation as a graphic designer at the Corporation in the 1970s and 1980s.
14. Ibid.
15. BBC Motion Graphics Archive, 'Play for Today (1977). Concept and creative process', available at < https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/bbc-motiongraphics-archive/play-today-1977 >.
16. Interview with the author, 9 August 2021.
17. Sid Sutton, email to the author, 28 August 2021. Pump typeface was designed for Letraset by New York-based designer Bob Newman in 1970; it had also been used for Play for Today's 1972–3 title sequence.
18. Interview with the author, 9 August 2021
19. Margaret Matheson, email to the author, 20 January 2017.
20. Margaret Matheson, email to the author, 18 September 2020.
21. Nick Bicât, email to the author, 11 June 2020.
22. Richard Eyre, interviewed by the author, 16 November 2020. There is, however, one anomaly in how Play for Today was introduced during the 1977–82 period. Both Stewart Parker's *Iris in the Traffic*, *Ruby in the Rain* (24 November 1981) and Jim Allen's *United Kingdom* (8 December 1981) were prefaced by a different title sequence. This design featured neon-style yellow, blue and red lettering on a black background, bordered by broken red and blue lines at the top and bottom and lacked editing, visual effects or music.
23. BBC Motion Graphics Archive, 'Play for Today (1978). Concept and creative process', available at <https://www.ravensbourne.ac.uk/bbc-motiongraphics-archive/play-today-1978 > .
24. Interview with the author, 9 August 2021.

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Appendix 5.

Play for Today: A Statistical History

Tom May

Abstract:

This article presents an original statistical analysis of Play for Today (BBC1, 1970–84). It begins by defining what counts as a Play for Today. It then presents six specific data-sets examining the following: (1) the output of Play for Today in different periods; (2) the duration and scheduling of plays; (3) their originality; (4) the use of film or video; (5) audience viewing figures; and (6) the number of television repeats. It also compares the data to indicate the construction of a privileged Play for Today canon which ignores a large 'lost continent' of Plays for Today.

Keywords: BBC; canon; duration; originality; Play for Today; repeats; scheduling; statistical analysis; viewing figures.

Introduction

This article provides an original and detailed statistical survey of Play for Today (BBC1, 1970–84) in order to assist our understanding of the strand and assist further study of television drama series. It begins with a justification for what is to be classified as a Play for Today. It then provides a periodisation of Play for Today according to the quantity of plays made by specific producers. This is followed by information on Play for Today's position in the schedule and its durational flexibility. The extent to

which Play for Today primarily showcased originality is then tested by investigating how many were new works and how many were adaptations of existing material in other forms. The article then considers how many of the plays were shot on film and how many on video. A historical overview of the strand's viewing figures then follows. A final section explores how many Plays for Today have been repeated on British television; the aim here is to establish which Plays for Today have benefited the most from repeats and whether there exists a 'canon' of culturally privileged Plays for Today.

Methodology

This analysis uses quantitative data-sets developed within an MS Excel spreadsheet. The data-sets are derived from several sources. The Trodd Index of filmed television dramas compiled by the Play for Today producer Kenith Trodd (1983) was invaluable in estimating numbers of film and majority-video productions, supplementing the author's own close viewing of numerous Plays for Today. There are, however, no exact numbers yet of the specific *types* of video production–whether studio or Outside Broadcast–or exact breakdowns of how many video plays were totally studio-made or included filmed inserts.

The strand's viewing figures were gathered via Audience Research Reports, Daily Viewing Barometers and, from autumn 1981, BARB daily summaries: all were accessed via the BBC Written Archives Centre or the British Library. To garner information on repeats, BBC Genome was used to identify all BBC repeats of Plays for Today. To identify the small, but significant, number of non-BBC repeats during the 1990s and 2000s, Ian Greaves and various newspaper digital archives provided help.

With the exception of *Oy Vay Maria*'s replacement of the planned repeat of *Gotcha/Campion's Interview* on BBC1 on 15 August 1978, no unscheduled repeats have as yet been identified. Drawing on my MS Excel data-sets, I have used the programming language R to create plots to support my statistical analysis; this data visualisation was developed using a specific software library within R, ggplot2: the resulting plots are shown in Figures 1 to 4.

What counts as a Play for Today?

There are many different estimates of the total number of Plays for Today: Lez Cooke (2015) refers to 298 while the documentary *Drama out of a Crisis*: *A Celebration of Play for Today* (BBC4, 12 October 2020) counts 300. Much here depends upon whether the estimates include censored productions or ones shown in the Play for Today time slot but not made by the BBC. According to my own strict criteria, 294 Plays for Today were broadcast on BBC1 from October 1970 to August 1984. To come to this number, I have applied four main criteria for a Play for Today:

1. It must have been made by the BBC.
2. It must be credited as a 'Play for Today' in the *Radio Times*.
3. It must have been broadcast between 1970 and 1984.
4. Its first broadcast must be as a Play for Today, not as part of another strand or series or serial.

Thus, two banned Plays for Today *Brimstone and Treacle* (1976) and *Scum* (1977) are not included. Neither are *The Write-Off* (12 November 1970) or *Reddick* (18 February 1971), both of which appeared under the Play for Today banner in the *Radio Times* but were made by the Canadian Broadcasting Company (CBC) rather than the BBC. By the same token, I have excluded David Storey's

Home (6 January 1972) which was made by the CBC and National Educational Television (NET), owned by the US Corporation for Public Broadcasting. I have also excluded dramas first shown in a different context and therefore only repeated under the Play for Today umbrella. This includes dramas such as *Our Day Out* (originally BBC2, 28 December 1977), *The Vanishing Army* (BBC2, 29 November 1978) and *The Black Stuff* (BBC2, 2 January 1980), as well as Jim Allen's historical series *Days of Hope* (BBC1, 11 September–2 October 1975). My data counts *Gotcha* and *Campion's Interview* separately despite being broadcast on the same night (12 April 1977), as they involved different creative personnel. However, portmanteau dramas which involved the same crew throughout– *Orkney* (13 May 1971) and *Clay, Smeddum and Greenden* (24 February 1976)–are counted as one Play for Today. I omit 24 one-off dramas shown in Play for Today's time slot but not using its name, running from Brian Phelan's *Being Normal* (27 July 1983) to Terence Hodkinson's *Brigadista* (5 February 1985).

Periodisation of Play for Today by producer output

Across its fourteen-year timespan, there were fifteen series of Play for Today, which generally ran from autumn to the following spring: numbers of plays averaged around twenty per run. The following section provides an original historical periodisation of four Play for Today eras, defined primarily by which producers commissioned most work during each era.

Era 1: 1970–3–McDonald-Shubik

Between 1970 and 1973, 66 Plays for Today were broadcast across three series. Until 1972, the strand was controlled from London, with projects being allocated on a broadly 50:50 basis between Irene Shubik and Graeme McDonald. Until he was succeeded by Christopher Morahan in 1972, Gerald Savory was Head of Plays, agreeing budgets and production aesthetics while sometimes having final approval over projects. Shubik (2000: 105, 110) praises Savory's key role in ensuring that the expensive, all-film *Edna, The Inebriate Woman* (21 October 1971) was made. The Shubik-McDonald duopoly ended in June 1972 with the first Play for Today produced by David Rose's English Regions Drama unit at BBC Birmingham's Pebble Mill. Significantly, early 1973 saw the return of Wednesday Play producer, Tony Garnett, and Kenith Trodd's debut as a Play for Today producer.

Era 2: 1973–7–McDonald-Trodd-Rose

In this second era, 84 Plays for Today were broadcast across four series and commissioned by a greater range of producers. Most prolific were Graeme McDonald (28), Kenith Trodd (18) and David Rose (15). Women producers included Ann Scott (5), Anne Head (1) and Margaret Matheson (3), whose first Plays for Today were screened in April 1977. Christopher Morahan was Head of Plays until he was succeeded by fellow ex-director James Cellan Jones in April 1976; Cellan Jones continued the policy of giving producers scope to develop their own idiosyncratic projects.

Era 3: 1977–82–Matheson-Eyre-Trodd

In mid-1977, McDonald left after overseeing 96 productions for the Wednesday Play and Play for Today strands since 1967. He

was followed by Margaret Matheson and, in 1978, Richard Eyre, who produced nine and fourteen Plays for Today respectively during an era that consisted of five series and 112 episodes. Other lead producers included Innes Lloyd (13), Kenith Trodd (8) and John Norton (6). Eyre notes how producing Play for Today was a 'formidable task' and how it was 'very, very difficult to get ten pieces in a year of great quality', crediting fellow producer Trodd as being 'very smart' for only doing five a year.[1] David Rose produced just seven Plays for Today in this period, a reduction partly attributable to his mammoth film project *Artemis 81* (29 December 1981)–shown on BBC1 broadly in Play for Today's time slot–the budget of which was probably reallocated from two Plays for Today.[2] In addition to Matheson, Anne Head (5), June Roberts (4) and Ann Scott (3) made significant contributions. James Cellan Jones continued as Head of Plays before being replaced by Keith Williams in April 1979.

Era 4: 1982–4–Wearing-Shallcross-Parr-Rogers

Keith Williams was BBC Head of Plays during this final era, being replaced by the docudrama-centric Peter Goodchild in April 1984. In contrast to previous periods, this fourth era witnessed the diminution of producer power. The 32 Plays for Today across three series were produced by no less than eighteen different producers. The four most regular ones–Michael Wearing (5), Alan Shallcross (4), Chris Parr (3) and Colin Rogers (3)–were responsible for just under half of the output, in contrast to Shubik, McDonald, Trodd and Rose who produced 87 per cent between 1970 and 1977. This shift towards more producers making fewer plays contributed significantly to Play for Today losing its clear identity in its final

years, becoming more miscellaneous and less consistently risk-taking in its approach.

Play for Today in time

In 1970, when renamed from The Wednesday Play, Play for Today was re-scheduled from its customary Wednesday to Thursday. Replying to a letter in the *Radio Times*, BBC Head of Drama Shaun Sutton claimed that Play for Today was a 'series of plays for the *present* day, not for any particular day. It will not be shifted about' (Farquhar 2021: 32–3). However, in October 1972, it did shift to Mondays and, over the subsequent twelve years, was moved around with little discernible pattern, shifting from Monday to Thursday to its most common day, Tuesday, where it finished its fifteenth and final series in 1984. Thirty Plays for Today had their original broadcasts on Monday (10.2 per cent), 106 on Thursday (36.1 per cent) and 157 on Tuesday (53.4 per cent). The anomaly was Jeremy Paul's *A Walk in the Forest* (14 May 1980), the only Play for Today to have been screened on Wednesday, albeit at 11:05 p.m.[3]

In the case of Play for Today's start-times, there was a clear, regular clustering around 9:25 p.m., the time when 223 Plays for Today–75.9 per cent of the total–were scheduled to commence. Furthermore,

284 Plays for Today–96.6 per cent–began between 9:20 and 9:35 p.m. This reflects its fixture-like status in the schedules following the Nine O' Clock News. Significantly, the data reveals how the schedule was built around Play for Today, which seldom ended at a set time. The most frequent end-time was 10:40 p.m. but there were myriad variations within the range between 10:25 and 10:50 p.m.

This reflects the varying lengths of Plays for Today and indicates the unusual freedom from the constraints of a set end-time that makers enjoyed. While the mean average length of a Play for Today's was 72.3 minutes–the range of lengths is extensive. The two shortest Plays for Today last 27 and 41 minutes–Brian Clark's *Campion's Interview* (12 April 1977) and N. F. Simpson's *Thank You Very Much* (11 November 1971)–while the two longest are late-era filmed productions: Jim Allen's *United Kingdom* (8 December 1981) and Robert Smith's *Z for Zachariah* (28 February 1984), which last 147 and 118 minutes respectively.

The originality of Play for Today

The perception that Play for Today showcased new work is broadly substantiated by the figures: 236 Plays for Today were original, amounting to fractionally over four in every five.[4] However, a significant minority of 58 originated from other media. Theatre was the primary external source: 26 were derived from previous stage productions, such as David Edgar's *Baby Love* (7 November 1974), adapted from a stage play first performed at the Leeds Playhouse in 1973, and Trevor Griffiths's *Comedians* (25 October 1979), originally staged at the Nottingham Playhouse in 1975. Eighteen Plays for Today were originally published as prose fiction, as in the case of short stories by William Trevor and Lewis Grassic Gibbon or novels by John Wain and Paula Milne. A further nine came from radio plays, several by the noted radio dramatist Rhys Adrian, and these included the very first Play for Today, Alan Sharp's *The Long Distance Piano Player* (15 October 1970), which was originally broadcast on the Third Programme (17 August 1962). Finally, five Plays for Today originated in non-fiction sources, such as *A Child of Hope* (24 April 1975)–John Elliot's

dramatisation of Joel Carlson's autobiography *No Neutral Ground* (1973)–and *Through the Night* (2 December 1975), which Trevor Griffiths based on his late wife Jan's unpublished diary of her time in hospital being treated for breast cancer. Jack Rosenthal based his script for *Spend, Spend, Spend* (15 March 1977) on interview transcripts with pools winner Vivian Nicholson, which were the basis of her book co-written with Stephen Smith.

Figure 1 shows the chronological order of sources per series. From 1973 to 1982, theatre adaptations were a consistent part of Play for Today's yearly roster but rose during the period 1977 to 1981 when

*Fig. 1.*Sources per Play for Today series.

twelve Plays for Today were derived from stage plays (12.8 per cent of programmes during this time, compared with an overall proportion for the strand of 8.9 per cent). This phase of Play for Today runs from Barrie Keeffe's *Gotcha* (12 April 1977) to David Leland's *Psy-Warriors* (12 May 1981), both of which were all-video productions making stylised creative use of the BBC's Television Centre studios.

Indicating a general decline in authored single television dramas, Play for Today between 1982 and 1984 had the lowest proportion

of original plays: 75 per cent. As Figure 1 indicates, there was an increase in Plays for Today from prose fiction sources, and a final spurt of theatre-derived plays in the period from March to July 1984. Contemporaneously, writers nurtured by the single play were increasingly working on serial or series drama: for example, Alan Bleasdale's *Boys from the Blackstuff* (BBC2, 1982), Willy Russell's *One Summer* (Channel 4, 1983) and Alan Plater's *Beiderbecke* trilogy (ITV, 1984–8).

Film versus video

Although the most-remembered Plays for Today are often those shot on 16mm film, a clear majority were shot on video, mostly in the BBC's Television Centre studios. An estimated 98 were all-filmed productions (33.3 per cent), while 196 were mostly or wholly shot on videotape (66.7 per cent).

Figure 2 shows the fluctuating percentages per series of Plays for Today shot wholly on film as opposed to those either totally or mostly shot on video. Video was, consistently, the majority aesthetic in all but one series. However, film did increase in the second series (1971–2),

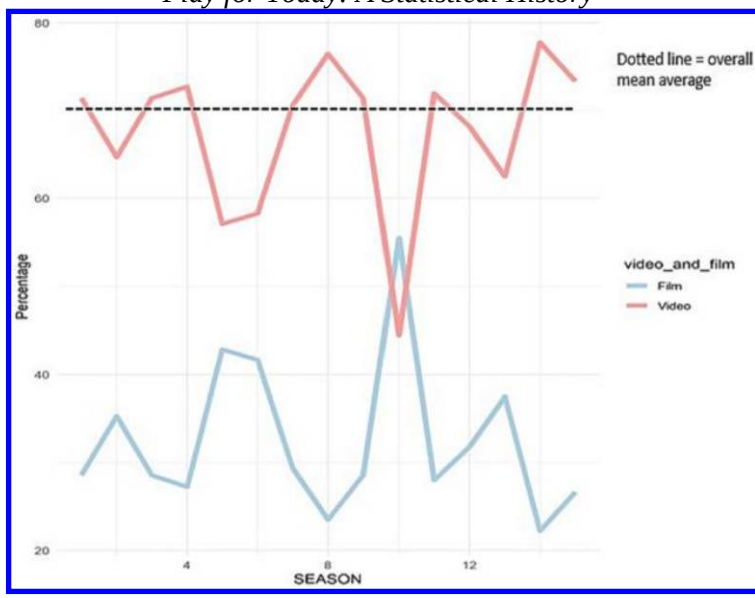

Fig. 2. Percentages of all-film and majority- or all-video Plays for Today per series.

before declining, then markedly increasing to 42.2 per cent across the fifth and sixth series (1974–6). This correlates with the ascendancy of David Rose's English Regions Drama unit. By comparison, the arrival of Margaret Matheson as a producer in 1977 correlates with a particularly high number of video productions: in the eighth series (1977–8), just 23.5 per cent of Plays for Today were filmed. However, it is also the case that Rose produced occasional video-studio Plays for Today just as Matheson made a number of filmed ones.

As Lez Cooke (2015: 150) has identified, the proportion of film actually exceeded video in the tenth series (1979–80). However, this also included superlative all-video studio plays such as *Comedians*, a rare Richard Eyre studio production. By the fourteenth and fifteenth series (1983–4), Play for Today output was

far lower, with a significant three-quarters made up of video productions. This was in part the consequence of the exodus of many film-favouring Play for Today creative alumni to David Rose's Film on Four strand for Channel 4 (launched in 1982) but also reflected economic necessity and the need to maintain the use of electronic studios. Philip Martin's *The Remainder Man* (2 November 1982), a black comedy directed in bare theatrical style on video in the studio by Richard Wilson, is indicative of the

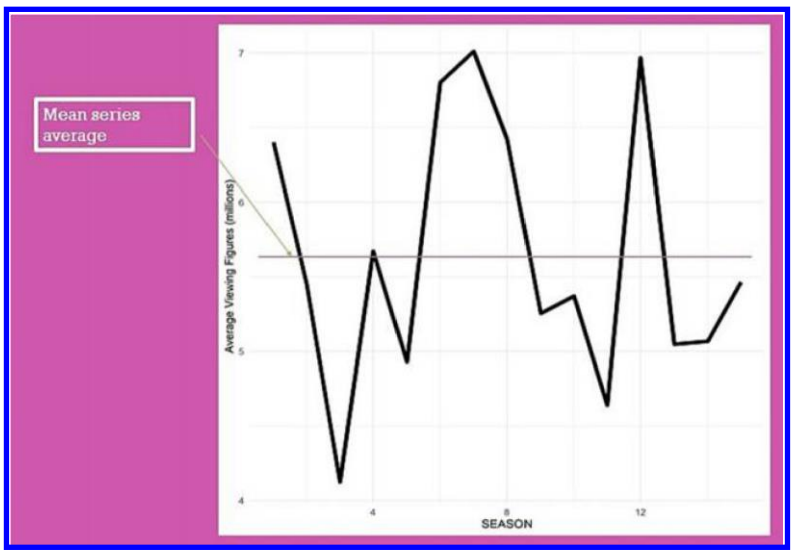

Fig. 3. Average audiences per Play for Today series, 1970–84.

economic constraints of the time and was inevitably overshadowed by being broadcast on the day of the launch of Channel 4.

Most neglected of all Plays for Today, aesthetically, are those shot on video outside the studio on Outside Broadcast (OB). This is sometimes criticised for having a flat look but, as Billy Smart argues, 'flexible' OB video's replacement of 16mm film for location sequences in *Coronation Street* in 1988 enabled a greater volume of material to be shot in 'the places and institutions of the wider world' and permitted 'a more mobile mise-en-scène' (2014:

72). Earlier, Rod Allen had noted how BBC and ATV employees were resistant to the use of OB as they saw the 'unfamiliar armies of engineers, planners and VT operators' impeding the director's 'creative act' (1977: 15). However, OB video's evocative, mobile everydayness was vividly utilised by Play for Today directors such as Alan Clarke in *Funny Farm* (27 February 1975) and Jon Amiel in the neglected *Gates of Gold* (8 March 1983).

Reception of Play for Today: viewing figures

Across Play for Today's fourteen-year run, its mean average audience was 5.63 million viewers. Figure 3 above shows an overview of the mean average viewing figures per series.

The line shows a complicated ebb and flow in the size of Play for Today's audiences. Notably, the first series achieved average audiences nearly 1 million higher than the last series of Wednesday Plays in 1969–70, which represented a significant revival in popularity. However, following the popular success of Jeremy Sandford's landmark filmed Play for Today *Edna, the Inebriate Woman*, which achieved an audience of 9.44 million, no Play for Today obtained anything like as many viewers for some time. The lowest series average was 4.12 million in 1972–3. While hardly poor in its own terms, and exceeding the mean average audience achieved by a prestige BBC1 series such as *Churchill's People* (1974–5), it is low in comparison to Play for Today's impressively high overall mean average.[5]

From January 1973, Play for Today audiences steadily increased, reflecting the increase in Rose's Pebble Mill-based productions. Colin Welland's *Kisses at Fifty* (22 January 1973), a majority-video studio play with filmed inserts, was the first to gain over seven million viewers since *Edna* and demonstrates how Play

for Today expanded its audience via an accessible and heightened form of social realism. The revival in popularity peaked when Play for Today obtained its highest ever series average of 7.01 million viewers in the seventh series (1976–7).[6] Jack Rosenthal's *Spend, Spend, Spend* gained the largest ever Play for Today audience of 13.13 million according to the BBC Audience Research Department.[7]

There was a slight ratings decline in Play for Today's more politically challenging Matheson-Eyre-Trodd era, although it usually obtained audiences exceeding five million and enjoyed a notable final hurrah in popularity during the twelfth series (1981–2), which averaged 6.97 million viewers. While, significantly, audiences fell by 2 million during the thirteenth and fourteenth series (1982–3), there was something of a recovery in the final 1984 series, the 5.46 million average of which was only just below the strand's fourteen-year average and higher than The Wednesday Play's final 1969–70 run. Made on both film and video, *Z for Zachariah* (28 February 1984), *Under the Hammer* (27 March 1984), *Rainy Day Women* (10 April 1984) and the very last Play for Today, *The Amazing Miss Stella Estelle* (28 August 1984), all gained between 6 and 9 million viewers.

Afterlife: Play for Today repeats and canon formation

Plays for Today have been repeated on British television 193 times, from *Robin Redbreast* (BBC1, 25 February 1971) to *Just a Boys' Game* (BBC Scotland, 25 June 2021): an average of just under four repeats a year.[8] The line plot in Figure 4 indicates the number of Play for Today repeats per year between 1971 and 2021. These include repeats

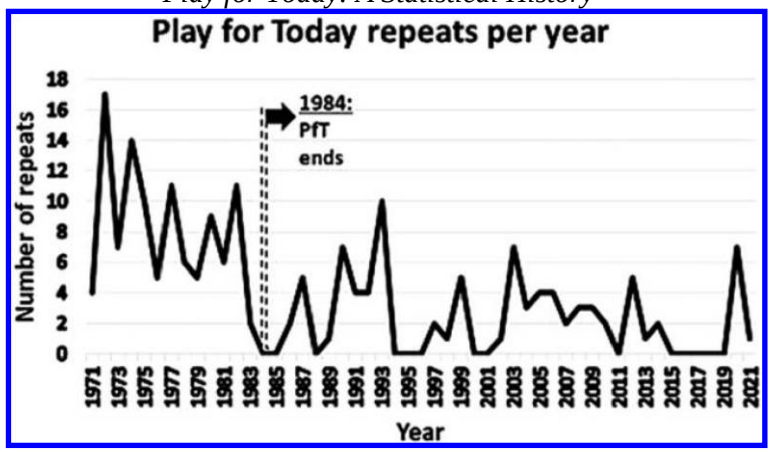

Fig. 4. Number of Play for Today repeats per year.

of all 294 Plays for Today as defined by my criteria but exclude the eleven plays repeated under the Play for Today banner between March and July 1971: nine Wednesday Plays, plus Obi Egbuna's *Wind Versus Polygamy* (originally shown as part of BBC2's Theatre 625 on 15 July 1968, and also repeated as a Wednesday Play, 27 May 1970) and Barry Bermange's *Scenes from Family Life* (originally shown on 25 September 1969 as one of BBC2's six Plays of Today).

Figure 4 shows a healthy picture throughout the 1970s, with at least five Play for Today repeats a year, often in the strand's usual time slot in summer months. The highest number was seventeen in 1972 and an increase was registered during BBC Television's fortieth anniversary in 1976. However, after 1982, the customary summer repeats used between series were largely discontinued. Following a healthy eleven repeats in 1982–including a Mike Leigh season in September–there were no repeats at all from June 1983 to November 1986. Alongside Channel 4's emergence, this

surely contributed to Play for Today's waning profile in its final phase.

There was a significant televisual revival of Play for Today in summer 1990 due to Channel 4's repeat season, Film 4 Today, commemorating David Rose's career; this was followed by several similar retrospectives. In 1993, ten repeats were screened on BBC2 as part of seasons celebrating producer-director Richard Eyre and 'classic BBC plays from the 60s and 70s', plus Mike Leigh's *Nuts in May* (first broadcast on 13 January 1976) repeated on 27 December as part of Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer's curated evening of viewing, *At Home With Vic and Bob*. Later, the launch of BBC Four in 2002 had some effect, with Play for Today initially figuring among a rich offering of archival drama repeats, although this declined in the 2010s. The fiftieth anniversary year, 2020, saw a welcome seven repeats, including six on BBC Four, equalling 2003 as the year of the highest number of repeats since 1993.

Table 1. The most-repeated Plays for Today. Those with the same number of repeats are listed chronologically, from the earliest first

#	**PLAY FOR TODAY with series and episode number beforehand (V =all-video; Vf =mainly video, with filmed inserts; F =all-film)**	**Year of original transmission**	**Number of repeats**
1	08.03: *Abigail's Party* V	1977	11
2	07.01: *Bar Mitzvah Boy* F	1976	9
3	06.12: *Nuts in May* F	1976	8
4	06.10: *Rumpole of the Bailey* Vf	1975	5
5	09.14: *Blue Remembered Hills* F	1979	5
6	10.05: *Just A Boys' Game* F	1979	5

7	03.20: *Hard Labour* F	1973	4
8	05.15: *Just Another Saturday* F	1975	4
9	07.12: *Spend, Spend, Spend* F	1977	4
10	08.01: *Stronger than the Sun* F	1977	4
11	02.02: *Edna, The Inebriate Woman* F	1971	3
12	02.11: *Stocker's Copper* F	1972	3
13	02.17: *The Fishing Party* F	1972	3
14	04.12: *Joe's Ark* Vf	1974	3
15	08.14: *The Spongers* F	1978	3
16	11.07: *The Flipside of Dominick Hide* Vf	1980	3
17	12.16: *Too Late To Talk To Billy* Vf	1982	3

In terms of which Plays for Today have been most revived, Table 1 shows a premier league table of Play for Today repeats. Seventeen have been repeated three or more times. A further 22 Plays for Today have been repeated twice. As with the top seventeen, there is a general trend for those in the strand's first half–the first to seventh series (1970–7)–to have been repeated more often.

Table 1 also reveals the dominance of all-filmed Plays for Today among repeats, amounting to 68.8 per cent of those most repeated. Perhaps, unsurprisingly, the most-repeated is *Abigail's Party* (first broadcast on 1 November 1977), the regular revivals of which have strengthened its position as the Play for Today most likely to be recalled by the British public. This theatre-derived all-video play–the sole studio-only play to have been repeated more than twice–has featured wearyingly often as the synecdoche of Play for Today: its image accompanying most press articles to mark the fiftieth anniversary. However, there is, to draw on Julian Petley's (1986) discussion of British cinema, a vast 'lost continent' of Plays for

Today: 186 episodes have never been repeated, while 108 have been, although mostly during the summers between 1971 and 1982. Only 39 Plays for Today have been repeated twice or more: a figure increased by four by BBC Four's fiftieth anniversary repeat season.

Interestingly, Plays for Today by its more radical or eclectic producers have been more frequently repeated: Tony Garnett (three repeats per Play for Today produced), Margaret Matheson (1.5), Richard Eyre (0.9), Kenith Trodd (0.6), Irene Shubik (0.81), Graeme McDonald (0.84) and David Rose (0.81). This contrasts especially with Pharic Maclaren's BBC Scotland-made Plays for Today (0.18) or the video-centric output of Innes Lloyd (0.35).

It is pertinent to consider whether it was initial viewing figures, the perceived quality of filmed productions or the kudos of particular writers that caused certain Plays for Today to be revived more frequently than others. There is a definite, if slight, correlation between viewing figures and repeats: original broadcasts of those Plays for Today in Table 1 achieved a mean average of 7.06 million viewers. In terms of all 108 Plays for Today that have been repeated, the audiences for the first broadcasts averaged 6.31 million whereas those never repeated averaged 5.23 million. This trend, however, hides many exceptions. Seven Plays for Today whose audiences exceeded 10 million have never been repeated, including *The Other Woman* (6 January 1976), *A Story to Frighten the Children* (3 February 1976), *Scully's New Year's Eve* (3 January 1978) and *A Cotswold Death* (12 January 1982). In addition, the BBC often chose to repeat perceived high-quality productions that had reached lower-than-average audiences on first broadcast, in some cases due to a late scheduling. *Speech Day* (26 March 1973), *Catchpenny Twist* (5 December 1977), *Destiny* (31 January 1978), *Comedians* (25 October 1979) and *A Walk in the*

Forest (14 May 1980) all added significantly to their audience figures when repeated.

There is a marked linkage between a Play for Today's use of film and the likelihood of it being repeated: 56, or 51.9 per cent, of the 108 plays that were repeated are all-film, far exceeding the overall third of the strand which were film. Furthermore, 77.4 per cent of Plays for Today that have never been repeated are majority- or wholly-video productions. The mean for the average number of repeats for a filmed Play for Today is 1.14, whereas the figure is 0.41 for a videoed Play for Today. Such statistics highlight that it is plays shot on video that primarily make up the strand's lost continent. This privileging of all-filmed productions through repeats has occurred to a far greater degree since the strand ended. Of the 86 repeats since 1984, 36 per cent have been primarily video productions as against the 64 per cent that were filmed. This may be compared with the period 1970–84 when 47 per cent of repeats were videoed and 53 per cent were filmed. Furthermore, 31 all-filmed Plays for Today have been released on DVD or Blu-ray–31.6 per cent of the total produced–whereas just fifteen primarily videoed Plays for Today have been made available this way: a mere 7.7 per cent. This imbalance has scarcely been rectified by the BFI's first three Blu-ray volumes: thirteen of the twenty productions included are all-film.

There are also significant biases in terms of which Play for Today writers (or devisers) have had their plays repeated. Jack Rosenthal's Plays for Today have been repeated thirteen times, Dennis Potter's fourteen, and Mike Leigh leads with 24. Their dominance has expanded exponentially since 1984. However, while they are significant Play for Today figures, they have come unfairly to overshadow the work of many other distinguished

writers. Colin Welland's five Plays for Today have received only a combined total of six repeats. *Your Man from Six Counties* (26 October 1976) has never been repeated, although it was included in the BFI's first Play for Today Blu-ray release in November 2020. Arthur Hopcraft's two Plays for Today have received only two repeats, with *Wednesday Love* (8 May 1975) never having been rescreened. Julia Jones's four Plays for Today have received a mere three repeats and none of these has been in the last 45 years. There have been no repeats at all of the Plays for Today by many of its 200 or so writers, including Caryl Churchill, Alma Cullen, Marcella Evaristi, Stephen Fagan, Ron Hutchinson, Bernard Kops, David Leland and Peter Prince. As such, the combination of repeats and commercial releases has helped to construct a canon that is formed disproportionately of filmed Plays for Today made by a relatively small number of critically acclaimed figures.

Conclusions

Data of Play for Today's viewing figures reveal the strand's cultural reach and centrality over fourteen years: its mean average audience was an impressive 5.63 million viewers. Higher audiences on first broadcast correlated to a greater likelihood of being repeated, although detailed analysis reveals that specific Plays for Today that originally gained low audiences performed significantly better when repeated. Play for Today's large audiences, quantities of repeats and its status as a fixture in its 9:20–9:25 p.m. starting-time slot showed the strand was highly valued by the public and the BBC. Its standing and its commitment to creative autonomy were demonstrated by its lack of a set end-time. However, the slight decline in viewing figures from 1982 to 1984 and the striking fall in the number of Plays for Today repeated

after 1982 shows that the strand had lost much of its former centrality within both public consciousness and the BBC's scheduling. The data also reveals how Play for Today has become associated disproportionately with the use of film as a result of repeats and distribution through other media. The 2020 *Drama out of a Crisis* documentary partly sought to rectify this by featuring twelve, out of 28 Play for Today clips, shot on videotape. However, the data analysed in this appendix suggests the existence of a canon consisting mainly of all-filmed Plays for Today by Mike Leigh, Dennis Potter and Jack Rosenthal, who have become increasingly identified with the strand since 1984.

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Notes

1. Richard Eyre, interviewed by the author, 16 November 2020.
2. Jenny Brewer, interviewed by the author, 7 July 2021.
3. This was one of five Plays for Today in the third Matheson-Eyre-Trodd era to be shown at 10 p.m. or later. These were, in ascending order of lateness: *Comedians* (25 October 1979), *Psy-Warriors* (12 May 1981), *The Legion Hall Bombing* (22 August 1978), *Campion's Interview* (12 April 1977) and *A Walk in the Forest* (14 May 1980). Due to scheduling changes to accommodate *Election '74 Question Time* programmes, both *Joe's Ark* (14 February 1974) and *Hot Fat* (21 February 1974) started at 10:45 p.m. and 10:40 p.m. respectively.

4. Both *O Fat White Woman* (4 November 1971) and *Scully's New Year's Eve* (3 January 1978) are included as originals. William Trevor's associated short story was not published until 1972; Alan Bleasdale's Scully character had appeared on radio and in print but not, it seems, in this particular story.
5. *Churchill's People* was, initially, shown on BBC1 in the same post-news time slot of 9:25 p.m. on Mondays that Play for Today had occupied in 1972–3. However, after a disappointing start, it was moved to time slots of 10:15 p.m. or later, where it did reasonably well. Overall, *Churchill's People*'s average audience was 2.51 million.
6. However, it is worth noting that audiences for The Wednesday Play during its second to fifth runs from 1965 to 1969 exceeded this figure. The second series (1965–6) obtained a mean average of 8.16 million viewers.
7. According to ITV's Joint Industry Committee for Television Audience Research(JICTAR) data, Robert Holman's *Chance of a Lifetime* (3 January 1980) achieved Play for Today's record audience of 14.5 million (Gambaccini and Taylor 1993: 355). According to BBC data, however, Holman's play had 12.9 million viewers. While JICTAR employed a mixed method of meters, interviews and diaries, the use of meters tended to inflate audience numbers compared with BBC Audience Research Department figures, which measured attentive viewing across a whole programme.
8. *Robin Redbreast* was repeated just 77 days after its first broadcast, which was cut short because of an electricians' strike.

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Appendix 6.

Chapter 9.

The Black British presence on television in Barrie Keeffe's *Play for Today* (BBC1) dramas and beyond

Tom May

Abstract

This chapter offers a cross-disciplinary study drawing on both Stuart Hall's 'Whose Heritage?' essay and his other television and media studies work. In 'Whose Heritage?' he argued that those who cannot see themselves reflected in the 'mirror' of 'National Heritage' cannot properly 'belong'. In the 'canon' of 1980s television, the period drama adaptations Brideshead Revisited *(1981) and* The Jewel in the Crown *(1984) are, to paraphrase Laurajane Smith, the usual suspects: a selected, naturalized 'legitimate national heritage' that smooths over internal national conflicts (Smith, 2006). This chapter studies an alternative heritage, that of* Play for Today *(1970–84), which was regarded as the BBC's flagship strand of single plays that reflected topical social issues and concerns. In particular, the chapter examines the content and reception of Barrie Keeffe's neglected* Plays for Today *'Waterloo Sunset' (1979) and 'King' (1984), evolving representations of Black experiences in multicultural Britain. Through their 'trans-coding' of stereotypes and progressive realism, Keeffe's plays laid some crucial groundwork for the resurgence in Black-led creativity in 2020 via the transformative work of Michaela Coel and Steve McQueen.*

This chapter offers a historical, cultural analysis drawing on Stuart Hall's argument in 'Whose Heritage?' that those who cannot see themselves reflected in the mirror of 'National Heritage' cannot properly belong. In the canon of 1980s television, the period dramas *Brideshead Revisited* (1981) and *The Jewel in the Crown (TJITC)* (1984) are, to paraphrase Laurajane Smith, the usual suspects: a selected, naturalised 'legitimate national heritage' that smooths over internal national conflicts (2006, p.11, 126). In this dominant British cultural mode of preservation and conservation, the nation is continually presented

as what Hall termed ‘a closed, embattled, self-sufficient, defensive, “tight little island”’ (Hall, 1999, p. 10). Conversely, *Play for Today* (*PfT*), the BBC’s flagship single-play strand of that era that dramatised topical social issues, provided to some extent the sort of new work Hall claimed was ignored. This chapter analyses the more critical, if compromised, representations of race, class and national identity in Barrie Keeffe’s neglected *PfT*s ‘Waterloo Sunset’ (1979) and ‘King’ (1984), which attempted to reimagine Britishness in ‘a more profoundly inclusive manner’ (Hall, 1999, p. 10). These were foundational works prefacing the recent resurgence in Black-produced television dramas.

Institutions that engage with ‘heritage’, broadly defined, select and exhibit past artefacts, but how they do so can variously include or exclude the range of people in their polities (Simon and Ashley, 2010, p. 247). *Which* cultural products or practices are exhibited, *how* they are presented and their level of interactivity can influence whether heritage institutions can enable diverse groups to conduct constructive dialogue in public (Simon and Ashley, 2010, p. 247). The televisual archive is a rich source of this representational heritage, the stories of the past, but access to it is controlled. Streaming services offer limited releases and regularly alter access to the televisual archive: in the same month, for example, BBCiPlayer, BritBox and Netflix removed the comedy series *Little Britain* (BBC, 2003–07) due to its offensive portrayal of Black characters, including the use of blackface.

Organisations such as the BBC have a mandate to appeal widely, part of which involves bringing varied audiences together to enjoy and reflect on material from British screen archives. The BBC, as a BBC Teach (2021) press release indicates, is widening access by granting educational establishments access to its Digitised Broadcast Archive. In a Britain currently experiencing severe discord and division, such education could contribute to a greater understanding of our televisual past alongside inter-generational dialogue. The *PfT* strand, whose representational strengths and limitations are discussed below, could be shown and interrogated in schools alongside an analysis of problematic 1970s sitcoms and seminal, Black-led dramas from 2020 to explore our television’s, and nation’s, complex historical evolution.

Recent TV dramas such as Steve McQueen’s *Small Axe* (BBC1, 2020) and Michaela Coel’s *I May Destroy You* (BBC1, 2020) mark a resurgence in Black-led cultural production that expands upon the topical social realism prevalent in British TV drama from

the 1960s to the 1980s and Black-led predecessors such as Michael Abbensetts's *Empire Road* (BBC2, 1978–79) and Trix Worrell's *Desmond's* (Channel 4, 1989–94). Writer-director McQueen recalls how, when growing up, he tuned in regularly to the 'rich […] interesting' dramas *PfT* offered on Thursday nights (Cripps, 2009, p. 2; Sepinwall, 2020). Furthermore, McQueen's use of 16mm film for the final *Small Axe* drama 'Education' was a conscious aesthetic decision to emulate his memory of how *PfT*'s filmed dramas, with their raw, grainy look, had made him feel close to the characters and the topical events they were embroiled in (Hunt, 2020; Sepinwall, 2020). *PfT* can be seen as part of a televisual heritage that unsettles the myth of a conservative past. The potential exists to use the televisual archive to learn from the successes and failures of TV drama representations over time, and thus support inclusive and complex productions today.

Representation of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people in the UK media, film and television

In the history of how Black people have been represented within the media, film and television, there has been a systematic, unspoken practice whereby – comparably to literature – films or TV dramas have been tailored to the white viewer's perspective or gaze (Morrison, 2013). Black writers or directors have invariably had to conform to appealing to the white gaze in order to progress within the industry. Media constructions of Black individuals and communities in the UK post-Windrush tended to elide or denigrate their presence and experience. Hall *et al.* (1978, p. 322) note conservative media outlets' misrepresentations of a real crisis of class struggle through their cynical use of racialised images of Black criminals to divide and conquer, exploiting white working-class readers' sense of their 'experienced reality'. By 1978, the othering of Black people as one of several groups constituting the 'Enemy Within' had become normalised in the UK (Hall, 2017, pp. 150–153). Gilroy (1982) and Sivanandan (1983; 1985) detail extensive police-community conflict from 1970–83 in Leeds, Bradford, Birmingham and London, where the increasingly authoritarian Metropolitan Police targeted and criminalised Black communities. Within their landmark analysis of the media-abetted construction of a 'mugging crisis', Hall *et al.* (1978, p. 50) noted senior police officers' call in *The Times* for a return to the 'good old days' of long sentences and harsher prison conditions.

In ‘Whose Heritage?’, Hall (1999, p. 5) quoted David Scott on how a ‘tradition is never neutral’. Nor was the widespread critical adoration for lucratively exported British television dramas such as Granada’s *Brideshead Revisited* and *TJITC*. Set in the ‘good old days’ of the distant past, these literary adaptations reflect Patrick Wright’s (2009) insight that heritage provides an alternative to the present. Like the Merchant-Ivory films, which Andrew Higson (2014, p. 125) sees as expressing a ‘wistful nostalgia’, they fail to engage critically or analytically with contemporary modernity. The ‘conservative nostalgic gaze’ that Higson (2014, p. 124) perceives as encouraged by the Merchant-Ivory films is akin to the uninterrupted white gaze that viewers are urged to adopt towards *TJITC* (Malik, 2002). While this is complicated by India-born Ismail Merchant’s ethnicity, Mary Katherine Hall argues that Merchant-Ivory’s film adaptation of *Howards End* (1992) takes a hierarchical, conservative class position in how it ‘reifies and sacralises’ high culture (2003, p. 225). For Sarita Malik, nostalgia is pervasive on British television, with ‘Black presence accredited with “dividing Britishness”’, while *TJITC* represents ‘extreme nostalgia’ and subtly rearticulates colonialist discourses (2002, pp. 145, 181).

This privileging of the white gaze extends to the number and quality of roles available to Black actors. Throughout 1984, Preethi Manuel monitored 670 dramas broadcast on British television, finding that only 2.3 per cent of the 8,733 actors appearing were Black actors, cast in ‘stereotypical roles’ or associated with violence and totally lacking in ‘wholesome’ or ‘heroic qualities’ (1986, pp. 10–11, 54–55). Sarita Malik refers to how many Black characters are nurses, chauffeurs, waiters, and hospital orderlies – actors cast, as Carmen Munroe claims, to ‘dress the set’ (Malik, 2002, p. 140). Malik recounts how writer and filmmaker Alrick Riley abandoned his TV acting career as he was ‘always playing muggers and thieves’, charging 1980s and 1990s soap operas with the tokenistic casting of Black actors in insubstantial parts. These roles rarely showed them at home so as not to ‘offend’ audiences with ‘ethnic distinctiveness’ (Malik, 2002, pp. 140, 148). As noted below, writer Barrie Keeffe dramatised economic inequalities, the policing crisis and experiences of the Windrush generation and their children. Keeffe progressed from including Black actors as foils to a white working-class star to giving them greater primacy, while representing working-class solidarity and conviviality across both ‘Waterloo Sunset’ and ‘King’.

Stuart Hall played a central interventional role in changing the media climate. Hall had 20 years of experience as a writer, presenter and commentator on BBC radio and television; his first BBC appearance was as a presenter of *British Caribbean Writers* (21 April 1958). Hall also contributed to the Campaign Against Racism in the Media's work on the BBC's Open Door access strand to critique racism in television, presenting 'It Ain't Half Racist, Mum' in 1979.' Throughout the 1980s, BBC Drama made gradual, if inconsistent, progress; as this chapter will show, the producer Michael Wearing enabled regional and working-class voices and went on to produce BBC dramas involving Black and Asian lead actors, writers and directors.

Within this context, this chapter will analyse whether two *PfT*s by Barrie Keeffe perpetrated or challenged stereotypical representations of Black characters in this period. This draws upon Stuart Hall's account of Donald Bogle's classification of prevalent stereotypical Black roles in American films, including the 'Uncle Tom', who are 'enslaved and insulted' but who 'remain hearty, stoic, generous, selfless and oh-so-kind' (2013, p. 239). Keeffe's plays, informed by a tradition of progressive realism, are exemplars of the process Hall explains whereby cultural texts attempt to 'trans-code': subversively reconfigure negative stereotypes by reappropriating them for new meanings (e.g., 'Black is beautiful') (Hall, 2013, p. 259).

Play for Today and Barrie Keeffe

Play for Today (1970–84) was a long-running strand which began as *The Wednesday Play* (1964–70). Around 23 one-off dramas were broadcast annually, in a regular BBC1 primetime slot directly following the news, which emphasised its contemporaneity. BBC managers and critics considered it the most prestigious dramatic vehicle for exploring difficult social issues and experimenting with form.

PfT gave playwrights and actors from the regions and nations of the UK space to articulate their voices and outlooks. Viewing figures varied greatly and, while it didn't gain the audience loyalty of a soap opera or costume drama, the strand averaged 5.6 million viewers (May, 2022). Some episodes gained over 9 million viewers; venerated examples such as Jeremy Sandford's 'Cathy Come Home' (1966), widely credited with increasing consciousness over homelessness, ensured it became a shorthand for 'topical, populist and hard-hitting scheduling' that provided talking points for many millions of British viewers (Malik, 2002, p. 137). Some researchers have found that these plays influenced public

opinion and government policy to some extent (see Malik, 2002; Toon, 2014; Ransley, 2017). Lenny Henry laments the passing of *PfT* and similar strands that offered a primetime platform for new writing when he was growing up: 'Whenever an ethnic minority writer was showcased … I remember that everyone in the family was dragged in front of the television because this was important – this was one of our stories' (2014a, p. 32).

PfT was known for its social realism, and Barrie Keeffe is one of the more neglected in academic literature of the strand's many openly left-wing playwrights. Keeffe was born in London into a working-class background with Irish roots (Coveney, 2019; Anon, 2019). He was a journalist at the Stratford Express from 1964–75 and was inspired to write plays after seeing Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop at Stratford. Keeffe described seeing Robin Chapman and Richard Kane's *High Street, China* in 1963, set in working-class Northampton, as being 'the first time I realised the theatre could articulate East End life' (Lahr, 1981, p. 106). Joan Littlewood had also been a patron of the Negro Theatre Workshop, which Black actors Edric and Pearl Connor had founded in 1961 (Bourne, 1998). Keeffe worked extensively across mediums, typically with London settings and themes such as disaffected youth, delinquency, alienation, violence and popular culture. Following his first play for ITV in 1972, Keeffe wrote four *PfT*s, including the controversial comprehensive school-set 'Gotcha' (1977) and the crime drama 'Nipper' (1977), while his screenplay for the feature-film *The Long Good Friday* (1981) depicted emergent Thatcherite individualism.

Keeffe's *PfT*s were the sort of challenging present-set dramas about social realities meant to serve a domestic audience that had been neglected (Hall, 1999, p. 3). *PfT* emerged from the vogue for social realism on stage via the Royal Court, at the cinema through the British New Wave, nurtured on television by Sydney Newman's vision for *Armchair Theatre* (ITV, 1956–74) and informed by American TV plays such as Paddy Chayefsky's *Marty* (NBC, 1953). As David Rolinson (2011) argues, *Armchair Theatre*, *The Wednesday Play* and later *PfT* provided mass audiences with a more democratic representation of working-class experiences to supplant the previously hegemonic middle-class drawing-room dramas.

Keeffe's 'Waterloo Sunset' (1979) and 'King' (1984) are evolving depictions of an increasingly diverse contemporary Britain, informed by his trenchant insights into social

class that build on Joan Littlewood and Sydney Newman's traditions. These *PfT*s were chronologically either side of Keeffe's one-act chamber play *Sus*, a polemical dramatisation of the everyday brutality of police stop-and-search first staged at the Soho Poly in June 1979, and which contributed to the repeal of the 'Sus' law (Coveney, 2019). *Sus* was one of several Keeffe plays that inspired Black British playwright Roy Williams, who saw Keeffe as 'writing about me and my mates at school … He captured how we were feeling – our anger. Not just our anger, but the humour, the life, the energy' (Hattenstone, 2010). By 1978, Keeffe had established a mainstream profile in the television industry, having had four well-received television scripts made and transmitted by ITV and three by the BBC. Thus, it was unsurprising that producer Richard Eyre commissioned Keeffe, who he knew and whose work he admired, to write a new *PfT* (Eyre, 2020).

Producing 'Waterloo Sunset' and 'King'

'Waterloo Sunset' concerns Grace Dwyer's escape from a deadening old people's home and how she gains renewed life through her experiences with a Black family in Lambeth. The narrative of 'King' centres on the aftermath of train driver Mr King's retirement.

In 'Waterloo Sunset' we are introduced to Grace, played by actress and publican Queenie Watts, who has been consigned to an old people's home by her uncaring, self-made businessman son Thomas (Tony Caunter). He reneges on his promise to take Grace on her first holiday for a decade. Thus, she absconds from the home, taking a train to London to revisit Lambeth where she lived with her late husband, Alf, a Communist Party member involved in the 1930s Hunger Marches.

In 'King', which evolved from Keeffe's 1980 stage play *Black Lear* (Crucible, Sheffield), the title role is played by Guyanese-born British actor Thomas Baptiste. Keeffe loosely translates Shakespeare's *King Lear* to contemporary London, with Lear becoming Thomas E. King, a Jamaican settler who arrived on the Empire Windrush in June 1948. Keeffe's inspiration for 'King' was 'being in a post office queue and seeing a Jamaican man drawing his pension', which made him realise that 'the Windrush generation were reaching retirement' (Keeffe, 2017). His resultant script was described by Michael Wearing, the producer of 'King', as a 'very, very powerful piece of writing', grounding a 'loosely classical theme' within 'a sort of general social psychological reality' (Manuel, 1986, p. 43). Thomas E. King sweeps platforms and drives trains on London Underground's Central Line, with his depot located, significantly, in Stratford, East

London (Keeffe, 1984). King is mourning the premature death of his wife, Malley, in 1973, which we see in flashback.

Wearing's commissioning and Keeffe's characterisation were relatively progressive. While, with 'Waterloo Sunset', Keeffe attempted to 'trans-code' negative representations, with 'King' he was to provide a more complex realism by writing three central roles for Black actors. Thomas Baptiste had been the first Black actor to appear in Granada's soap opera *Coronation Street*, in January 1963. There he played bus conductor Johnny Alexander, within what Bourne terms a 'believable working-class' couple who live in cramped conditions with two children (1998, p. 191). Keeffe provided actors Ella Wilder and Josette Simon with substantial roles in 'King': he gives the characters of Linda and Susan some of the perceptive 'oppositional Black gaze' discerned by Heneks (2020, p. 145). They were able to vividly enact conflicts and differences within the Black community.

While Keeffe's narrative dictated the ethnicity of the characters in 'King', Wilder and Simon were the *only* Black women performers in TV drama roles at that moment, compared to 489 white men and women, as Manuel's April 1984 survey of British television demonstrated (1986, p. 11). It is also telling that Baptiste felt his body of work was neglected, saying in 1991 of his *Coronation Street* role: 'What I feel sad about is when Granada celebrates the Street's birthdays, I am forgotten. I am not remembered in its history, in the books they publish, or in its celebrations, yet I was the first Black actor to appear in the programme. It's like I never existed, and that is a corruption of history' (Bourne, 1998, p. 192).

Reading 'Waterloo Sunset'

'Waterloo Sunset' was broadcast on Tuesday 23 January 1979 on BBC1 at 9.25pm. White protagonist Grace escapes from her nursing home and revisits her old local pub in Lambeth. She witnesses regulars – both Black and self-described British – arguing over North Sea Oil and a World Cup match. Barman Jimmy (Robbie Coltrane) repeatedly uses racist slurs against the Black clientele, a sentiment echoed by an elderly woman (Jeanne Doree), who claims Lambeth is the 'dustbin of the world' and has changed 'for the worst' due to Black immigration. Keeffe conveys that 'real authentic material concerns' underlie the racism, implying that North Sea Oil revenues are not being directed to benefit the working class (Hall, 2017, p. 157).

Next, Jeff (Larrington Walker) is slashed with a knife by white youths in an underpass, a scene that presents the grim social results of the Powellite populist racism propagated by the British media. Director Richard Eyre avoids aestheticising the attack: no musical underscoring, excessive editing or detailed lingering on the violent act. Grace patches Jeff up in his Lambeth tower-block flat, where he lives with his sister Marie-Louise (Floella Benjamin) and her two children. Over a shared cannabis spliff, Grace and Jeff bond in laughter. In the following days, Grace babysits and takes the children on an outing.

At a party celebrating Jeff's birthday, Grace tries, as she explains in voice-over, to 'show what side' she's on by naively blacking up her face to express her sincere identification with the Black British. Marie-Louise and Jeff affirm, calmly, that they love Grace for who she is, and Jeff politely asks her to wipe it off her face. Marie-Louise gets Grace a drink and calls for some music, as 'we're here for a party!' A reggae song plays and dancing recommences. The party is abruptly raided by the police; the belligerent sergeant (Alan Ford) claims the house is being used for 'the purposes of prostitution'. Marie-Louise's children are to be taken into care for the night, and the WPC (Linda Beckett) scornfully dismisses Grace's protests: '*Home* in a *brothel*!?'. Following the police raid, Grace remains in Jeff and Marie-Louise's tower-block flat, where she feels at home. Finally, her son Thomas apologises to Grace and drives her to live with him. Out of the car window we see racist National Front graffiti on a wall: 'NF BLACKS OUT'. Grace recalls Jeff's account of the colours of Rastafarianism and her association of the colour black with her late husband's anti-fascism in the 1930s. She finishes: 'How come we're supposed to be so different? We share the same dream. Dream of happiness.' This is followed with a freeze-frame of Grace's uncertain face as the credits roll accompanied by Bob Marley and the Wailers' song 'Crisis' (1978).

The Black British community tends to be coded as illicit and counter-cultural, but in 'Waterloo Sunset' Grace clearly prefers Jeff and Marie-Louise's working-class lifestyle: the interaction revitalises her. Black British culture is demystified as Jeff articulates his Rastafarian culture to Grace and, as discernible in Image 1, they bond in shared talking, listening and laughing, embodying Paul Gilroy's 'chaotic pleasures of the convivial postcolonial urban world' (2005, p. 151).

Figure 6.1: Grace (Queenie Watts) with Jeff (Larrington Walker); Figure 6.2: Marie-Louise (Floella Benjamin) and Grace. Waterloo Sunset *(40:04, 61:10)*

'Waterloo Sunset' is a moving drama committed to addressing issues of racism, but it still uses common 'othering' tropes associating Black British culture with drug-taking and prostitution (Hall, 1999, p. 9). Floella Benjamin complained in the media about how,

in all three of her TV roles in 1979, she was cast as a prostitute, including as Marie-Louise: 'I've said to producers and directors why can't you give me straight parts? They reply, "It's not realistic my love. The public won't accept it"' (Bourne, 1998, p. 185). This familiar representation – see Image 2 – reflects how TV creatives' aspirations towards 'realism' led them to regurgitate public and media perceptions that Black people were disproportionately criminal (Schaffer, 2014). Perhaps responding to these weaknesses, Keeffe's next *PfT* gave Black characters complete centrality.

Reading 'King'

'King' was broadcast on Tuesday 3 April 1984 on BBC1 at 9.25pm, during *PfT*'s last official series. 'King' opens with Baptiste's voice-over as Mr King reflects upon his retirement as a train driver. He embodies the mindset of the first-generation settlers, who kept a low profile amid 'muted optimism about the hope and dream of long-term Black and white assimilation' (Hall, 2017, p. 146–147). We are introduced to his daughters: first, Susan (Ella Wilder), an NHS nurse, then Linda (Josette Simon), fashionably attired in furs and a blue hat. Susan is signified as serious and caring, Linda as vivacious and materialistic.

King's family visit a posh French restaurant in London's West End. King gives a long, valedictory speech, boasting of his achievement and pride in his work and in his daughters. He then tells Linda and Susan – with Linda's boyfriend Stevie (Clarke Peters) present – that he is giving them the deeds to his house, its mortgage fully paid off. The Cordelia-like Susan is uneasy with his grandiose display of patriarchal beneficence, while, in her flattery of her dad, Linda resembles the manipulative Goneril and Regan in Shakespeare's tragedy.

Figure 6.3: The family's toast; Figure 6.4: Susan (Ella Wilder) refuses to join in the family's toast. King *(41:53, 41:54).*

As shown in Image 3, King proposes a toast 'to England! The Mother Country!' However, Susan cannot assent: 'Hmm, *some mother*…! I'll drink a toast to *you*, dad, but I won't drink to *England*'. According to Keeffe's script, 'She sees England as her home, but a place in a present state of uncaring thrift and meanness which oppresses its poor and its sick' (Keeffe, 1984, p. A). They argue, King interpreting her concern regarding social inequality as 'Black Power talk'. These family fissures reflect the fault-lines running through Thatcher's nation. This initiates a rift with her father, while the duplicitous Linda gains the deeds to the house. Later, Linda refers pejoratively to her father as an 'Uncle

Tom', using this descriptor to sharpen Susan's criticism of King's unquestioning, 'grateful' attitude to the England he idealises.

King's ostentatious toast causes Susan to brand her father a 'vain man', who has now assimilated into being an English patriarch, bestowing the gift of property upon his daughters, for which he demands their love. Later, in a scene at the shunting yard of his old depot that echoes *King Lear*'s storm, he asserts desperately: 'I'M A MAN, I tell you!' King's identity as a 'man' is newly uncertain; his foolish lack of understanding of his daughters' true natures resembles Lear. At the end, a partial but important reconciliation takes place between Thomas and Susan. Keeffe does not end his tragedy with a literal Shakespearean death but his script indicates that King is 'stripped of his illusions of Englishness and fatherhood' and preparing for his return to Jamaica (Keeffe, 1984, p. B).

If 'Waterloo Sunset' constitutes an idealised, trans-coded perspective on Black culture as 'Other', 'King' decentres race as an issue. The Kings are represented as part of Britain's and Thatcher's property-owning society. Rather than being stereotypes, King's daughters reflect different facets of Britain in 1984: Linda is a successful florist, while Susan is a dedicated NHS nurse. Both reflect a younger generation that is willing to challenge racism, unlike their father.

Its representation of Black Britain in television at the time is reflected in its casting and production. The top four billed actors in 'King' were 57 per cent of its total cast, all Black Caribbean, Black British and African-American actors, marking an improvement on 'Waterloo Sunset', where 38 per cent of the cast had been Black actors, including half of the top-billed actors. However, none of the key behind-the-camera roles of director, producer or writer were Black creative people, a situation still largely unrectified in the British film industry, as Clive Nwonka (2020) has documented.

Keeffe's writing demonstrates an evolution from an idealistic, anti-racist parable to a Shakespearean tragedy that foregrounds working-class Black British lives and a significant contribution to the national story of Britain from 1948 to 1984.

Reception

Television critics in the mainstream London press reacted to 'Waterloo Sunset' and 'King' in ways that demonstrated an aversion to the committed anti-racism of the former and subdued praise for the subtler representations of the latter. Following the broadcast of

‘Waterloo Sunset’, reviews by the critics were mixed and revealed their biases as white Londoners as to what they considered realistic or otherwise.

Conservative reviewers criticised the play as an unreal, excessively sentimental ‘monstrosity’ (North, 1979, p. 194) and as prone to ‘Left-wing … pieties’ (Purser, 1979, p. 13). Grace, Jeff and Marie-Louise’s shared working-class solidarity clearly affronted critics who endorsed the status quo of capitalist Britain, wherein ethnicity is used to divide and rule workers. More liberal voices praised its realism: the ‘meticulous accuracy’ of Floella Benjamin and Larrington Walker’s performances and the ‘vital’ Watts providing ‘the authentic voice of SE1’ (Holt, 1979, p. 19) within an ‘unabashed story about the sour realities of black life in Lambeth’ (Kretzmer, 1979, p. 10). Five senior BBC managers strongly commended it (BBC TWPR, 1979, p. 17–18). However, Head of Serials and former *PfT* producer Graeme McDonald thought it unfortunate that Black characters, although sympathetic, were once again portrayed as ‘involved with drugs and prostitution’ (BBC TWPR, 1979, p. 18). ‘Waterloo Sunset’ reached an audience of 7.5 million, with a 36.4 per cent viewing share (BBC Audience Research, 1979).

Critics received ‘King’ more positively, especially Thomas Baptiste’s performance. Peter Davalle (1984, p. 31) highlighted Baptiste’s ‘huge performance’ as the ‘fiercely British’ King, and Michael Church (1984, p. 15) his ‘splendid acting’. *The Observer*’s Julie Welch (1984, p. 24) celebrated Simon and Wilder’s ‘accomplished’ performances, though Ian Penman (1984) criticised Keeffe in essentialist terms for writing outside his own experience. In a critical stance suggesting complacency over race in Thatcher’s Britain, some critics applauded its avoidance of depictions of contemporary racism. BBC managers gave ‘King’ measured approval and it achieved an audience of 3.6 million, a viewing share of 20.3 percent (BBC TWPR, 1984; BARB, 1984). ‘King’ attained an audience Appreciation Index of 63 and ‘Waterloo Sunset’, 77; both figures exceeded the strand’s average. While its audience was less than half that for ‘Waterloo Sunset’, ‘King’ provided further evidence that dramas with Black-led casts could perform solidly in a primetime slot.

Echoing Malik’s claim about Black actors being absent from para-texts, Baptiste’s *PfT* lead appearance received less publicity compared with that of Watts; Watts was a well-known white actress and celebrity famous for working-class portrayals, while Baptiste was a Black character actor with no name recognition. Neither Baptiste, nor Simon, nor Wilder

were interviewed. By 2020, Black creators Michaela Coel and Steve McQueen *were* extensively interviewed in para-texts about their TV dramas, which drew on their own experiences as well as the wider lives of Black British people.

Representational issues and new Black British stories

A pattern of negative connotations about Black people, whom television dramas marginalised and represented stereotypically, was described by Manuel (1986). 'King' is more polysemic than Manuel allows: it *fulfils* Manuel's recommendations for more Black families and characters that constitute 'plural and diverse representations' (Manuel, 1986, pp. 59–60). Producer Wearing justified representations of Mr King as a train driver in 'King' as *realistic*, referring to London Transport's recruitment of West Indian settlers in the late 1940s, and how this was crucial in stimulating audience identification with him early in the drama. Furthermore, Wearing claims that, while King *is*, initially, a 'recognisable' type, he was also presented as 'a completely subtle individual human being' (Manuel, 1986, p. 46). Keeffe successfully 'trans-codes' the King family by enabling them to display character growth and voice opinions. None of the characters are presented in stereotypical ways: they function as complex British citizens of 1984. Furthermore, the Kings *live* – unlike Cordelia and Lear, Susan and Thomas King do not die.

'King', along with *Empire Road* and *Desmond's*, laid some groundwork for recent Black British productions. Steve McQueen's and Michaela Coel's expansive television dramas for BBC1, *Small Axe* and *I May Destroy You*, respectively (both 2020), have transformed the landscape for Black creatives. McQueen narrates Black British personal and community experiences through five filmed dramas primarily set in London from 1968–1984, creating a space where Black British people are 'playing their own history' (Olusoga, 2020, p. 32). Roshi Naidoo (2021, p. 17) writes about the Black perspective and gaze of the series: 'Each film was a testament to what happens to actual, real, living people when they encounter a world that refuses to see them'.

Cumulatively, *Small Axe* conveys its protagonists' needs for an education in Black people's history while expressing the paramount necessity for Black people to become community advocates who act to change history. In 'Mangrove', McQueen dramatises the key roles played by Darcus Howe (Malachi Kirby) and Altheia Jones-LeCointe (Letitia Wright) in winning justice for the Mangrove Nine, following the police harassment of a Black-owned café and community meeting space. In 'Education', Lydia (Josette Simon)

and child psychologist Hazel (Naomi Ackie) campaign just as forcefully and efficaciously for Black children who are let down by ESN schools (where pupils were defined as 'educationally subnormal'). As Lydia, Josette Simon swaps the toughness of her businesswoman in 'King' for the focused tenacity of an activist. Comparably to 'Waterloo Sunset', 'Mangrove' and 'Alex Wheatle' represent the police as primarily hostile and racist or mired in institutional racism, as in the story of Black PC Leroy Logan (John Boyega) in 'Red, White and Blue'. With *Small Axe*'s eclectic reggae-led soundtrack and the remarkable 'Lovers Rock', McQueen offers a corrective to the predominant emphasis on Black people's house parties being raided in dramas like 'Waterloo Sunset' by immersing us in the visceral pleasures enjoyed by Black teenagers at a party in West London in 1980 that is *not* raided by the police.

Michaela Coel's contemporary-set *I May Destroy You* dramatises consensual and non-consensual sexual experiences with attentiveness to ethical complexity. Writer-director-actor Coel explains that the show was inspired by her experience of having her drink spiked on a night out and being sexually assaulted by a stranger in 2016, and her research involved talking to more people with similar experiences (Graham Norton Show, 2020). Deftly utilising unpredictable tonal shifts and television's episodic, serial potential, Coel explores trauma, social media, environmentalism, transgender identity, loneliness, language and memory, alongside class hierarchies within the publishing industry, with seriousness and ebullient humour. For lead actor Paapa Essiedu, *I May Destroy You* is a meditation of Black twentysomething London life (Sunday Brunch, 2020). At its heart are the tumultuous, deep friendships between Arabella Essiedu (Michaela Coel), Terry Pratchard (Weruche Opia), Kwame (Paapa Essiedu) and Ben (Stephen Wight), enacted within a dynamic and experimental dramatic form using sound design even more expansively than *Small Axe*. Coel's and McQueen's 2020 dramas are the new stories of Black Britain that fulfil the BBC's remit to include original, diverse voices.

Conclusion

Viewed today, it is clear that 'Waterloo Sunset' and 'King' contributed to clearing a path for the intense current debates around representation and structural change within television and the media. They confirm and challenge the picture that Lenny Henry presented of British television in his BAFTA Television Lecture (2014b), where he called for a 'fair and honest reflection of our society, not a fictionalised version of who we are'.

These *PfT*s reflect Henry's claim that Black people's screen representation in the 1970s and 1980s was poorer *in comparison to* the UK's regions and nations (BAFTA Television Lecture, 2014b). However, they also highlight *PfT*'s incisive exploration of how class works in society, and they foreshadow architect David Adjaye's perception that race and class are inextricably linked in Britain (Henry and Ryder, 2021). They point to the continued need for public service broadcasters to provide ring-fenced money to widen Black people's representation on screen and behind the camera (BAFTA Television Lecture, 2014b). Current intense debates around representation and structural change can be traced back to the pathfinding work of Keeffe, Abbensetts and others.

The representation of Black Britons in 'Waterloo Sunset' and 'King' sets Keeffe apart from his contemporaries. While Keeffe's attempts to trans-code Black stereotypes sometimes reinforced them, his *PfT*s presented Black characters within nuanced Black familial and community contexts. He placed the 'heritage' of Shakespeare in dialogue with diverse contemporary Britain. In the more rounded 'King', race was not figured as a 'problem' or an 'issue'. Baptiste, Wilder and Simon rendered the Kings as individuals, as a family and as complexly engaging in the national political conversation, and he brought uncomfortable truths into the national British story. In 'Waterloo Sunset', Grace's identification with Black British culture exemplified Keeffe's vision of working-class openness, which was informed by Joan Littlewood and inspired Roy Williams. It depicted police racism within the national story in a manner educative for audiences, and which touched a nerve for naive critics. Within a primetime television drama time slot, Larrington Walker and Ella Wilder delivered utterances of exceptional symbolic power to criticise blackface and Thatcher's uncaring political economy.

Televisual history is a 'productive terrain for re-constituting the vitality of public life' (Simon and Ashley, 2010, p. 254) and, paraphrasing Stuart Hall, Keeffe 'un-settled the heritage' by challenging Black British representation in television. Instead of gathering dust in the BBC archives, 'Waterloo Sunset' and 'King' should be made widely available to inspire new work and provoke discussion of British representational history among students and citizens. Keeffe's portrayals of how race and class intersect should be part of Hall's collective social memory as vital terminals on the way towards Steve McQueen's and Michaela Coel's dynamic televisual interventions, and the future of fully

representative television. Such work offers an alternative to this ‘tight little island’ of ‘uncaring thrift and meanness’, encouraging a generous, convivial archipelago.

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Dedicated to the memories of Thomas Baptiste (1929–2018) and Barrie Keeffe (1945–2019).

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Appendix 7.

‘Treading on Sacred Turf’[1]: History, Femininity and the Secret War in the three *Plays for Today*, ‘Licking Hitler’ (1978), ‘The Imitation Game’ (1980) and ‘Rainy Day Women’ (1984)

Alan Burton and Tom May

Abstract: The article examines the three single television plays ‘Licking Hitler’, ‘The Imitation Game’ and ‘Rainy Day Women’, which were broadcast in the celebrated BBC drama strand *Play for Today* between 1978 and 1984. Each play was set within the secret war: at a black radio station, at Bletchley Park, and with a secret mission to investigate dark doings in remotest Fenland. Similarly, each play dealt substantially with female characters and their troubled experience of wartime Britain. The plays provided a revisionist treatment of the mythology of the Second World War, painting a less cosy picture of the People’s War and its supposed egalitarianism, shared sacrifice, and of the different classes supposedly ‘pulling together’. The article investigates the changing historiography of the secret war, a process in which the authorities attempted to manage the release of wartime secrets dealing with sabotage, resistance, deception and cryptography, and shows how the three dramas came into being through, and were influenced by, the opening up of the secret archive. Detailed attention to the production of the plays and their reception considers how the three historical dramas related to the *Play for Today* strand, traditionally celebrated for productions dealing with contemporary social and political issues.

Keywords: *Play for Today*, secret war, Second World War, BBC, television, David Hare, Ian McEwan, David Pirie, Richard Eyre

Introduction

> There is something especially thrilling about any really authentic story about Intelligence in war (Slessor 1974: xi).

The BBC’s *Play for Today (PFT)* (1970-84) strand of single plays has long been considered a high-point in British television drama, a showcase for hard-hitting productions dealing

with contemporary social and political themes. It had been nurtured by Sydney Newman as BBC Head of Drama from January 1963, who proposed that *PFT*'s precursor *The Wednesday Play* pursue an ethos of 'agitational contemporaneity'; this was inspired by developments in theatre from 1956 and ABC's popular networked strand of single dramas *Armchair Theatre* (which Newman had overseen from 1958).[2] Newman fostered a 'progressive social realism' tradition in TV drama, within institutional constraints, though the space for dissent gradually narrowed from 1974 onwards. In its long run, the *Play for Today* strand broadcast two dramas dealing with contemporary espionage matters: Dennis Potter's 'Traitor' (1971) treated an anxious British double-agent now exiled in Moscow, while Stephen Poliakoff's 'Soft Targets' (1982) conversely dealt with a Soviet diplomat in London nervously seeking ways to get recalled home (Burton 2018 : 204-7, 210-12).

Between 1978 and 1984 *PFT* unusually broadcast three historical dramas treating the secret war, centring on secret establishments dealing with radio propaganda and code-breaking, and treating a secret mission to investigate reports of deteriorating morale in remotest East Anglia. 'Licking Hitler' ('LH') (1978), 'The Imitation Game' ('TIG') (1980) and 'Rainy Day Women' ('RDW') (1984) each put women at the centre of their narratives, revealing a rare concern for the female experience of the 'People's War'. This desire to treat wartime secrecy from the vantage point of the late 1970s was influenced by recent historiographical changes in writing about deception, code-breaking and special operations of the wartime period.

David Hare, Ian McEwan and David Pirie have each specifically acknowledged the new writing about the secret war which began to appear from the 1960s onwards as stimulating and shaping their own interest to write about this previously obscured aspect of the Second World War. Similarly, their desire to de-mythologise was a consequence of new critical writing on the British experience of the Second World War, especially Angus Calder's landmark and hugely influential study *The People's War* which first appeared in 1969. The new perspectives were allied to emergent concerns regarding female experience and agency which were very much in the air at the time the playwrights were setting their ideas to paper. The following article sets out in detail the pressures which led the traditionally hesitant authorities to loosen its grip on the secret archive, provides an overview of the various publications, some sanctioned and some not, which began to open the door on wartime secrets, and shows how these surprising insights and perspectives, allied with the demythologising impulse emanating from the work of Angus Calder and fresh attitudes

arising from the new feminism, directly influenced the writing of 'Licking Hitler', 'The Imitation Game' and 'Rainy Day Women'.

Each of the *PFT*s receives discussion and analysis along the lines indicated above, in terms of their secret war credentials and their treatment of central female characters. Their reception is charted generally across a range of periodicals and newspapers, especially for any consideration of the dramas' treatment of wartime secrecy and of femininity, and internally, with an examination of BBC documents and reports where they exist. A range of interviews with the dramatists and technicians who worked on the productions adds further to the general explanation and understanding of the dramas.

History and Historiography

Popular accounts of secret missions and bravery behind enemy lines began to appear soon after the war finished. Unsurprisingly, there was an appetite for such stories with the public, which included many who had served in military roles or had been closely affected by the conduct and consequences of the conflict. The curiosity was satisfied by numerous fictions which sat comfortably in the ever popular thriller genre, as well as by a steady trickle of memoirs from former agents who had served with the Special Operations Executive (SOE) aiding resistance in occupied Europe. The personal accounts and biographies counted among their number George Millar's *Maquis* (1945) and *Horned Pigeon* (1946), Ann-Marie Walters's *Moondrop to Gascony* (1946), Jean Overton Fuller's *Madeleine* (1952), Peter Churchill's *Of Their Own Choice* (1952) and *Duel of Wits* (1957), Elizabeth Nicholas's *Death be not Proud* (1958) and Ben Cowburn's *No Cloak, No Dagger* (1960). Outstandingly successful were Jerrard Tickle's *Odette* (1949), Bruce Marshall's *The White Rabbit* (1952), R.J. Minney's *Carve Her Name with Pride* (1956), and W. Stanley Moss's *Ill Met by Moonlight* (1950), accounts of the SOE agents Odette Sansom, F.F.E. Yeo-Thomas, and Violette Szabo, and the extraordinary kidnapping of Heinrich Kreipe, Commander of the 22nd Air Landing Infantry Division that was occupying Crete. The books were adapted for the screen in 1950, 1957, 1967 and 1958 respectively (Burton 2018: 243-258).

While the stories satisfied popular demand, the approved attitude to the secret war remained one of keeping wartime secrets firmly locked up. The official historian M.R.D. Foot referred to the accounts as 'good thrillers, but bad history', and at their worst, 'pieces of downright fiction elaborately disguised as fact' (1966: 453, 454); thus, they served the

useful purpose for the authorities of seemingly revealing something about the secret war without giving away any classified material. The British authorities had long maintained a 'culture of secrecy', and nowhere was this more firmly entrenched than in the area of British Intelligence and the secret services.[3] The main reasons professed for this cautiousness were the need to protect agent anonymity in perpetuity, and to safeguard operational practice. Why should former agents be left open to intrusion and possible retribution, and why should potential enemies be privy to British achievements in, for example, code-breaking?[4]

However, the post-war decades witnessed increasing pressure on Whitehall to relax its attitude to secrecy, especially in regard of the recent world war. Statesmen and soldiers were queuing up to publish their memoirs, not least among them Winston Churchill who quickly settled down to writing his multi-volume history of the Second World War and who would tax the authorities with his intention to comment on the part played in the victory by Bletchley Park and the breaking of many of the German codes, usually designated as Enigma (the cipher machine) and Ultra (the operational use of the intelligence) (Moran 2013: 208-211). Allied to this was the increasing desire to praise publicly the remarkable British achievements in the secret war, in aiding and sustaining resistance, in deception, such as the turning of German agents to work for the allies and feed false information back to the enemy, and in code-breaking. The concern here was fuelled by the growing claims of the communists to have been the main effective support for resistance across Europe, and further there was resentment stemming from a spate of memoirs by former Office of Strategic Services (OSS) staff which gave the impression that the main initiative from the allies for sabotage and resistance had come from the Americans. The crucial role of SOE was being overshadowed and the challenge was not being met.

The various pressures on Whitehall led to a slow and cautious relaxation on the part of officialdom to its wartime secrets. As Christopher Moran has detailed, the secret state under pressure in the period shifted from its traditional stance of blanket secrecy to one of information management (2013), The trickle of memoirs and accounts of secret missions had fed popular curiosity and usefully deflected attention from the more sensitive practices of wartime deception, sabotage and code-breaking. However, later in the 1950s awkward questions were being asked in Parliament about the role women had played as agents of the SOE in France and the Prime Minister Harold Macmillan consented to a 'trial run' in the official history of the Second World War series, one dealing with the Special Operations Executive in France, but without a promise of publication. The Oxford historian and former wartime Special Air Service officer M.R.D. Foot was authorised to commence the study in

November 1960. Despite hostile reactions to the final draft from various government departments, which appeared in spring 1963, the study was passed and published as *SOE in France* in 1966. A 'milestone in the history of British secrecy' (Moran 2013: 281), and a best-seller in the official series, the book ran into immediate difficulties, attracted litigation, and proved costly in out of court settlements as former agents felt aggrieved by some of Foot's acerbic assessments. The chastened authorities vowed not to repeat the experiment in the short term.

However, the idea of putting further revelations from the secret war archive on ice for the time being did not prove expedient or practical, and the prospect of secrets leaking out through unofficial channels remained a real issue. The problem lay in effectively silencing well-placed secret war warriors with a tale to tell, as well as the investigative journalists and specialist writers who were sniffing out intriguing titbits and who were often in touch with former participants in wartime deception and code-breaking. The first of these irritants to confront the authorities was J.C. Masterman who had been chairman of the wartime 'Double-Cross' committee, which had managed the complex business of captured agents and deceiving the Germans through feeding back false information. The activities of the committee had been crucial, for example, in the deceptions around D-Day and in sufficiently convincing the enemy that the invasion of France would be launched against the Pas-de-Calais rather than Normandy. John Masterman had long pressed for publication of his in-house record of the work of the committee which had originally been prepared in 1945. He was a believer that there was no longer an operational imperative in keeping such activities secret and an advocate of the need to celebrate the remarkable national achievements in the secret war as a counter-balance to the inflated claims of the communists and the Americans, and subscribed to the view previously expressed by the official historian M.R.D. Foot, that society owed it to the survivors, and still more their dead companions, to set the public record straight, 'to show that the dead deserve honour, and that SOE's effort was not made in vain' (1966: 453). The frustrated Masterman eventually circumvented the guardians of the secret world – and the possible strictures of the Official Secrets Act – by publishing his *The Double-Cross System in the War of 1939 to 1945* in America in 1972, outside of the jurisdiction of the Crown. And then only on the tacit agreement that half of the royalties went to her Majesty's Stationery Office (Foot 2007: xiv).

The second type of irritant was the specialist writer on the secret world. In the early 1970s, it came to the notice of the authorities that Anthony Cave Brown, through meticulous researches in the American archives, was preparing a manuscript that would blow the gaff

on the most closely-guarded wartime secret of all, Ultra. Concluding that it would be impossible to silence all journalists, writers and would-be memoirists, the reluctant decision was taken to beat the competition to the punch and a secretly-sanctioned account of the wartime success in code-breaking was hastily put in train. The job was given to F.W. Winterbottom, the former representative of the Air Staff at the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), whose ground-breaking *The Ultra Secret* appeared in 1974. Still denied access to the official archives, the book was written quickly from memory, took most by surprise, and profoundly changed military history and the understanding of the Allied victory in the Second World War. Cave Brown's *Bodyguard of Lies* appeared in 1975, proved extremely popular, but has been largely dismissed as fanciful and unreliable by scholars.

The three publications led to a sea change in attitudes to wartime secrecy. Whitehall could no longer argue for blanket restrictions on the archive and there commenced a piecemeal release of documents pertaining to the secret war; the first of the formerly classified papers relating to Enigma and Ultra, for example, finding their way to the Public Records Office in 1977. Thus, a spate of new studies began to appear from the later 1970s. Former participants in the secret war now felt freer to publish their accounts, although restrictions remained (Hinsley, Thomas, Ransom and Knight 1979: vii-viii), and these included R.V. Jones's *Most Secret War: British Scientific Intelligence 1939-1945* (1978), Ewan Montagu's *Beyond Top Secret Ultra* (1977), Patrick Beesly's *Very Special Intelligence: The Story of the Admiralty's Operational Intelligence Centre 1939-45* (1977), Ralph Bennett's *Ultra in the West* (1979) and Peter Calvocoressi's *Top Secret Ultra* (1980). And writers now with access to an archive were also tempted into action, as with Ronald Lewin's *Ultra Goes to War: The Secret Story* (1978), and Charles Cruickshank's *The Fourth Arm: Psychological Warfare 1938-1945* (1977) and *Deception in World War II* (1979). In the 1970s, the authorities relaxed its attitude and official history once again 'became part of the secret state's strategy of information management' (Moran 2013: 326). Accordingly, the spate of recent studies was crowned by the multi-volume *British Intelligence in the Second World War*, which began to appear from 1979, supervised by the Cambridge professor and Bletchley veteran F.H. Hinsley. The decision to commission and publish, though, had its critics, including the leader of the Opposition Margaret Thatcher, no friend to the disclosure of secrets as she would prove as prime minister throughout the 1980s (Moran 2013: 323).

Such works, alongside the explosive revelations in 1979 exposing the wartime spy Anthony Blunt and later in 1985-7 concerning the 'Spycatcher Affair', were extensively commented on in the press. This provided stimulus for original dramatic writing for

television, and, as will be clarified, David Hare with 'Licking Hitler', Ian McEwan with 'The Imitation Game', and David Pirie with 'Rainy Day Women', all acknowledged the ground-breaking factual writing as influential on their decision to write about the secret war. More broadly, new, less reverential writing on the war itself also impacted on how these dramatists would treat their characters and the experience of the home front in the conflict.

Historiography, Myth and the Second World War

> Until the 1970s the period of the second world war had been covered with a web of largely unchallenged mythology (Stammers 1983: 5).

The advances in knowledge by the mid-1980s gave intelligence writer Nigel West the confidence to confront what he considered the entrenched espionage myths of the Second World War (1984). Other recent work had also challenged, in varying degrees, the stubbornly enduring Churchillian myth of the Second World War, its dominant representations and discourses. Chief among these was Angus Calder's *The People's War* (1969), published on the thirtieth anniversary of the war and only a year after the turbulent events in Paris which profoundly changed the outlook on culture and politics, and a civilian rather than military history of the conflict. In this version the focus was shifted from mythic leader, and in his place 'the people' become the protagonists in their own history, 'represented in the very process of sloughing off the old restraints on their energies, the old limitations of consciousness, as they begin to take control of the war effort' (Dawson 1984: 5). *The People's War* also caught the spirit of the new writing of 'history from below' and the privileging of previously voiceless witnesses. Interestingly, the book was reviewed by the dramatist Dennis Potter in *The Times,* on whom the new inflection was not lost. Potter was sensitive to the 'paralysing nostalgia' that coursed through the veins of British culture like an embalming fluid, aware that 'We British are always having our puckered and pasty faces thrust hard into that capacious nosebag of carefully mined legend and myth which is so often and so cunningly cast off as our real history' (6 September 1969).

The agenda marked out by Calder was reiterated in such popular studies as Raynes Minns's *Bombers and Mash: The Domestic Front 1939-45* (1980) and Peter Grafton's *You, You and You! The People Out of Step with World War II* (1981). A revisionism working in a different direction was evident in P. and L. Gillman's *Collar the Lot* (1980) and Neil Stammers's *Civil Liberties in Britain During the Second World War* (1983). Dealing with

such thorny issues as the internment of enemy aliens, the widespread use of defence regulations, the control of political action, and censorship, these works exposed a troubling assault on civil liberties during the war which flew in the face of the myth of a war for democracy and for civilisation. Angus Calder remained active, and around the turn of the 1980s, 'in reviews and articles and papers', continued to promote widely the 'Myth of 1940' (Calder 1991).

However, any emerging revisionism had to confront a powerful backlash in the period from 1979, which witnessed the right-wing authoritarian populism and elitist neoliberalism of the Margaret Thatcher regime.[5] This was accompanied by a neo-imperialist logic which found expression in the Falklands War in 1982, during which the powerful myths of the British nation in its 'Finest Hour' were reignited and reworked. Angus Calder, incensed by the abuse of 'Churchillism' by Mrs Thatcher in the recent conflict, found further drive to undermine the mythical narrative and pursue what would become his later classic *The Myth of the Blitz* (1991); a point further developed by Lucy Noakes who showed in detail how the experience and the myth of the war shaped perceptions of the Falkland's conflict nearly half a century later (1997). Various facets of British cultural production challenged the dismaying regressive tendencies, not least in British film and television which in some sectors mounted a rear-guard challenge to the reactionary turn (Friedman 1993, Hill 1999).[6]

Bringing the discussion back to the secret world, national confidence, as it centred on the validity of entrenched myths and eventually the nostalgic ideology of neo-Conservatism, was also tested in the period following the Second World War by a series of exposés and scandals centring on national security and the secret services. The 'missing diplomats' Burgess and Mclean in the 1950s, and later the Soviet spies George Blake at MI6 and Andrew Vassall at the Admiralty, the Portland spy ring, the defection of former MI6 officer Kim Philby, and the Profumo Affair in the early 1960s, all attracted unwanted sensationalist attention as far as the authorities were concerned. The image of traitors at the heart of British Intelligence gathered new momentum when the *Sunday Times* began a series of articles on Philby in 1967, further cemented with the sensational appearance of Philby's autobiography *My Silent War* in 1968.[7] Such revelations fuelled support for more positive accounts of the wartime secret record, to boost morale and to restore reputations, and played their part in the spate of new publications in the 1970s dealing with the secret war. However, the tarnished image lingered, and the forced exposure of the 'fourth man' in 1979, Anthony Blunt, who had spied for the Soviets during the Second World War and had been 'protected' by the

authorities since MI5 first learned of his espionage in 1963, created further controversy and bred additional doubt in a sceptical public.[8]

Three Secret War Dramas for Play for Today

> Our lives must be refreshed with images which are not official (Hare 1978: 70)

In the tradition of the thrillers and the early published memoirs of wartime agents, a handful of early television drama series treated the secret war. These included *Man Trap* and *Secret Mission* broadcast on ITV in 1956, the Anglo-American series *O.S.S.* (ITV, 1957), a screen adaptation of Lt.-Col. Oreste Pinto's published memoirs *Spycatcher* (1952) and *Friend or Foe?* (1953), which appeared on the BBC between 1959-1961, and *Moonstrike*, a BBC drama series broadcast in 1963. The aforementioned, four-part adaptation of *The White Rabbit* starring Kenneth More received a single broadcast on the BBC in 1967, after which the tape was destroyed (Burton 2018: 253). A little later the new awareness regarding the secret war stemming from the recent revelations from the archive also led to some popular series, such as *Secret Army* (BBC, 1977-79), *The Fourth Arm* (BBC, 1983), and *Wish Me Luck* (ITV, 1987-1990). By this time factual programming was also attracted to an hitherto no-go area, and closely allied to the new writing there appeared Brian Johnson and Fisher Dilke's seven-part *The Secret War* (BBC, 1977), arising out of Professor Jones's recent *Most Secret War*, and the eight-part *SOE* (BBC, 1984), arising out of M.R.D. Foot's *SOE: The Special Operations Executive 1940-1946* (1984).

The three *Plays for Today*, therefore, appeared at the moment when the secret war was emerging out of a dense fog of secrecy, and joined other fictional and factual programming similarly inspired by the new historical writing and archival revelations, although, as we will see, the single dramas were more revisionist in intent. The dramatists David Hare, Ian McEwan and David Pirie have each alluded to the influence of recent key studies in arousing their interest as well as in shaping their attitude to the material. The following section introduces each of the three plays in turn, examining their origins, authorship, production, treatment of secret war material, and their place in the traditions of the *PFT* strand.

'Licking Hitler' (1978)

David Hare wrote 'Licking Hitler' following a sustained period of writing history plays, dramas undermining established myths about the nature of contemporary British society (Coates 1989). Among Hare's early theatre works was *Brassneck*, a collaboration with Howard Brenton which opened at the Nottingham Playhouse in 1973. This scathing satirical chronicle of corruption among local government and property speculators in a post-Second World War Midlands town was adapted for television as a *PFT* (1975) and communicated disillusionment at the post-war 'settlement'. Hare attributed his change in thinking about the Second World War and the recent past to Angus Calder's *The People's War* (1969), 'a complete alternative history to the phoney and corrupting history I was taught at school' (Hare 1978: 66). The idea for writing 'LH' came to Hare after a chance meeting in the Weiner Library with Sefton Delmer, a wartime secret warrior who had headed-up a radio station broadcasting black propaganda to the Germans, and located within the Political Warfare Executive (PWE). The factual basis for the drama was provided by *Black Boomerang* (1962), Delmer's account of his unorthodox wartime work, and one of the few authoritative narratives of the secret war published up until then (Hare 1984: 13).[9] One of Delmer's early clandestine stations was called *Gustav Siegfried Eins* (GS1) and Hare imitated this with the station *Otto Abend Eins*, seen at operation through May 1941-July 1942.[10] GS1 has been described as 'the greatest exponent of the pornographic theme' in British wartime propaganda, and it worked as a purely subversive station, its purpose to stimulate distrust of the Nazis and the administration in general among the German population, and to stir up friction between the Nazi Party and the military leadership (Cruickshank 1981: 80).

'Licking Hitler' centres on the tricky work of black propaganda concocted and broadcast from the remote Windlesham House. A young middle-class translator Anna Seaton (Kate Nelligan) arrives at the house and the brilliant, instinctive propagandist Archie MacLean (Bill Paterson), a working-class Glaswegian, forces his attentions on her and they lapse into an abusive relationship. Just before the station is de-sanctioned, Archie cruelly sees to it that Anna is removed from her duties.

Hare was determined for the drama to speak not just of Britain then but of Britain now. Therefore, he added a postscript, wherein an authorial voice-over (performed by Hare himself) informs the viewer of the post-war circumstances of the main characters. For example, John Fennel (Clive Revill), the unit's contact at the PWE, is shown to attain ministerial position in the Labour Government of the 1960s, marking him as the real-life Richard Crossman who had served at the wartime PWE. We are told that Will Langley

(Hugh Fraser), the unit's commander, became a world famous thriller writer, noted for his emphasis on sex and violence, equating the character with Ian Fleming, who had served in Naval Intelligence rather than black radio.

Central protagonists Anna and Archie are seen as 'trapped in myths about their own past from which they seem unwilling to escape', much in the way Hare perceived the nation as constantly harking back to the war and an idealistic view of the conflict (Hare 1984: 13). As drama historian Richard Johnstone has observed, 'LH' is 'the kind of historical drama that is more concerned with the way we are than with the way we were' (1985: 196). There is a lasting resonance in how Anna enjoys her sexual 'thing' with Archie, but cannot cope with how the secrecy and lying extends beyond their propaganda work and hampers their ability to communicate on a personal level. Initially, Anna appreciates the tough Glaswegian's physical dominance and his worldlier outlook, which is refreshing to someone with her sheltered upper-class background, but they are ultimately unable to be honest with each other. Recently, Hare has commented on this final montage sequence, suggesting that counter to dominant myths about the Second World War, the British actually had a 'gift for lying', and that the Establishment could only justify its continued existence and self-importance through continual lying (quoted in *Drama Out of a Crisis: A Celebration of* Play for Today, BBC4, 12/10/2020).

'LH' was shot on 16mm colour film from 9-27 May 1977.[11] Its opening credit 'A film by David Hare' rhetorically positions Hare as a film *auteur*: as Hannah Andrews has argued, marking a convergence between the film and television mediums (2014: 50-52). It was one of 26 *PFTs* David Rose produced from 1972-1980, 23 of which were made from BBC Birmingham's Pebble Mill where Rose had been Head of the English Regions Drama unit since November 1971. Its Birmingham location was 'centrally situated' so that Rose could 'concern himself with non-metropolitan drama for the national network' (BBC 1972: 73). Hare's drama was shot on location at Compton Verney House, Warwickshire, representing Windlesham House mansion, Surrey, which Hare describes as 'An English country house. Perfect and undisturbed. Large and set among woods' (Hare 1977: 1).

Hare's *PFT* is shot with the sedate, deliberate pacing of a European art film and Hannah Andrews has compared its use of lighting indoors on location to 1940s British cinema (2014: 50-52), while Julian Petley has noted Hare's break with television's customary naturalism with 'discordant' juxtapositions of sound and images (*Monthly Film Bulletin*, August 1984). Its Average Shot Length (ASL) is 11.1 seconds, a fairly slow cutting speed

which reflects Hare's visual aesthetic of lingering on ensemble acting within the wider *mise-en-scène* of the country house which is a textural character in its own right. There is no underscore, though *Chopin's Waltz No. 3 in A-minor* features thrice diegetically. Hare uses deep focus, an often mobile camera tracking the bustling movements in Windlesham House, or swooping in as characters perform their radio propagandist duties. There is a de-glamorised, lengthy take of Anna dragging the drunken Archie's body out of her room, leaving it in the corridor, covering it and leaving him out there, visually complementing her later claim they are doing 'degrading work'. In the previously mentioned epilogue, Hare uses a sequence of monochrome still photographs and staged exterior film sequences made to look like 1950s and 1960s newsreel or home movie recordings, interspersed rhythmically with cut-outs to a black screen. This dynamic section (56:14-58:33) is rapidly cut with an ASL of 3.2. Hare's bravura stylistics here recalls and comments on the Grierson-led British Documentary Movement and its complicity in the art of national lying.

'LH' ends, aptly, in the present, with static shots of the interior of Windlesham, empty and devoid of the vital, flawed life that had occupied it during wartime. A window is reflected on the carpet. Depth of field enables us to see outside; we feel a sense of decay and hollowness as Hare's voice-over makes clear how the habit of 'daily inveterate lying' has never since abated in British public life. Next, we see an exterior shot of a Neo-Classical statue of a man carrying a scythe which may signify the political betrayal of the hopes of the working-class following the 'People's War' – pre-echoing the elaborate montage that concludes Trevor Griffiths and Richard Eyre's later *PFT* 'Country'. As the credits ensue, in the foreground is a radio microphone back in 1942, signifying the pre-eminence of communications technology and the importance of who controls it, then and now.

'The Imitation Game' (1980)

This *PFT* was written by Ian McEwan at the invitation of the producer-director Richard Eyre, and filmed on location in Essex and Suffolk in October-November 1979.[12] McEwan brought together three elements that were preoccupying him at the time: the first was the Women's Movement and the wish to write about society not in terms of economic classes but as a patriarchy; the second was an interest in the mathematician and wartime code-breaker Alan Turing[13]; the third was Mozart's *Fantasia in C Minor,* K475.

‘The Imitation Game’ begins early in the summer of 1940. Cathy Raine (Harriet Walter) is an intelligent and head-strong young woman stifled by her familial surroundings, described as a ‘modest suburban home … on the edge of a small southern town’ (McEwan 1980: 1). Desiring to contribute to the war effort, Cathy joins the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) in preference to working in a munitions factory and opts to serve in the exciting-sounding role of ‘special operator’. She is posted to a wireless intercept centre (Y-station) where she laboriously records incoming coded messages.

At each stage of her attempt to be independent and do something more fulfilling, her ambition is hampered by an external sexual appraisal of her role, from her father, her boyfriend or a senior officer (Head 2007: 53). After assaulting a chauvinistic publican (Peter Schofield) who refuses to serve Cathy and her friend Mary (Brenda Blethyn) and, in an attempt to eject Cathy ‘hauls her by the lapels’ and slaps her face – which McEwan sardonically calls ‘the cure for hysteria’ – she is re-assigned to Bletchley Park where she is put on general duties in the mess (McEwan 1981: 143). Turner (Nicholas Le Prevost), a Cambridge don, is intrigued by the young woman’s independence, invites her to his rooms for tea, and their attempt at lovemaking ends in his humiliation. He storms out angrily and the curious Cathy is caught looking over some of his secret papers. Accused of ‘knowing more about Ultra than any woman alive’ she is imprisoned for the rest of the war by a nervous security organisation. Our final view of Cathy is through the barred window of her cell, reading the score to Mozart’s *Fantasia in C Minor* sent by Turner, the musical motif which fascinates Cathy and runs through the drama (McEwan 1981). This time, we hear the piece as non-diegetic sound, in contrast to Cathy’s earlier diegetic renditions on pianos, signifying Cathy’s loss of agency and freedom as she is incarcerated by the suspicious patriarchal authorities. As Hayes and Grote assert: ‘We leave Cathy forced to retreat into the realm of the imaginary, literally and figuratively imprisoned and excluded from reality’ (2009: 36).

Eyre and McEwan both found inspiration in Angus Calder’s *The People’s War*. The director remembers its influence on both he and his friend David Hare and their respective *PFT*s (Eyre 2021); while the playwright after reading it ‘resolved to write something one day about the war’ (McEwan 1981: 17). However, finding it difficult to research Alan Turing at that time, McEwan decided that his Turing ‘would have to be invented’, resulting in the character of Turner. However, the writer did discover that the majority of personnel who worked at Bletchley were women, doing vital but repetitive jobs, that women in the early war years were chauvinistically thought incapable of keeping a secret, and, with the

observation that ‘Secrecy and power go hand in hand’, that he could ally this to his intended theme of patriarchy (McEwan, 1981: 18). Concurrent with McEwan’s findings, historian Penny Summerfield was confirming that the war accelerated the segregation of women in ‘inferior’ sectors of work and consolidated the sexual divisions of labour (1977, 1984), and a little later Lucy Noakes offered challenging studies of gendered understandings of the early war years and their lasting impact on British culture (1997), and of the problematic position of females in the traditionally male sphere of the military (2006). Film historian Robert Murphy has argued how ‘TIG’ revised the ideology of such wartime consensual dramas as *The Gentle Sex* (1943, about the ATS) and *Millions Like Us* (1943, about women conscripted into an aircraft factory). Cathy refuses to act with traditional deference to men and is accordingly disgraced and punished. There is no suggestion of the emerging equality of the earlier films and McEwan’s revisionist interpretation of wartime circumstances emphasises chauvinism and discrimination: ‘all male-female relationships are troubled by misunderstandings, hostility and prejudice’ (2000: 263). Indeed, Harriet Walter spoke of her ‘great sympathy’ for Cathy: ‘She’s a curious girl who couldn’t fit into the mould of a patriotic, submissive female’ (*Daily Mirror*, 24 April 1980).

Jo Imeson’s review in *Monthly Film Bulletin* also took into consideration class, embedded in the setting in the echelons of intelligence and code-breaking. As Imeson noted, the Bletchley Park elite are all Cambridge graduates, their power residing in their unique code-breaking ability. So, Turner is not disciplined for having secret files in his room as he is ‘indispensable’, a privilege denied to those providing the massive support structure around him and his colleagues (June 1983). ‘TIG’ remains unusual as both a critique of the wartime myth and of the venerated achievement of Bletchley Park, and reminds us that it would be wrong to idealise blindly the remarkable successes of wartime code-breaking. Like many centres of wartime activity, intercept stations, dissemination stations and their like suffered problems of absenteeism and staff discontent at working conditions and motivation, not least among women who resented their low pay and status, and who were often unenlightened about their vital contribution to the winning of the war (Hastings 2015: 406-7).[14] Females, essential for the war effort, are needed only in versions of their old roles.

McEwan de-personalises many of the characters who represent the patriarchal institutions, de-individualising them as ‘Publican’, ‘Colonel in cell’, ‘Major’, ‘ATS Officer’, ‘ATS Sergeant’ and ‘Technical Officer’. This is a Brechtian dramatisation of history and its objective inequalities via social types. McEwan centres the human interest elsewhere: profoundly granting devolution to gender and class; while *three* of the four

main characters given forenames are women. Whereas Anna in 'Licking Hitler' has 16 close-ups or extreme close-ups (4.8 per-cent of the total shots), Cathy is accorded 49 in 'TIG' (10.2 per-cent), indicating Eyre's allocation of spatial centrality to Walter's performance. There are five close-ups of Cathy's dexterous piano-playing fingers, signifying her creative agency, while the camera also observes Cathy's firm, intent looks and mordant eye-rolls that make her such a transgressive and relatable protagonist.

Eyre shows Cathy as spatially distant from her father Mr. Raine (Bernard Gallagher), complementing how she argues with him, a paid-up member of the British Union of Fascists in 1937. Undergoing a dehumanising drill ritual in a hangar, the female ATS recruits are verbally barracked by their Sergeant (Carol Macready), but they are recalcitrant and unruly and won't be moulded so easily – which, less positively, includes their raucous and puritanical bullying of Sarah (Belinda Lang), whom they forcibly bathe, claiming she is promiscuous.[15]

At the Y-station, we see Cathy in deep concentration, working amid whirring radio signals on the soundtrack. In a briskly cut, rhythmic sequence of short takes, one fading into another, Eyre conveys the mechanistic discipline and rhythms of the women's teamwork. As they transcribe signals, film editor David Martin matches the fades to the ebbing sounds. In the following fateful pub scene, the camera mimics the male gaze in the bar, surveying Cathy and Mary's legs; followed by a medium-shot of male punters watching them warily. Mary talks about courting, while Cathy talks about the war and her work, and the men resent their presence in the pub as vocal women.

Alongside the bullying scene is further tangible physical violence as Cathy knees the landlord in the crotch – accompanied, wittily, by a split-second shot of his assailed nether-regions. Following this, her male C.O. (Tim Seely) reprimands Cathy for her offence: 'I don't know I wouldn't rate that more serious than rape', and gets her to assent to this preposterous claim. Cathy is subsequently sent to Bletchley Park to work as a skivvy, doing menial odd-jobs around a reclining young officer in the mess who listens to a BBC radio talk on women's role in the war effort, its tone described in McEwan's stage direction as 'one of patronising intimacy and bluff inanity' (McEwan 1980: 101A). As the RP voice acclaims women's function of cooking meals for the armed forces, Cathy rebelliously switches the radio off, eliciting the officer's ire. Later, the toiling Cathy is ignored and left behind as the entirely male group of scientists rush off to engage with an exciting new

development. When Cathy plays the *Fantasia* on the piano, Turner voices traditional class hierarchies by claiming disdainfully that 'Mozart's only for officers'.

In the climactic scene in the cell, the Colonel (Geoffrey Chater) justifies Cathy's detention and paternalistically puts his hand on her shoulder, earning her fiery rebuke: 'Take your hands off me!' This follows her eloquent explanation, framed in medium-shot in a long take, of how the men keep women out of the frontline in the War to preserve their position in male eyes as idealised innocents: 'If… If the girls fired guns and women generals planned the battles. *Then*, the men would find there was no morality to war, there'd be no one to fight for… Nowhere to leave their *consciences*…'

The image in 'TIG' is often multiplane with lighting cameraman Peter Bartlett operating in rack focus to shift attention within shots, implementing Eyre's suggestions (2021). Eyre selected exterior and interior locations – such as the greensward at Frinton, a house in its fellow Essex seaside town of Clacton, and Woolverstone Hall School, near Ipswich in Suffolk – which add verisimilitude to McEwan's portrait of pervasive societal restrictions. After the stultifying Raine household and the incongruous beach huts flanked by barbed wire, we see a range of dehumanising institutional spaces: an officer's mess, barracks, impersonal corridors and a hangar; contrasted by the more inclusive Bletchley Park workspaces.

McEwan and Eyre's *PFT* is even more sedate than 'Licking Hitler', with an ASL of 11.5. 'TIG' contains many long, clinically surveying takes, for example, of the officer's mess, as we see Cathy's busy activity as skivvy while the officer sits back and listens to the radio broadcast. Precise depth of field captures long corridors and a staid, closed social world, where the toiling worker Cathy is excluded from the still, privileged centre.

'Rainy Day Women' (1984)

David Pirie has also confirmed that he was influenced by the new writing about the Second World War that was appearing in the 1970s; he recalls, for example, 'avidly' reading Anthony Cave Brown's *Bodyguard of Lies*. In the late 1970s, he fused this interest with a long-standing aim to write a film about a community where the 'sexual centre of gravity' had been disturbed, settling on a setting among the Land Girls in 1940. Pirie spent much effort researching 'secret war stuff', including time at the Imperial War Museum (2019).

Pirie had unsuccessfully pitched his synopsis for what became ‘Rainy Day Women’ as a novel and a film, until he took it to Michael Wearing at the BBC, producer of *Play for Today* who was very keen and commissioned Pirie to write a script. Pirie’s title came from the ‘idea that on a Rainy Day, a day of trouble, women would be the ones to suffer’ (2019), and the term ‘Rainy Day’ is used in the drama as code for a situation in which morale would be irreparably damaged if word ever got out.[16]

The production was more fraught than its *PFT* secret war predecessors. Reportedly, ‘it very nearly did not happen because of the cost’; Wearing said they were at one point ‘hanging by a thread’; and Pirie claims that Wearing’s skilful budgetary management saw them pull through (2019). In place of original choice as director Philip Saville, Ben Bolt, son of the playwright Robert and a relatively experienced film and TV director at 31, was enlisted to helm a production that was shot on film during September-October 1983 in locations mostly around North Somercotes, north-east of Louth in the Lincolnshire Marshes (Charlesworth 2021).

Like McEwan’s ‘TIG’, ‘RDW’ is set following the British retreat and evacuation at Dunkirk in May-June 1940, where Captain John Truman (Charles Dance) has recently served. In this ‘darkest hour’ of the war, which precipitated the mythical national ‘pulling together’, Ministry of Information official Reed (Cyril Cusack) assigns Truman on an unusual mission to investigate the morale of people in the fictitious Darton village, in ‘an isolated Fen north of the Wash’. A poster on Reed’s MoI office wall denotes a pervasive paranoia over fifth columnists.

Life has been tilted on its axis. Road signs have been altered, rural by-passers tell Truman they don’t follow maps or the news anymore, and the English pastoral is infused with the uncanny and the fearful. The changed centre of gravity is reflected in Bolt’s off-kilter framings, such as a sideways view of Truman collapsed on the ground suffering the after-effects of post-Dunkirk shell-shock, and a weirdly horizontal gas-mask-wearing boy Tom Durkow (Anthony Rowson), with his ear to the earth, paranoid about a German invasion from underground.

The influx of Land Girls Joan (Joanna Foster), Linda (Gwyneth Strong) and Susan (Sally Baxter) has disrupted what the men of the village see as its natural balance and they resent these irreverent urban young women. Led by the sinister Dennis Ibbetson (played with suppressed brutality by Ian Hogg) the men begrudge the Land Girls’ alliance with the local left-wing atheist intellectual Alice Durkow (Suzanne Bertish) who has housed them

in what ‘upper-class gentleman farmer’ Fleming (Bert Parnaby) calls a ‘witch’s castle’ (Pirie, 1984: 19). The sense of foreboding is intensified as this follows shots of dead birds in a bucket which Ibbetson brings into the pub, and Ibbetson taking trial aim at the upper windows of Alice’s home with a gun.

Alice is a German internee’s widow who makes money from billeting Land Girls; her husband was a Communist in Vienna whom, Dr Karen Miller (Lindsay Duncan) reveals, was drowned on a British deportation ship to Canada. Fleming tells Truman that the authorities tried to intern her ‘but she’s English and slippery’. Ibbetson’s ally Joe Hutton (Anthony Langdon), who, suffering impotence, perpetrates domestic violence against his wife Gayle (Anna Mottram), claims without evidence that Alice has taken a Land Girl into her room at night. Joe and Dennis’s leering comments and use of the vocative ‘girl’ to put-down Joan prefigure later violence.

Spurred by their bigoted paranoia, the Home Guards violently ransack Alice’s house, and ‘with scarcely disguised pleasure Ibbetson hits Joan hard across the face’ (Pirie 1984: 54). Ibbetson also strikes Alice and Truman stops him hitting her again, asking with piquant irony: ‘Who do you think you are? The bloody *gestapo*?’ Next, the Home Guards believe they have located ‘some primitive Morse transmitter or jamming device’, but which Dr Karen Miller sardonically reveals is ‘an electrical hair remover’ (Pirie 1984: 55-56). This builds towards Truman’s eventual realisation of his own misogyny and that he has to fight for ‘everyone’, including women. He heroically travels eleven miles across the fen to Thurston military base in an attempt to avert the looming threat from the Home Guards; yet, echoing Cathy’s incarceration, the military establishment does not believe him: he is locked up for the night, thoroughly emasculated.

The earlier frightening incursion into Alice’s home prefigures the grim conclusion of the 1940 story, when the Home Guards are implied to have raped and butchered the women and young Tom. As with ‘Licking Hitler’, there is pervasive establishment secrecy. While an ARP Warden (Godfrey Jackman) claims the place was flattened by the Luftwaffe as happened ‘at Meldreth’, Cambridgeshire, ‘two weeks ago’, it is clear the secret state has blown-up the house to eradicate any possibility that the harrowing truth will emerge and undermine the war effort. In a point pertinent to the longer time-scale embodied in the dramatists’ objectives about wartime myths and secrets, Reed tells Truman that the appalling tragedy can never appear in subsequent histories or memoirs. Pirie furthers the conspiracy narrative through the implication that Reed may also work for the Security

Service. Justice for the women and child murdered by the Home Guards is foreclosed: the perpetrators themselves have been obliterated and thus spared prosecution or having to live with their actions; the groundwork is being laid for the subsequent myth.

Pirie's grasp of politics is sophisticated and allusive. Villager Charles Muir's (John Joyce) pregnant utterance of 'back to the land' after he and Ibbetson have pedantically and cruelly tested Linda on her reading ambiguously implies that the local men may have sympathy with H.J. Massingham and Rolf Gardiner's contemporary 'rural restoration' movement which exerted fascistic military discipline over its members. Ironically, there is 'hysterical gossip' among the male villagers that Alice is a spy sending signals to the Nazis, while in the pillaging of her home Muir claims to have found 'Communist' propaganda, which Truman clarifies is actually a government pamphlet. Alice disdainfully notes how 'Most in the village think Communists and Nazis are the same thing. Including the magistrates', which chillingly implicates the local authorities in this tangible and vindictive local conspiracy.

While Pirie openly discloses being influenced by the 'contaminated community'-set 1950s science fiction films *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956) and *Quatermass 2* (1957), as well as John Bowen's rural *PFT* thriller 'Robin Redbreast' (1970), 'RDW' was also grounded in actual events he researched (2019). There was a real invasion scare on 7 September 1940 in Southern England and he 'uncovered several stories of cruelty and discrimination against Land Girls'. A disturbing incident in 'RDW' wherein the Home Guard brutally interrogate the women concerning a possible clandestine radio, which turns out to be an electrical hair remover, was seemingly derived from a similar incident recounted in R.V. Jones's recent *Most Secret War*.

Echoing David Hare's voice-over in 'LH', 'RDW' incisively demonstrates Svetlana Boym's idea of restorative nostalgia (2002: 41).[17] In his *Listener* preview, John Wyver noted how Pirie's film challenges the culturally persistent idealised harking back to 'Dunkirk' and 'Blitz' spirits, and the cosy representations of the Home Guard in sitcoms *Dad's Army* (1968-77) and *Backs to the Land* (1977-78) (5 April 1984). This is seen in Bolt's framing of the hard-faced Home Guards Ibbetson, Muir, Hutton and special constable Ian Street (David Hatton), who are lined up as a threatening, armed mob outside Alice Durkow's home (Pirie 1984: 52). These named characters feel more tangible than McEwan's patriarchal functionaries, and Pirie heightens the awful realism by having this

directly follow a pub scene where we hear an authentic BBC broadcast on the radio by Air Marshal Sir Philip Joubert.

The play 'opens with a memory of 1940 revealed in the present' (Wyver op.cit.), with schoolboy Christopher (Lauren Beales) discovering his recently deceased grandfather Truman's hand-written journal from the War. We hear in his eulogy that Truman (1905-1983) later became a Colonel; however, the account of his war record omits any reference to Operation Rainy Day, it only being revealed that 'he served and suffered as much as any man at Dunkirk, yet recovered to play an outstanding part in the Allied Invasion of Europe'. Pirie's *PFT* closes in 1984, subtly critiquing the contemporary Thatcher-led restorative nostalgia with an unseen guest at Truman's funeral heard on the soundtrack claiming, smugly: 'At least he lived to see the Falklands'. The melancholy finale leaves it ambiguous as to what Christopher will make of the truth of what happened, with the last section of the journal noting that the Cromwell invasion alert 'was a notorious false alarm'. We imagine horrifying scenes – which, sensitively, are not shown on-screen – and have to face the grim stay of historical reckoning with the descendants of the same cynical establishment still in power in Britain in 1984.

'RDW' is cut at a notably brisker pace than 'LH' and 'TIG' with an ASL of 9.2 seconds, unsurprising given that Bolt includes sequences of terror and physical action, realising Pirie's intentions to use horror and science fiction tropes. Unlike Hare and McEwan's, and indeed most *PFT*s, there is a commissioned underscore by film composer Stanley Myers. Myers uses horns including the cor anglais and grave, ornery strings to create an ominous mood that evokes the English Gothic and the Hungarian modernist composer Béla Bartók.[18]

Truman's eavesdropping through the wall of the Hutton household he is staying in echoes the cult British horror film *The Wicker Man* (1973), which BBC Head of Purchased Programmes for Television and ex-*Film Night* producer Barry Brown had identified.[19] Furthermore, the sequence where the Home Guards approach the Durkow household at the grim climax quotes contemporary horror stylistics: jerky, handheld camera, Myers's shock-instilling underscore and a dramatic zoom into Tom's terrified face as the men close in. 'RDW' in fact sits comfortably in that cycle of British 'Uncanny Landscape' films and television dramas of the 1970s and 1980s which included *The Wicker Man, And Soon the Darkness* (1970), *Straw Dogs* (1971) and *Children of the Stones* (HTV 1977) (Hutchings 2004). Pirie makes his use of these genre tropes more troubling by including Mattel

Electronics' actual intellivision video-game, *B-17 Bomber* (1982), which Truman's other grandson Timothy (Hayden Parsey) is playing in the concluding 1984 sequence. Pirie's camera-script specified this particular game: 'Bizarre computer voices and sound effects accompany lurid graphic sand bombs and planes and land explosions' (1984: 84). In this Second World War-set shoot-'em-up simulation, the player flies a bombing mission into Europe: Pirie's inclusion of it straight after the revelation of the multiple atrocities in Darton signifies contemporary trivialisation of the horrors of the war.

Femininity and Female-Centred Dramas

> One of the most useful spheres for women in the services is cooking. As the war progresses the number of meals they cook each day for His Majesty's armed forces has risen to millions. (Wireless broadcast in 'The Imitation Game')
>
> If some of Miss Bertish's outbursts sounded too contemporary for 1940, the play gave disturbing substance to the theory that uniforms dehumanise by giving false legitimacy to brutish acts (*The Times*, 11 April 1984, on 'Rainy Day Women')

The traditional myth of the nation's 'finest hour' has rightly been castigated as a masculine fantasy, one which sentimentally 'portrays women in the conventional and silenced role of weeping and then welcoming wives, mothers and girlfriends' (Dawson and West 1984: 9). Wartime British cinema was implicated in such a process, demonstrating that women's desires could be fulfilled only when they were directed 'inwards' in the confirmation of family unity and continuity through motherhood (Gledhill and Swanson 1984).

All three *PFT*s considered here were united in their concern over femininity in wartime. Although revisionist in intent, the dramas attracted some criticism for their portrayal of women, and this might have surprised the male authors who professed they were genuinely responding to changing perceptions regarding women's place in society. Hare has revealed how his treatment of Anna in 'Licking Hitler' 'infuriated' some viewers, 'who asked how I could allow so fine a heroine to grow so convincingly through her wartime experience and yet be shown years later to have become effectively a victim of it'. The dramatist also alludes to feminist criticism which objected to the portrayal of a woman who chooses to go on meeting and making love to a man who has originally taken her by rape. Hare does not see his play as 'irresponsible' and defends his depiction of the relationship as something

that, regrettably, does happen, and that to portray only what you would like to be true is an unacceptable form of censorship (1984: 13).

Conversely, critic Philip Purser claimed 'The Imitation Game' was untrue to what the Second World War was actually like, noting his experience of the friendliness of pubs, and criticised its over-dependence on a contemporary feminism he pejoratively associates with transient advertising: 'Women's lib and women's rights and equality have become such an unescapable bore, propped up everywhere you look like hoardings covered with the same few posters' (*Sunday Telegraph*, 27 April 1980). Similarly, Russell Davies regarded this *PFT* as becoming a 'feminist tract' (*Sunday Times*, 27 April, 1980); while Sean Day-Lewis – who termed it 1980's 'most memorable feminist television play' – pointedly reported that a male reader had written to him bemoaning that it was the latest in a general 'flood of feminist propaganda' on television (*Daily Telegraph,* 28 February 1981).

'The Imitation Game' was also viewed suspiciously by some women. A number of former ATS women wrote to the BBC's listings magazine *Radio Times*, 'mostly in a critical vein'. Ian McEwan graciously replied to the correspondents, pointing out that it had not been his intention to 'impugn the ATS'. He claimed to have researched 'The Imitation Game' for four months, to have interviewed many former ATS and Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) personnel, and that despite a 'total refusal of co-operation from the Ministry of Defence' had tried to get the period details right.[20] He explained his aims for the drama at length:

> By the end of the war there were over 10,000 women working in and around Bletchley; a great proportion of them were in vital but mechanical tasks. The closer you moved to the centre of 'Ultra' the more men you found; the further out, the more women. In terms of sex and power, Ultra suggested to me a microcosm of a whole society .... My play exploited a series of accidents and coincidences in order to move the heroine from the periphery of Ultra to its centre where she was to be destroyed.

The author expressed his hope that 'viewers would be prompted to consider that they live in a patriarchy and that its values are perverse' (17 May 1980: 71). Imeson's review also critiqued the portrayal of women, claiming that the intelligent drama ignored the great social changes that took place in the war, and that Cathy's 'solitude, sullen silences and aggressive sarcasm – the result of her frustrated ambitions – undermine any notion of incipient female solidarity' (op.cit.: 160-161). This, of course, could be where the writers to the *Radio Times* had felt a personal affront.

In 1984, a British Film Institute Summer School debated the struggles over the meaning of the Second World War. A screening of 'The Imitation Game' led to some angry reactions from the female participants who felt 'betrayed' and 'patronised' by a drama which for them essentially shared characteristics with conservative popular art. The critical view articulated from the conference has similarities with that of those ex-ATS women who voiced their disappointment in *Radio Times*. That is, McEwan's portrayal of wartime women is 'completely negative' and that any meaningful description of new possibilities opened up by the war and the new felt independence are lost. The consequence of representing Cathy as unique and exceptional has resulted in unacceptable stereotypes for most of the other women in the drama, thereby making the heroine alone in her struggle, losing sight of the positive outcome of female solidarity (Perkins 1984).

However, such responses to 'The Imitation Game' were in a minority. 'IMG' was previewed by Hilary Kingsley in the *Daily Mirror* as 'one of the most powerful plays yet about the unfair deal that women get… and it was written by a man' (24 April 1980). Michael Church saw it as 'a feminist statement of welcome maturity' and 'subtlety' (*Times*, 25 April 1980). Rosalie Horner empathised with Cathy's anger at 'continually being the prisoner of her sex' in a world where men idealise and ignore women (*Daily Express*, 25 April 1980). Jennifer Lovelace celebrated how McEwan had mixed 'dialectic with drama in reasonable proportions' and echoed Horner in claiming the production had avoided stridency. In an implicit critique of Purser's subjective diatribe, Lovelace notes that 'only those who were there can tell if the judgement was too harsh' (*The Stage and Television Today*, 1 May 1980).

Julian Barnes identified 'TIG''s 'argument' as blending 'cleanly public and private feminist themes', while being representationally complex in having the ATS Officer deliver 'a mind-shrivelling lecture putting down her own sex' (*New Statesman*, 2 May 1980). Significantly, fellow literary-minded reviewer Hermione Lee claimed it was a 'moving demonstration' of Virginia Woolf's argument in *Three Guineas* concerning how, in the patriarchy, public and private 'tyrannies and servilities' are 'inseparably connected' (*Times Literary Supplement*, 25 April 1980). Both Lee and the feminist Ruth Wallsgrove acclaimed in realist terms how Cathy *isn't* an exemplary heroine and the ATS girls lack any wider collective feminist consciousness. Wallsgrove approves of Cathy being 'a particularly good propaganda device' against the portrayal of men's 'exquisite viciousness', as in the pub scene which she perceives as a 'feminist set-piece' where Cathy is persecuted for daring to ignore the men by chatting with Mary and kicks back.

Wallsgrove concluded with: 'It's the kind of piece that shows up the sex-war in such terms that makes you want to see women take machine guns to men' (*Spare Rib*, June 1980). Clive James accepted 'TIG' as a successful feminist drama which made him personally feel 'apologetic' to women for his own past behaviour towards them (*Observer*, 27 April 1980).

For David Pirie, 'Rainy Day Women' came out of the 'general feminist flux at the time' and was 'about sexual politics'. A seminal influence was a challenging time he spent living at a 'strongly centred feminist commune' where some of the women were effectively 'separatist' (2019). While this *PFT* attracted less criticism than the others regarding the portrayals of its heroines, Philip Purser decried how Pirie had chosen to prioritise 'the eternal and these days inescapable conflict between oppressed woman and ravening man' over and above the War (op.cit.). Furthermore, Maureen Paton attacked what she saw as its 'trendy [feminist] obsession' with misogyny while herself expressing an objectifying admiration of Charles Dance's body. Like Purser, who called it a 'sadly unconvincing rustic melodrama' (op.cit.), Paton betrays a judgemental attitude towards popular forms, claiming non-ironically that Pirie has 'obviously absorbed far too many British horror movies for his own good' (*Daily Express*, 11 April 1984).

More typical was Herbert Kretzmer, who contrasted the 'unbounded malice' of Ian Hogg's Dennis Ibbetson with Arthur Lowe's 'genial codgers' in *Dad's Army*. Kretzmer commended the story's historical grounding in the real German invasion scare in Southern England on the evening of 7 September 1940 and traced its historical continuities with witch-burning (*Daily Mail*, 11 April 1984). John Naughton found its 'convincing and menacing [portrayal of] gender-based savagery […] more frightening than anything Sam Peckinpah could have produced' (*Listener*, 19 April 1984). As Pirie recounts, there 'was some nervousness at the BBC [as] we were treading on the 'sacred turf' of 1940 with a dark and negative view of *Dad's Army*'. Notably, the production did not create as much of a stir in the printed press as McEwan's *PFT*, although Pirie refers to a letter he received following the broadcast in which a former Land Army girl recounted a traumatising sexual violation during her posting. She praised the play as a 'courageous' portrayal of a previously hidden side of the wartime experience which left her feeling 'liberated' (2019).

Audience, Critical Reception and Afterlife

‘Licking Hitler’ and ‘Rainy Day Women’ were scheduled for broadcast on BBC1 in *Play for Today*’s usual post-news 9:25pm slot, both on Tuesday. ‘Licking Hitler’ was shown on 10 January 1978 while ‘The Imitation Game’ went out ten minutes later on a Thursday, broadcast on 24 April 1980, ‘Licking Hitler’ gained strong viewing figures of 6.57 million (approximately 13 per-cent of the UK public aged 5 and over), a 40.3 per-cent audience share, as against 26.6 for BBC2 – whose main programming in opposition was a *Man Alive* documentary about dieting in young girls – and 33.1 per-cent for ITV, which showed *Hello! Central State Puppet Theatre of the Soviet Union* and the news. It obtained an audience ‘Reaction Index’ of 54 per-cent, exactly equal to its parent 1977/78 series average.

On 24 April 1980, ‘The Imitation Game’ garnered a slightly lower audience of 5.69 million, gaining a narrower ratings victory, but with its impressive 42.4 per-cent share outscoring another *Man Alive* on BBC2 about apartheid in Northern Irish education (18.7 per-cent) and Thames’s sitcom *Shelley* and the news on ITV (38.9 per-cent). Its RI was a high 67.

On 10 April 1984, 8.60 million tuned into ‘Rainy Day Women’, 47.2 per-cent of the viewing public, as against 12.3 per-cent for BBC2’s documentary *A Prospect of Kew*, 27.5 per-cent for ITV’s repeat of its Paul Scott adapted single play *Staying On*, and 13 per-cent for Channel 4’s screening of the film adaptation of Doris Lessing’s dystopian *Memoirs of a Survivor*. ‘RDW’’s performance was especially impressive given that *PFT* had been defeated in the ratings ‘battle’ by ITV for all previous eight episodes in *PFT*’s fifteenth series – led by Granada’s prestigious *The Jewel in the Crown*, which had regularly gained around half of the TV audience.

Broadcast put its large audience down to Charles Dance’s star appeal, following his performances in Granada’s Paul Scott adaptation, implying loyal *Jewel* viewers had transferred to *PFT* due to Dance’s presence (1984: 30-31). The audiences for these three ‘secret war’ *PFT*s were all in excess of their parent series’, while audience RIs for the latter two exceeded their season averages: ‘Rainy Day Women’ scored an impressive 66. While ‘Licking Hitler’ registered an audience share of 1 per-cent lower than the *PFT* 1977/78 series average, McEwan and Pirie’s *PFT*s obtained shares 12 and 17 per-cent higher than their parent series’. Clearly, these secret war dramas were among the more popular late *PFT*s.

‘Licking Hitler’ and ‘The Imitation Game’ were widely reviewed, garnering 9 and 14 reviews from a range of publications.[21] Despite its large, appreciative audience, ‘Rainy Day Women’ was comparatively neglected: receiving just 6 reviews. Hare and Eyre’s productions were widely applauded by critics for their realism, though audiences were divided on ‘Licking Hitler’: while many in the audience sample described it as ‘very credible’, ‘plausible’, ‘believable’, ‘natural’, ‘realistic and genuine’, almost as many thought it was a ‘lifeless, gloomy production’ and that ‘the Scottish journalist (Bill Patterson) had been grossly overplayed’.[22] While many strongly admired ‘The Imitation Game’, a minority found it questionable on historical grounds: claiming gas masks were worn in the wrong position and one viewer claimed ‘it didn’t seem true to ATS Royal Signals life as I knew it; the characters were thought unbelievable’. More typical were commendations of Harriet Walter’s performance as ‘outstanding’ and how ‘the costumes and sets’ [locations] had led to the creation of a very convincing atmosphere’.[23]

While most critics admired the ‘fidelity’ to historical detail in ‘Licking Hitler’, playwright-critic Dennis Potter (1978) discerned how Hare’s courageously open-ended work ‘was dangerous and subversive, as is all good-writing’. Potter noted how ‘the team itself, and their very surroundings, inevitably reflected the lies that had been told, and are still being told, to the British people’. “Licking Hitler” – the title is sickeningly ambiguous – was thus an examination not simply of a particular time, and a special segment of war-work, but of the gangrenous nature of deception […] “Licking Hitler” cannot be safely locked away in its period’ (Quoted in *Guardian*, 11 January, 1978). Reviewing ‘LH’ in the Thatcher era, Julian Petley made specific reference to Hare’s play’s contemporary resonance, noting how Fennel’s proposed formation of a “Rumour Committee” aimed at smearing “the little man” prefigured ‘a sinister and malign Security Service [and] the dissemination by a gutter press of calumnies against those least able to fight back’ (op.cit.).

Some critics perceived connections between the three ‘secret war’ *PFT*s. Philip Purser discerned that Hare and McEwan were both drawn to ‘the confined, dramatic possibilities of backroom warfare’ (op.cit.); Michael Church situated ‘TIG’ in the context of ‘Licking Hitler’ and Peter Ransley’s highly-regarded recent *PFT* ‘Kate The Good Neighbour’ (1980) as ‘new and profound’ dramas based upon ignored aspects of the Second World War’s social history (op.cit.). While Richard Johnstone (1985) grouped Hare and McEwan’s *PFT*s with Trevor Griffiths’s ‘Country’, John Wyver discussed all four as a ‘distinguished cycle [presenting the] dark face of the war’ (op.cit.); as echoed later by

Robert Murphy, who perceived these *PFT*s as viewing the War in 'dark, conspirational terms', adopting contemporary feminist concerns (2000: 7).

Rare exceptions to the pervasive praise were Hazel Holt who perceived a 'coldness of spirit and aridity of emotion' in 'LH', finding Archie McLean 'totally charmless and unsympathetic' and Anna unbelievable, though approving of how MoI boss John Fennel was 'a suitably Brendan Brackenish figure' (*The Stage and Television Today*, 19 January 1978). Mervyn Jones saw 'TIG' as too much of a compromise between Ian McEwan's unique prose style and 'the *Play for Today* formula, which makes one play after another look like the product of a reductive computer'. Jones was alone in arguing that Cathy became 'a bore' (*Listener*, 1 May 1980).

Both audiences and BBC bosses elided the core gender theme. When BBC management met to discuss 'Licking Hitler', Head of Drama Shaun Sutton praised 'a good play. Very well done'; BBC1 Controller Bill Cotton 'was glad it had had good reviews', while David Rose highlighted Hare's dual writer-director role.[24] 'The Imitation Game' was also not seen as a film but as 'A marvellous play [which] was praised by all who had seen it'.[25] Head of Plays Keith Williams agreed with Head of Series and Serial Drama Graeme McDonald about 'a splendid central performance' by Harriet Walter and 'remarkably distinguished direction from Richard Eyre'.[26] 'Rainy Day Women' saw more of a mixed, though still positive reception from the BBC elite. Roger Laughton, Peter Goodchild and Jack Henderson rated it highly, the latter describing it as 'remarkable'; though Laughton thought it was 'a shade melodramatic'.[27] However, Pebble Mill's Head of Drama Robin Midgley and BBC1 Controller Alan Hart thought it overly complex and that its first half-hour should have been simpler.[28]

These *Plays for Today* were garlanded with industry acclaim: in March 1979, 'Licking Hitler' won a BAFTA for the 'Best Single Play' of 1978, though lost out for the Broadcasting Press Guild's equivalent award to Jim Allen's contemporary-set *PFT* 'The Spongers' (*The Stage and Television Today,* 15 March 1979; *The Stage and Television Today,* 29 March 1979). Kate Nelligan's performance as Anna won a Commendation at the Royal Television Society Awards. While it was overlooked in the BAFTAs – as was Harriet Walter as 'Best Actress', unbelievably – 'The Imitation Game' was nominated by the Broadcasting Press Guild for its 'Best Single Play' Award, losing to Stephen Poliakoff's 'Caught on a Train' (*Broadcast,* 16 March 1981). While 'Rainy Day Women' was overlooked domestically, it won a Bronze Award at the New York International Film

and TV Festival (BBC 1985: 11). From 1979 to 1993, 'LH' and 'TIG' were each repeated twice on British television, while 'RDW' was reshown once in 1990; only 'TIG' has been commercially available since its DVD release by Simply Media in October 2018.

Conclusion

'Licking Hitler', 'The Imitation Game' and 'Rainy Day Women' were direct responses to the new writing on the secret war that began to appear from the mid-1960s. In each case, the dramatists made it clear that inspiration was drawn from publications such as Delmer's *Black Boomerang* and Cave Brown's *Bodyguard of Lies*, which offered original insights into a previously closed-off world. Similarly, the playwrights drew on the critical perspectives embodied in Calder's influential *The People's War*, and in 1985 the drama historian Richard Johnstone commented on the book's 'influence on some of the best of recent television drama' (189). Calder had argued that despite the challenges and idealism thrown up by the war, 'the forces of wealth, bureaucracy and privilege survived with little inconvenience, recovered from their shock, and began to proceed with their old business of manoeuvre, concession, and studied betrayal' (1969: 18). 'What caught these writers' imaginations, and seemed to strike them as true', Johnstone argues,

> was the paradox that Calder deliberately emphasises in everything he has to say about the War: that a national experience which seemed, despite the suffering, to offer new beginnings, new roles, which seemed to point the way to an exciting and fulfilling future, was in fact a dead end. Far from ushering in the millennium, the War actually consolidated everything that had gone before. (1985: 190)

The governing class remained in power, and the governors were men. Johnstone sees the gender issue as 'embedded' in Calder's *The People's War*: a point forcefully adopted by the three *PFT*s in which women remain in 'secondary roles', or are disappointed (Anna), imprisoned (Cathy) or killed (Alice Durkow and the land girls). In effect, women's war contributions are reduced to 'silent helper' and, as most forcefully apparent in McEwan's 'The Imitation Game', women are 'kept resolutely away from the centre' (1985: 190). Female sexuality as a threat to male superiority or even adequacy is also foregrounded in the dramas, each of the *PFT*s harshly punishing its women for what male characters perceive as unsettling and unacceptable displays of desire: in Turner's revenge on Cathy for his own sexual inadequacy in 'The Imitation Game'; in Archie's false complaints against Anna

which result in her dismissal in 'Licking Hitler'; and in the Home Guard's savage and murderous attack on the women who have 'invaded' their preserve in 'Rainy Day Women'. For each of the dramatists, as Richard Johnstone once observed, in this war 'it is the woman who seems to be the real enemy, the real threat' (1985: 195).

Many of the writers for *PFT* had been inspired by the promises of renewal and reform inherent in the Labour Government in 1945, and this greatly affected their work in the theatre and on television. The complex Attlee legacy was dissected in the *PFT*s 'All Good Men' (1974, w. Trevor Griffiths), 'Brassneck' (1975, w. David Hare and Howard Brenton), 'Destiny' (1978, w. David Edgar) and 'Country' (1981, w. Trevor Griffiths). Recently, Hare has confirmed that 'Licking Hitler' was an attempt 'to diagnose what had happened in the Second World War and why we were telling ourselves lies'. He reviles the return of the 'myth' in recent times, evident in the ugly nationalist discourses and abundant lying around Brexit, the slavish flag-waving and mindless cheering during the seventy-fifth anniversary of V.E. Day in 2020, and even in some of the rhetoric around the Covid-19 crisis, with calls for wartime stoicism in face of adversity and privation, and, dare we add, the idolatry of centenarian servicemen and wartime icons offered up as models of behaviour (Captain Tom Moore and Vera Lynn). In response to the airing of a recent documentary on the Second World War, the television critic at *The Times* mulled over the fact that, 'If we have not moved on from the war, it is because we refuse to properly stare at it' (27 February 2021).

Four decades ago, three dramatists invited the audience to do exactly that; revealing that the British were every bit as good at lying as the Germans, that women were thought incapable of keeping a secret and were consequently kept well away from wartime secrets, and that the authorities were capable of bottling up unpleasant and uncomfortable facts about wartime morale and behaviour. It is time once again to remind ourselves of the need to counter the dominant myths of the Second World War and to re-appraise a tradition in British television drama which did not shirk from confronting those myths.

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[1] The phrase is David Pirie's (2019), author of 'Rainy Day Women'.

[2] Asa Briggs explains how at ABC and the BBC, Newman was drawn to English writers, 'most of them, in the language of the time, more interested in the kitchen sink than in 'tea and crumpets''. He encouraged producers to appeal to multiple audiences, sending them a printed card to hang in their offices, bearing the words 'Look back not in anger, nor forward in fear, but around with awareness'. (1995: 395-7)

[3] There is a vast literature on secrecy, security, intelligence and the British state. Interested readers could start by looking at Pincher (1981), Wright (1987), Porter (1989), Gill (1994), Thurlow (1994), Hennessy (2002) and Moran (2013) for a cross-section of academic, journalistic and insider accounts of state secrecy, security and intelligence in Britain. Attention could also be given to *Lobster* magazine, published since 1983, and devoted to exposure of intelligence secrets and conspiracies, but it should be treated with due care, see https://www.lobster-magazine.co.uk/. The very abundance of the literature indicates the widespread concern over the nature, extent and validity over governmental secrecy and its practice in the UK.

[4] In a wider sense, the authorities were protecting the anonymity of the secret services, which were never acknowledged, as well as the Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ), which officially did not exist, and which sticky questions about wartime code-breaking might compromise. The keepers of secrets had slipped up previously with Ewan Montagu's *The Man Who Never Was* (1953), an account of a stunning wartime deception, and with *Cloak without Dagger* (1955), the memoir of Sir Percy Sillitoe, former head of MI5, and were determined to stop further disclosures.

[5] Stuart Hall (1979: 15) coined the phrase 'authoritarian populism' to describe Thatcher's tabloid press-abetted anti-trade union and pro-law and order discourses. Following Thatcher's landslide victory in the 1983 general election, Conor Cruise O'Brien (1983: 7) described Thatcher's politics as 'QUALP': 'Quasi-regal, authoritarian laissez-faire populism'. Thatcher fulfilled David Harvey's second definition of neoliberalism in advancing 'a political project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites' (2005: 19).

[6] The extensive and complex matter of collective memory and the Second World War from the vantage point of the new Millenium is gone over in Eley (2001). See also, Smith (2000).

[7] Philby's story informed Dennis Potter's *Play for Today*, 'Traitor' (1971), featuring John Le Mesurier as the Philby-like Adrian Harris.

[8] Blunt was outed in Andrew Boyle's study of the Cambridge spy ring *The Climate of Treason* (1979). Television intrigued by such revelations, put together the drama series *Philby, Burgess and Maclean* (ITV, 1977) and *The Atom Spies* (ITV, 1979), and although Euston Films bought the rights to *The Climate of Treason*, the production never materialised (Burton 2018: 272-277, 281).

[9] Hare has also claimed that in preparing the play he interviewed as many of the original black propaganda teams as he could find (1984: 14).

[10] In reality, GS1 operated until October 1943, when it was brought to an abrupt end in the manner correctly shown in the drama.

[11] Notably, David Edgar's 'Destiny' (31 January 1978) which went out in the same month in *PFT*'s series 8, was mainly shot on video-tape in the studio: an aesthetic which produced over 33 minutes of material used in the final cut per day, whereas on 'Licking Hitler', each of the 15 days of production produced an average of 4 minutes per day. This reflects Hare's painstaking, auteur-like perfectionism, in contrast to the more economical studio craft.

[12] McEwan and Eyre's fathers served in the armed forces during the Second World War; the writer and director also had in common an interest in Bletchley Park and both had read Virginia Woolf's influential book-length feminist essay *Three Guineas* (1938) which focused on women's need for economic independence from men (Eyre 2021).

[13] The title 'The Imitation Game' derives from Turing's famous 1950 article for philosophy journal *Mind* on artificial intelligence.

[14] Mass-Observation revealed that by 1945, most ATS women felt a shared grievance about being paid two-thirds of what male British soldiers earned (Calder and Sheridan, 1984: 184-186).

[15] Expressing *PFT*'s contemporaneity, Patricia Routledge performs her lines as the ATS Officer with an officious moralistic voice that bears uncanny resemblance to Margaret Thatcher.

[16] Like 'The Imitation Game', but unlike 'Licking Hitler', 'RDW' was made by BBC London.

[17] Boym defines this as a cultural reconstruction of the past to 'return home' to national myths, thus achieving a conservative restoration in the present.

[18] In his mystery novels Pirie drew extensively on the gothic; in his non-fiction writing he investigated the gothic horror of British cinema and, more widely, vampire cinema.

[19] BBC Television Weekly Programme Review minutes, 11 April 1984. BBC WAC, micro-film.

[20] In the end-credits, McEwan's research is indicated: ex-Wren Helen Rance is thanked, alongside historians Angus Calder, Peter Calvocoressi and *The Secret War* director Fisher Dilke. By coincidence, the first memoir of a female Y-Service operative was published the year of the broadcast, Aileen Clayton's *The Enemy is Listening*.

[21] Eleven newspapers (*Daily Express, Daily Mail, Daily Mirror, Daily Telegraph, Sunday Telegraph, Financial Times, Guardian, Observer, Jewish Chronicle, Times, Sunday Times*) and nine magazines (*Broadcast, Gay*

News, Listener, New Society, New Statesman, Spare Rib, Spectator, The Stage and Television Today, Times Literary Supplement) were consulted.

[22] BBC Audience Research Department (1978).

[23] BBC Audience Research Department (1980).

[24] BBC Television Weekly Programme Review minutes, 11 January 1978. BBC WAC, micro-film.

[25] BBC Television Weekly Programme Review minutes, 30 April 1980. BBC WAC, micro-film.

[26] Ibid.

[27] BBC Television Weekly Programme Review minutes, 11 April 1984. BBC WAC, micro-film.

[28] Ibid.

Appendix 8.

Poorly paid, but proud to work in teams producing 'quality': an oral history of women's experiences working in BBC Drama

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Abstract

This article presents a range of hitherto unheard women's testimonies of their experiences working in the BBC Drama Plays department during the 1970s and 1980s. It incorporates the subjective interview testimony of nine women who all worked to varying degrees on BBC1's prestigious strand of one-off dramas, *Play for Today* (1970-84) to reveal commonalities and differences in their gendered work experiences. This incorporates topics such as discrimination, pay, working conditions, emotional labour and trade unionism. There is attention to what made working for the BBC unique, compared to ITV or independent production companies. It is discerned that BBC women workers generally saw the BBC as a meritocracy, but also that some regret the decline in the strength of television trade unions, which they saw as leading to a situation of pervasive exploitation in television today.

Keywords

BBC, television, women, gender, oral history, workplace discrimination, broadcasting, trade unions, Britain

Play for Today (1970-84) was widely perceived as the BBC's main 'flagship' strand of one-off dramas. Shown immediately after the 9 o'clock news, it was known for bringing challenging dramas to audiences regularly exceeding 5 million (Ball, 2022; May, 2022). From March 2020 to November 2021, I conducted interviews with 58 people, including 19 women, who worked on the strand. None of these women have had their testimonies published previously, except Tara Prem (Jackson, 2009; Ball, 2015). Women interviewed include those who worked behind-the-scenes as Production Assistants, Director's Assistants or Assistant Floor Managers (AFM). These overlooked roles did not receive on-screen credits in the 1960s: for instance, Linda McCarthy and AFM Jackie Willows were crucial members of the team who made the celebrated *Wednesday Play* (the single drama strand that

preceded *Play for Today*) *Up the Junction* (1965) but went uncredited. This under-crediting situation gradually improved from the mid-late 1970s.

This article reveals previously neglected oral histories of the experiences of nine women: two actors (Linda Beckett and Claire Nielson), three behind-the-camera creatives (Alma Cullen, Jehane Markham and Tara Prem) and four behind-the-camera workers (Jenny Brewer, Jacmel Dent, Linda McCarthy and Meg Theakston) (see Table 1). The nine have been selected as representative of varied BBC roles, fulfilling the need to attend to a wide range of women's voices, going beyond 'exceptional' workers to heed 'below-the-lines' workers (Ball and Bell, 2013: 549-550). The article will reveal that some women regard the BBC during the 1970s and 1980s as a meritocratic environment, where others highlight the impact of the decline of trade unionism from the 1980s onwards on working conditions at the BBC. In addition, illuminating comparisons are made to working outside the BBC, within theatre or ITV.

Oral history is used as a qualitative method in this media production research as uncovering living witnesses' stories of economic, industrial and political changes they have lived through enables us to understand historical shifts within television and experiences of job roles (Banks, 2014: 546). Individual oral histories are useful as they can challenge 'traditional sources [which] have often neglected the lives of women' (Sangster, 1998: 87), offering an alternative which revises 'received knowledge about them' (Gluck and Patai, 1991: 2). The women's voices articulate a range of sometimes clashing stories concerning historically contested events; this piece aims to relay, rather than deeply analyse, these voices. The article uses the approach that Gluck and Patai (1991) advocate: focusing on the women telling their own stories, to create research *with* women, rather than *about* women.

Table 1 Details of Interviewees

Name	**Role**	**Details**
Linda Beckett (b. 1948)	Actor	Appeared in five *Plays for Today* including *Hard Labour* (1973) and *Double Dare* (1976).

Jenny Brewer (b. 1950)	Secretary & Production Assistant	As Secretary to Head of English Regions Drama, David Rose, worked subsequently as Production Assistant on seven *Plays for Today*, including *Penda's Fen* (1974), *Gangsters* (1975) and *The Other Woman* (1976).
Alma Cullen (1938-2021)	Writer	Wrote widely for television, including *Play for Today: Degree of Uncertainty* (1979).
Jacmel Dent (b. 1951)	Assistant Floor Manager	Worked at the BBC from 1973. Assistant Floor Manager on eleven *Plays for Today*, including *Comedians* (1979) and *John David* (1982).
Linda McCarthy (b. 1943)	Assistant Floor Manager	Joined the BBC as a Secretary in 1965, advancing via training to Assistant Floor Manager in 1969. Worked on nine *Wednesday Plays* or *Plays for Today* from *Up the Junction* (1965) to *A Choice of Evils* (1977).
Jehane Markham (b. 1949)	Writer	Poet, lyricist and dramatist, who has written extensively for BBC Radio. Wrote *Play for Today*: *Nina* (1978).
Claire Nielson (b. 1937)	Actor	Known for skilled comedic performances, featured in one *Wednesday Play* (1964) and three *Plays for Today*.
Tara Prem (b. 1946)	Writer, Script Editor and Producer	Worked at BBC from 1972 as script editor and writer. Script edited six *Plays for*

		Today, later producing two including *Thicker than Water* (1980).
Meg Theakston (b. 1948)	Secretary, Director's Assistant	Joined BBC in 1968 as a secretary. Director's Assistant on four *Plays for Today* including *The Spongers* (1978).

The BBC as a workplace for women

Interviewees variously raised incidents of sexual harassment, pay disparities and lack of childcare facilities that were indicative of a longstanding cultural problem with women at the BBC. In the early years of the BBC, certain women achieved renown doing incrementally graded salaried work, such as the powerful and autonomous radio drama producers Mary Hope Allen and Barbara Burnham (Murphy, 2016: 132-135). However, Allen and Burnham's outlier success should not obscure the cost to the personal lives of women who advanced at the BBC. For example, in 1937 a complaint was made to *Ariel*, the BBC's in-house magazine, about plans for a 'marriage discouragement scheme', highlighting institutional, sexism (Murphy, 2016: 108). Interviewee testimony reveals that the BBC of the 1970s and 1980s had not entirely assuaged these problems. For example, Jenny Brewer (2021) suggested:

> If you did get married, and if you were marrying someone from the BBC, you definitely had to leave. It was still like that in the 1970s. So, the reality is, if somebody married but then got pregnant they would have to leave. I hate to say it. So, those kind of things were discriminatory at that point. There was an expectation that you'd get married and you'd become a housewife. This practice was not unique to the BBC it was reflective of the times.

Salaried BBC women did not feel sufficiently angry to protest, identifying not as 'female workers with a shared grievance' but with BBC men as crucial public servants (Murphy, 2016: 149-50). However, as Kate Murphy (2016) details, many BBC women workers were not equal, but grievances were averted through pay levels being secretive and trade union organising subtly discouraged.

In May 1973, the BBC put out a statement promising to improve its treatment of women employees and end job adverts tailored to one gender (ACTT, 1975: 42). However, the Association of Cinematograph and Television Technicians (ACTT) trade union's landmark report, *Patterns of Discrimination Against Women in the Film & Television Industries* (1975), perceived that few concrete improvements had resulted, with power remaining in the hands of the male managerial class rather than being ceded to women workers (Bell, 2021: 181). The ACTT report, researched since 1973 by Sarah Benton, was presented to the union's conference in spring 1975. This exhaustively empirical and emotionally affecting text documented a range of discriminatory practices pervasive in the film and television industries. Recommendations included extended maternity and paternity leave, expanded childcare facilities in every workplace where five or more employees wanted them and employees to be put on short attachments to grades of their own choosing (ACTT, 1975: 52). According to Suzanne Franks (2011) the BBC, in contrast to its relatively progressive early days, now lagged behind the civil service in gender equality terms. She details how the internal report *Limitations to the Recruitment and Advancement of Women in the BBC* (1973) revealed that *no* women were employed at Board or Controller level and documented BBC managers' extensive 'prejudiced and hostile' attitudes to women workers (Franks, 2011: 127). By 1979, women still only fulfilled 7 per-cent of the BBC's senior graded managerial roles (Murphy, 2016: 262-3).

The Labour government's important mid-1970s legislation was a small advance set against women's paltry representation in top jobs and the social context of everyday sexism. The BBC's clubbable drinking culture, wherein 'old boy' cliques networked in the BBC Club bar, excluded women, and has been linked with habitual sexual harassment (Seaton, 2015; Sutherland, 2013). Interview testimony supports this. For example, Alma Cullen (2021) reports that while she did not actively recall experiencing overt discrimination personally, 'I observed discrimination of course everywhere. In those days, men were always in powerful positions and women applying for jobs would be interviewed by a bank of twelve men sitting down. That would have intimidated me if I'd had to go for that kind of job.' This culture in its wider manifestations was documented in the National Union of Journalists' (NUJ) 1977 pamphlet, *Images of Women*, which emerged during a time when women trade unionists in ACTT forcefully argued for their union to campaign against media portrayal of women and workplace sexual harassment (Boston, 2015). ACTT followed the NUJ's example in creating a code of practice advocating non-sexist language and imagery. However, the Trade Union Congress did little to tangibly address these issues, beyond

publishing booklets with progressive rhetoric (Boston, 2015). Discussions during the ACTT Conference debate of the *Patterns* report were deliberately limited and the experimental workplace nursery opened at Pebble Mill in 1974 only lasted one year. By the time of the ACTT's first Women's Conference in 1981, little had changed since *Patterns* (Galt, 2020; Murphy, 2016). While there were some improvements from the 1980s on, patterns of BBC women workers being sexually harassed and discriminated against in terms of pay and childcare facilities persisted throughout the 1970s (Franks, 2011; Seaton, 2015).

Representation, discrimination and sexual harassment

Interviewees referenced specific incidences of workplace discrimination in the BBC as part of their work on *Play for Today*. Linda Beckett (2021), for instance, echoes the NUJ's claims about limited and sexist representation of women on-screen:

> Well, just an obvious generalisation: there *were* better parts for men than there were for women. There were *more* parts for men than women. Women tended to be the wife, the friend, never the protagonist. I was cast as a prostitute or some secretary, because that's how they were written and most of the plays were written by men, with male directors and producers. But, I was *grateful* to play the prostitutes, the less than moral characters. It was a challenge, it was great, a lot of fun. At the time I didn't ever think: oh, this is always how you're perceived as a woman. Looking back now, you can see how women were portrayed, but then, I just was glad to get work.

> However, I enjoyed playing a middle-class feminist [in Janey Preger's *Play for Today: Under the Skin* (1982)]. I was involved in talking to other feminists around me, but I didn't specifically go out and research a feminist group because it was around us all. A lot of actors naturally thought that women were betrayed or the image of women wasn't satisfactory. I prepared [for the part] by trying to get into the head of someone who's quite intellectual: *thinking* rather than understanding the emotions as well, and [who] was a bit over-intense and too serious really about it all. So, I suppose that's where I prepared more […] being middle class and doing an RP accent. I remember laughing at this character and thinking oh dear, for goodness sake, do give it a rest! Not that the subject matter was wrong in my eyes, it was just that she was too *in her head*, really, rather than what real life is like.

Behind-the-camera workers, by contrast, recall the presence of strong women within powerful positions in the BBC, often perceiving their own advances within the Corporation in meritocratic terms. When asked whether, in her own experience and observation, she would describe the BBC she knew as male-dominated and discriminatory or whether she perceived barriers to women progressing within the organisation, Meg Theakston (2021a) said:

> I wasn't aware of it really because I worked with women who had made it. There were powerful women like Monica Sims, Biddy Baxter, Ann Kirch… Anne Head and Margaret Matheson were very talented Drama producers. There was a female Head of Make-Up as well. I think if you had it you could make it. The BBC in those days was probably ahead of its time. Now, you could well say that men in suits were heads of department mostly and I can't argue with that.
>
> There wasn't anything that worried me. If you were good at your job... That I could join as a Secretary and work my way up from that position, it was so much more *open* then. Now, if you haven't got a university degree, I may be wrong, but you wouldn't probably get in at the bottom like I did.

Brewer reveals that discrimination increased as she climbed the hierarchy and illuminates some of the unspoken restrictions that women faced:

> In BBC drama, there were good, strong female production managers which was not normally a female role, and people like Tara Prem. So to a large extent, there *were* women around the department that you could see had worked their way up. At Pebble Mill, we had a female Head of Design, Margaret Peacock, as well as women as Head of Costume and Head of Make-Up. You might say well *you would*, wouldn't you? But, actually, we had three strong females who for years ran those departments. Plus, in Costume, the bulk of the designers were female, in Make-Up they were all women, and in terms of scenic Design, in the early 1970s, it was half and half. If you wanted it, there was an opportunity. So, I never felt any particular discrimination. I started off in what was conventionally a female role as Secretary to the Head of Department, then moved to Production Secretary, Production Assistant and ended up Line Producer. I then moved away from drama to become Head of Planning in BBC Resources from 1990 to 1992 and that was quite different. Dealing with my fellow

> senior managers there, I did experience some discrimination. They found it challenging having a woman as their equal.
>
> I know there are friends of mine who were working outside of Drama who felt they'd come in to work at the BBC in what was seen as a traditionally female role. They could see that there was a structure that, if you wanted to, you could work your way up, but, for some reason, they didn't quite have the confidence to think: oh, I might have a go at that. I think, in those days, when you applied for a job your current boss had to sign off the application form. So, some women felt not quite brave enough or thought that their boss hadn't encouraged them. When I joined in the late 1960s, we couldn't wear trousers to work and we had occasional inspections on our clothing. Extraordinary when you think about it now!

Claire Nielson (2021a) specifically identifies patriarchal biases and sexual harassment that had been illuminated by the *Limitations* (1973) and *Patterns* (1975) reports:

> Yes, I experienced a great deal of discrimination and gender bias at that time. I found out, afterwards, that I was paid less than half what my male counterparts earned. Directors could suddenly on a whim change rehearsal times not giving a thought to actresses with children and their painstaking arrangements for childcare. There was also a lot of bullying and unwanted sexual advances for women actors to suffer – usually silently – for fear of losing their livelihood.

Her fellow actor Beckett notes that working in television compared favourably with theatre, where sexual harassment was rife:

> There were, occasionally, casting couch scenarios. I remember going for auditions for a theatre and being compromised within the interview, like if you play ball with me you might get a part, and I just walked out the door. I remember being compromised with other actors coming into my dressing room, suggesting things, and being very uncomfortable about that, so I did come across that from time to time.
>
> But on the whole, working in television, I don't ever remember feeling less respected as a woman. I hear horrendous stories of other women but for some reason I didn't feel that. I just remember loving working.

> There's more time in theatre rehearsal, more time to get to know people. If you're on tour or backstage you're with those actors all the time, you can't get out of the situation as easily. Whereas, on television, you're in and out, really. I have had someone come into my dressing room when I was on television but it was another actor. When I say coming in I mean for a motive, you know [*laughs*]. But that didn't happen very often. So, working in television you were *less* likely, in my experience, to be compromised. And I don't remember being bullied by a television director or anything, no. The BBC particularly was very respectful back then, in all sorts of ways. In fact if anything, it's got worse in terms of treating you as a human being. In film and television, as an actor, you're treated with less respect I think nowadays, strangely enough.

BBC workplace experiences, ITV and trade unions

The following section situates such competing discourses of meritocracy and discrimination within discussion of BBC staff's workplaces and how BBC pay and the BBC's identity as an organisation differed from that of ITV. BBC women workers' varied attitudes towards, and engagement with, trade unionism show their divergent responses to workplace inequalities. The BBC workplace's social spaces could feel intensely gendered. Jehane Markham (2021) and Jacmel Dent (2021b), who worked on productions at the BBC's Television Centre, recall the atmosphere of the BBC Club – where Theakston (2021b) claims 'liquid lunches' were regular – as intensely masculine and distinctly unwelcoming to women. Indeed, Markham claims that this 'drinking culture' partly convinced her against pursuing a career in writing for television beyond *Play for Today: Nina.* Interviewees' descriptions of these workplace experiences bear out the *Patterns* findings: women faced unfair work conditions and pay at the BBC, despite many behind-the-scenes women workers carrying out skilled – and undervalued – emotional labour. Forthright and divergent accounts of experiences of television trade unions indicate that one union was guilty of patriarchal bullying, but also that, indirectly, some women workers' lack of involvement in industrial struggles may have enabled inequalities to persist.

Melanie Bell (2021) argues that women film workers, in their discreetness, interpersonal communication skills and abilities to organise, solve difficult situations and express non-confrontational disagreement, made a major unsung contribution to creative filmmaking. Theakston's (2021b) testimony suggests these were also skills required by

women working at the BBC. Responding to questions about times in her BBC career when she showed resourcefulness or demonstrated problem-solving, Theakston explains:

> One was on constant alert to avoid or smooth over any potential problems or embarrassments [among] colleagues and cast. I often helped artistes learn lines, not all of them find it easy. Once, I was working on a Stephen Frears play and the lead actor, who went on to television stardom, just could not learn his lines. We were filming in a flat in Clapham and I had to neglect my duty and retire to a bedroom off set to help him with his lines for the next set up. There were some perks to the job!

Theakston (2021b) recalls incidences where she performed emotional labour, using her mediating skills to ensure that television dramas like *Plays for Today* were made on time and on budget:

> I tried to display tact and diplomacy on a daily basis – directors would not want you to work with them if you had the reputation of behaving differently. I am not being humble when I say that I had the reputation of being able to 'handle' difficult directors – there were others doing the same job as me who were more outspoken, shall we say. I do remember one director throwing pens and pencils around the gallery when losing his temper, having been told that there were no 'two, four, sixes' on our studio floor – blocks upon which furniture, etc., can be stood to raise them to a suitable height for a shot. He shouted: "A studio without two, four, sixes is like a house with no salt!"

A useful measure of the BBC as a workplace for women is to compare it with the institution's major competitor in the 1970s and 1980s, ITV's network of regional television companies. When asked what the BBC was like as a place to work compared with ITV, Beckett extolls the BBC's values, which were underpinned by collective endeavour:

> I've always preferred working with the BBC, for good or bad. They always paid worse, *much* worse. I always feel, at the BBC, it's teamwork and everybody seems considerate of everybody else. I've always thought of it as being a joy. I don't know what it's like now because I haven't worked with the BBC for a while. It's only my perception as a performer, but with the commercial companies I felt money was very much more a consideration. Which is odd because the BBC didn't have as much

> money. But I thought the BBC [made] quality stuff, with less money than some of the commercial companies did.

Cullen echoes Beckett's articulation of the BBC's distinctive identity:

> I was largely educated by the BBC, which went through a golden period in the 1950s and 60s, with radio and television productions of every major drama in the general repertory, [including] American and European. [Working on ITV's] *Inspector Morse* was extremely well-paid and you were trusted to get on with it.

While exalting *Play for Today* as high-quality drama, Nielson (2021a) is nuanced about her experiences with ITV and does not regret the passing of an era where there was snobbery against commercial broadcasting.

> *Upstairs, Downstairs* (LWT, 1971-75) was very well-produced and directed. I very much enjoyed playing the suffragette character who influenced Elizabeth (Nicola Pagett). The other ITV programmes I was in [like *Thriller,* ATV, 1973-76] were more economically produced, more run of the mill and not at all in the same rank as *Play for Today*. Would you believe, in those early days of ITV, actors who appeared in actual TV commercials were often looked down upon? So much has changed and sometimes for the better.

Tara Prem (2021b) sees the BBC in the 1970s and 1980s as comparing well to its rivals and as a creative oasis compared with certain commercially-run independent companies:

> At the BBC, I was happy to have the job and loved the work, so did not question the pay. I was never employed *directly* by ITV or Channel 4, but worked for both as an independent producer. The worst employer was [an early independent company]; I was hired on a contract to produce three shows they had negotiated to produce. They were driven by profit, paid badly and generally behaved appallingly.

Dent (2021b) strongly echoes Nielson and Prem's claims of the BBC's distinctiveness and diverse drama output in the *Play for Today* era, and criticises ITV's commercialism:

> I and many of my colleagues preferred to work for the BBC as there wasn't the same variety of drama programmes at ITV and my feeling was that BBC drama productions were always of a higher quality than those of ITV, at least then. I have

> never been able to tolerate adverts – I see them as a form of bullying – and having to chop up drama productions to fit advert slots has always seemed sacrilegious to me! Those whose motives were monetary often left to be freelance or work for ITV.

Relevant to the question of working at the BBC by comparison to the ITV companies is the matter of unionisation. While actors were, straightforwardly, members of Equity, permanent behind-the-scenes BBC staff tended to be members of the in-house Association of Broadcasting and Allied Staff (ABS) union; any who *also* worked at ITV would have been members of the ACTT, which operated a closed-shop there. It has been noted (Chanan, 1980: 122) that members of the ACTT perceived themselves as 'industrial workers' in contrast to members of the BBC's trade union the ABS, who saw themselves more as public servants, *above* the practice of making commodities. The BBC has been seen as a 'QUANGO' and a 'social-industrial complex' with those at the top feeling responsible for retaining a 'moral order' (Burns, 1977). While Heather Sutherland's oral history interviewees recall male chauvinism and sexual harassment when they worked in the Light Entertainment division, they also spoke highly of their largely male colleagues due to their 'pride in the BBC's public service identity and position in society at the time', especially compared to commercial competitors (2013: 660). This self-perception of fulfilling an educational calling, or as being meritocrats doing higher 'quality' work at the BBC, could lead to many of its workers accepting lower pay than at ITV. For example, Dent (2021b) notes the 'considerable' pay disparity between the BBC and ITV; Nielson (2021b) claims that ITV 'paid on average three times what the BBC could afford, so a job with ITV often financed actors to be able to pick and choose more.' In April 1973 to March 1974, ACTT members who worked at the BBC *and* ITV had vastly different levels of pay according to their gender. While 46 per-cent of male employees earned £3,000 or higher annually, only 18 per-cent of women did likewise (ACTT, 1975: 57). Asked about BBC pay and working conditions, Theakston (2021b) claims that 'I did work overtime and it was paid. However, my monthly pay came to less than what I get for a pension every week now.'

In accord with accounts of the ACTT union paying lip service to gender equality, but ultimately defending male privileges (Galt, 2020), Prem (2021a) tells of a less positive experience of trade unionism:

> I was a member of Equity because I was an actress. At the BBC you didn't have to be a member of anything. In my early days as an independent producer, I became a

> freelance ACTT member. But, working on an adaptation for Channel 4 of Dario Fo's play *The Accidental Death Of An Anarchist* [1983], I was blacked and, you know, made an example of. When the freelance ACTT people found out that I was going to take the money from Channel 4 and plough it straight back into a commercial company, they got very upset and decided that they would blacklist me. So, like a lamb to the slaughter I went in to see Alan Sapper and his henchman Bob Hamilton at the ACTT headquarters in Soho Square. I have never been bullied or frightened. I wasn't expecting it, I was on my own. The pair of them sat there and said, you will never, never work again.

Union membership and activity was varied in the below-the-line workers interviewed. Linda McCarthy was a member of ABS, but Brewer (2021) explained that she 'was never a member of a trade union' and how, later as a senior manager she was 'required, with others, to manage the consequences of any strike action but not as a union member.' Theakston (2021a) recalls some union action at the BBC, but views it detachedly: I was a member of the ABS which later merged with the ACTT. There was a lady who was their shop steward, Jenny MacArthur, and she was very combative and passionate in representing her colleagues. I was in Drama Plays department during a PA strike in 1976. I didn't ever call on the union for assistance, though. When asked whether she thought the ABS was a forceful, effective union at that time, Theakston (2021a) seems representative of a wider passivity among ABS members:

> I suppose, yes. I wasn't a keen union member, I didn't put myself up for any sort of position within the union or anything like that. Jenny MacArthur was the only person that I ever really knew that was union-orientated. I was aware of the union and it was thought to be a good thing. I paid my dues, but… I was surprised in my diary to see that I went to a union meeting.

While Prem and Brewer never recall going on strike, Brewer mentions that 'working in Drama there were occasional strikes and, [in 1974], I remember one affecting [*Play for Today*:] *Gangsters*.' Likewise, when asked, Theakston (2021a) explained that she never went on strike:

> Oh no, no, no. There was a strike by the PAs in 1976. I just remember that they picketed the gates. It was emotional and sad because they were our friends, but I don't honestly remember a lot about it. I wasn't a political person at all in those days.

McCarthy has a different perspective on the PAs dispute:

> We did come out on strike once as PAs didn't get overtime. You could work your socks off and you didn't get any extra pay. It was very bad. And we were all very behind [the strike action]. I think it was about eight weeks and it was jolly difficult financially.
>
> There was a [hardship] fund that helped people. A lot of us just had to use our savings. But it *meant* something, we didn't just do it. With better management, things could have been sorted out before they got to that stage. But anyway, I've never been a political animal.

When asked whether the trade unions in television in the 1970s and 1980s were over-powerful or simply stood up for their members very effectively, McCarthy (2021) supports the latter view: 'I don't remember anything big. But when it came to the PA strike, at least [ABS trade unionists] tried getting money to people who needed it and kept it well-organised.'

Echoing arguments about the erosion of women's structural gains in the 1990s (Galt, 2020), Beckett advances a view that unions have had insufficient clout:

> Well, I don't recall these troubles specifically. On the whole, I don't think unions *have* been too strong. If anything I think unions haven't been strong enough, really. Certainly, Equity hasn't been strong enough at all. They were perhaps too frightened of their members. So, no, I don't think they were too strong.

Despite her own negative personal experience in 1983, Prem (2021a) feels that workers' rights have since been curbed excessively:

> After experiencing this terrible, powerful [*sighs*] iron rod that [the ACTT] wielded, the other result of having all these independents is that the trade unions lost all their power totally, so now everyone's exploited dreadfully. I think it is probably true that a lot of unions [overly abused their power]. That's the reason that Margaret Thatcher wanted to break them, but she succeeded in breaking them so that people are now completely *unrepresented*. We've gone from one extreme to the other. A lot of

people have to work very hard, in often difficult circumstances for little and sometimes no money.

Interviewees had notably varied attitudes towards trade unionism and delineated a range of diverse experiences of membership. Women actors and writers felt very well represented as members of Equity and the WGGB and articulated the tangible benefits (Beckett, 2021; Cullen, 2021; Nielson, 2021a). However, below-the-line women workers interviewed tell of how the BBC's ABS union's membership was more passive, with the 1976 PAs strike a partial exception. Notably, some women ABS members who either attended a meeting or went on strike express a shared aversion to seeing themselves as 'political', which accords both with ABS's moderate reputation and the BBC's self-image as being 'balanced' and above the political fray. In contrast, women writers and actors were part of union cultures more conducive to the 'separate self-organisation' that ACTT women activists pioneered in the 1970s and 1980s (Galt, 2020). Even though some of these gains were reversed in the 1990s, current BBC worker Dent (2021a) attests to the vastly more equal standing women have in the workplace today compared with when she started work at the BBC nearly fifty years ago.

Conclusions

These nine women's accounts give a sense of the BBC as an imperfect organisation mired in unconscious discrimination, a masculine culture and managerial failures to encourage women towards promotion. While she avoided using polemical language concerning unfairness, a below-the-line worker like Theakston gives a detailed account of her undervalued emotional labour, which was vital in creating highly lauded BBC dramas for strands such as *Play for Today*. However, despite some incidences of sexual harassment and lack of childcare provision, the women generally felt that most fellow BBC workers treated them respectfully. They perceived a deep sense of 'teamwork' existing among staff proud to work in making what they perceived as 'quality' drama, despite low pay.

These BBC women's mixed levels of enthusiasm for trade unionism reflect key societal divides. Some among them expressed their moderate levels of engagement with trade unionism, seemingly identifying strongly with their employer the BBC, seeing it as nurturing meritocracy. They may have internalised much of the Corporation's 'balanced', non-political self-image. While others, including actors and writers, felt far more warmly towards trade unionism, perceiving its tangible benefits to their working lives. This group,

alongside a producer who once experienced bullying from trade union bosses, regret the decline in trade union power and collective solidarity and feel that today's television industry suffers as a result.

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This article is dedicated to the memory of Alma Cullen, who died on 7 August 2021.

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He has previously taught a range of A Levels at Newcastle Sixth Form College from 2006-2018 and has recently taught on Northumbria's Mass Communications and Media and Journalism degree programmes.

Appendix 9.

Examples of critics' reviews and hermeneutic assessments of their positivity

For the purposes of transparency, here is a selection of nine press reviews of Plays for Today. These comprise three each per series focused on within Chapter 3: series 1 (1970-71), series 7 (1976-77) and series 15 (1984).

This is to show examples of my quantitative assessments of how positive specific reviews were towards certain PfTs, using my interpretative analysis and understanding of these journalistic texts.

The reviews are transcribed in full, omitting sections which are devoted to non-PfT programmes discussed in the same columns, for reasons of brevity and relevance. After each of these nine texts is my rating, characterising the reviewer's level of admiration for each PfT under review, from 1 (very negative) to 5 (very positive). In each case, this is followed by a justification for my rating. In addition, two further reviews of different PfTs are noted which share the same level of positivity.

Review #1: 15.05 – *Desert of Lies* (1984)

FINANCIAL TIMES – Chris Dunkley, 14/03/1984: 15

Plays without point or purpose (with 'Z for Zachariah' and 'Moving on the Edge')

'It has been argued repeatedly in this column that television with its continuous flow and easy access, plus the recidivist habits of its audience, is a medium peculiarly suited to series and serial drama. This is not the same as saying that there is or should be no place on television for the single play. Indeed there are all sorts of reasons why the single play should be encouraged, not least the fact that many good series (Rumpole, Boys From The Blackstuff and Jewel in the Crown for instance) have developed as the result of successful single plays.

Moreover, the single play can serve as a nursery slope for new talent; it can offer more protection than many forms for the expression of powerful individual views; and it can even push out the boundaries of the medium, though this has occurred very rarely recently. There is no prejudice in this column against the single play: when they are as good as An Englishman Abroad and Ballroom of Romance were good they will be readily celebrated here.

The trouble is that since the great flowering of the single play in the sixties so many have been bad. Take Howard Brenton's "Play For Today" on BBC1 last night, Desert of Lies. As it dragged through its 85 minutes the main reaction it produced was puzzlement: what on earth was it supposed to achieve? There was a loose association of ideas between the story of a missionary family lost in the Kalahari Desert 100 years ago and a trio of ludicrously naïve modern adventurers (a caricature of a journalist, Sue, played by Cherie

Lunghi; an empty headed redundant Luton car worker, Jake, played by Mick Ford; and a fey middle class mystic, George, who started the whole business, played by Tim Wylton) lost in the Kalahari today.

The connecting factor seemed to be a shallow and incoherent anti-imperialism of the sort which used to inform school debates in the 1950s and 1960s. Yet there was never any attempt to develop any recognisable intellectual positions as in, say, a Shaw play. From time to time there were snatches of dialogue which seemed as though they might lead to the development of an argument, for example:

"I am hungry."

"I've got some freeze dried ravioli."

"I mean I'm hungry for experience. And it's a vice" but they invariably petered out.

A black man told Sue "You'll never understand the liberation struggles of the third world until your wealth decays and in your turn have lived in chains." Sue herself wondered about a line drawn between her front door key in the desert and her front door in Fulham: "How many children would it pass through in black republics… how many students poring over Engels… white mining engineers getting into Johnnie Walker." None of it led anywhere.

But nor on the other hand did the narrative justify the occupation of its 85 minutes: the Victorian missionaries failed to find any natives with heads in the middle of their bodies to convert to Christianity (surprise, surprise) and ended in internecine feuding with a young man self-righteously stoning his alcoholic uncle to death. The modern-day trio wrecked their Landrover, frittered away their supplies, failed to operate the sextant, and ended with Sue musing about which bit of George to eat.

The two far from noble savages who had hitherto been spying on Jake and Sue as they indulged in bouts of remarkably joyless "oogie boogie" in the sand then saved Sue's life with a snack of water and live maggots and took her to their hut for a year where one of them fathered her child. After her presence had been supposedly spotted by a satellite, Sue returned to London where she played tapes of her cannibalistic ravings to her editor and then refused to write any account of what had happened.

Was this supposed to entertain? Hardly: there was no attempt at wit, humour, or even satire. Was it intended to inform? Clearly not in any systematic way. Was it a vehicle for outstanding acting? Definitely not: neither Cherie Lunghi nor Terence Rigby as the Victorian paterfamilias was even moderately stretched. Did it exploit wonderful locations? None. It was shot in studio. Was it intended to engage our sympathy or enlist our support? Apparently not; there was not a sympathetic character in the entire production nor a single speech with which one could be bothered to agree or disagree especially strongly.

Why then was it produced at all? One is driven back upon the fact that Brenton is the man who wrote "The Romans in Britain," which became the subject of a famous obscenity trial. The trouble is that however ludicrous legislation regarding taste may be, falling foul of it does not automatically make you a good playwright.'

1 – Very Negative

This is a diatribe, with its animosity exacerbated by its extensive word-count. Dunkley does not see Brenton as a good playwright, thinking this narrative is insufficiently strong and sees its anti-imperialism as callow. He derides the characterisation and acting as poor, with the actors not stretched. Dunkley is also scornful and cursorily dismissive towards its use of a video-studio aesthetic, explicitly conveying his preference at this time for film-location dramas. My contextual hermeneutic understanding is based on the lavish contemporaneous praise he gave to Granada TV's *The Jewel in the Crown* (1984). In this same review, he also attacks *Z for Zachariah* but at much reduced length, showing where his deepest antipathy resides. Dunkley really has nothing positive to say at all about *Desert of Lies*.

Others rated '1': Mary Malone (*Daily Mirror*) on 01.05 – *I Can't See My Little Willie* (1970) & David Wheeler (*The Listener*) on 07.11 – *Do As I Say* (1977).

Review #2: 01.06 – *A Distant Thunder* (1970)

DAILY TELEGRAPH – Richard Last, 27/11/1970: 14

Edelman play lacks his novel touch

'THE name of Maurice Edelman, whose novels I regularly take from the library shelves and have even been known to purchase, is normally a guarantee of fictional quality. But it didn't quite work on television last night.

His "Play for Today," **A Distant Thunder** (B B C-1) was a highly melodramatic piece about a well-to-do wartime hero who for 26 years has lived with a guilty secret. He betrayed his comrades to the Nazis, though admittedly only under extreme physical torture.

From the outset, one had the feeling of having been there before.

Mr Edelman's country house-party setting seemed almost designed to reinforce this impression. The banter of the fashionable guests, the arrival of the mysterious – looking strangers (and they don't come any more mysterious looking than Vladek Sheybal), might have been the preamble to an Agatha Christie.

Miss Christie also appeared to be presiding over the climax, with everyone coming downstairs or back to the house just in time to hear Sir Henry (Tony Steedman looking guilty from the moment his uninvited guests arrived) confess.

It all ended in civilised, though again cliché-ridden, fashion with Sir Henry's accuser explaining that he wanted nothing more than to see justice reaching him.'

Look, Stranger – 'The Valley of Animals': 'a rather delightful lady author, Elma Williams'.

1.5 – Negative towards Very Negative

Last sees this drama as cliché-ridden and is disappointed given how he has tended to admire Maurice Edelman's novels. 'Highly melodramatic' is used as a pejorative,

implicitly juxtaposing this to higher quality drama. While Last does not offer anything especially positive to say, there is a hedging adverb 'it didn't quite work' and the adjective 'civilised' bears a mildly positive association, given Last's wider traditionalist and conservative outlook.

Others rated '1.5': Dennis Potter (*Sunday Times*) on 07.14 – *Gotcha* (1977) & Martin Amis (*Observer*) on 15.11 – *The Groundling and the Kite* (1984).

Review #3: 07.16 – *A Choice of Evils* (1977)

SUNDAY TELEGRAPH – Philip Purser, 24/04/1977: 17

The great deal Moore

'Jim Allen's **A Choice of Evils** (B.B.C. 1) reduced in the end to people firing slabs of prose at each other, and demonstrated once more how a good idea can be strait-jacketed by too conscious a political partiality; for Allen the rank-and-file Left were the only good guys in Fascist Italy and certainly the only Resistance, just as the workers were always the victims of the conspiracy between Church and State – a premise rather let down by the list of those actually massacred in the incident which prompted Allen's play. They started to unroll it at the end. Among the upholsterers and plumbers and railwaymen were a banker, a general, a professor of philosophy and an artist.'

2 – Negative

Purser sees the play as a good idea, but finds it limited by 'too conscious a political partiality': criticising its Manichean view of the rank-and-file Left as the only good guys and Allen's portrayal of the workers as victims. He claims that Allen misses complexity in not representing the real variety of people listed at the end, who died in the historical incident dramatised. In desiring this *particularity*, Purser argues from a conservative humanist viewpoint, while seeing realism and ideology as in opposition.

Others rated '2': Sylvia Clayton (*Daily Telegraph*) on 01.12 – *Hell's Angel* (1971) & Herbert Kretzmer (*Daily Mail*) on 15.06 – *Hard Feelings* (1984).

Review #4: 15.10 – *Dog Ends* (1984)

DAILY TELEGRAPH – Seán Day-Lewis, 18/07/1984: 13

Explosive affair of the heart

'LATELY DECEASED Grandad was crowned with a favourite cap before being pushed in his wheelchair, towards storage in a neighbour's deep freeze. Dignity was shortlived. Soon, his corpse was unwittingly conveyed by refuse men to the council incinerator, where his heart pacemaker exploded. "Oh well, he had always wanted his ashes sprinkled in the Newport Street area," observed his daughter-in-law.

These were not the only echoes of the Joe Orton black comedy style to be found in Richard Harris's **Dog Ends** (BBC 1), opened a six-week "Play for Today" season last night.

Yet, in sum, witty and mordant lines were insufficient to compensate for an un-Ortonish lack of movement, invention and surprise.

Mr Harris is an experienced and versatile writer for stage and cinema as well as television. This play had a brief trial as a theatre piece and was presumably reduced from its original length to make 73 minutes of television time. Not reduced enough, I think. The script is essentially a clever 30-minute sketch and padding.

The first proposition that Grandad was an incontinent physical wreck whose life was a misery for himself and his family was laboriously underlined. The second proposition that the vet who puts down decaying dogs extended his service to senile people was laboriously signalled. That – plus the responses of the other characters – was the play.

As the responses came from such as Leonard Rossiter as the exasperated son, David Threlfall as the self-preoccupied grandson and Bryan Pringle as a luminously hypocritical neighbour, they were watchable for a time. Neither the high-class acting nor the chirpy direction of Carol Wiseman could keep the giggles bubbling all the time.

If anything, the case for euthanasia was set back and some might think that at least a useful negative virtue.'

2.5 – Negative, towards Mixed

Broadly, he sees this as stale, unsurprising, unoriginal and inert. Day-Lewis is quite fulsomely appreciative of 'witty and mordant lines', the cast and Carol Wiseman's 'chirpy direction'. He also seems to see it as possessing useful negative virtue in setting back the cause of euthanasia! However, he explicitly locates this as beneath the Joe Orton class, and, as with a good number of negative reviews of PfT – see also review #1 – attacks it for being overlong and not a good use of his time.

Others rated '2.5': Martin Jackson (*Daily Express*) on 01.16 – *The Foxtrot* (1971) & Shaun Usher (*Daily Mail*) on 07.13 – *A Photograph* (1977).

Review #5: 01.20 – *The Man in the Sidecar* (1971)

GUARDIAN – Nancy Banks-Smith, 28/05/1971: 10

THE MAN IN THE SIDECAR on television

'MURDER, AGATHA CHRISTIE said, is a very convenient hobby for a woman at home. I may have misquoted a word or two, but that was the gist of it, for I remember thinking at the time what a neatly double-edged remark it was. Suggesting that a woman can pass the time profitably at home writing a murder mystery. Implying, also, that she could pass the time even more profitably by slaughtering a well-insured and dispensable relative.

"The Man in the Sidecar" (BBC 1) was also bifurcate. (That is not normally the sort of word I would use, but I find styles of writing infectious and it is exactly the sort of papery, polysyllabic word that Simon Gray would use and so would Edith, the novelist in his play.) Edith is writing a novel about a woman who neatly and by degrees discards her successful husband. But in truth and in fact she also sloughs off her husband and literally allows him to die. What is fictional and what is actual are closely plaited in the play. There is, for

instance, Edith's real child and her brain child, the novel she is writing. She even wears flowing clothes as if pregnant with a novel and, when her husband steals the draft of the book, she is more frantic than the mother of a kidnapped child.

"Man in a Sidecar" is a perfectly accurate account of a certain sort of woman writer, perhaps of every woman writer. We grind the bones of the people nearest to us to make our bread. We use them, neglect them, and subordinate them to work which hardly warrants such human sacrifice. A man's life, for instance, seems rather a high price to pay for Edith's novel. It is always difficult, of course, having established that someone is writing an important novel actually to produce a passage of Important Prose to prove it. Edith's writing is, in fact, extremely mannered. Thus "he has abandoned his art for which he had no devotion and then his religion for which he had no talent and then his love-making for which he had no stomach" and so on and so forth. It hardly sounds as though it will make the top ten.

Simon Gray's own writing is not surprisingly, rather like Edith's – meticulous fastidious. He has a cool touch like a surgeon working in thin rubber gloves. But there is no blood. He performs a rather elegant dissection.

But he didn't make it matter to me: neither Edith's work nor the husband's death. I felt as I had a cold coming on. I could see it was a well-directed and written play but I couldn't seem to taste or smell it. But of course I may just have a cold coming on.'

3 – Mixed or neutral

Banks-Smith admires it, comparing the dramatist Simon Gray to a surgeon in an extended metaphor. However, she doesn't love it. The review's mixed nature is clear in how she perceives the drama as too bloodless and as not appealing to her emotions or senses. This is a typical literary and personal type of review from Banks-Smith; its opinion of the play closely resembles the literary-theatrical critic Peter Black's equally torn response to the same PfT in the *Daily Mail*.

Others rated '3': Stanley Reynolds (*Times*) on 07.17 – *The Country Party* (1977) & Hugh Hebert (*Guardian*) on 15.01 – *Young Shoulders* (1984).

Review #6: 07.16 – *A Choice of Evils* (1977)

DAILY EXPRESS – James Thomas, 20/04/1977: 21

An uneasy conflict of ideals

'JIM ALLEN, author of the successful series Days of Hope, is a lapsed Catholic who turned towards Socialism.

His personal conflicts emerged very strongly in his play A Choice of Evils for B.B.C.1's Play for Today last night.

The play had been on the stocks for six years, since Allen broke away from the Church, studied the practice of Communism and came to the conclusion that the two could be reconciled.

With fictitious names – except for Pope Pius XII, Allen attempted to trace the background to the German massacre of 330 innocent Italians in the Ardeatine caves as a reprisal for the partisan killing of 33 Germans in Rome.

The question being asked was why the Vatican, which had stood by without interference in the slaughter of the Jews, did not strike up one note of protest against the execution of people who had had no part in the killing of the Germans.

The fact of the massacre was the only real truth in the play.

The argument about the Vatican's involvement with the German occupying forces was deftly conducted as a dialogue between the conforming Cardinal Volponi and Don Borelli, a Communist priest who is thrown into jail with an assortment of Jewish and political prisoners to await death and resolutely refuses clemency.

Here were two very strong and moving performances from Trevor Peacock as Father Borelli and David Burke as Cardinal Volponi.

A Choice of Evils was a play deliberately setting out to cause unease. Since I am on neither side, I found it stimulating and compelling.'

3.5 – Mixed towards Positive

Thomas, often a vehement critic of certain PfTs from a snobbish viewpoint (see Chapter 4), or using incomprehensibility or 'Plague for Today' discourses (see Chapter 3), is here somewhere in between this and his admiration for Nichols-Clark-Rosenthal 'well-made' PfTs. He is critical that there is not much real truth in Allen's play, somewhat in line with Philip Purser's perspective in review #3. This is a paradigmatic realism discourse. However, it is broadly positive – especially regarding the acting. While he is a bit uneasy about it deliberately setting out to cause unease, Thomas claims to be on neither side – i.e. he is implying Communist or Nazi, or perhaps Catholic – so found it compelling due to not feeling personally affronted by its ideology as he does with certain other PfTs.

Others rated '3.5': Bernard Davies (*Television Mail*) on 01.11 – *Circle Line* (1971) and Patrick Stoddart (*Broadcast*) on 15.15 – *The Amazing Miss Stella Estelle* (1984)

Review #7: 15.11 – *The Groundling and the Kite* (1984)

DAILY EXPRESS – Judith Simons, 25/07/1984: 21

A touching song for two voices

'I'M STILL trying to work out which man of the homosexual partnership in last night's play The Groundling and the Kite (BBC1) was the groundling – and which the kite.

I feel the earth-bound partner was Jimmy (John Duttine), the record company executive. He hoped the songs composed by his friend Peter (Leonard Preston) would fly him to a better job as a disc producer.

This identity puzzle apart, actor Preston – who wrote the play and the incidental songs – presented us with a relationship between two men as dignified and affectionate as a good marriage, with the same switches of mood the same instances of exasperating selfishness alternating with emotional generosity.

Heartcry

Peter, a schoolteacher, able in his job, was remote from the commercial world. He genuinely could not comprehend Jimmy's wish to market songs he had composed simply for personal achievement.

I understood Jimmy's heartcry, as an artistes and repertoire man, so well, I always know what I'm looking for, but I can't actually sit down and write a song.

The only weakness of the play was in the recording industry sub-plot.

Jimmy wanted Peter's songs for Phil, a former group member now going solo. But Phil looked to me more the heavy-metal type. His image was unsuited for performing Peter's fanciful lyrics, which were not what you'd term "commercial."

Phil's scorn on hearing the budding composer, Peter was a schoolteacher did not ring true, either. He would have known many teachers have written hit-songs – Sting of Police for a start !

Still, as a play about a loving and giving relationship, this piece could not be faulted.'

4 – Positive

While Judith Simons has reservations around the subplot, overall she appreciates its mainstream representation of a loving and giving relationship between two gay men. Simons gives a bit too much emphasis and space to her negative caveat for me to elevate this above positive, but it is a solidly positive review: essentially discernible in how she expresses empathy for the characters.

Others rated '4': Philip Purser (*Sunday Telegraph*) on 01.09 – *The Hallelujah Handshake* (1970) and Peter Fiddick (Guardian) on 07.08 – *Love on a Gunboat* (1977).

Review #8: 07.17 – *The Country Party* 1977)

DAILY MAIL – Shaun Usher, 28/04/1977: 23

Zing went the strings of my heart

'BELATED thanks to writer Brian Clark and the production team for *The Country Party* (BBC 1) and its companion piece The Saturday Party, repeated the previous night.

Given great help by his leading actor, Peter Barkworth, Clark persuaded one that real people were being observed, recognisable yet never banal, except by intention.

This brace of plays said more than the whole of the long and pretentious *Fathers and Families* collection.

And there was a gem of a scene – touchingly funny teenage courtship – in *The Country Party*, featuring Robin Davies and Amanda Wissler. I'll watch it again, just for the sake of those 90 seconds or so.'

4.5 – Positive, towards Very Positive

This is not quite a '5', due to its being so brief. Usher brackets it with Brian Clark's previous *The Saturday Party* (1975), due to its repeat and has very much enjoyed both and seemingly desires another repeat of *The Country Party*. He uses realism and journalistic-observational discourses to praise how this drama feels like real people being observed. He praises one particular scene, naming the actors, after earlier noting Peter Barkworth's crucial contribution.

Others rated '4.5': Peter Knight (*Daily Telegraph*) on 01.17 – *When the Bough Breaks* (1971) and Mary Kenny (*Daily Mail*) on 15.14 – *Only Children* (1984).

Review #9: 01.14 – *Billy's Last Stand* (1971)

THE LISTENER – Raymond Williams, 11/02/1971: 188

Billy and Darkly

'It is always interesting to see how younger dramatists work in and through the conventions of their predecessors. Two interesting television plays gave some evidence of this: *Billy's Last Stand* by Barry Hines (BBC 1) and *The Bequest* by Carey Harrison (BBC 2).

Billy's Last Stand was familiar, structurally: a duologue centred on the arrival of a sinister stranger. Billy has been scraping a living by shovelling coal from its delivery point on the pavement to people's coal-houses. Darkly arrives, watches him and persuades him of the need for organisation: Darkly will get orders and set up a regular rota; Billy will hump more coal and earn some money. This goes along until Billy's back gives out under the increased work load. And then there is competition – from a younger man, Briggs. Darkly persuades Billy to join in an attack on Briggs, after threatening to leave and organise him instead. Back in Billy's hut, Darkly insults his shame and his pride. He throws Billy's souvenirs around, smashing the place, and for a long time Billy does nothing. Then at last he picks up one of his lumps of coal and kills Darkly.

About ten years ago the arrival of a sinister stranger, and the passage of violence, had acquired what was in effect a metaphysical status, only thinly disguised by an extreme and studied colloquialism. What interested me was to see Hines taking this form and restoring its human substance. The lively and convincing common talk was not a theatrical cover, but the slow creation of a world of work and precarious survival. And the stranger came, not from an undefined area of threat, but from a real social condition. Everybody else had been organised, Darkly explained; Billy was one of the few casuals left. But for Billy this was work, as opposed to employment. An old miner, he had chosen this way of running his own life, taking his own time, relying on the fact that people knew and trusted him. What Darkly was taking away was the freedom and self-respect of that kind of work, and he was doing it in the name of the modern idols: increased productivity and a rising standard of living.

Barry Hines didn't have to force any superstructural meanings. He had created a situation in which all the necessary meanings were direct. And it is a mark of his fundamental quality as a dramatist that, having dropped the theatrical cover, he was able very quickly to let the substance of the experience come through. There was at once immediacy and resonance: the facts of labour and of human identity, the destructive intrusion of a familiar alienation.'

5 – Very Positive

Williams uses a realism discourse in admiring the play's lively talk; he sees it as rooted in real experiences in how it evokes 'a world of work and precarious survival'. He perceives a work/employment binary, but is also highly appreciative, beyond his use of Marxist lexis – 'superstructural', 'alienation' – to analyse it, by how its meanings are direct and it has the 'substance of […] experience.' This is a deeply positive review, with Williams perceiving Hines's powerful social and political fable as being PfT at its best in having both immediacy and resonance.

Others rated '5': Tom Durham (*Television Today*) on 07.03 – *Rocky Marciano is Dead* (1976) & Seán Day-Lewis (*Daily Telegraph*) on 15.07 – *Under the Hammer* (1984).