Television in the Global Age: The Returned (C4 & Canal+)
Televison in the Global Age

An introduction

- Television has changed considerably since the advent of digital technology in terms of its production, distribution and consumption. It has become a global, rather than a national industry and has become increasingly commercial, with public service broadcasting forced to adapt its structure, role and function. International co-production is growing and broadcasters such as HBO have achieved global success.

- Broadcasters are now ‘narrowcasters’, with multiple channels targeting different (sometimes more niche) audiences.

- Audiences consume television texts in a variety of ways as the industry has increased portability via new platforms (tablet, mobile phone) and patterns of consumption have changed alongside this (the box-set & binge-watching, on-demand and catch-up, Netflix, Amazon, etc.).

- Interactive social media channels such as YouTube have increased accessibility for the ‘prosumer’ audience, and social media and viral promotion have become a crucial part of marketing television texts.

You must consider television and your texts in terms of:

- Media language
- Representations
- Media industries
- Audience

This should be linked where relevant to:

- social
- cultural
- economic
- political
- historical contexts
THE RETURNED (LES REVENANTS)

The Returned (Les Revenants)
26 November 2012 on Canal+
United Kingdom 9 June 2013 on Channel 4
2 series, 8 episodes each
Based on the French film *They Came Back (Les Revenants)* (dir. Robin Campillo 2004)
Created by Fabrice Gobert

**Season 2: 8 episodes**

- First broadcast 28 September 2015 on Canal+
- UK on 16 October 2015 on More4
- US on 31 October 2015 on SundanceTV

**Television history**

Imagine UK - Season 7 Episode 9 - And Then There Was Television Dec 19, 2006
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLD511F39E7FF8C5BC

Watch the documentary and answer the following questions:

Why are Lord Reith and John Logie Baird so important in terms of the development of TV?

How did television develop during the 1930's?

What was the impact of WW2 on TV, especially Post War?

What television genre developed during the late 1940's and into the 1950's?
Media language

You will need to consider:

• How the different modes and language associated with different media forms communicate multiple meanings
• How the combination of elements of media language influence meaning
• The codes and conventions of media forms and products, including processes through which media language develops as a genre
• The dynamic and historically relative nature of genre
• How audiences respond to and interpret the above aspects of media language
• How genre conventions are socially and historically relative, dynamic and can be used in a hybrid way
• The way media language incorporates viewpoints and ideologies
• Narratology (including Todorov)
• Genre (including Neale)
• Structuralism (including Lévi Strauss) at A level

Analytical toolkit for television

You will need to analyse television texts in terms of media language.

This will include:

• technical codes
• visual codes
• genre
• narrative
What types of drama can you identify?

- Drama is a wide-ranging genre that is often categorised by its links to other genres

Drama sub-genres/hybrids task: To what sub-genre/hybrid do the following programmes belong?

Write your answers into the table and then use the digital resource to compare your answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme(s)</th>
<th>Sub-genre</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Downton Abbey; Call the Midwife</em></td>
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<td><em>Liar; Appletree Yard</em></td>
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<td><em>Luther; Broadchurch</em></td>
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<td><em>Theresa v Boris; The Moorside</em></td>
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<td><em>House of Cards</em></td>
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<td><em>Silk; Judge John Deed</em></td>
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<td><em>Sex &amp; the City</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Penny Dreadful; The Walking Dead</em></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Returned/Les Revenants

The Returned is difficult to categorise by genre. It won an International Emmy for best Drama Series in 2013. It has elements of a supernatural horror text. Wikipedia classifies it as a ‘supernatural drama’, whilst IMDb classifies it as ‘drama, fantasy, horror.’ Rotten Tomatoes classifies it as ‘Mystery/Suspense’.

It is possibly closest to a zombie text because of its focus on the ‘undead’. Gabriel Tate in The Guardian calls it ‘A zombie series like no other’.


Zombie text
Genre – What are the codes and conventions of a zombie text?

Think RESISTS

- Recurring situations
- Elements of narrative
- Style
- Iconography
- Settings
- Themes
- Stock characters

You may also refer to the video extracts below

Clips: Ryan Hollinger: The Accidental History of the Zombie Genre (10 mins)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FWaRhTUmkZE

Warm Bodies trailer #1 2013
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07s-cNFffDM

Digg: The Evolution of Zombies in Movies and TV (2015) 3'30" NB: A little gory but whistle-stop. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxTe1OJXICw

Shaun of the Dead trailer https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LlfcaZ4pC-4:
**Task: 5 things**

Look at the images on the previous pages for some possible examples.

Find 5 things for each of the RESISTS codes/conventions that audiences would expect to find in a zombie drama.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recurring situations</th>
<th>Elements of narrative</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>Iconography</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Settings</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stock characters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Check your answers against the list in the interactive resource ‘Resists’. Add any important conventions you may have missed to your grid/notes.
French ‘poetic realist’ tradition

Some 1930s French films were categorised by their ‘poetic realism. Directors such as Jean Renoir, Marcel Carné and Jean Vigo focused on aesthetics and had a lyrical style aimed at highlighting the poetry within reality. Shots were simply constructed but with an other-worldly purity from the lighting and camera techniques used. They often dealt with characters who were disillusioned, with perhaps one last chance at happiness. They were fatalistic in tone and had a sense of impending doom and the bittersweet irony of human existence.

Examples:
- *La Grande Illusion* (Renoir, 1937)
- *Le Quai des Brumes* (Carné, 1938)
- *L’Atalante* (Vigo, 1934)

Impact of poetic realism on The Returned

- Genre conventions are socially and historically relative – here the genre is influenced by French cinematic tradition.
- Visual style: spare and sharp but beautifully constructed. Lyrical aesthetics.
- Sense of impending doom – enigma codes – the dam, the horde.
- Fatalistic – Victor’s visions of the future. He has been likened to Cassandra in myth – doomed to foretell the future but be ignored.
- Nature of human condition – man’s mortality. Focus on the irony and bitter-sweetness of loved ones returning – but things have moved on. Displaced and marginalised characters who struggle to fit in. Last chances of happiness.
- Fabrice Gobert: ‘I love silences... I love people looking at each other. I love suspended time.’
Task: Watch The Returned episode 1 and identify the generic signifiers in the text

- Identify the signifiers of the ‘zombie’ show using the tick sheet provided (use RESISTS).

- What other genres/generic features are evident? **Use the reviews below as starting points**

- What is ‘old’ in terms of genre and what is new, ‘innovative and imaginative’? Why has the genre changed/developed?

- Use the digital resource ‘Generic signifiers’ to compare your ideas.


*The gripping first episode of the new French drama isn’t quite a zombie story – but it is haunting, creepy and a moving reflection on loss.*


Melissa Maertz

http://ew.com/article/2013/12/16/returned-review-2/

Joanne Ostrow

http://blogs.denverpost.com/ostrow/2013/10/30/the-returned-is-perfectly-creepy-halloween-fare/16940/
Recurring situations
- Pandemic
- The dead return
- The dead move in hordes
- Judgment day
- Zombie attacks
- Flesh eating
- Destruction of society
- Collapse of law and order
- Meeting of survivors
- Holed up and besieged
- Whittling down of group, one by one
- Military/police intervention
- Difficult decisions—killing loved ones for the good of many
- Bloody fightback + climactic battle
- Power and resources go down

Elements of narrative
- The return as Todorovian disruption
- Quest based narrative for survival
- Narrative positioning with hero on a quest
- Binary oppositions of living v dead, past v present, outsider v community
- Faust storylines—making the wrong moral choice because of emotional attachment
- Orpheus narrative archetype—deals with loss
- Denouement—alternative scenarios
- Flashbacks to previous existence
- Narrative closure—offers Todorovian resolution
- Restriction/derestriction of narrative
- Enigma codes throughout

Stock characters
- Disparate characters attempt to work together
- Screaming victims
- Eerie child with exceptional powers
- Arrogant gung-ho type
- Archetypal warrior
- Hero/ protector
- Disposable sidekick
- The disrupted family unit
- The character who can’t let go
- New ‘family’ community created

Iconography
- Ripped clothing
- Blank stares
- Grasping hands
- Decaying flesh
- Police/government notices/warnings
- Inarticulate grunts
- Body parts
- Weaponry
- Mist/darkness

Settings
- The mall or community hub
- Abandoned buildings/streets
- Community setting
- Enclosed spaces and closed frames
- Isolated settings close to nature

Themes
- Existential themes—nature of the human condition
- Survival of the fittest
- Sacrifice
- Human mortality
- Man over-reaching, playing God by bringing back a life
- Notions of order/chaos within society
- Isolation v community
- Allegorical—reflects anxieties of the time
- Impact of violence on humanity
- Humans as the real monsters
- Social and ideological messages
- Human resilience questioned
- Themes of control
- Fate
- Disillusionment

Style
- Music soundtrack
- Low key, often chiaroscuro lighting
- Bright, high key glare
- Hard focus
- Closed frames
- Gritty (dependent on production values and budget)
- Tracking shots
- Desaturated colour palette
- Red accents connoting danger and bloodshed
Genre: The Returned - differences

Gabriel Tate in The Guardian calls it ‘A zombie series like no other’. What makes The Returned ‘different’?

Linking to your key theorist, Steve Neale, and using the reviews above, write at least 2 paragraphs below exploring this question:
The Returned and Genre: Steve Neale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What conventions of the Zombie/Supernatural Horror genre are evident in The Returned?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steve Neale suggests that genres exist within particular contexts and develop through borrowing from other texts. What evidence is there for this within The Returned?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How has the development of supernatural horror/Zombie horror reflected contemporary ideologies and concerns? Give examples.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neale states that genres are ‘instances of repetition and difference’ – how is this idea appropriate when looking at The Returned?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
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<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the name of the character on the bus in the establishing scene?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What happens to the frame on the wall in the corridor?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who climbs over the mountain road wall?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the relationship between Lena and Jerome?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What happens when Camille walks into town?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What does Camille need to do when she gets home?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who does Claire call first to inform them that Camille is home?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Who does she call second?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the name of the Dr and who is she speaking to?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What does the stranger at the entry door believe is the reason for him not being able to get in to the building?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What provides the continuity that allows us to know that the Stranger is knocking on the door of Dr Julie?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What classic signifier is used to foreshadow impending doom when Claire and Jerome are discussing what to do</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the link between Camille and the woman that Mr. Costa is hiding?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are the signifiers of impending doom when Dr Julie is sat at the bus stop?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What are we expected to think of Lena when she asks the Stranger to buy her a drink?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Why does no one really know who Adele is in the pub?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Answer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the relationship between Claire, Jerome and Pierre?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>How is the enigma surrounding Adele resolved by Dr Julia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the link between Camille, Mr Costas ‘hidden woman’ and Victor?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the resolution between Claire, Jerome and Pierre?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>When the Stranger and Lena are walking- what are we expected to think of Lena?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Why does Adele not open the door?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Why does Dr Julie not call the police?</td>
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<tr>
<td>If we follow established movie myths- why is it we could guess that Lucy would be killed?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the enigma resolved when Camille and Lena ‘meet’ each other?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the relationship between Mr Costa and the woman he was hiding?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the first word spoken by Victor?</td>
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<tr>
<td>How many bodies are found in Mr Costa’s burned down house?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is the continuity link between Adele and the previous scene?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has “started again”?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the name of the Stranger?

Why do we need to know that the levels of water in the lake are falling?

What enigma is further resolved via the graphics on screen?

Who is Lena having sex with?

How does Victor tie everything together?

Identify the different story arcs that are presented to us in Episode 1:
Task: Narrative – Tzvetan Todorov

Can you identify the various stages of the narrative in Episode 1 of *The Returned*?

- **EQUILIBRIUM**: The given state or balance of affairs before the...

- **DISRUPTION**: Disruption of the equilibrium (may stem from a catalyst)

- **RECOGNITION**: That there has been a disruption

- **RESOLUTION**: The attempts to restore the equilibrium

- **EQUILIBRIUM**: Restoration of a similar or changed state of affairs after the disruption has been resolved

Are all these stages completely realised in Episode 1? Why?

There should be cause/effect links throughout the narrative. Can you identify these?

Would we expect full closure in an episodic drama? How are cliffhangers used?

Is there causality? Can you identify cause/effect links?
Task: Can Todorov’s theory of narratology be applied to the Season as a whole?

Watch the summary ‘Sundance TV - season 1 in under 5 minutes’

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AadvodsivY8

Read the Episode synopsis:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Les_Revenants_(TV_series)#Season_1_(2012)

Or watch the whole of season 1.

Can Todorov’s theory of narratology be applied to the Season as a whole?

Extension - Narrative: Todorov: series 1

- Does the Todorovian structure become more apparent after the end of Series 1? Can you identify the various stages of the narrative in Series 1 of The Returned? Use the digital resource to compare your answers.

- EQUILIBRIUM –
- DISRUPTION –
- RECOGNITION –
- RESOLUTION –
- EQUILIBRIUM –
IDENTIFYING THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURE IN EPISODE 1

As you are watching the episode, can you note the actions/ events/characters that indicate the different stages of Todorov’s Narrative Structure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EQUILIBRIUM</th>
<th>DISRUPTION</th>
<th>RECOGNITION</th>
<th>RESOLUTION</th>
<th>EQUILIBRIUM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This is the normality within the fictional world. There is an established order that is recognised by the characters within the narrative.</td>
<td>An action/ event takes place or a character is introduced that disrupts the established order.</td>
<td>There will need to be a recognition by a character or characters that a disruption has taken place.</td>
<td>The characters will seek to find a resolution to the disruption. They will perform actions to repair the disruption.</td>
<td>There is a return to the established order OR a new equilibrium is established.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Binary opposites (Lévi-Strauss)

Binary Opposition (defined by Lévi-Strauss) – many oppositions are set up to drive the narrative and we watch to discover which side “triumphs” in the end.

Can you identify what is in “opposition” to the first word?

- Past  v ……
- Living  v ……
- Old relationships  v ……
- Serge  v ……
- Simon  v ……
- M Costa  v ……
- Self-sacrifice  v ……
- The horde  v ……
- Illusion  v ……
- Honesty  v ……
- The ‘truth’  v ……
- Camille  v ……
- Julie  v ……
- Death  v ……
- Immortality  v ……

Use the digital resource ‘Binary opposites’ to check your answers
Story arcs/character arcs

There are several story arcs and narrative strands. Can you identify them?
Key questions for class discussion:

- Is the narrative entirely linear? If not, why not? Give examples.
- Does the episode have a flexi-narrative?
- Are there story arcs which run across the series/franchise?
- Are there obvious codes (Barthes) around which the narrative is structured? Give examples
- Is it realist?
- How are time and space manipulated within the narrative?

Narrative – Points you may have made

- Narrative – Is it a flexi-narrative? Characters are complex, storylines interweave, we question what is real and what isn't, it challenges the audience through enigma, confusion.
- Linear/non-linear? Flashback/forward e.g. the bus crash, Léna and her boyfriend. Often complex manipulation of time and space challenges audiences.
- Complex flexi-narrative with over-reaching story arcs – e.g. the dam, Victor. Part of larger narrative – only the beginning.
- It’s a series so we expect an element of closure in the final episode. Here it is minimal. The supernatural sub-genre is reliant on enigma.
- Intellectual puzzle for an active audience. Not ‘easy’ viewing as there are enigmas/hermeneutics throughout – e.g. Why do only some of the dead return? Why is the water level dropping? Who is Victor? Who killed Lucy? How did Mme Costa die?
- Symbolic and cultural codes – Barthes e.g. the apocalyptic symbolism of ‘the flood’; the use of colour; Faustian bartering of life/death; mythical quality of Lucy/Victor as foretellers of the future (the Cassandra figure).
- Orpheus root story – focuses on loss and how we deal with this.
- Proppian roles and functions shift as the multi-strand narrative progresses – is there a single hero?
- Christopher Booker suggests a narrative archetype of ‘Rebirth’ which is applicable here.
- Narrative ellipsis – much is not revealed.
- Surreal/anti-realist elements at times – e.g. Victor in the middle of the road; the telepathy of the twins.
Task: DVD cover analysis

Analyse the cover and then compare your ideas with the digital resource.
Is the narrative entirely linear?
If not, why not? Give examples

Are there story arcs which run across the series/franchise?

How are time and space manipulated within the narrative?

Does the episode have a flexi-narrative?

Are there story arcs which run across the series/franchise?

How are time and space manipulated within the narrative?

Is it realist?

Are there obvious codes (Barthes) around which the narrative is structured? Give examples
Representation

You will need to consider:

- The way events, issues, individuals (including self-representation) and social groups (including social identity) are represented through processes of selection and combination
- The effect of social and cultural context on representations
- How and why stereotypes can be used positively and negatively
- How and why particular social groups, in a national and global context, may be under-represented or misrepresented
- How media representations convey values, attitudes and beliefs about the world and how these may be systematically reinforced across a wide range of media representations
- How audiences respond to and interpret media representations
- Theories of representation (including Hall)
- Feminist theories (including bell hooks and Van Zoonen) at A level.
How are representations constructed/encoded?

Stuart Hall proposes that representations are constructed through a series of codes:

- Narrative: e.g. audiences identify/empathise with characters through the restricted nature of our narrative positioning
- Technical codes (language) – camera, editing, audio
- Lighting
- Framing
- Mise-en-scène (costuming, setting)
- Performance
- Barthes – cultural codes
**TASK:** Look at the characters. analyse how they are represented and how this representation has been constructed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Camille</th>
<th>Simon</th>
<th>Claire</th>
<th>Julie</th>
<th>Mme Costa</th>
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<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>
CAMILLE

Involvement/ importance in the Narrative:

Key evidence/ sequence in the episode:

When discussing representation, remember to reference:
Technical codes / Lighting/ cinematography/ Mise en scene/
Performance/ audience positioning/ Barthes codes

LENA

Involvement/ importance in the Narrative:

Key evidence/ sequence in the episode:
CLAIRE

Character Description:

Involvement/ importance in the Narrative:

Key evidence/ sequence in the episode:

When discussing representation, remember to reference:
Technical codes / Lighting/ cinematography/ Mise en scene/
Performance/ audience positioning/ Barthes codes

JEROME

Character Description:

Involvement/ importance in the Narrative:

Key evidence/ sequence in the episode:
Character Description:

Involvement/ importance in the Narrative:

Key evidence/ sequence in the episode:

When discussing representation, remember to reference:
Technical codes / Lighting/ cinematography/ Mise en scene/ Performance/ audience positioning/ Barthes codes
When discussing representation, remember to reference:
Technical codes / Lighting/ cinematography/ Mise en scene/
Performance/ audience positioning/ Barthes codes
bell hooks

- bell hooks argues that feminism is a struggle to end patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination, and that the position of the underrepresented is by class and race as well as gender.

- ‘Women in lower class and poor groups, particularly those who are non-white, would not have defined women’s liberation as women gaining social equality with men since they are continually reminded in their everyday lives that all women do not share a common social status.’

- Is ‘patriarchal oppression and the ideology of domination’ evident in *The Returned*?

- Write 3 paragraphs which express your ideas.
RECAP: Van Zoonen Argues that there is a “variety of feminist discourse” and identifies 3 distinct perspectives

- Read the paragraphs from Van Zoonen’s essay “Feminist Perspectives on the Media”.

What does she suggest are the key differences between a

- Liberal feminist perspective?
- Radical feminist perspective?
- Socialist feminist perspective?

Apply the different Feminist approaches to “The Returned”

- Socialist feminism:

- Radical feminism:

- Liberal feminism:
Liesbet Van Zoonen

‘[There is] a depressing stability in the articulation of women’s politics and communication . . .The underlying frame of reference is that women belong to the family and domestic life and men to the social world of politics and work; that femininity is about care, nurturance and compassion, and that masculinity is about efficiency, rationality and individuality.’

- Van Zoonen

Give examples from ‘The Returned’ that illustrate this concept

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marginalised (or absent)</td>
<td>Efficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>Rational</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexualised</td>
<td>Individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurturer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Liesbet Van Zoonen

- However Van Zoonen argues that gender is constructed and that its meaning varies dependent on cultural and historical context.
- She suggests that masculinity as well as femininity is constructed – and that the codes used to construct men ‘as a spectacle’ are different.
- Is this the case in “The Returned” or are these constructed representations challenged?

Think about:
- Males constructed through movement (active)
- Silence and impassivity
- Strength, muscularity and aggression
- Competition – males as gladiators or combatants – ‘the spectacle’
- Constructed more through the intradiegetic gaze – the way they are looked at by other characters (e.g. with respect/fear)
- Allows narcissistic identification without erotic gaze.
The Spectacle of the Other – Stuart Hall

Stuart Hall also discusses the notion that the powerful elite groups (white, male, middle class, etc.), which control the media, create a ‘norm’ which reflects themselves. Representations of other groups are then constructed in terms of their difference to this – their ‘otherness’.

- ‘Stereotyping... is part of the maintenance of social and symbolic order. It sets up a symbolic frontier between the ‘normal’ and the ‘deviant’, ‘the normal’ and the ‘pathological’, ‘the acceptable’ and ‘the unacceptable’, what belongs and what does not or is ‘Other’, between insiders and outsiders, Us and Them.’

*Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practice, Ed. S. Hall, 2013 Sage, p.258*

Hall identifies three classic stereotypes of black people

A) as slave, willingly serving a white master

B) as native, savage and uncivilised

C) as clown or entertainer, to be laughed at but not taken seriously.
The Returned as allegory

- ‘Pierre symbolizes the current mediatic characterization of Others as “savages” that serve the purpose of presenting the West as human, and migrants as non-human. While Gobert has not openly said that the series was a reflection of the Syrian migration, it can be inferred from the series’ narrative arcs that the many similarities in script and scenario with Campillo’s 2004 film do reflect the same sort of malaise concerning the treatment of migrant Others in contemporary French society. Furthermore, in positing the character of Pierre as the voice of a traditional, Christian society that purposely rejects Others, drives them out of their ‘civilized’ town and into the woods, and characterizes them as the antithesis of humanity, Gobert is able to extend his criticism of the current situation in France.’


The Returned as allegory

Task: How are the returned constructed as ‘other’?

Use the digital resource to compare your ideas.
Media Industries

You will need to consider:

- Processes of production, distribution and circulation by organisations, groups and individuals in a global context.
- The specialised and institutionalised nature of media production, distribution and circulation.
- The significance of patterns of ownership and control including conglomerate ownership, vertical integration and diversification.
- The significance of economic factors, including commercial and not-for-profit public funding, to media industries and their products.
- How media organisations maintain, including through marketing, varieties of audiences nationally and globally.
- The regulatory framework of contemporary media in the UK.
- How processes of production, distribution and circulation shape media products.
- The role of regulation in global production, distribution and circulation.
- Regulation (including Livingstone and Lun) at A level.
- Cultural industries (including Hesmondhalgh) at A Level.

The Returned: Key facts

- *The Returned (Les Revenants)*
- 26 November 2012 on Canal+
- UK 9 June 2013 on Channel 4
- 2 series, 8 episodes each
- Based on the French film *They Came Back (Les Revenants)* (dir. Robin Campillo 2004)
- Season 2: 8 episodes
- 28 September 2015 on Canal+
- UK on 16 October 2015 on More4
- US on 31 October 2015 on SundanceTV
Canal+

- French premium cable channel.
- Founded 1984.
- Owned by Canal+ group (Studio Canal – major French film investor/producer; news, sport and entertainment TV across Europe and Africa).
- At year-end 2016, Canal+ Group had revenues of €5.253 billion.

Vivendi

Vivendi is a French multi-media conglomerate whose assets include:

**MUSIC:**


**FILM/TV UNITS:**

- Eagle Rock Entertainment, PolyGram Entertainment, Universal Music TV.
- Canal+ Group.
- Canal+ Canalsat Afrique, Calédonie Caraïbes, D8, StudioCanal UK.

**OTHER ASSETS:**

- Video hosting: Dailymotion (90%) Video games: Ubisoft and Gameloft (96%) Telecom Italia (20.03%) Mediaset (12.3%).
- Vivendi Ticketing (retail) and concert venues; Paddington Bear.
Channel Four

- Launched in 1982 with an alternative programming remit.

You should consult your notes on C4’s ‘Creative Greenhouse’ Report from your studies of Humans to aid you in your discussions of C4 and their PSB obligations and objectives.


Sundance TV

- http://www.sundance.tv/

- ‘Since its launch in 1996, SundanceTV has remained true to founder Robert Redford’s mission to celebrate creativity and distinctive storytelling through unique voices and narratives found in the best independent films. From delivering critically acclaimed
Emmy®, Golden Globe® and Peabody Award-winning television featuring some of the world’s most talented creators and performers, to showcasing some of the most compelling and iconic films across genres and generations, SundanceTV is a smart and thought-provoking entertainment destination. SundanceTV is owned and operated by AMC Networks Inc.; its sister networks include AMC, IFC, BBC America and WE tv. SundanceTV is available across all platforms, including on-air, online at sundance.tv, on demand and mobile.

Original Trailer C4 : May 2013

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CqXP_Xw5RD4

Look at the marketing materials and make notes on how these are used to target different audiences.
Website: Series 1 at the FWA
Canal + mobile website

360° Virtual navigation of the town on multiple platforms. 1M visits.

https://vimeo.com/53693051

Facebook official
Facebook fan site

Twitter
C4 website

Peabody Award

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlLU5pl34RA
Publicity

- [Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ggHB3UsxIUg)
  - *Making* The Returned 5'36".

- The Returned – *Grounding The Undead.*
- [Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8G7OhlRw7w)

Reviews

- [Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXn6nSapPic)
- LondonCityGirlTV 2014.
- [Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7znFUjt7Ko)
- Kerrang radio review 2013.
- 100% on Rotten Tomatoes
• Hank Stuever, *Washington Post*


Marketing

Soundtrack by Mogwai

Marketing – French poster/ad
US spin-off

The Returned is an American supernatural drama television series developed by Carlton Cuse as an adaptation of the 2012 French series Les Revenants, which was broadcast internationally as The Returned. The series premiered on March 9, 2015 and was cancelled by A&E after one season, on June 15, 2015, with no finale.

Book – Novelisation October 2014
T-shirts
The Returned - Marketing materials: Make notes on how the marketing materials promote the product and engage the audience.

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The Returned and Marketing

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<th>Overall summary of marketing tools used:</th>
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Media Industries
Application of Theory

Using your notes on Industry, consider how Hesmondhalgh's arguments can be applied to The Returned in relation to its ownership, production and distribution methods:

Write 2 focused paragraphs linking Hesmondhalgh to the economic context of The Returned and TV in the global age:
Media Regulation
Find information relating to the regulation of the The Returned:

You should consider:
- Scheduling (UK and abroad if possible)
- DVD classification
- Online distribution of the series and regulation
- Marketing

Using the above information, write 2 paragraphs linking Livingstone and Lunt to the regulation of The Returned. You should also draw upon the context of TV distribution in the modern age:
Media Audiences

You will need to consider:

• How media producers target, attract, reach, address and potentially construct audiences.

• How media industries target audiences through the content and appeal of media products and through the ways in which they are marketed, distributed and circulated.

• How audiences interpret the media, including how they may interpret the same media text in different ways.

• How media organisations reflect the different needs of mass and specialised audiences, including through targeting.

• How audiences use media in different ways, reflecting demographic factors as well as aspects of identity and cultural capital.

• The role and significance of specialised audiences, including niche and fan, to the media.

• The way in which different audience interpretations reflect social, cultural and historical circumstances.

• Reception theory (including Hall).
Task: How does The Returned target audiences?

- Who is the audience for The Returned? Think about gender, age, psychographics (e.g. VALS), socio-economic group, interest. Is there more than one audience? Justify your response.

- How does the text itself target audiences? Consider genre, narrative, star and character, representations, intertextuality.

- How does the marketing target audiences?

Use the digital resource to compare your ideas with those suggested.
How do audiences respond to The Returned?

- **Identification – Uses and Gratifications Model.** Link to context – audiences may identify with the characters as the concept of bereavement and loss is universal.

- **Diversion – Uses and Gratifications Model.** Audiences use the text as escapism. There are elements of fantasy and the surreal in the text which divert us from our own mundane existences. The non-linear narrative also helps with this. There is also diversionary appeal in the development of the relationship between Simon and Adèle – a bittersweet love story – and the family focus (maternal sacrifice, etc.) which may hold more appeal for a female audience.

- **Enigma** – who is Victor? Why is the dam receding?

- **Testimonial** – on DVD cover – quotes from e.g. *Time magazine* (ABC1 audiences). Sundance branding. **Two-step Flow.** These act as opinion leaders and audiences believe in the show’s quality because of this.

- **Social interaction – Uses and Gratifications Model.** Audiences may discuss the text (water-cooler effect) or tweet/comment/follow on social media. They may attempt to ‘solve’ the intellectual puzzle that is posed.

- Audiences may consider their own attitudes by comparing them to those of e.g. Claire or Adèle.

Awards: Audience response factsheet & article

- International Emmy for Best Drama series
- Peabody Award
- 100% on Rotten Tomatoes
- Facebook 109,000 likes; 106,000 followers
- Also FB fan sites and fan fiction
- IMDb – 8.2 score
- Cult audience
- The most watched original fiction created by Canal+ of all time
- Voted best 2013 drama by *The Guardian*
Reviews

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXn6nSapPic
  LondonCityGirlTV 2014

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7znFUt7Ko
  Kerrang radio review 2013

- 100% on Rotten Tomatoes

- http://entertainment.time.com/2013/10/30/t-v-tonight-the-returned/
  James Poniewozik, Time Magazine

- https://www.washingtonpost.com/entertainment/tv/the-returned-a-morose-mesmerizing-tale-that-offers-a-new-twist-on-the-living-dead/2013/10/30/97b0160a-3b63-11e3-a94f-b58017bfee6c_story.html?utm_term=.db3c0ed7e568
  Hank Stuever, Washington Post

Audience Task: What pleasures might audiences gain from The Returned?

Task: Create a word cloud of the pleasures we might gain from the text. Develop three of these points with examples from the text itself. Check against the list of potential pleasures in the digital resource.
Readings – Stuart Hall

Extended writing task:

Write a paragraph on each of the following questions

0. What is the preferred meaning of *The Returned*?

1. How is this encoded?

You may wish to look at the resources on representation here, or read the reviews again to help you.