Genre and Globalization:

Working Title Films, the British Romantic Comedy

and the Global Film Market

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I certify that all material in this dissertation which is not my own work has been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.
Abstract
This thesis seeks to better understand the relationship of film genre to globalization through an
examination of the use of the British romantic comedy and other related genres by the production
company Working Title Films (WTF) from the 1900s through the 2000s. Because of the sudden
and unexpected global success of British romantic comedies by Working Title Films such as
Four Weddings and a Funeral and Notting Hill, the 1990s is a significant period for the study of
the genre. In this examination the process of globalization is understood as one of complex
connectivity postulated by John Tomlinson in Globalization and Culture as ‘the rapidly
developing and ever-densening network of interconnections and interdependences that
characterize modern social life’. This theory of globalization is used as a methodological
framework to understand the complex network of global and local interconnections that has
driven the development of Working Title Films over the past twenty five years to becoming one
of the most important British production companies in the international film industry. Through a
detailed analysis of the practices of development, production, distribution and exhibition by
Working Title Films and the Hollywood dominated global film industry, this thesis seeks to
understand the function of genre and genre films as cultural products, economic products and
meaningful representations in the global market and to better understand Hollywood, mainstream
film and cinema as social institution. The analysis in the following chapters serves as evidence
to support the central argument of this thesis that the use of genre in the film industry’s
production, distribution and exhibition processes of globalization was the critical area for
Working Title Films to master in order to produce value as meaningful audience appeal and
connectivity to global audiences for on-going economic success.
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