

**Genre and Globalization:
Working Title Films, the British Romantic Comedy
and the Global Film Market**

**Submitted by Lucyann Snyder Kerry to the University of Exeter as a thesis for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy in Film November, 2011**

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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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