

**GCSE Media Studies**

**Knowledge Booklet**

**Component 2**

# CRIME DRAMA

Crime drama is a **sub-genre** of drama that focuses on crimes, the criminals that commit them and the police that catch them.

There are many formats of Crime drama such as detective, forensic/medical, procedural etc...

*The Sweeney* features elements of the **action genre**, while *Luther* includes conventions of different genres such as **Thriller**....

## Key Conventions of TV Crime Drama:

Committing and solving of crime

Medical/ Forensic/ Procedural

Fictional accounts of real life stories

Titles of the shows are regularly eponymous e.g.

“Luther”

Main character has conflict with authority or their partner in crime

Set in the city

Typical character types inc. villain

Disequilibrium – discovery of a crime leads to equilibrium – solving of a crime

Continuing narrative arc over multiple episodes

**CONVERGENCE:** Luther was initially broadcast on BBC1, then made available to download or stream via iPlayer. It was then available to buy on DVD boxset and then later sold to Netflix.



## PUBLIC

-FUNDED BY TV LICENSE



## PRIVATE/COMMERCIAL

-FUNDED BY TV & ONLINE ADVERTISING



**REGULATION:** Luther and The Sweeney were both given a 15 certificate and were broadcast at 9pm – post watershed due to the violence and adult themes which revolve

around the serious crime unit settings for the drama.



## WATERSHED

There are strict rules about what can be shown on TV before the 9pm watershed.

The watershed means the time when TV programmes which might be unsuitable for children can be broadcast. The watershed begins at 9pm and material unsuitable for children should not, in general, be shown before 9pm or after 5.30am.

Unsuitable material can include everything from sexual content to violence, graphic or distressing imagery and

LUTHER uses social media & the BBC website to connect with audiences, provide entertainment through streaming options, clips and information. Social media was specifically used to market and promote new series to audiences.

## KEY TERMS

**Conventions** – what we expect to see in a TV crime drama

**Hybrid Genre** – some programmes share the conventions of more than one genre e.g. Jonathon Creek

**Sub-Genre** – programmes that share similar conventions e.g. detective lead shows

**Watershed** – After 9pm

**Prime time** – The most popular programmes shown between 7pm&8pm

**Enigma code** – something within the narrative raises questions for TA

**Inverted Narrative** – The criminal is identified to the audience early on, there is no mystery around who the villain is and the story focuses on how the detective is going to catch the criminal.

**Action codes** – progress the story quickly e.g showing a character packing a suitcase means they are leaving

**Diegetic sound** – natural sound that hasn't been added

**Non – diegetic sound** – soundtrack that is added over the action

**High key lighting** – bright light used

**Low key lighting** – dark light used Cliff-hanger – the narrative is left unresolved

**Mise-en-Scene**—What's in a scene? Props, costumes, settings, composition, lighting etc.

**Verisimilitude** –The believability or realism of a film or TV show.





**Luther** is a British crime drama television series starring Idris Elba as the title character DCI John Luther.

Prior to Luther Elba was well established in the US crime drama *The Wire* and the US version of *The Office*.

Written by Neil Cross.

The first series comprised six episodes which ran in **May 2010** on **BBC1** in the **9pm timeslot**

BBC Studios handles the distribution of the series.

The series has been highly successful receiving numerous awards and critical acclaim for the production, writing and the stars of the show.

#### OPENING SCENE MEDIA LANGUAGE:



**ESTABLISHING SHOT** –industrial setting, implies ‘gritty’

**TRACKING SHOTS** on Luther pursuing Henry Madsen **LOW**

**ANGLE SHOTS** –intimidating, powerful **CROSS-CUTTING:**

Between scenes at the crime scene and the chase implying they are happening simultaneously, the music is used to convey a sense of urgency –a race against time Our initial impression is that Luther is the **villain** –dark, hood-ed figure pursuing the smart businessman. We initially don’t see Luther’s face creating **enigma**.

#### MEETING ALICE MORGAN MEDIA LANGUAGE:

**SETTING:** At Alice’s family home , environment creates high level of **verisimilitude**.

**BODY LANGUAGE & GESTURE:** Creates a sense of vulnerability, she is in distress and represented as the **victim** when we first meet her. She waits for the police to rescue her, a ‘damsel in distress’.



#### REPRESENTATION & CONTEXT:

**ETHNICITY:** Luther challenges stereotypical representations of black men in crime drama which is typically negative. This is further reflected in Luther’s highly educated, successful mixed race wife. This reflects the diverse, multi-cultural setting of this contemporary drama.

**GENDER:** Masculinity is represented in a very complex way; Luther is represented as an aggressive, alpha male, yet also vulnerable through his psychological instability. Typical masculine stereotypes are challenged through characters such as Justin who is openly admirable of Luther; and Mark who is gentle and represented as a ‘sensitive’ contrast to Luther. The representation of femininity **challenges stereotypes** in all lead female characters; Alice subverts expectations as a manipulative, intelligent villain, Rose Teller is a powerful, authority figure, and while Zoe Luther is by far the most typically ‘feminine’ representation (vulnerable, weak, lead by love), she is also represented as a highly successful humanitarian lawyer. These female representations reflect the contemporary context of the setting.

**CRIME & THE POLICE:** Crime is represented as dark & sinister and Luther is represented as a vigilante, rule-breaker who will stop at nothing to stop criminals. Rose is the calm, steady influence who encourages him to stay on the right track.

#### PROPP CHARACTER FUNCTIONS:

**HERO:** John Luther, troubled but brilliant detective; a rule-breaker who will do anything to bring criminals to justice.

**VILLAIN:** Alice Morgan, femme fatale, highly intelligent, manipulative and an obsession with Luther.

**HELPER:** Justin Ripley, faithful side-kick who idolises Luther and is eager to learn. Ripley asks questions that the audience need to follow Luther’s thoughts and processes of detection.

**DISPATCHER:** Rose Teller, Luther’s boss, keeps him focused , tough but fair –see’s Luthers brilliance and willing to put her job on the line for him.

**DONOR:** Both Ripley and Benny provide Luther with the means to achieve his goal

#### STYLE:

50s Noir conventions are borrowed e.g. dark lighting and long overcoat Alice Morgan is pale and wears red lipstick – ‘femme fatale’ again borrowed from the 50s . This is noted in the opening credit sequence, with its use of reds, blacks and crime-drama genre iconography. Reinforced by enigmatic silhouettes and the whispering, secretive theme tune.





**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

Sweeney Todd is the cockney rhyming slang for "flying squad" (a division of the police who dealt with serious, violent crime)

Produced by Talkback Thames

Main star is John Thaw as Regan; this show established

him as a television star

First broadcast 1975-1978 in the 9pm timeslot.

Filmed all around London

**MEETING CARTER: (Helper/side-kick)**

**Long shot** –allows us to see the smartly dressed professional man  
Clean cut, smart –good attitude, pride.

Lighter coloured suit/coat implies he is the good guy links to her

Introduced in a professional setting suggesting he takes his work character in the narrative



**MEETING JACK REGAN: (Hero)**

**Medium close up** –close to him –focus. Implies he is important. Closeness creates personal connection.

Introduced in a 'personal' location suggesting that personal life may be an aspect in the narrative

Haggard –hungover –on a work night!!!! Hints to a rebellious lifestyle perhaps?

Heavy drinker –issues?

In lady's dressing gown –adds an element of humour and suggests he is not himself to seriously, might be a bit of a 'character' –particularly given the overtly masculine stereotypes of men.



**STYLE:**

The Sweeney was produced in the 70's and looks very dated; this is due to both the production values and the costumes & props.

The production is grainy, poor quality image in comparison to today's high-definition digital film, this is also reflected in the sound quality.

The costumes and styling is from the 70's and looks very dated, the props such as phone boxes, cameras and typewriters also reflect the lack of technology at the time.

These reflect the historical context of the time in which the production was made

Created by THAMES for ITV –a **commercial** channel



### SIMILARITIES WITH LUTHER:

Troubled male lead, aided by faithful, professional side-kick. Gritty London settings, filmed on location to create verisimil-

itude.

Genre iconography

Opening title sequence –grainy editing & silhouettes

### CONTEXT:

Genders were less equal in the 1970s; there were very few fe-males in the police. This is clearly reflected in The Sweeney. The only female in the episode is not involved in the investigation and is sent to look after Regan’s girlfriend, Jenny, who has been threatened by Kemble’s men.

Minority groups weren’t reflected or were misrepresented in The Sweeney.

**This contrasts significantly with representations of gender & ethnicity in Luther.**

### MEETING KEMBLE: (Villain)

Mid shot/over the shoulder shot allows us to see him in his ‘lair’.

Setting –red connotes danger. Opulent –ornate mirrors, leather wingback chair, suggests wealth.

Costume –Suit clearly connotes authority figure/incharge, an-chored by the two henchmen who sit listening to him, trying to impress him. His patterned silky tie a reference to his wealth as opposed to the plain ‘work’ wear of the police.

Props –Pipe is reflective of the era, plans/maps suggestive of his ‘cunning’ attitude.



# MUSIC: ONLINE MEDIA

A website is an additional platform that allows an artist to generate new fans and keep existing fans engaged. It should be well structured and easy to navigate.



### ARTIST IMAGE

- To help with building a brand/identity
- To introduce a new artist/song
- To provide information about the artist
- To show off an artist's image

### COMMERCIAL (make £££!)

- To link to an online store to sell merchandise and digital content
- To provide information about the artist such as tour dates or release dates
- To promote an artist or song

### FOR THE FANS

- Provide links to all their social media platforms to increase social engagement from fans
- Can provide an element of interaction with fans
- To attract global fans and distribute to them
- To let fans hear new music or see new videos

## SOCIAL MEDIA & CONTEXTS

Historically, music fans would form communities offline, maybe meeting through conventions or the back pages of the music magazines. Music journalists had some real clout too and artists would spend time trying to get into the pages of music magazines, whether through reviews or whole articles. Now though, it's much easier for fans to create communities online and these communities can span space and time as the internet has a global reach which operates 24/7. And, where once music journalists were king, now bloggers and vloggers have taken over in many respects. Social media is very important to the music industry - most fans turn to Twitter and Facebook to keep updated with their favourite bands and how most new tracks and videos will get their launch on social channels. Social media is monitored, often by paying someone to carry out data analysis and monitoring engagement of different tweets, posts and image uploads. This will then inform them of how to launch their next campaign, maybe by using pre-release material, or teasers. Social media is also very important for artists to identify and engage with fans to maintain their relationship, however it is often unlikely that artists write all their own Tweets/Posts and they usually have a brand manager who helps with their online presence



### Purpose of Music Videos

- To help sell a song
- To promote an artist or song
- To introduce a new artist/song
- To show off an artist's image
- To help make the song/artist memorable
- To allow the artist/song to be seen/heard on more platforms – music channels, internet, DVDs
- To promote an artist's other skills – dancing or acting maybe
- To provide a visual representation of the song and its narrative
- To entertain the audience

### Types of Music Videos

#### CONCEPT BASED

Using ideas and imagery instead of strictly band shots

#### ADVANTAGES

Artist and production team can be really creative and come up with unusual ideas. Can become iconic in itself, a text people recognise and enjoy.

#### DISADVANTAGES

More expensive to execute  
Can be time consuming to plan

#### PERFORMANCE BASED

A recording of the band as they perform the song. This could either be live or staged

#### ADVANTAGES

Cheaper to execute  
Much quicker to plan and execute  
Gives a sense of authenticity, shows a 'real' side to the artist

#### DISADVANTAGES

Can become repetitive if a band does too many of a similar style.  
The band has to be already established

## Why audiences use websites - applying Uses and Gratifications theory

To remember the U&G theory, think of P.I.E.S.

- Personal identity
- Information
- Entertainment
- Social interaction

Uses and gratifications theory refers to ACTIVE audiences - audiences who seek out, chose and use media products to satisfy a need. There are four main needs audiences will satisfy when consuming media:

### Personal identity

(The need or satisfaction of relating to the media product, in the artists, their music etc)

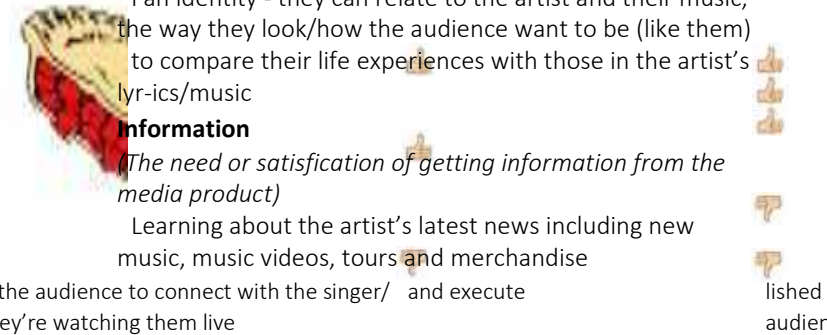
Fan identity - they can relate to the artist and their music, the way they look/how the audience want to be (like them) to compare their life experiences with those in the artist's lyrics/music

### Information

(The need or satisfaction of getting information from the media product)

Learning about the artist's latest news including new music, music videos, tours and merchandise

- To allow the audience to connect with the singer/ and execute feel like they're watching them live



## **Entertainment**

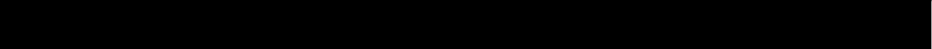
*(The need or satisfaction of escaping from everyday lives and being entertained)*

Enjoyable functions - watching music videos, exclusive clips and interviews, where they are taken away from their every day lives

**Social Interaction** *(The need or satisfaction of being able to interact with people about the artist - either in person “did you see the latest news/music video” or sharing on social media/being part of a community online)*

- Fan community – eg Katy Perry fanzine, websites, Twitter following, forums, pod-casts. Sharing fan identity with others (eg sharing views on artist).

- to discuss with family/friends or by continuing the conversation about latest news on Twitter or Facebook



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OF



Instagram



**Why audiences use websites - applying Uses and Gratifications theory**

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#### DISADVANTAGES

- 👎 Can become repetitive if a band does too many of a similar style.
- 👎 The band has to be already established for the music video to maintain audience interest

**Entertainment**


*(The need or satisfaction of escaping from everyday lives and being entertained)*

Enjoyable functions - watching music videos, exclusive clips and interviews, where they are taken away from their every day lives

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## KATY PERRY - ROAR - 2013

## MEDIA LANGUAGE: How ROAR communicates with the audience using symbolic and technical codes:

## REPRESENTATION: How ROAR constructs representation of groups, themes and issues

### REPRESENTATION OF MEN



#### Challenge stereotypes - vane, self-obsessed, weaker than women

At the beginning of the video, the male taking selfies is a subversion of a typical stereotype of females. The media would have us believe that selfies are exclusively the domain of the females in our society but this unusual representation forces the audience to consider how men can also be victims of vanity and self-obsession. If we consider that this song was Katy Perry's first release after her split from Russell Brand, this representation makes sense as he is known for his love of the limelight and there is also evidence to suggest he believes he is very attractive too.

### REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN



#### Challenge stereotypes - strong, resourceful, king of jungle, don't need men

The focus for the song is about female empowerment, sending a message to her fans that women are strong and a force to be reckoned with. To achieve this she represents the female character as submissive and inferior to the male to begin with but once he is out of the picture she is able to grow and become stronger, finding an inner strength she hadn't realised she possessed. It could even be suggested that the leopard print fabric she is seen to be wearing at the start as a scarf is a motif to represent this inner strength. The fabric remains with her throughout the video, beginning life as a rather prim neckerchief, then as a belt, then an integral part of her spear and finally her revealing bra top.

*Although empowered, Katy is still being a typical female - painting nails, applying lipstick and wearing a bra.*

### FEMINIST THEORIES

This video is interesting to consider in relation to feminist theoretical perspectives - there is a clearly empowering message about women, however Katy Perry's character becomes more scantily clad as the video progresses and is, therefore, also sexually objectified - this fits with Mulvey's Male Gaze theory.

### REPRESENTATION OF ETHNICITY

**Colonisation: the action or process of settling among and establishing control over the indigenous people of an area.**

It is worth noting that the characters in the video are white and it is seemingly set in a jungle. The omission of any other ethnicities constructs the representation that links to white colonisation, representing white cities.

- The video opens with an Establishing shot of a plane crash in the jungle leaving only two survivors. The female looks visibly shaken and scared whilst the male is seen, through a point of view shot, to be taking selfies indicating how he isn't recognising the seriousness of the situation or showing any care towards his partner.

- That night, when walking through the jungle, the male meets his demise after being attacked by a lion, leaving the female alone. The surrounding darkness indicates the danger and the close up of the female's face shows her feelings of shock and absolute fear.

- We cut to a mid-shot again showing the female's abject terror whilst two tarantulas crawl over her. Her clothing indicates how she is unprepared for such an environment and she is seen as a victim who we sympathise with.

- As the video progresses, the female becomes more accustomed to the dark and begins to see the beauty in the nature around her rather than the dangers, for instance when what looks like ominous yellow eyes actually turns out to be fireflies.

- The female soon turns cat-like and a mid-shot shows her crawling on all fours and roaring at the water's edge. In the water we see what is supposed to be her reflection shown as a tiger's face. This primal behaviour connotes a sense of oneness with nature and indicates how the female is gaining emotional strength and feeling empowered.

- This new representation of the female character is established through a wide shot of her in the jungle, now dressed a little more practically, standing confidently and holding a home-made weapon showing her new found skills.

- Later shots see her completely absorbed into the jungle life-style wearing a skirt made of leaves and a garland of flowers.

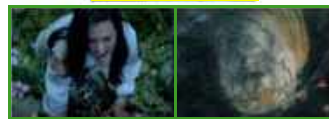
- Low angle shots connote her dominance in the environment and her body language is open and even defiant at times, showing she is now fully in control. The narrative is that she is no longer needing to act passively because of a man in her life and she has the courage to carry on alone, making the best of her situation.

- This culminates with a wide shot of her sitting centrally on some kind of throne made from plants and flowers. Either side she is flanked by wild animals perhaps protecting her and her flowers form a crown, suggesting she is now the Queen of the Jungle.

- The final scene is another wide shot showing how her world and that of the jungle have collided and both now live side by side in harmony. She has converted the broken plane into a home and made the best of her situation. The subtext here is that the female can cope with whatever life throws at her.

Propp's Character Theory: Damsel in distress-Katy Perry at the start, Hero-Katy Perry at the end, Antagonist-Tiger.

### KEY MESSAGES



### BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Successful Singer/Songwriter Katy Perry released 'Roar' as the lead single from her fourth studio album 'Prism' on August 10th 2013.

On July 7, 2015, the video for 'Roar' became the fourth video to reach 1 billion views on Vevo, making Perry the first artist in history to have two music videos with 1 billion views.

As of February 2017, the video for 'Roar' is the eleventh most viewed YouTube video of all time, receiving over 1.79 billion.

"Roar" made Katy Perry the first artist in history to have two mu-sic videos with over 1 billion views.

### CULTURAL CONTEXTS

The song is focused on empowerment and standing up for oneself.

It is thought to be a positive statement about moving forward in her life after her tumultuous relationship with comedian Russell Brand.

The song references Muhammed Ali ("I'm floating like a butterfly, Stinging like a bee"), Helen Reddy ("hear me roar") and the Rocky movie franchise ("I got the eye of the tiger"), and these references could be seen as Perry targeting an older audience.

This is also intertextual reference as it references other media products - including Tarzan and Jane with the graphics in the opening and closing of the music video



