



YOU MAY BE SHOWN A CLIP FROM CUFFS AND BE ASKED TO ANALYSE FOR LANGUAGE AND REPRESENTATIONS. YOU ALSO NEED TO KNOW HOW THE 2010S CONTEXT INFLUENCES THE SHOW AND ITS IMPACT ON AUDIENCES

KEY VOCABULARY

Social realism – a style of drama that is grounded in the contemporary world in terms of setting, characters and social issues, often portraying social injustice (used in Cuffs). Also referred to as verisimilitude (see below).

Verisimilitude – the appearance of being true or real

KEY FACTS

1. Cuffs was scheduled on BBC One during peak viewing time in 2015: Wednesdays at 8pm.
2. The programme was expected to attract a mass, diverse audience by offering them a range of characters in the hope that they would identify with one or more of them.
3. The programme was pre-watershed so the producers had to take care over the way they portrayed crimes, criminals and the police, avoiding swearing and extreme violence.
4. One of the ways they did this was to combine serious police procedural plots with humour.

MISE-EN-SCENE

1. Naturalistic locations and lighting is used to reflect real life.
2. Some low-key lighting in scenes where crimes are being committed to add to seriousness. The settings used also fit the genre: urban environment, police offices, abandoned/run down locations.
3. Costume and props fit generic conventions for crime dramas (Police uniforms, coats, suits, walkie talkies).

AUDIENCE APPEALS

Personal Identity - wide range of characters to identify with, may see characters as role models, may empathise with their difficult jobs

Entertainment – can escape into fictional world of police team working together, can feel reassured by the hard work of the police, may enjoy humour, action and suspense

Social Interaction – may feel part of the team, may discuss programme with family and friends, may use social media to discuss the show

Surveillance – the social realism offers a sense of informing the audience about police work

CAMERAWORK and EDITING

1. The majority of the camera shots are of the police officers, who are represented as the heroes of the show and therefore have more screen time than the criminals. This allows the audience to stay with the police as they watch.
2. There are shot/reverse shots during conversations
3. Bird's eye view shot during fast driving scene on motorway
4. Extreme close-ups in moments of tension.
5. A handheld camera is also used at times to give a 'documentary' feel, as if its recording 'real-life'.
6. There is lots of cross-cutting and fast paced editing is used to help create the sense of tension and urgency.
7. Continuity editing is used to establish the illusion of continuous action.

SOUND

1. Fitting with the verisimilitude of the programme, familiar **diegetic** sound is used such as well known music playing in the canteen, phones ringing in the office, etc.
2. Sinister **non-diegetic** music begins only when the criminals arrive. Rise in volume and tempo of sound puts audience on edge.

CONTEXT and REPRESENTATION

Women – Since the 2000s, stronger roles for women have been developed in television series, reflecting many changes in gender equality. For example, DS Jo Moffat has important status as lead investigator and has power in the police force because of her status, reflecting the number of women in positions of authority in 2015. PC Donna Prager is representing as physically and mentally stronger than her male police partner, Lino. Donna is equal to Ryan during training.

Masculinity – Changes in social attitudes towards masculinity have meant that men are no longer confined to traditional male roles in TV. PC Jake Vickers does not initially display many traditional masculine qualities of physical and mental strength, representing him as weak and lacking in dedication. PC Ryan Draper, on the other hand, is a multi-dimensional character; he is brave, respected by his peers, shows gritty determination and complete commitment to duty. He is also displays some typically 'feminine' traits as he is gentle when dealing with the public and emotional when he lets his anger get the better of him.

Sexuality – The Equality Act of 2010 made discrimination against LGBT people illegal. By 2015, audiences were used to seeing gay characters on pre-watershed programmes. Jake's homosexuality is not a problem in Cuffs; in the first ten minutes, he openly states that he is gay, 22 and single. When the duty solicitor shows interest in Jake, Ryan warns him to distance himself, only because the solicitor is known for creating obstacles for the police.

Multiculturalism and ethnicity – By 2015, audiences recognised that Britain is a multicultural society, despite political debates about immigration and Brexit. In Cuffs, there are a number of different ethnicities in the police team, but these are hardly remarked on or noticed as differences are just accepted. Racism is a theme in the episode, however, as the first crime shown is an unprovoked racist attack on a young Asian boy by a gang of young, white, racist men. This shows that despite the Equality Act of 2010, racism still exists in Britain today.

Name	Actor	Important characteristics
PC Ryan Draper	Ashley Walters	Main character, Black British
PC Jake Vickers	Jacob Ifan	Gay, White British
PC Donna Prager	Eleanor Matsuura	Lesbian (revealed in episode 2), Half Japanese
PC Lino Moretti	Alex Carter (Hollyoaks, Emmerdale)	Half Italian
DS Jo Moffat	Amanda Abbington (Sherlock, Mr Selfridge)	Main character, White British
Chief Superintendent Robert Vickers	Peter Sullivan	White British
Debbie Vickers	Clare Burt	White British
PC Mischa Baig	Bhavna Limbachia	Asian
DC Carl Hawkins	Shaun Dooley	White British
DI Felix Kane	Paul Ready	White British