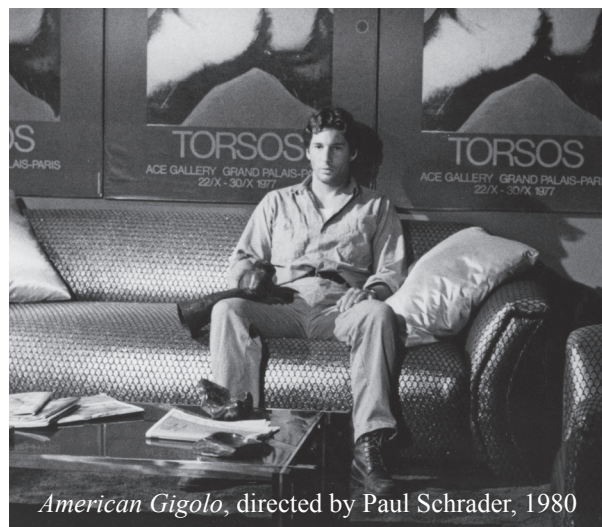


# NAMING THE NATION IN US FILM

## Screen Studies Symposium

Friday, February 2, 2007, 10.00 – 19.00  
Senate House North Block Room 336

The day-long event tackles the question of US cinema and American national identity in a new way. It examines some of the hundreds of US films that have underscored their role in interpreting and /or constituting 'America' by announcing themselves as titularly 'American'. Many of these films are well known – e.g. *An American in Paris*, *American Gigolo*, *American Beauty*. But the tradition is as old as US film, extending back to travelogues like *American Falls from Above* (Edison, 1896), Spanish-American War 'actualities' such as *American Cavalry Charging with Drawn Swords* (Lubin, 1898) and, more famously, Porter's 1903 *Life of an American Fireman*.



*American Gigolo*, directed by Paul Schrader, 1980

**America First**, the 2007 Routledge collection examining this phenomenon, includes discussions of work by such major figures as DeMille (*The Little American*, 1916), Capra (*American Madness*, 1932), Vidor (*An American Romance*, 1944), Minnelli (*An American in Paris*, 1951) and Mankiewicz (*The Quiet American*, 1958) as well as recent titles including *American Me*, *American History X* and *American Splendor*. Several of its contributors will be speaking at this event.

- 9.30- 10.00 Registration and Coffee
- 10.00-10.30 Introduction by Mandy Merck (Royal Holloway, University of London) editor, *America First*
- 10.30-11.15 *The Vanishing American* (George B. Seitz, 1925) by William Handley (University of Southern California)
- 11.15-12.00 *An American Romance* (King Vidor, 1944) by Rembert Huser (University of Minnesota)
- 12.00-12.45 *An American in Paris* (Vincente Minnelli, 1951) by Pam Cook (University of Southampton)
- 12.45-2.00 Lunch
- 2.00 - 2.45 *The Americanization of Emily* (Arthur Hiller, 1964) by Sharon Willis (University of Rochester)
- 2.45- 3.30 *American Graffiti* (George Lucas, 1973) by Barry Langford (Royal Holloway)
- 3.30– 3.45 Tea
- 3.45 - 4.30 *American Gigolo* (Paul Schrader, 1980) by H.N. Lukes (New York University)
- 4.30 - 5.45 Round table with Peter Evans, Queen Mary, University of London (*The Quiet American*, 1958 and 2002); Diane Negra, University of East Anglia (*An American Werewolf in London*, 1981); and Esther Leslie, Birkbeck (*American Splendor*, 2003).
- 5.45 – 7.00 Drinks

**Fee: £ 10 Standard. £5 Concessions (Students/Unemployed)**

**Enquiries & Advance Bookings: Dean's Office, School of Advanced Study (T: 020 7862 8659 / E: Deans.Office@sas.ac.uk)**