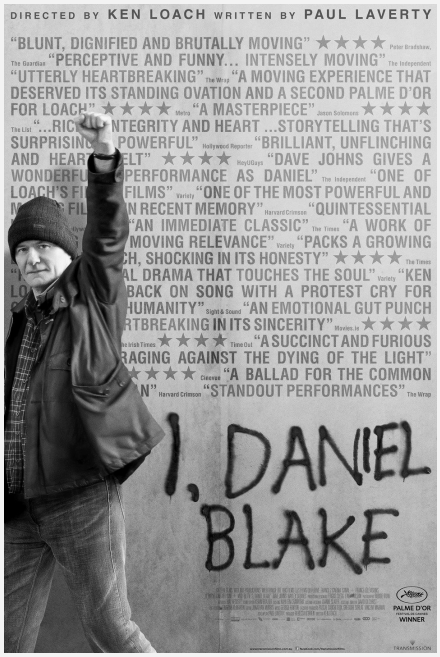
Cover Image



Key & Terms

Bold writing indicates an importance to the information, *italics* represents information that will likely gain you further marks but isn't necessarily important information.

Superscript indicates a recap of a theory or extra/specific information on something specific.

IDB - I, Daniel Blake

BFI - British Film Institution
National Lottery funding distributor

BBC Films - British Broadcasting Corporation
Now changed to "BBC Film", pointless change ik

Product Context

I, Daniel Blake is an **independent social realist film directed by renowned filmmaker Ken Loach**
(Notable for his other films: *Ken, Raining Stones, Sweet Sixteen, etc)*
The film was a **UK/French production, it received funding from the BFI and BBC Films.**
It became **Ken Loach's largest grossing film at the box office** *(taking over $8 million)*, was **highly critically acclaimed and generated much debate due to the contemporary social and political issues addressed in the film.**
I, Daniel Blake was **exhibited at many film festivals, won the Palme d'Or at Cannes, and was nominated for many awards including several BAFTAS.**

Media Industries

-- SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXTS --
I, Daniel Blake **addresses contemporary British social issues such as poverty, the welfare system and the Work Capability Assessment.**
The film portrays a group of **traditionally underrepresented characters in Newcastle struggling in poverty to gain benefits and support.**
IDB conveys a **clear left-wing political message** and **criticises specific government policies.**
Consideration of the **wider economic context and concept of "austerity" might be useful in exploring how changes to benefit policy had been justified.**
Much of **Ken Loach's work has addressed similar issues** (*Cathy Come Home, Raining Stones)* and **he is a social campaigner, known for his socialist political views.**
This is important to consider in terms of film production and maintaining audiences (arguably the intended audience for this film is educated, media literate and socially aware).
-- THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ECONOMIC FACTORS, INCLUDING COMMERCIAL AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT PUBLIC FUNDING, TO MEDIA INDUSTRIES AND THEIR PRODUCTS --
Economic factors including funding are extremely significant to this independent British co-production. **The funding bodies are the BFI (through National Lottery Funding) and the BBC,**
This film is *funded differently from many mainstream films,* like Black Panther who could easily source their own money.
Vast financial profits might be less important for practitioners working in this genre of film as they want to spread the message- but don't be mistaken, it's still a film that must pay its actors and producers, so there is still a need to get profit from the film.

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Media Industries (cont)

-- PROCESSES OF PRODUCTION, DISTRIBUTION AND CIRCULATION AND THE IMPACT OF DIGITALLY CONVERGENT PLATFORMS --

It was **filmed largely on location (hospital, job centre, etc), features lesser known actors and doesn't rely on special effects.**

The IDB website includes links to social media and the trailer offers a **hashtag (#idanielblake)** suggesting links with Twitter, but it is worth considering the ways in which the marketing might be more likely to be consumed in more traditional ways.

Might an assumed older audience be more likely to see the trailer at the cinema and less likely to search for it on the internet?

It was marketed more traditionally (poster campaign, trailer in cinema, etc) as well as online.

The film was **exhibited at various film festivals and received a theatrical release in Britain and various other countries (including France, Spain, Brazil and Japan - although not in the USA).**

It was later *released on digital download and DVD/Blu-ray.*

-- THE EFFECT OF INDIVIDUAL PRODUCERS ON MEDIA INDUSTRIES --

It may be useful to explore *Ken Loach and his significance as a practitioner in British and Global cinema - how Loach has been able to repeatedly secure funding for social realist films and the extent to which the genre itself exists in its current form due to his work.*

Consider the **extent to which IDB can be described as a mainstream product**. Loach is a well-known successful figure in the UK and Europe but *is his work mainstream? Does the fact he is challenging governmental policy mean he is also challenging mainstream opinions?*

It might also be interesting to consider whether there exists a **pre-sold audience of Loach Fans who are eager to watch his films and the extent to which this gives him license to make films that might not otherwise secure finance.**

-- HOW MEDIA ORGANISATIONS MAINTAIN, INCLUDING THROUGH MARKETING, VARITIES OF AUDIENCES NATIONALLY AND GLOBALLY --

The marketing materials establish the status and reputation of film- **positive critical comments on the poster, reference to the Palme d'Or award in the trailer, etc.**

The genre (**British social realist film) and director Ken Loach are important factors in maintaining an audience.** Loach has a long history of directing work in the genre and **unlike some film genres which have been impacted by technical developments and special effects, might this genre be particular in its tendency to resist change?**

Media Industries (cont)

There are specific and distinct potential audiences that the film is attempting to target through its marketing:

The **trailer references the BBC, BFI and the Palme d'Or.**

The trailer **explores specific governmental policy** which may also suggest **audiences will have an awareness of political and social issues int he UK.**

Only specific **"star" identified in the trailer using intertitles is the director Ken Loach.**

-- APPLYING THEORY --

Curran & Seaton - Power and Media

Theory recap: (1) the idea that the media is controlled by a small number of companies primarily driven by the logic of profit and power. (2) the idea that media concentration generally limits or inhibits variety, creativity and quality. (3) the idea that more socially diverse patterns of ownership help to create the conditions for more varied and adventurous media productions.

The trailer seems to **offer an experience that sits outside the logic of profit and power** and may arguably also **demonstrate a level of variety and creativity that does not reflect Curran and Seaton's ideas about the impact of media concentration.**

You can also talk about whether the trailer is **able to offer a more adventurous production due to socially diverse patterns of ownership or (as above) Loach's own pre-sold audience.**

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