

Spring, 2023 Semester – Syllabus

Instructor: Ted Wilks

Course: British Drama: “Lillie”

Course No.: CA xxx

Day, time: Thursdays, 9:00 am – 10:15 am

Abstract: “Lillie” is a 1978 British television drama series based on the life of Emilie Charlotte Le Breton (1853-1929), who was born on the island of Jersey. In 1874 she married Irish landowner Edward Langtry, called herself Lillie (or Lily), and acquired the sobriquet “The Jersey Lily.” She became a prominent British-American socialite, actress, and producer. This classic, beloved costume drama series follows the life and loves of the dazzling beauty who defied societal convention to woo a slew of wealthy admirers and become a renowned actress.

Spring 2023, weeks 1-13

Week 1	Episode 1	Emilie: Beautiful young Lillie becomes restless in the countryside and yearns to see London, but her romantic vision of city life falls apart when her first visit reveals the harsh truth of society’s prejudice.
Week 2	Episode 2	Mrs. Langtry: Lillie’s father, dean of the local church, forbids her friendship with Michel, a local boy. Her brother reveals that the real reason is that Michel is their illegitimate half-brother. Lillie, determined to find a wealthy husband, marries Irish landowner Edward Langtry, who takes her to his imposing home in Southampton.
Week 3	Episode 3	The Jersey Lily: Lillie persuades her husband to take her back to London, where she becomes a sensation at the first social gathering she attends.
Week 4	Episode 4	The New Helen: Lillie’s marriage fades, whereas her stardom brightens. Soon she is favored in high society by a King, a Prince, and the famous author Oscar Wilde.
Week 5	Episode 5	Bertie: The Marlborough House set successfully maneuvers a meeting between Lillie and Bertie, the Prince of Wales, which prompts scandalous rumors about both of them.
Week 6	Episode 6	Let Them Say: A new suitor – the Crown Prince Rudolph of Austria – takes too much interest in Lillie for Prince Bertie’s liking.
Week 7	Episode 7	The Sailor Prince: Lillie’s indiscreet behavior turns Bertie and high society against her, but her artist friends have a plan to put her back in the friendly spotlight.
Week 8	Episode 8	Going on the Stage: Bertie financially enables the now-pregnant Lillie to hide in Paris until her daughter Jeanne Marie is born. Edward ignores Lillie’s repeated requests for a divorce. Henrietta Labouchere, an actress and teacher, helps her to become an actress. Her successes lead to an American tour.
Week 9	Episode 9	America: Henrietta increasingly resents Lillie’s scandalous social life in America and frivolous attitude toward acting. The wealthy New

		Yorker Freddy Gebhard tells Lillie that she can get a divorce by becoming an American citizen.
Week 10	Episode 10	Home on the Range: Lillie finds great success in her two American tours and purchases an elegant home in London.
Week 11	Episode 11	Mr. Jersey: Lillie becomes fascinated by the wealth and arrogance of Squire Abington, her latest suitor; she ignores warnings from friends who tell horrifying stories about his cruelty and temper.
Week 12	Episode 12	Sunset & Evening Star: After Edward's death Lillie ricochets between husbands and lovers. She returns to the stage in the hopes of earning enough money to purchase her own theater.
Week 13	Episode 13	Fifty Cents a Dance: The Great War rages across Europe. Lillie seeks to repair her relationship with her daughter Jeanne and secure her legacy.