If ever we wished a format wasn’t exportable, it’s this. But Brian Woods and Jezza Neumann’s concept of analysing the realities and effects of poverty through interviews with children proves just as punishingly effective in the States as it did in 2011’s UK documentary.

Focusing on three Iowan families laid low by the recession, it exposes the fallacy of right-wing claims that welfare is a hammock rather than a safety net. The parents are desperate to work and the kids desperate to learn, but unemployment benefit is pitiful, medical insurance scanty and waiting lists for subsidised housing on the rise. Theirs are itinerant lives of homeless shelters, motels and a constant, gnawing hunger.

As ever, the kids cut to the quick with the heartbreaking maturity of their observations: ‘Grades is my only way out of here,’ says 13-year-old Johnny; ‘This is not the Great American Dream,’ reckons 11-year-old Sarah. Yet there’s no self-pity, which, perhaps oddly, makes this important film as inspiring as it does despairing.
Bank of Dave: Fighting the Fat Cats

The day after the original ‘Bank of Dave’ aired, Dave Fishwick received thousands of emails.

Thu Feb 28
10-11.05pm
C4

Jack Taylor: The Pikemen

Iain Glen’s titular gumshoe doesn’t so much eschew genre cliché as elevate it to the level of

Thu Feb 28
9-10.55pm
ITV

The Wedding Shop

Blame the gypsies. Or, at least, blame ‘My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding’ for re-igniting the small

Thu Feb 28
9-10pm
BBC2

The Sea King: Britain’s Flying Past

In the opening sequence, as a grown man tearfully admits to be crying over a helicopter, alarm

Thu Feb 28
9-10pm
BBC2

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