Meeting Time and Location: M/W 11-12:15; Silver 44

Instructor: Susan Murray, Ph.D
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-3:30 and by appointment; 239 Greene St, 7th fl.

Course Description:
This course will survey American broadcasting from the wireless through digital television. We will examine how historically specific economic forces, regulation, technological innovation, advertisers, creative producers, and audiences have interacted to shape the development of commercial broadcasting and how these cultural products, narratives and processes have become part of our social history.

Required Readings:
-Hilmes, Michele, Only Connect: A Cultural History of Broadcasting in the US (New York: Wadsworth) SECOND EDITION. Available online or at the NYU Bookstore
-Coursepacket—available @ Advanced Copies: 552 LaGuardia Place @ W. 3rd Street.

Attendance
Students are allowed two absences without explanation. Any further absences will only be excused if they are due to documented emergency or illness. If you miss more than two classes and do not have documentation, your final class grade will drop by 1/3 of a letter grade for every day missed (ex- on the third unexcused absence a grade could go from an A- to a B+).

Assignments/Responsibilities:
1. **Participation** (15% of grade) Class discussion is a very important aspect of this course and all students are expected to attend class and participate. If a student fails to show up, participate, is disruptive, or is regularly late to class, his/her grade will be affected.
2. **Midterm**. (30%) Exam will consist primarily of short answer questions. No make-ups allowed.
3. **Final Exam** (30%) Final exam is not cumulative. Like the midterm, the exam will consist primarily of short answer questions. No make-ups allowed.
4. **Research Paper** (25%) (see attached assignment sheet for more detail). Students will research and write a 10-15 page research paper on a particular moment in broadcast history. Primary historical research will be required. **DUE: April 9th.**

Grading:
- 90 - 100 = A range
- 80 - 89 = B range
- 70 - 79 = C range
- 60 - 69 = D range
- 50 & below = Fail
NOTE ON PLAGIARISM (Please see the attached Statement on Academic Integrity)
Since I consider plagiarism to be the most egregious and prevalent form of academic
dishonesty, I carefully check every student paper/assignment for
ideas/sentences/paragraphs that are copied from sources without proper attribution.
Often students cut and paste such material from websites, which means I can find
evidence of cheating fairly easily, but I will also go to the library to check books, articles,
and encyclopedia entries in order to locate the original source. If I find that you have
plagiarized, you will most likely fail the assignment and possibly fail the course. DO
NOT RISK YOUR GRADE because you are feeling lazy or overwhelmed. I guarantee
that it will not be worth it.

JANUARY
W - 23 Introduction to Course and to Media History/Historiography

M - 28 Victorian Leisure, Culture & Communication
Readings: Hilmes, 1-15
Nasaw, chapters 4-6
Marvin, “Locating the Body in Electrical Space and Time”

W - 30 Telegraph
Hilmes, 16-27
Reading: Starr, “The First Wire”

FEBRUARY
M - 4 Wireless & Amateur Operators
Reading: Hilmes, 27-33
Sconce, “Voices from the Void”, Douglas, “Exploratory Listening in the
1920s: Maxim, “The Amateur in Radio

W - 6 Broadcasting Begins, 1919-26
Reading: Hilmes, 34-58

M - 11 Commercial Network Broadcasting: 1926-40
Listening: My Favorite Husband
Reading: Hilmes, 59-83
Douglas, “The Invention of the Audience”

W - 13 Radio’s Golden Age/Genres
Listening: Suspense
Reading: Hilmes, 84-113
Hilmes (coursepack) “Who We Are, Who We are Not: The Emergence of
National Narratives”

M-18 NO CLASS - HOLIDAY

W - 20 Daytime Radio and the Female Consumer/Radio and the War
Reading: Hilmes, 114-43;
Brunsdon, “The Housewife in 1940s Mass Communication Research,
M - 25  From Radio to TV
Screening: Texaco Star Theatre (1949)
Reading: Hilmes, 144-55
Gould, “The Paradoxical State of Television”

W - 27  Early Television, 1948-52
Screening: Ok Mother! (1947), The Goldbergs (1951)
Lipsitz, “The Meaning of Memory”
Gould, “Family Life AT”

MARCH

M - 3   Television, 1952-1960
Screening: I Love Lucy (1955), See it Now (1952)
Reading: Hilmes, 145-175
Schatz, “Desilu, I love Lucy and the Rise of Network TV”

*Midterm review sheet distributed in class

W - 5   LIBRARY RESEARCH INFORMATION SESSION
Lower Level 1 of Bobst, room TBA. Attendance will be taken. Meets for the entire class period

M - 10  MIDTERM

W - 12  Television, 1960-65
Screening: Queen for a Day (1960), Addams Family, Bewitched
Reading: Hilmes, 176-207
Alvey, “Too Many Kids and Old Ladies’: Quality Demographics and 1960s U.S. Television”

++++++++++++++++++++++SPRING BREAK+++++++++++++++++++++

M - 24  Television Genres and Narrative Form
Reading:
Feuer, “Genre and Television”
Feuer, “Narrative Form in American Network Television”

W - 26  Public Broadcasting
Reading: Hilmes, 222-224
Ouellette, “Oasis of the Vast Wasteland”

M - 31  Network TV, 1965-75
Screening: All in the Family, Mary Tyler Moore
Reading: Feuer “MTM Style”
Hilmes, 208-220

APRIL

W- 2  Cable TV
Screening: MTV clips
Reading: Kompare, “TV Land: Cable and Satellite as Boutique Television”
Hilmes, 220-230

M-7  Alternative TV Movement
Screening: TBA
Readings: Boyle, “A Brief History of American Documentary Video”

W- 9  Television, 1975-85
Screening: Roots, Dallas, The Cosby Show
Reading: Hilmes, 230-278
Staiger, “Cosby”

M – 14  Television, 1985-95
Screening, It’s Garry Shandling Show, Married with Children
Reading: Hilmes, 279-324

*Research paper due at the beginning of class

W-16  Television 1995-2000
Reading: Hilmes, 325-361
Lotz, “How to spend $9.3 billion in three days”

M – 21  Reality TV & Current Programming/Contexts
Reading, Andrejevic, “Visceral Literacy: Reality TV, Savvy Viewers …”
McMurria, “Global TV Realities”

W – 23  Digital Convergence
Reading: Caldwell, “Convergence Television”
Lisa Parks, “Flexible Microcasting”

M – 28  New Technologies
Reading: Carlson, “Tapping into Tivo”
Hilmes, 388-393

MAY

W – 1  Catch up and Final Review

M - 5  FINAL

*ALL LECTURES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE*
Due Date: Wednesday, April 14th at the beginning of class
Length: 12-15 double-spaced typed pages

For this assignment, you are expected to write a paper based on your research of a specific event, issue, or trend in broadcasting that occurred prior to 1980. (Examples of topics include: introducing color to television, uses of radio in schools in the 1920s, Good Times and 1970s racial politics, radio and the “problem” of jazz, children’s programming in the 1950s, etc.)

You are required to use no less than five primary sources and two secondary sources. (These sources cannot come from commercial or encyclopedia websites. In fact, the only type of Internet source you are permitted to use are academic/library databases.) Your paper will also contain proper foot/endnotes and a bibliography.

Grading Criteria

A range
A grade of A is an excellent grade. The student’s work shows originality, coherence, and a mastery of the primary and secondary research. The interpretation of the material is concise and well-argued and all requirements of the assignment have been met. The writing is strong. Sentences are complete and understandable and there are few, if any, grammar, punctuation or spelling errors.

B range
A grade of B is an above average grade. All requirements of the assignment have been met. The student has shown that he/she clearly understands the material and knows how to make an argument. There must be a solid presentation of research and interpretive skills, but some aspects of the argument are weak or digressive. The writing may contain some grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors. It is clear that with some additional work, this type of paper could become an A paper.

C range
A grade of C is an average grade. The student has completed only the very basics of the assignment and the argument or analysis may need significant revision. Interpretation may be weak in that it may be factually incorrect, tenuously argued, or awkward. The writing may be rough, contain structural errors (incoherent development of a main point or unclear sentences or paragraphs) or contain quite a few grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors.

D range
A grade of D is a poor grade. The basic expectations of the assignment are not met. All questions are not answered and the argument does not hold together. However, student will not receive a failing grade, because he/she has provided some evidence of research. The writing may be inept or riddled with grammar, punctuation or spelling errors.