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FILM 4210: Critical History of Radio & TV

Fall 2009

TR 5:30-6:45 pm; Section 80502
T 7-8:50 pm Screening

General Classroom Building 318
Arts & Humanities 406

Instructor: Karen Petruska
Office: 840B, One Park Place South
Email: k.petruska1@gsu.edu

Office Hours: M 5-6:30 pm
R 4-5:30 pm
or by appointment

Course Pre-requisites: Film 1010 and Film 2700, with grades of "C" or higher

Course Description

This course reviews the history of broadcasting, which includes the origins of radio and television in the United States. Because television adopted many of the structures and regulatory policies applied to radio, it is impossible to study one without the other. For this reason, we will spend a few weeks discussing radio alone, with an eye towards identifying how radio developed as a technology, as a business, as a regulable medium, and as entertainment. The course textbook devotes half of each chapter to a concise review of the cultural history of each period studied. Similarly, this course will position radio and television as cultural objects that reflect and critique the values of American history. Both these media forms are undergoing tremendous change in the digital age, and an understanding of their history provides a context for contemporary debates and also identifies how the discourse of today echoes the discourse of the past. My hope for this course is to challenge you to study the past as a means to better understand the present.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you should be able to read critically and think analytically about broadcasting history, recognizing that interpretation is always an element of historiography. You should be able to identify the social, political, commercial and technological facets of broadcasting, assessing the complicated ways these facets have operated and continue to interact to define our American broadcasting system. Understanding the complexity of our broadcasting system and appreciating its cultural significance, I hope you will become more critical consumers of media content.

Required Text

Hilmes, Michele. *Only Connect: A Cultural History of Broadcasting in the United States*. 2nd Edition. 2007.

Screening programs

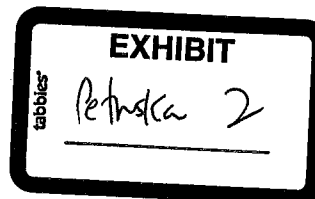
Supplemental readings available on E-Reserve or ULearn (see course reading schedule)

Please note: there is a significant amount of reading required for this course.

Assignments

Quizzes

Each Thursday is quiz day. Every Thursday, I will ask students to complete a short quiz covering that week's assigned reading and the content of the screening session. These quizzes may be multiple choice or short answer and should not be difficult for any student who has completed the reading. In accordance with the absence policy, students are allowed to drop three quiz grades. Should a student have more than three absences, missed quiz grades will count as a zero.



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Reading Response Assignments

Throughout the semester, students are asked to complete five one-page, single-spaced response essays to an article assigned as supplemental reading. This assignment asks students to read analytically and critically. Within 500 words, students should summarize the author's main argument and provide a response to the author's key points. For each essay, students are to write about an essay assigned for that week only—essays written about articles from prior or future weeks will not be accepted. A more detailed assignment description may be found on ULearn. These assignments will be submitted electronically by 4 p.m. (guidelines detailed on assignment description). Each short essay is worth 5% of your final grade.

Exams

There will be three exams throughout the semester. These exams will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and one essay question and will query material covered in class discussion, in the textbook, and in the broadcasting programs screened on Tuesday nights. Students who miss an exam will receive a zero on that exam unless an *approved* written excuse is presented *within one week* of the absence and exam date. Each exam is worth 15% of your final grade.

Final Project

Each student will be asked to write a 6-8 page historical research paper incorporating scholarly research. During week 10, each student must submit a proposal for the student's intended final research project, including a bibliography of scholarly sources. The paper is due during the final week of class and must be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of the final class. I will provide more detailed instructions for this assignment during week seven of the semester.

Grading

Quizzes	5%
Reading Response Essays	25%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Exam 3	15%
Final Project	20%
Participation	5%

A	94-100	C+	77-79
A-	90-93	C	74-76
B+	87-89	C-	70-73
B	84-86	D	60-69
B-	80-83	F	Under 60

Absence Policy

Students are expected to come to class. I will ask students to sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of each class; it the responsibility of students who arrive late to request the opportunity to add their name to the attendance sheet. Each student will have **three** personal days. These days may be used for any reason you choose and should include time out for illness, emergencies and family obligations. No explanation or doctor's note is required for these three absences. If an assignment is due on the date of a planned absence, please make arrangements to turn in the due assignment **before** the due date.

*For any absences **over** three, no doctor's note or explanation will be accepted. For each absence over three, I will lower the student's final grade by **1/3 of a letter grade**. For

example, a student who misses six classes who otherwise has a B in the course will earn a "C" as his/her final grade.

Any student with an ongoing situation that requires special consideration, please discuss this with me outside of class.

Dropping, Incompletes, Withdrawals

It is your responsibility to drop the class if you deem necessary. Incompletes may be given to a student who for nonacademic reasons beyond his or her control is unable to complete the requirements of this course. An incomplete may be assigned for this course if a student has completed most of the major assignments of the course with a passing grade.

All undergraduates are allowed to withdraw with a grade of "W" a maximum of six times in their entire careers at Georgia State. Students who exceed the limit will automatically receive a grade of "WF" which will count as an "F" for GPA calculations. Withdrawals taken before Fall 2006 will not count against the limit and neither will hardship withdrawals, withdrawals at other institutions or withdrawals after the midpoint. Withdrawals after the semester midpoint are automatically given a grade of "WF."

Tips to help you succeed in this class:

- Attend class and the screenings.
 - My lecture will include material not presented in the textbook, so the first step to be prepared for the exams is to show up. I do not provide outlines outside of class.
 - Screenings are not optional and will be the heart of the course. I hope these screenings will be enjoyable--broadcasting is, after all, entertainment. They are also an important "text" for the course, and quizzes will include questions about the material covered during the Tuesday night screenings.
- Complete the reading assignments. Be sure to reference the syllabus frequently to be sure you are reading the correct materials--reading assignments are scheduled on the day *by which they are to be completed*, preparing you for class discussion.
- Check the syllabus regularly on ULearn for any updates.
- When assignments are due, expect the unexpected.
 - Assume that one (or perhaps all) of the following will happen to you on exam dates and assignment due dates:
 - Your printer will not print
 - Your computer will crash and all data will be lost
 - Your car will not run, public transit will be on strike, and all your friends will be out of town
 - Please take whatever steps are necessary to prevent these events from affecting the timely submission of assignments.

Additional Sources of Academic Support

The University offers a range of support services for students. Among the resources available are:

- The Writing Studio (<http://www.writingstudio.gsu.edu/>) -- Provides advice and tutoring in composition
- Student Support Services (<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwsss/>) -- Offers a variety of services, including tutoring, career counseling, and support groups

Special Accommodations

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities that you believe may require accommodations for this course, please meet with me after class or during my office hours to discuss appropriate adaptations or modifications that might be helpful to you. The Office of Disability Services (<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwods/>) can provide you with information and other assistance to manage any challenges that may affect your performance in coursework.

The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.

Policy on Academic Honesty

Introduction

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The university assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable or unethical conduct related to their academic work.

The university's policy on academic honesty is published in the Faculty Affairs Handbook and the On Campus: The Undergraduate Co-Curricular Affairs Handbook and is available to all members of the university community. The policy represents a core value of the university and all members of the university community are responsible for abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. All members of the academic community -- students, faculty, and staff -- are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such reporting are on file in the offices of the deans of each college, the office of the dean of students, and the office of the provost.

In an effort to foster an environment of academic integrity and to prevent academic dishonesty, students are expected to discuss with faculty the expectations regarding course assignments and standards of conduct. Students are encouraged to discuss freely with faculty, academic advisors, and other members of the university community any questions pertaining to the provisions of this policy. In addition, students are encouraged to avail themselves of programs in establishing personal standards and ethics offered through the university's Counseling Center.

Definitions and Examples

The examples and definitions given below are intended to clarify the standards by which academic honesty and academically honorable conduct are to be judged. The list is merely illustrative of the kinds of infractions that may occur, and it is not intended to be exhaustive. Moreover, the definitions and examples suggest conditions under which unacceptable behavior of the indicated types normally occurs; however, there may be unusual cases that fall outside these conditions which also will be judged unacceptable by the academic community.

A. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as one's own. Plagiarism includes any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student's work as one's own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of the paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the faculty member. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Any work, in whole or in part, taken from the Internet or other computer-based resource without properly referencing the source (for example, the URL) is considered plagiarism. A complete reference is required in order that all parties may locate and view the original source. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course, examples of which should be provided in advance by the faculty member. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

B. **Cheating on Examinations:** Cheating on examinations involves giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include the use of notes, computer based resources, texts, or "crib sheets" during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member), or sharing information with another student during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member). Other examples include intentionally allowing another student to view one's own examination and collaboration before or after an examination if such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the faculty member.

C. **Unauthorized Collaboration:** Submission for academic credit of a work product, or a part thereof, represented as its being one's own effort, which has been developed in substantial collaboration with another person or source, or computer-based resource, is a violation of academic honesty. It is also a violation of academic honesty knowingly to provide such assistance. Collaborative work specifically authorized by a faculty member is allowed.

D. **Falsification:** It is a violation of academic honesty to misrepresent material or fabricate information in an academic exercise, assignment or proceeding (e.g., false or misleading citation of sources, the falsification of the results of experiments or of computer data, false or misleading information in an academic context in order to gain an unfair advantage).

E. **Multiple Submissions:** It is a violation of academic honesty to submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the faculty member(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit. In cases in which there is a natural development of research or knowledge in a sequence of courses, use of prior work may be desirable, even required; however the student is responsible for indicating in writing, as a part of such use, that the current work submitted for credit is cumulative in nature.

Text quoted from the GSU Faculty Handbook

Weekly Reading & Screening Schedule

Week 1

Tuesday, 8/18

Review syllabus

Screening: No screening this week

Thursday, 8/20

E-Reserves: Winston, "How Media Are Born"

Week 2

Tuesday, 8/25

Hilmes, Chapter 1: Making History

Screening: *Empire of the Air*

Thursday, 8/27

Hilmes, Ch. 2: Before Broadcasting

E-Reserves: Douglas, "Marconi and the America's Cup"

Week 3

Tuesday, 9/1

Hilmes, Ch. 3: Broadcasting Begins, 1919 - 1926

Screening: *The Shadow*, 1937

Vic and Sade, 1938

Abbott & Costello, 1938

Thursday, 9/3

E-Reserves: Douglas, "Popular Culture and Populist Technology: The Amateurs."

Week 4

Tuesday, 9/8

Hilmes, Ch. 4: The Network Age, 1926-1940

Screening: *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*, 1940

The Jack Benny Show, 1944

The Guiding Light, date unknown

Thursday, 9/10

ULearn: McChesney, "Free Speech and Democracy!"

E-Reserves: Meehan, "Why We Don't Count?"

Week 5

Tuesday, 9/15

Hilmes, Ch. 5: Radio for Everyone, 1926 - 1940

Screening: *Amos & Andy*

The Mercury Theatre on the Air, 1938

Thursday, 9/17

E-Reserves: Nachman, "A Voice of Another Color"

Week 6

Tuesday, 9/22

Exam 1

Screening: *Big Dream, Small Screen*, 1997

Thursday, 9/24

Hilmes, Ch. 6: War at Home and Abroad, 1940 – 1945

E-Reserves: Boddy, "Building the World's Largest Advertising Medium"

Week 7

Tuesday, 9/29

Hilmes, Ch. 7: At Last Television, 1945-1955

Screening: *The George Burns and Gracie Allen Show*, 1950

I Love Lucy, 1951

The Honeymooners, 1955

Thursday, 10/1

E-Reserves: Schatz, "Desilu, *I Love Lucy*, and the Rise of Network TV"

Fuller-Seeley, "Learning to Live with Television"

Week 8

Tuesday, 10/6

Hilmes, Ch. 8: The Domesticated Medium, 1955 – 1965

Screening: Excerpts from *Quiz Show*

Father Knows Best, 1954

Cheyenne, 1957

Thursday, 10/8

ULearn: Haralovich, "Sitcoms and Suburbs"

E-Reserves: Anderson, "Disneyland"

Available on web (see bibliography): Minow, "Television and the Public Interest"

Week 9

Tuesday, 10/13

Hilmes, Ch. 9: The Classic Network System, 1965 – 1975

Screening: *All in the Family*, 1971

Mary Tyler Moore Show, 1970

The Bob Newhart Show, 1973

Good Times, 1974

Thursday, 10/15

E-Reserves: Feuer, "The MTM Style"

ULearn: Bogroghkozy, "Good Times in Race Relations?"

Week 10

Tuesday, 10/20

Exam 2

Screening: *Brian's Song*, 1970

Thursday, 10/22

ULearn: Mullen, "Fall and Rise of Cable Narrowcasting"

E-Reserves: Gomery, "Brian's Song: Television, Hollywood"

Watson, "Television and the Presidency"

Week 11

Tuesday, 10/27

Ch. 10: Rising Discontent, 1975 - 1985

Screenings: *Charlie's Angels*, "Angels in Chains" 1976

Hill Street Blues, "Hill Street Station" 1981

Thursday, 10/29

E-Reserves: Gitlin, "Hill Street Blues: Make it Look Messy."

Inness, "Semi-Tough: Emma Peel"

Final Project Proposal Due

Week 12

Tuesday, 11/3

Hilmes, Ch. 11: Big Change, 1985 - 1995

Screening: *The Cosby Show*

In Living Color

The Simpsons

Thursday, 11/5

ULearn: Gray, "Television, Black Americans and the American Dream"

ULearn: Mittel, "Cartoon Realism"

Week 13

Tuesday, 11/10

Hilmes, Ch. 12: Everything That Rises Must Converge

Screenings: *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, 1998

The Real World, 1992

Thursday, 11/12

ULearn: Becker, "Prime Time Television in the Gay 90s"

ULearn: Raphael, "The Political Economic Origins of Reali-TV"

Week 14

Tuesday, 11/17

Hilmes, Ch. 13: Convergence Culture in the New Millennium

Screening: TBD

Thursday, 11/19

Exam 3

Week 15 Thanksgiving Break

Week 16

Tuesday, 12/1

E-Reserves: Lotz, Introduction, *The Television will be Revolutionized*

Thursday, 12/3
In-Class presentation of final project
Final Project Due