History of Electronic Media
COSF 175, Section A00, Section ID 628432
Fall 2008: m & w 5-6:20pm, CSB 002
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Course Description
This course investigates the history of electronic media from early radio to cable/satellite television and the internet. Students will consider how a variety of social, economic and cultural contexts have impacted and shaped the development of these influential forms of electronic media and how these media have shaped American culture. We will consider industry formations, regulatory practices, programs and genres, rating systems, advertising, public broadcasting and reception contexts. Emphasis is placed on questions of power regarding the unequal representation of social groups and the restrictions to viewpoint diversity. Also, students will develop methods for identifying the values and assumptions of those who write histories of electronic media.

Learning Goals
- Gain an understanding of electronic media history from its inception to the present.
- Learn about studying history through a diversity of historiographic methods.
- Study electronic media institutions including their economic, social and organizational structures.
- Understand how issues of class, race, gender, sexuality and nation have impacted electronic media in the US.
- Apply historical case studies of radio/TV broadcasting to recent developments in TV/internet convergence.
- Develop critical reading, writing and thinking skills through written and verbal engagement with a variety of readings, screenings and class discussions.

Required Readings
- Other required readings will be posted on WebCT.

Assessment
- Preparation of assigned readings, regular attendance and class participation. More than two unexcused absences will lower your grade for class participation by one full grade per absence. Excused absences must include a signed note from a doctor or other official. (10%)
- Four pop quizzes based on assigned readings. Quizzes will consist of one or two short essays and/or multiple choice questions. I will drop your lowest quiz grade. (15%)
The midterm will consist of in-class and take-home components. The in-class midterm will be given on Oct 29 and will consist of multiple choice and short essay questions. Also, students will be given a take-home midterm, which requires students to answer three of five essay questions. Take-home midterms are due at the beginning of class on Nov 5. (15% in-class, 15% takehome)

During the quarter pay attention to a single broadcast network, cable network, radio station or multimedia website with attention to the institutional culture of that media source. What types of programs, scheduling and promotion make the electronic media source unique? Who is the audience for this electronic media source? Who owns the network/station/website and how does this impact programming. How do the commercial imperatives of the electronic media source influence the network? In what ways are particular categories of class, gender, race, sexuality and age represented? Write a four page summary and critique of the electronic media source and give a 5 minute presentation to the class. Presentations will be scheduled for class periods beginning Nov 3. (15%)

Students will receive a take-home final on Nov 17. Students must submit their final through WebCT “assignments” no later than noon on December 11, midnight. Students will choose four of seven essay questions to answer. (30%)

Grading

The grading scale is as follows: A+ (98-100%) A (94-97%), A- (90-93%), B+ (87-89%), B (83-86%), B- (80-82%), C+ (77-79%), C (73-76%), C- (70-72%), D+ (67-69%), D (63-66%), D- (60-62%), F (59% and below).

An A designates work of extraordinarily high quality that consists of unusual thoroughness and comprehensives, cogency and clarity in the development of ideas, and critical reflection and conceptual sophistication. Written work should be well organized, clearly argued and free of serious grammatical, spelling and syntactical errors. Students who receive an A will consistently come to class prepared to engage with the daily reading assignments and have a near perfect attendance record. They will regularly participate in class discussions and often initiate class discussion.

A B designates work of high quality regarding the organization and development of ideas. Work substantively addresses the main issues/topics/questions of the assignments. Writing is relatively well organized and free of serious grammatical and spelling as well as syntactical errors. Students will receive a B if they contribute regularly to class discussion and/or have a near perfect attendance record.

A C designates work that minimally meets acceptable requirements as stated in guidelines for assignments. Written work is not well organized, ideas are less clearly stated, and there will be several grammatical, spelling and syntactical errors. Work may only address a part of the assignment. Students receiving a C will infrequently participate in class and often wait until they are called on to do so. Students who have four unexcused absences will likely receive a C.

A D designates work that does not meet minimum acceptable requirements of the assignment(s). Work is very poorly written in terms of organization and development of ideas and in terms of grammar, spelling and syntax. Students who do not complete all assignments and that miss five classes are likely to receive a D.

An F designates a failure to complete all assignments and/or a failure to demonstrate a minimal degree of engagement with the readings or the written assignments. Students who miss six or more classes will fail the course.

Class Policies and Student Responsibilities

Class Discussions. Students are required to read the assigned readings before the day they are assigned. Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions through posing questions about the readings,
engaging with the instructor and other students, and relating the readings to your own experience and to the audiovisual examples presented in class.

- **Active Reading.** You should be an active and critical reader. Identify the main arguments the author is making. Ask what types of evidence the author uses to substantiate these arguments. Think about the unexamined assumptions the author is making. Do you agree with the author, and if not, why not? Identify the questions the author is setting out to answer. Think about the questions they are not asking. What have other authors said about this topic that might support or challenge the author’s arguments? Students should take notes on the readings regarding these questions.

- **Written work.** All written work should be typed and double-spaced using no larger than 12 point font with correct spelling and grammar. Avoid lengthy quotes from the readings. Rather, use your own words to summarize and critique the main arguments of the authors and to offer your original ideas. You must footnote any work that you draw from. You may use footnotes at the end of the essay or place a citation in parenthesis at the end of a sentence or paragraph.

- **Academic Integrity.** No student shall engage in any activity that involves attempting to receive a grade by means other than honest effort. For example, no student shall: 1) knowingly procure, provide, or accept any unauthorized material that contains questions or answers to any examination or assignment to be given at a subsequent time; 2) complete, in part or in total, any examination or assignment for another person; 3) knowingly allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, for himself or herself by another person; 4) plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his or her own work; 5) employ aids excluded by the instructor in undertaking course work or in completing any exam or assignment; 6) alter graded class assignments or examinations and then resubmit them for grading; 7) submit substantially the same material in more than one course without prior authorization. Please review the UCSD Policy on Integrity of Scholarship at http://www-senate.ucsd.edu/manual/appendices/app2.htm.

- **Sexual Harassment.** All incidents of sexual harassment or gender harassment should be reported by the complainant to either a person in a supervisory capacity or the Office of Sexual Harassment Prevention and Policy. For the office contact information and complaint procedures go to: http://oshpp.ucsd.edu/index.shtml.

- **Disabilities.** Students with disabilities should talk to me as soon as possible so we can make the appropriate accommodations. Students with disabilities need to be registered with the Office of Students with Disabilities: http://osd.ucsd.edu/

**Class Discussions and Readings**

**Week 1**

9/29  Introduction

10/1  Making History  
      Read: preface and ch 1

**Week 2**

10/6  Radio Before Broadcasting  
      Read: ch 2

10/8  Early Radio Broadcasting  
      Read: ch 3

**Week 3**

10/13  Commercial Networks
10/15 Popular Radio
Read: ch 5

Week 4

10/20 Radio and War
Read: ch 6

10/22 Emergence of Television
Read: ch 7

Week 5

10/27 Program Formats
Read: ch 8

10/29 In-class midterm. Hand out take-home midterm.

Week 6

11/3 Classic Networks and Civil Rights
Read: ch 9

11/5 Public Television

**Take-home midterm due at the beginning of class**

Week 7

11/10 Deregulation and Cable Television
Read: ch 10

11/12 Televisuality
Read:

Week 8

11/17 Conglomeration
Read: ch 11

11/19  Sexuality and the Sitcom
Read:

Week 9

11/17  Convergence
Read: ch 12

Hand out take-home final

11/19  no class

Week 10

12/1  Global TV
Read: ch 13

12/3  Future of TV
Read: ch 14

12/11  Take-home final must be uploaded through WebCT “assignments” by Thursday, December 11, midnight.