

Grand Valley State University
School of Communications

CBR 240-01

Survey of Electronic Media
Fall 2013
Tues/Thurs 2:30 – 3:45pm
DEV 201D (Pew Campus)

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Description of course:

This is a look at 20th century US history up to the present through the window of broadcasting. We will explore the historical, cultural, technological, economic, and political forces that shaped the US system of electronic mass media. We will also look at how this developing history – and the media that it created – has had an impact on society and on our own lives. In the end, your perceptions about all the media you consume should change somewhat, as you will gain a context for the larger picture that you may not have had before.

Objectives:

1. To gain a sense of the history of broadcasting and understand the role this technology has played in our culture.
2. To learn the stories of key individuals who helped develop electronic media.
3. To understand how broadcasting operates as a business and how broadcasting differs from print media.
4. To develop critical thinking skills.

Classroom Policies and Attendance:

Regular attendance will be critical to your success in this course. A number of the activities in this class will be in-class assignments that cannot be made up. **Anything discussed in lecture, featured in an audio or video clip, contained in a reading assignment, or shared by a guest speaker is fair game for an exam.**

Behavior that interferes in anyone else’s ability to learn will not be tolerated. Please refrain from texting/updating Facebook/etc. during class time. The use of phones in class should be for emergencies only, and laptop use should be solely for taking notes.

Updates, announcements, discussion, and additional reading will be posted on the Blackboard page for this class. Be sure to check it at least once a week.

Assignments are due by the start time of the class period stated. E-mailed assignments are permitted with time stamp serving as proof of “on time” submission. Any assignment received past the due date suffers a penalty of 10% per day it is past due.

Requirements and Grading:

Attendance/participation

10%

It is expected that you will attend class and have prepared to discuss that period's material. Absence will be excused only for health, work, or family emergency, and I must be notified by e-mail in advance. There will be a deduction of 2% per unexcused absence.

Blackboard quizzes

10%

There will be a quiz each week on the assigned reading material for the class. Quizzes are open book: I want you to have read the material and be ready to discuss it as a group.

Midterm exam

20%

Final exam

20%

Public Interest paper

20%

Research paper

20%

All points earned will be added together for a numeric grade for the class. Letter grades will be assigned as follows: (note that percentages are not rounded off. 92.999 is an A-.)

93-100	A	90-93	A-		
87-89	B+	83-87	B	80-83	B-
77-79	C+	73-77	C	70-73	C-
67-69+	D+	60-63	D		
59 and below	F				

The last date to drop this class with a grade of "W" is October 25 by 5:00 pm.

Required Text:

"Only Connect: A Cultural History of Broadcasting in the United States" by Michele Hilmes, Third Edition.

Additional relevant readings will be posted to Blackboard or handed out in class. Students should also check with the GVSU library for materials as recommended.

Items of interest/articles will also be posted to Twitter using #GVSUCBR240 . Only materials posted to Blackboard are considered "fair game" for exams. The class Twitter feed is intended only as a supplement to the classroom experience.

Extra Credit:

At my discretion, extra credit projects may become available to you during the semester. They will be posted on the Blackboard page for the class.

Students With Special Needs or Those Requiring Accommodation:

Please let me know early in the semester to make arrangements necessary to accommodate a special situation. If you need academic accommodations because of a learning, physical, or other disability, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) at 331-2490. Furthermore, if you have a physical disability and think you will need assistance evacuating the classroom and/or building in an emergency situation, please make me aware so that I can develop a plan to assist you.

A word about academic honesty:

It is expected that you will only submit work of your own creation in this class. Cheating and/or plagiarism (including use of anyone else's work without attribution) will result in a grade of "0" for the assignment and will be referred to the department chair for possible failure of the course.

If you are ever in doubt as to whether you should cite a source or have any questions regarding academic honesty, please see me.

A word about subject matter of this class:

In order to understand where we are in terms of electronic media, it is vital to understand where we came from. To discuss the history of the media in the 20th century necessitates discussion about matters of race, gender, sexual orientation, and religion – and how the media's attitudes about these subjects have changed over the years. At times, some of the terms used in writings and in audio and video recordings may include those we now deem offensive by 21st century standards. I will not shy away from this material; instead, we will discuss these topics – and the way they have been discussed in the media - in a mature, respectful fashion.

Office Hours/Additional Help

I am happy to meet with you outside of class if you need assistance with material or have questions about what we are learning. My posted office hours are Tuesday from 4p-5:30p (downtown) and Thursday from noon-2pm (Allendale). However, I will make sure to make time for you if you ask for it. My office is on the lower level of Lake Superior Hall in room 165.

Topics and Assignments by week:

Week 1: 8/27 – 8/29

T: Introduction to Class

Th: Discuss Chapter 1 – Making History

Week 2: 9/3– 9/5 (NO CLASS on Tuesday 9/3)

QUIZ 1 on chapters 1 and 2 due before Thurs class

Th: Discuss Chapter 2 – Before Broadcasting

Week 3: 9/10 – 9/12

QUIZ 2 on chapter 3 due before Thursday class

T: finish chapter 2 discussion

Th: Discuss Chapter 3 – Broadcasting Begins

Week 4: 9/17 – 9/19

QUIZ 3 on chapter 4 due before Thursday class

T-Th: Discuss chapter 4 – The Network Age

Public Interest paper assigned

Week 5: 9/24 – 9/26

QUIZ 4 on Chapter 5 due before Thursday class

T-Th: Discuss Chapter 5 – Radio for Everyone

Week 6: 10/1 – 10/3

T-Th: Discuss History of Recorded Music

Th: Public Interest Paper due at beginning of class

Week 7: 10/8 – 10/10

T: Discuss Chapter 6 – War at Home and Abroad 1940-1945

T: Review for midterm exam

Th: Midterm exam is Thurs 10/10

Week 8: 10/15 – 10/17

QUIZ 5 on Chapter 7 due before Thursday class

T: discuss midterm

T-Th: discuss Chapter 7 – At Last Television

Week 9: 10/22 – 10/24

QUIZ 6 on Chapter 8 due before Thursday class

T-Th: Discuss Chapter 8 – The Domesticated Medium

Week 10: 10/29 – 10/31

QUIZ 7 on Chapter 9 due before Thursday class

T-Th: discuss Chapter 9 – The Classic Network System 1965-1975

Week 11: 11/5 – 11/7

QUIZ 8 on Chapter 10 due before Thursday class

T-Th : discuss Chapter 10 – Rising Discontent 1975 - 1985

Th: Research papers assigned

Week 12: 11/12 – 11/14

Quiz 9 on Chapter 11 due before Thursday class

T-Th: discuss Chapter 11 – The Big Change 1985-1995

Week 13: 11/19 – 11/21

Quiz 10 on Chapter 12 due before Thursday class

T-Th: discuss chapter 12 – Entering the Digital Era 1995-2010

Week 14: 11/26 (NO CLASS on Thursday 11/28)

T: Catch up on all textbook discussion

T: Research paper due at start of class

Week 15: 12/3 – 12/5

T-Th: Copyright/Creative Commons material

Th: review for final exam

FINAL EXAM will be held on TUESDAY 12/10 at 4:00 pm (not 2:30)