

Radio Studies
Seminar in Moving Image Studies
Comm 8750

Wednesdays, 4:30-7:00
Spring 2006

Instructors:

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Radio created the conceptual foundation of our current moving image culture. Without it, our society would not have the broadly held understanding of a “network” that underlies the structure of television and new media. Radio gave us the idea of a mass culture that could be shared at the same instant throughout the nation. It also was at the forefront of dividing that unified audience into smaller segments, with deejays both acknowledging and creating different taste cultures (along with the music industry in the 1950s). Today radio is at the center of discussions about industry monopoly practices and about the political mobilization of extremist rhetoric. This course investigates the history of radio as a way of providing a solid grounding for an understanding of the present and future of our mediated culture.

Required Texts:

Michele Himes, Radio Voices: American Broadcasting, 1922-1952
Michele Himes and Jason Loviglio, eds., Radio Reader: Essays in the Cultural History of Radio (RR)
Susan J. Douglas, Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination
Coursepack (available at Bestway Copies, 18 Decatur St.) (CP)

Course Requirements:

Research Paper	40%
Midterm exam	20%
Class Presentations	30%
Participation	10%

The 20 page research paper should examine primary sources: radio broadcasts, trade journal discussions, oral histories, archival materials, etc. Acquiring these materials takes some time, and so students are strongly encouraged to begin collecting sources as soon as possible (the instructors will be glad to work with students concerning finding sources).

Because the class is a small seminar, it emphasizes discussion of the readings. To develop the student's skills in leading discussion, each student will serve as discussion leader/presenter for two class sessions (each 15% of the grade). By Friday before the class that the student is scheduled to lead, the student must submit a lesson plan to the two instructors via email. This plan should discuss three categories of class activities:

- 1) outcomes. What are the main ideas that you would like the class to arrive at through discussion?
- 2) processes. What open-ended activities (playing a clip and leading a discussion) will you lead, and for what purpose?
- 3) questions. What key questions will you use to guide the discussion?

You may not use all the different categories of educational activities in a particular class. The instructors will provide feedback on the lesson plan, which you should incorporate into your class session. Your presentation will be graded based on how thorough/creative/insightful your lesson plan is and on how well you manage the class time and promote classroom interaction that produces good insights.

It is obviously in everyone's best interests to promote good discussion through active oral presentation and good preparation before the class. The participation grade is based on your in-class performance in oral discussions. Factors include: the quality of your comments (do they contribute to the discussion and reveal insight into the reading?); the quantity of your comments (do you participate regularly without monopolizing conversation?); and participatory style (do you promote other people's participation?). There is no formal attendance record taken, but missing class will obviously affect your participation grade, as will perennial lateness or coming to class unprepared, since all of these factors negatively influence the quality and quantity of your participation in oral discussion.

Class Policies:

It is expected that the student will: attend all classes having read the required material for the day; give his/her full attention to the in-class learning activities; and participate in class sessions with civility and respect for others. Plagiarism/cheating in any form will not be tolerated and will result in failure for the entire course (see the Policy for Academic Honesty, Section 409, GSU Faculty Handbook: <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwfhh/fhh.html>). The course syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. Please turn off cell phones, pagers, etc. at the beginning of class.

The last day to withdraw from the course and possibly receive a W is March 3.

If the research paper is handed in late, your grade will decrease by 10% for every business day (Monday-Friday) the paper is late. For example, if the paper is due Monday and you hand it in the following Monday, then the paper gets a 50% late penalty (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Monday). A student's presentation cannot be

done at a later date than scheduled unless there are extraordinary circumstances (illness, death in the family, etc.).

Grade Breakdown:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	below 60

Class Schedule:

January 11 Introduction

January 18 Radio Voices

Michele Hilmes, **Radio Voices**

January 25 Listening In

Michele Hilmes, "Rethinking Radio" (RR)

Susan Douglas, **Listening In**, Intro and chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 8

Brian Winston, "How Are Media Born?" (CP)

February 1 Audiences

Derek Vaillant, "Your Voice came in last night...but I thought it sounded a little scared: rural radio listening and talking back during the progressive era in Wisconsin 1920-1932"(RR)

Jason Loviglio, "Vox Pop: Network radio and the voice of the People" (RR)

Lizabeth Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots: The Experience of Chicago Workers in the 1920s" (CP)

Richard Butsch, from **The Making of American Audiences** (CP)

Pamela Grundy, "We Always Tried To Be Good People: Respectability, Crazy Water Crystals, and Hillbilly Music on the Air, 1933-1935" (CP)

February 8 Ideology and Social Science (Frankfurt school meets the radio)

Bruce Lenthall, "Critical Reception: Public Intellectuals decry Depression-era radio. Mass culture, and modern America" (RR)

Douglas, ch. 6, **Listening In**

Theodor Adorno, "A Social Critique of Radio Music" (CP)

Robert Merton, "Mass persuasion: the social psychology of a war bond drive"
(CP)

Edward Miller, "The Case of 'War of the Worlds'" (CP)

Paul M. Dennis, "Chills and Thrills: Does Radio Harm Our Children? The Controversy over Program Violence during the Age of Radio" (CP)

February 15 Gender

Allison McCracken, "Scary Women and Scarred Men: Suspense, Gender Trouble and Postwar Change" (RR)

Jennifer H Wang, "The Case of the radio-active Housewife: Relocating radio in the age of TV" (RR)

Herta Herzog, "Motivations and gratifications of daily serial listeners" (CP)

Jane and Michael Stern, "Radio Neighboring on the Air" (CP)

Susan Smulyan, "Radio Advertising to Women in Twenties America: A Latchkey to Every Home" (CP)

February 22 Radio Comedy

Douglas, **Listening In**, Ch. 5

Michele Hilmes, "Invisible Men: Amos 'n' Andy and the Roots of Broadcast Discourse." (CP)

Mel Ely, "Amos 'n' Andy's Balancing Act" (CP)

Margaret McFadden, "America's Boy Friend Who Can't Get a Date: Gender, Race, and The Cultural Work of the Jack Benny Program, 1932-1946" (CP)

Alan R. Havig, "Critic from Within: Fred Allen Views Radio" (CP)

March 1 Government Regulation/Commercial and Consumer issues

Kate Lacey, "Radio in the Great Depression: Promotional culture, public service and propaganda" (RR)

Matthew Murray, "The tendency to deprave and corrupt morals: regulation and irregular sexuality in golden age radio comedy" (RR)

Kathy Newman, "Poisons, Potions and Profits: Radio Rebels and the Origins of the Consumer Movement" (RR)

Robert W. McChesney, "The Battle for the U.S. Airwaves, 1928-1935" (CP)

Elizabeth Fones-Wolf, "Creating a Favorable Business Climate: Corporations and Radio Broadcasting, 1934 to 1954" (CP)

March 8 Spring Break

March 15 Politics, news, wartime, journalism

Douglas, **Listening In**, ch. 7

Judith E Smith, "Radio's Cultural Front 1938-1948" (RR)

William O'Connor, "Expatriate American propagandists in the employ of the Axis powers" (RR)

Susan Smulyan, "Now it can be Told: The Influence of the US Occupation on Japanese Radio" (RR)
Gerd Horten, "Propaganda Must Be Painless: Radio Entertainment and Government Propaganda during World War II" (CP)
Robert J. Brown, "Roosevelt and Radio" (CP)
Kate Lacey, "Driving the Message Home: Nazi Propaganda in the Private Sphere" (CP)

March 22 Race and Ethnicity

Barbara Savage, "Radio and the Political Discourse of Racial Equality (RR)
Alexander Russo, "A Darkened Figure on the Airwaves: Race, Nation and the Green Hornet" (RR)
Lauren Rebecca Sklaroff, "Variety for the Servicemen: The Jubilee Show and the Paradox of Racializing Radio during World War II" (CP)
Kathy M. Newman, "The Forgotten Fifteen Million: Black Radio, the "Negro Market," and the Civil Rights Movement" (CP)
Donald Weber, "Taking Jewish American Popular Culture Seriously: The Yinglish Worlds of Gertrude Berg, Milton Berle, and Mickey Katz" (CP)
Melvin Ely, "This Continuing Harm" (CP)

March 29 The Decline of Broadcast radio/ Radio as music broadcaster

Douglas, **Listening In**, ch. 9
Jason Mittell, "Before the Scandals: The radio precedents of the Quiz show genre" (RR)
Eric Rothenbuhler and Tom McCourt, "Radio Redefines Itself, 1947-1962" (RR)
Matthew A. Killmeier, "Voices between the Tracks: Disc Jockeys, Radio, and Popular Music, 1955-60" (CP)

April 5 Underground radio and FM

Douglas, **Listening In**, ch. 10
Michael Keith, "Turn On...Tune In: The Rise and Demise of Commercial Underground Radio" (RR)
Paul Riismandel, "Radio by and for the public: The Death and Resurrection of Low-Power Radio" (RR)
John Fiske, "Techno struggles: Black Liberation Radio" (RR)
Gene Fowler and Bill Crawford, "Coast to Coast, Border to Border. . . . Your Good Neighbor along the Way" (CP)

April 12 Talk radio

Douglas, **Listening In**, ch 11, 12 and conclusion

Jack Mitchell, "Lead us not into Temptation: American Public Radio in a world of infinite possibilities" (RR)

Paul Apostolidis, Scanning the Stations of the Cross: Christian Right Radio in Post-Fordist Society" (RR)

Susan Douglas, "Letting boys be boys: Talk radio, Male Hysteria and political discourse in the 1980s" (RR)

Michael McCauley, "Radio's Digital Future: Preserving the Public Interest in the Age of New Media" (RR)

April 19

TBA

April 26

Final Class