This course analyzes the history of television, spanning from its roots in radio broadcasting to the latest developments in digital television. In assessing the many changes across this span, the course will cover such topics as why the American television industry developed as a commercial medium in contrast to most other national television industries, how television programming has both reflected and influenced cultural ideologies through the decades, and how historical patterns of television consumption have shifted due to new technologies and social changes. Through studying the historical development of television programs and assessing the industrial, technological, political, aesthetic and cultural systems out of which they emerged, the course will piece together the catalysts responsible for shaping this highly influential medium.

**Required Texts**
- *Only Connect*, Michele Hilmes, available at Hammes Bookstore (listed on the syllabus as Hilmes)
- Reading packet, available at ND Copy Shop in LaFortune as #53 (listed on the syllabus as Packet)

**Grading Breakdown**
- Participation & quizzes: 10%
- Paper I (due March 7): 10%
- Paper II (due April 4): 15%
- Paper III (due May 3): 25%
- Midterm (March 9): 20%
- Final (May 10): 20%

**Important Details:**

**Attendance**
You are expected to attend all class meetings. I will, however, grant you two free absences across the semester. For every absence in excess of the two, the class participation grade will be lowered by a grade level (e.g. A- to B+, B to B-, etc.).

**Participation**
Participation is important to the success of this class. The more people we hear from on any given day, the more ideas we will be able to explore and the more we will all enjoy and benefit from the course. Just keep up with the readings and screenings, and you will have plenty to add to the class. I don’t mind class discussions that go in unexpected directions (in fact I encourage them), so speak your mind, ask questions and answer questions! Also keep in mind that my definition of participation is not isolated to only verbal participation. Anything that shows that you are engaged in the course and striving to engage with the material counts as participation. Thus, listening intently during class,
coming to my office hours, and writing or e-mailing me questions outside of class also counts for participation, as by doing these things you are exhibiting your engagement with the course material.

**PowerPoint Slides**
All of the PowerPoint slides I use during class will be available to you after each class session on the CourseWare space for the class at webfile.nd.edu (ask me if you don’t know how to access this). Please note that the slides do not contain everything you need to know for the course. If fact, they don’t even contain half of what you need to know—I only use them when I have a bunch of info that easily lends itself to bullet-pointing. So don’t feel that you can nap through lectures since the PowerPoint slides will be available; they are merely there to facilitate your note-taking.

**Quizzes**
There will be occasional pre-announced quizzes on the readings and screenings. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest quiz grade; because of this, I do not offer make-up quizzes.

**Papers**
You will be assigned three papers. You will receive information about these assignments well before they are due. Late papers will lose a grade level for every late day; an A will be reduced to an A-, an A- to a B+, etc., for each late day, including weekends. If you hand in a paper to my mailbox or e-mail it to me, it is your responsibility to confirm that I received it on time. “You mean you didn’t get my paper? I e-mailed it to you but must have sent it to the wrong address” is not an acceptable reason for a late paper. Plagiarism, copying, and other forms of cheating will result in academic failure; check the student handbook for University policies.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1  Course Overview**

- **January 17:** Introduction to the Course  
  NO SCREENING
- **January 19:** Introduction to Television History  
  Hilmes: Ch. 1  
  Packet: “Seeing Round the World”  
  Koszarski, “Coming Next Week”

**Week 2  Radio Roots I**

- **January 24:** The Invention of Radio  
  Hilmes: pp20-33  
  NO SCREENING
- **January 26:** Creating Commercial Broadcasting  
  Hilmes: pp41-61, 65-78, 144-45

**Week 3  Radio Roots II**

- **January 31:** Radio Programming  
  Hilmes: pp97-116, 122-130  
  Packet: Douglas, “Radio Comedy and Linguistic Slapstick”  
  NO SCREENING
- **February 2:** The Road Not Taken: The Creation of the BBC  
  Hilmes: pp78-85, 370-374  
  Packet: Kaufman, “God Gets an Idea”  
  Hilmes, “Who We Are, Who We Are Not”
Week 4  The Beginnings of Television
    February 7: Technological and Industrial Competition Over TV
        Packet: Winston, “The Development of Television”
        NO SCREENING
    February 9: Early Television Programming
        Packet: Lipsitz, “The Meaning of Memory”
            Matthei, “Inventing the Commercial”

Week 5  The Rise of Network Television
    February 14: The Networks
        Hilmes: pp160-165, 178-182
        SCREENING: Burns and Allen Show, Marty
    February 16: Golden Age Programming
        Hilmes: pp165-175
        Packet: Spigel, “Installing the Television Set”

Week 6  Television Takes Hold
    February 21: Network Consolidation
        No reading.
        SCREENING: Honeymooners, I Love Lucy, Father Knows Best, Mr. Adams and Eve
    February 23: The Domestic Sitcom
        Packet: Douglas, “Mama Said”
            Haralovich, “Sitcoms and Suburbs”

Week 7  Into The Sixties
    February 28: Portrait of a “Vast Wasteland”
        Hilmes: pp191-208
        Packet: Minow, “The Vast Wasteland Speech”
            Newcomb, “The Opening of America”
        SCREENING: Twilight Zone, Have Gun Will Travel, East Side/West Side
    March 2: NO CLASS

Week 8  Paper & Midterm
    March 7: Discussion of papers and midterm review
        ***PAPER I DUE***
        NO SCREENING
    March 9: MIDTERM

Week 9  Cold War Television
    March 21: Cold War Consensus
        Packet: Watson, “The Kennedy-Television Alliance”
        SCREENING: Bewitched, The Monkees, I Spy
    March 23: Wars at Home and Abroad
        Hilmes: pp208-212, 218-224, 237-240
        Packet: Douglas, “Genies and Witches”
            Haralovich, “I Spy’s Living Postcards”
Week 10  Television in the 1970s

March 28: The Turn Toward Relevance
Hilmes: pp228-235, 240-250
Packet: Gitlin, “The Turn Toward Relevance”
SCREENING: All in the Family, M*A*S*H, Soap

March 30: The Turn Back Again
Hilmes: pp271-278
Packet: Ozersky, “Return to Normalcy, 1975-77”

Week 11  The Networks Get Competition

April 4: The Arrival of New Competitors
***PAPER II DUE***
Hilmes: pp235-236, 263-271
Packet: Streeter, “Blue Skies and Strange Bedfellows”
SCREENING: Roseanne, The Cosby Show, Frank’s Place, Twin Peaks

April 6: Quality and Televisuality
Hilmes: pp278-286, 313-320
Packet: Gray, “Recodings”
Caldwell, “Excessive Style”

Week 12  Television in the 1990s

April 11: New Networks
Hilmes: pp302-309, 356-364
SCREENING: The Simpsons, Will and Grace, Steve Harvey Show, Buffy

April 13: New Representations
Hilmes: pp320-324
Packet: Becker, “Prime Time Television in the Gay Nineties”

Week 13  New Regulation and Expansion

April 18: The 1996 Telecom Act & Conglomeration
Hilmes: pp294-302, 331-350
SCREENING TBA

April 20: Globalization
Hilmes: pp368-369, 380-398

Week 14  Current Topics

April 25: The Regulation of Television
US & UK Decency Guidelines
SCREENING TBA

April 27: The Future of Television
No reading.

Week 15  Discussion and Review

May 3: Discussion of papers and final review
***PAPER III DUE***

****FINAL EXAM  Wednesday, May 10, 10:30am****