Course Description
In this course, we will explore the ways in which the medium of television has evolved and consider the different ways in which television is situated in the lives of youth. To that end, we will understand youth as viewers, producers, and manipulators of television. The overall purpose of this course is to provide students with a broad understanding of the role of television in the lives of youth using social, cultural, and educational lenses. Students will be expected to 1) explore multiple perspectives about television as a source of entertainment, education, and information, 2) consider the ways that television is connected to other digital media in the lives of children and youth, 3) critically analyze television content, form, and purpose using various interpretive lenses, and 4) be able to translate their analysis into recommendations for design and research of television for children and youth.

The course texts draw from a variety of sources that reflect research-based, youth-focused, and practitioner-oriented perspectives on television. Occasionally, texts may be added or deleted from a future week’s reading in order to best support the goals of the course. There will also be opportunity for students to share texts of interest to them and there is an expectation that all students will contribute their interests and expertise to the class discussions and activities.


Copies of text available at Labyrinth Books located at 536 West 112th St, between Broadway and Amsterdam. (212.865.1588)

Readings: To be distributed in class or downloaded from ClassWeb.

Course Requirements

Course Participation (15%)

Television program survey (10%)
Due: September 21st
Identify an age group of children or youth that matches your areas of interest.
Document the range of programming that is available for the age group you selected
from a variety of sources that are available to you, and from different times during the day and week. Choose between 5 and 10 programs to document.

When you present your findings, include the following information:
- brief description of the program, including characters, general plotlines and content
- program location – i.e. cable television, public access, network, youth media site
- intended audience (include how you were able to determine this)
- learning or educational value (note how you are defining “learning” or “educational”)

You may choose to represent your survey in whatever format best fits your needs – i.e. annotated paragraph for each show; a chart with the appropriate fields included; etc.

**Response Papers (25%)**
**Due: October 12th; November 16th**

You will be responsible for writing two response papers during the course of the semester. Each should be between 1000-1500 words and follow standard APA guidelines. Both responses should draw on the readings to support arguments being made and should address the following broad questions:

- What claims are being made about children/youth?
- What are the underlying assumptions about children and youth? And how do you know?
- How are children/youth represented visually?
- What is the intent of the program? And does it meet its goal(s)?

The first should respond to a television program about youth produced by adults – this can include educational programming, entertainment shows, an informational piece, etc.

The second response paper should be a response to program produced either entirely or mostly should be a response to program produced/directed either entirely or mostly by youth (we will explore several examples in class).

**WORKING GROUPS (25%)** (refers to special topics discussions & multimedia group project)

**Special Topics Discussions**
**Due: November 2nd; November 9th**
Each group will develop a set of readings and class activity focused around a topic they have selected to explore more deeply. This topic can extend an existing class discussion or introduce a new topic related to children/youth and television. Groups will be responsible for posting their readings at least two weeks before their Special Topics date, and should discuss the topic with me no later than October 5th.

**Multimedia Group Project**

**Due: December 14th**

Public Service Announcement (PSA): Develop a PSA that makes a statement about television and youth that will run during a teen drama. Clearly express the purpose of the PSA, the content you wish to convey, and the desired effect and response from the audience. The PSA should be between 60-120 seconds long.

*or*

Media Literacy Curriculum: Develop a plan for educators to use with a predetermined group of children or youth that focuses on a theme (e.g. media representation, television violence, gender, etc.), which can be made available on the web. Include a rationale for the theme (i.e. why is this topic of particular interest or importance?), objectives for the curriculum, activities to address the objectives, resources to use, the length of time for the unit study (e.g. 2 weeks, etc.), and ways of assessing learning. You may design this curriculum for use in either in or out-of-school contexts, or you may specify your intended context.

*or*

Television show “commercial”: Imagine you are asked by a network to develop a program to be aired on TV, and are given the following guidelines:
- A show for adolescents
- Should have some educational value
- Reflects diversity

What kind of show would you develop? What would be the content of the program? How often would it run? Will it be a situation comedy? A reality show?

Consider these questions as you develop a commercial to advertise this new show. Your ultimate goal is to convince your network that your show is a viable option to address their vague guidelines. Keep the commercial to a limit of 5 minutes.

**Final Reflection (25%)**

**Due: December 21st**
The final reflection is an opportunity to collect your thoughts on your learning over the course of the semester. This reflection is intended to be a space for you to raise new questions, reflect on the variety of texts you have engaged with, and discuss your intellectual and technological journey over the course of the semester. Include necessary references (using APA formatting) and limit your reflection to 1500-3000 words.
# Schedule of Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 7th</td>
<td><strong>Introduction</strong></td>
<td></td>
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October 12th

**Children and Youth in a Multimedia World**


**Due: Response Paper 1**

October 19th

**Representation and Diversity in Television**


October 26th

**Youth Media**


Youth-produced programming - TBA

November 2nd

**Special Topics I**

TBA

November 9th

**Special Topics II**
TBA

November 16th  **Media Literacy/Media Education I**  


Due: Response paper 2

November 23rd  **No Class – Thanksgiving Break**

November 30th  **No Class – AAA Meeting**  
(continue working on final projects)

December 7th  **Media Literacy/Media Education II**  


December 14th  **Television Policy**  


Due: Multimedia Group Projects

December 21st  **Future Directions for Media & Television**  

Due: Final reflection