

## History of Radio & Television: Guidelines for Final Paper and Proposal

This paper is due on our last day of class - Monday, March 12th, 2018. It should be 7 to 10 pages in length and should examine some aspect of television or radio history in detail. As we have discussed, you may write about almost anything – a specific program or historical event covered by radio or television, a genre of programming, an important figure from the history of television or radio, etc., but I must approve all topics. There is a lot more to radio and television history than we can ever hope to cover in a quarter so your papers do NOT necessarily have to be about things we have covered in class. There are many other possible topics that are worthwhile and important.

This paper is NOT a report. The paper can and should include factual or biographical information as background for what you want to say but that should not be the focus of the paper. Rather, you must make an argument or express a point of view about the topic you are writing about. The idea is for you to take a position and then present evidence and examples to support that position. This evidence will come from things you have read and watched.

You may want to use examples from class to support your position. You will also be expected to use information that you find in your own research. You may use your textbook as one of your sources but in addition you should also use at least TWO other sources. These might include DVDs, books, articles from newspapers or magazines or information that you find on the internet. Remember - DO NOT use direct quotations from websites or from books or articles in your papers without giving credit to the original author! This is plagiarism and if you do it and I catch it you will receive an F for the course.

One note about using the internet for research: information found on the net is often incomplete and/or unreliable. Please consider the sources you use and be especially skeptical of information or “facts” found on fan sites and amateur sites. You should try to confirm such information from another source rather than simply accepting it at face value. It is important to evaluate all second-hand information with a critical eye but this is especially true of much of the material found on the net. You should carefully evaluate and check the information you find online to ensure that it is accurate before using it in your paper.

You must also include a bibliography with your paper that will include the following:

- 1) The title of the magazine, newspaper article, book, DVD or website used as a source
- 2) The author or authors of the article or book (or the writer and director of the program in the case of DVDs, or the sponsoring organization of a website)
- 3) The date the source was originally published (or, for a DVD, the original air date of the program)
- 4) Any relevant information having to do with the publisher of your source of information – the publishing company for books or magazines or newspapers and the production company for DVDs.

As far as the format of your paper is concerned, I ask only that you double space and use either blue or black ink when printing your paper and also that you use a font that is no bigger than 12 point and no smaller than 10 point. Also, please proofread your paper and run a spell check before turning it in. I don't take off for misspellings or grammatical errors unless they are outrageous and indicate that the work was done at the last minute but I do expect you to proofread your work so that you catch the big mistakes and correct them.

Concerning footnotes, you can either use numerical footnotes when referring to the work or ideas of others or you can refer to outside sources in the body of your paper (for example, “As Podrazik and Castleman note on page 41 of *Watching Television ...*”). Obviously, any works that you refer to in this way should be listed in your bibliography.

Again, any time that you use the ideas of words of others you MUST give them credit. This may be through a direct quotation or with a footnote or a paraphrase – any of these is acceptable. But do NOT use the words of others without giving proper credit. This is plagiarism and is grounds for an automatic F, not just on the paper but for the entire course. Anyone who takes the work of someone else and tries to represent it as his or her own will fail the course – period.

These papers will be graded on 1) the quality and strength of your argument, 2) your use of evidence and examples to back up your position and 3) your general organization and presentation.

DON'T TRY TO DO TOO MUCH IN THIS PAPER! 7 to 10 pages is actually not that long a paper. Try to focus and streamline what you have to say and try to stick to relevant facts and observations.

Also, please note that there should be no “I” in this paper. In other words, although YOU are obviously the one making whatever argument you choose to make, you need to do that from an OBJECTIVE rather than a SUBJECTIVE perspective. You don't want to say “I feel” or “It seems to me” or anything like that. The idea is that through your research you will find other voices to make the points you want to make for you. Quote THEM in the paper to back up your assertions or arguments. This the formal academic style that should be used in this paper.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me by phone or by e-mail and I will respond as quickly as possible.

Your proposal regarding what you wish to write about is due this at our next class meeting, Weds. February 28th. This is a very simple assignment. All you have to do is give me a paragraph or two explaining what you want to write about in this paper, including the argument that you are going to make. If you have more than one idea and are not sure which one is best then submit both of them and I'll help you figure it out. Again, you must present an argument or a point of view about whatever you choose to write about and use your research to find evidence which backs up your position.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks! Mike Mertz