

AMST1902Z: Radio: From Hams to Podcasts  
Spring 2017

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Office Hours: Wednesday, 3-5, **82 Waterman Street**

## **Description**

This course examines the history of radio broadcasting and asks if a consideration of radio's historic flexibility can predict the future of this interesting medium. Readings will focus on the exciting new field of radio studies, emphasizing economics, structures, and listeners. Topics include radio's ability to cross borders, create racial and gender categories, and change programming possibilities.

## **Requirements**

### **Readings and Listening**

All materials needed for the course are available on CANVAS. All books are available as e-books linked on CANVAS, although students are welcome to purchase copies. Articles, as PDFs, are also linked on Canvas. Listening is either on-line or available through Brown's Course Reserves, all linked to Canvas

Details on due dates and assignments at the end of the syllabus

- Participation in class discussions, drawing on reading and listening: 10%
- One short paper on global radio or podcasts: 20%
- One project proposal: 20%
- A collaborative podcasting project: 40%
- A self-reflection paper: 10%

Over 14 weeks, students will spend 3 hours per week in class (42 hours total). Required reading for the seminar meetings is expected to take up approximately 7 hours per week (98 hours). In addition, researching, writing, revising, and presenting two short papers and one longer project is estimated at a total of approximately 100 hours over the course of the term.

## Weekly Reading and Listening Assignments

These will change slightly. Find the up-to-date version on Canvas

### Thursday, January 26: Intro/What is Radio?

#### Listening:

Abbot and Costello, Who's On First?

[https://library.brown.edu/reserves/ears/ears\\_player.php?filename=1169062919494430.mp3](https://library.brown.edu/reserves/ears/ears_player.php?filename=1169062919494430.mp3)

Marc Maron, WTF Podcast, #111, with Louis CK

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2cLKxqw792A>

### Thursday, February 2: Radio Hams/ Crystal Sets

#### Reading:

Susan Douglas, *Inventing American Broadcasting, 1899-1922* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University, Press, 1989). Available as an E-book.

Introduction, xv-xxxix

Chapter 1, "Marconi and the America's Cup," 3-28

Chapter 6, "Popular Culture and Populist Technology," 187-215

Chapter 9, "The Social construction of American Broadcasting"  
292-314

**Build a crystal set in class**

### Thursday, February 9: Early Radio/ Listening to Radio

#### Reading:

Susan Smulyan, *Selling Radio: The Commercialization of American Broadcasting, 1920-1934* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian University Press, 1992). PDF linked here.

Introduction, 1-10

Chapter 1, "Toward National Radio" 11-36

Chapter 2, "The Rise of the Network System," 37-64

Chapter 4, "Twisting the Dials" 93-124

Ray Barfield, *Listening to the Radio, 1920-1950* (Westport, CT: Praeger, Publishing, 1996). PDF linked here.

Chapter 1, "Listening in the 1920s" 3-14

Chapter 2, "Listening in the 1930s" 14-24

Chapter 5, "Radio Families" 39-58

#### Listening:

The Happiness Boys <http://turtleservices.com/jukebox.htm>; "How Do You Do?"; "Pardon Me While I Laugh,"; "Down By the Old Apple Tree,"; "As A Porcupine Pines for Its Pork"; "That's a Lot of Bunk," "Down Where the Old South Begins"

A Day in Radio: <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~1930s2/radio/day/radio.html>

### Thursday, February 16 The Golden Age

#### Reading:

Susan Douglas, *Listening in: Radio and the American imagination, from Amos 'n' Andy and Edward R. Murrow to Wolfman Jack and Howard Stern* (New York : Times Books, 1999): Chapters 1-6, 3-160.  
Available as an E-book

Goodman, David, *Radio's Civic Ambition: American Broadcasting and Democracy In the 1930s*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011): Introduction; Chapters 4 and 6, xiii-xx; 181-219; 245-286  
PDF available here.

#### Listening:

Jack Benny, 4/11/37, Try Episode #48 with Burns and Allen  
<http://www.archive.org/details/JackBenny1>

Chase and Sanborn Hour, 1937  
[https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy\\_agree=agree](https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy_agree=agree)

"The War of the Worlds," The Mercury Theater of the Air, 30 October 1938  
[https://youtu.be/OzC3Fg\\_rJM](https://youtu.be/OzC3Fg_rJM)

### Thursday, February 23 Roosevelts/ Politics

#### Reading:

Jason Loviglio, *Radio's Intimate Public: Network Broadcasting and Mass Mediated Democracy* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2005): Chapter 1, 1-38. (and any other chapter) Available as an E-book

Douglas Craig, *Fireside Politics: Radio and Political Culture in the United States, 1920-1940* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000): Chapters 3, 5, 6, 9, Conclusion; pp: 36-58, 78-112; 167-185; 279-284. Available as an E-book

#### Listening:

FDR Fireside Chats – choose one  
Fireside Chat #1, 3/12/33; Fireside Chat #7, 4/28/35  
Fireside Chat #9, 3/9/37; Fireside Chat #16, 12/29/40  
<http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches#franklinroosevelt>

Audio Documentary: "The First Family of Radio," American Radio Works, November 2014  
<http://www.americanradioworks.org/documentaries/roosevelts/>

### Monday, February 24: Paper #1 Due

## Thursday, March 2 College Radio/Radio at Brown

### Reading

Original Documents about Brown Radio: PDF linked here

Louis Bloch, *The gas pipe networks : a history of college radio, 1936-1946* (Cleveland, OH: Block and Company, 1980): Chapters 1-3. PDF Linked here

Kyle Spencer, "College Heads: Off the Dial," *New York Times*, 4 November 2011.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/11/06/education/edlife/college-radio-heads-off-the-dial.html?emc=eta1>

"About College Radio," Radiosurvivor.com

<http://www.radiosurvivor.com/learn-more/about-college-radio/>

### Listening: Audio Documentary

"From Gaspipes to Websites: Radio at Brown, 1936-2007;

<http://dl.lib.brown.edu/brownradio/audiodoc.html>

### Tour: College Stations at Brown

## Thursday, March 9: WWII

### Reading:

Gerd Horten, *Radio goes to war: the cultural politics of propaganda during World War II* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2003). Intro, Chapters 1-2; 5-6; 1-65; 116-176. Available as an E-Book

Susan Douglas, *Listening in: Radio and the American imagination, from Amos 'n' Andy and Edward R. Murrow to Wolfman Jack and Howard Stern* (New York : Times Books, 1999): Chapters 7 -8, 161-218. Available as an E-book

### Listening:

Norman Corwin, "We Hold These Truths" OCRA

[https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy\\_agree=agree](https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy_agree=agree)

Eddie Cantor Show: Awash in Washing Machines, 9/26/46 OCRA

[https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy\\_agree=agree](https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy_agree=agree)

Guiding Light - Child Psychologist - #794 - ca. 1943

[http://ia600202.us.archive.org/21/items/otr\\_guidinglight/GuidingLight\\_e794.mp3](http://ia600202.us.archive.org/21/items/otr_guidinglight/GuidingLight_e794.mp3)

**Guiding Light - Child Psychologist - #795 - ca. 1943**

[http://ia600202.us.archive.org/21/items/otr\\_guidinglight/GuidingLight\\_e795.mp3](http://ia600202.us.archive.org/21/items/otr_guidinglight/GuidingLight_e795.mp3)

**Thursday, March 16: Black Radio/ Post War Radio**

**Reading:**

Louis Cantor, *Wheelin' on Beale: How WDIA-Memphis became the nation's first all-black radio station and created the sound that changed America* (New York: Pharos Book, 1992). Chapters 1-3; 7-9; pp. 7-55; 111-172 PDF available here

Susan Douglas, *Listening in: Radio and the American imagination, from Amos 'n' Andy and Edward R. Murrow to Wolfman Jack and Howard Stern* (New York : Times Books, 1999): Chapters 9-10; pp.219-283. Available as an E-book.

**Listening: Listening:** "WDIA: AM1070: The History, The Music, the Legend," WDIA Records, 2005. OCRA

[https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy\\_agree=agree](https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy_agree=agree)

**Thursday, March 23: Sex, Drugs and Rock and Roll**

**Reading:**

Richard Neer, *FM: The Rise and Fall of Rock Radio* (New York: Villard Books, 2001): 3-165; 204-209; 227-233; 342-350. PDF available here

Marc Fisher, *Something in the Air: Radio, Rock, and the Revolution That Shaped a Generation* (New York: Random House, 2006): Part I, 3-98. PDF available here

**Listening:**

Emerson, Lake & Palmer; The Beatles "Sergeant Pepper"; Rolling Stones; Janis Joplin; Jefferson Starship; Bruce Springsteen OCRA

[https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy\\_agree=agree](https://library.brown.edu/reserves/student/course/?classid=1535&copy_agree=agree)

Musicradio 77 WABC, <http://www.musicradio77.com/>

A Page for Allison Steele, FM radio Disc Jockey, <http://www.angelfire.com/tv2/eccentric/alison.htm#sound>

**Workshop (in class) – Using digital recorders**

**Friday, March 24: Paper #2 Due**

**Thursday, March 30: Spring Break**

**Thursday, April 6: Podcast workshop: @Multi-Media Lab, Grad Center****Thursday, April 13: Public Radio****READING:**

Jack Mitchell, *Listener Supported: The Culture and History of Public Radio* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2005): ix-xiv; 27-56; 161-188. PDF available here

Jason Loviglio, "Sound Effects: Gender, voice and the Cultural Work of NPR," *The Radio Journal* 5 (2007): 67-81. PDF available here

Jason Loviglio, "'Public Radio in Crisis,'" in Loviglio and Hilmes, *Radio's New Wave: Global Sound in the Digital Era*, (New York: Routledge, 2013): 24-42. PDF available here.

**Listening:**

["This American Life: Episode #100, 24 April 1998."](#)

Listen to RI Public Radio, 88.1 FM (or stream [here](#))

Catch either "Morning Edition" or "All Things Considered" and listen to the local cuti-ins; try to understand the weekly schedule and which national programs they carry.

**Guest Speaker:**

Torey Malatia, GM of RI Public Radio, and the co-creator (with Ira Glass) of "This American Life" Read more about Torey here.

<http://ripr.org/post/public-radio-veteran-torey-malatia-formerly-wbez-named-gm-ri-public-radio>

**Thursday, April 20: Spanish Language Radio/ Political Radio****Reading:**

Dolores Inés Casillas, *Sounds of Belonging: U.S. Spanish-Language Radio and Public Advocacy* (New York: New York University Press, 2014). Selections PDF Available here

**Listening:**

"Democracy Now! Turns 20: A Freewheeling Look Back at Two Decades of Independent, Unembedded News," 19 February 2016.

<https://www.democracynow.org/shows/2016/2/19?autostart=true>

**Thursday, April 2: Digital Radio****Reading:**

Matthew Lasar, *Radio 2.0: Uploading the First Broadcast Medium* (NY: Praeger, 2016), Selections. EBook available.

**Listening:** TBA

**Thursday, May 4: Putting Together the Podcast: Workshop  
Bring Draft Scripts**

## ASSIGNMENTS

### Useful Class Participation 10%

Participation: Come prepared to discuss; listen to others; ask interesting questions; make useful analytical points

### Paper #1: What is Radio? 3-5 pages, 20% Due Monday, February 27

This paper has one question and two ways to answer it. Select **either** A or B.

A. Choose a radio station outside the United States to listen over several weeks. You will probably need to hear between 10 and 20 hours of broadcasting, at different times of the day and week. One of the best way to find streaming stations is Radio Garden, here: <http://radio.garden/live/>

You can learn about this project here:

<http://www.npr.org/2016/12/18/506045527/jonathan-puckey-s-radio-garden-knows-no-borders>

### OR

B. Choose a podcast and listen to between 5 and 10 episodes. I think this will work better if you stick with one podcast.

Use your listening as evidence for formulating a thesis that answers one or more of the following questions (you don't have to answer them all).

- How is the radio you listened to the same or different from the way listeners heard radio before 1950 in the United States?
- How is digital radio – on demand, not geographically bound – different or the same from earlier forms of radio?
- What is radio? Can your definition fit all the different forms of radio you have listened to already this semester?

Submitting Paper #1:

- Word Doc, titled with your last name
- Emailed, as an attachment to [Susan\\_Smulyan@brown.edu](mailto:Susan_Smulyan@brown.edu)

**Paper #2: Research Proposal for Podcast, 3-5 pages, 20%**  
**Due, Friday, March 24**

As a group or groups, the class will produce one or more podcasts. Each person will be responsible for about 10 minutes of the podcast treating some aspect of radio history, policy, or contemporary challenges. Your portion of the podcast must have a thesis and evidence to support it. The evidence will, most likely, be a sound text, historical or contemporary.

In the proposal:

- Describe topic, evidence, and potential thesis of your podcast.
- Refer to course readings you will reference.
- How will you use sound to present your evidence and support your thesis.
- Where will you find the sound files?
- Will you conduct interviews? With whom?
- Link to or otherwise include one of the sound files you will use and explain how it will help prove your thesis.
- Include a working bibliography in proper format of other materials you will read or to which you will listen.

Submitting Paper #2:

- Word Doc, titled with your last name
- Emailed, as an attachment to [Susan\\_Smulyan@brown.edu](mailto:Susan_Smulyan@brown.edu)

**Final Project, 40%**

**Draft Scripts due in class, May 4**

**MML, Grad Center, Open Office Hours to help with editing  
 Tuesday, May 9, 4-6**

**Project Due Friday, May 12 (Turn it in on Canvas – details to follow)**

The final project will be due as a sound file. Details on how to develop this and how to turn it in will be available in class on March 23, April 6 and May 4.

**Self-Reflection Paper, 3-5 pages, Due Friday, May 12, 10%**

Consider your work on the final project. What did you learn? How are a podcast and a final paper different? What would you do differently if you had the project to do over again?

Submitting Self-Reflection Paper:

- Word Doc, titled with your last name
- Emailed, as an attachment to [Susan\\_Smulyan@brown.edu](mailto:Susan_Smulyan@brown.edu)