

S Y L L A B I

Television Genres, DC 229-701; DC 229-710

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Autumn, 2014

WEEK ONE: Monday, September 15, 2014

"Introduction To Television Genres; Variety"

VARIETY, work that is generally hosted and consists of different acts, sketches and/or dance and musical performances, combined in a non-narrative matter. Although predominantly for television, some theatrical film variety work has also been produced. Examples:

- * **BLACK AND WHITE** (or ancient history), "Sid Caesar"
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c5KKAdFnOwQ>
- * **LIVING COLOR** (or recent history), "The Carol Burnett Show"
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PwubhFtI_jc
- * **HD** (current), "Saturday Night Live"

ASSIGNMENT: Watch this week's episode of "Saturday Night Live," and take notes based upon your personal emerging criteria with regards to what constitutes quality programing, and how it defends a given genre. Write a theme paper, 2-3 pages in length, discussing what worked and didn't work in the episode. Incorporate your observations in terms of the episodes zeitgeist (or spirit of the times), the show's point of view, and how it might be based on elements pioneered by either the Sid Caesar example(s) or The Carol Burnett Show example(s).

WEEK TWO: Monday, September 22, 2014

DETECTIVE AND MYSTERY, fictional work in which a detective (sometimes merely an endangered individual forced to "detect" for his own self-protection) attempts to solve a crime, usually a murder or theft. Emphasis is placed on the search for clues and rational power of the detective, rather than the efforts of police or lawbreakers.

WEEK THREE: Monday, September 29, 2014

COMEDY, fictional work for television, normally running a half-hour in length, which creates humor around the lives of a cast of recurring characters and the "situations" in which they find themselves. Generally, regardless of what happens in any given episode, the characters remain in the same relationships, and positions as they were before, and much of the humor derives from this predictability. The characters seldom change, and react in an expected manner to whatever challenges them, and generally the overall tenor of the shows is upbeat, expecting a happy, satisfying resolution. Everyday life is often an important element, and as a result, although the setting could be almost anywhere, most situation comedies are set in the home or workplace.

WEEK FOUR: Monday, October 6, 2014

DOCUMENTARY, nonfiction work defined by documentary pioneer John Grierson as the creative treatment of actuality. Grounded in some aspect of real life, documentaries may vary from a very deliberate account of facts to an extremely interpretive rendering of a subject, advocating a particular viewpoint on a political, social, or historical issue. In documentaries, actuality should still be dominant over the creative treatment, which while often staged for the camera, should not go so far as to be dramatized for emotional impact and belong to such genres as historical films or propaganda. Documentaries may include films that merely use a realistic technique in telling a fictional story.

WEEK FIVE: Monday, October 13, 2014

ANIMATION, work created by recording a series of still images, such as drawings, objects, or posed people; when played back, the static images combine to simulate motion, creating the impression of movement.

WEEK SIX: Monday, October 20, 2014

POLICE, fictional work portraying the activities and personalities of official law enforcement officers and agencies (from municipal police to FBI to G-men) in tracking criminals. Police stories offer many of the same elements as the crime and mystery genres, but with an added concentration on the procedures of police work and characterizations of police officers. Narratives are often concerned with their excessive

devotion to their work and police procedure as they cope with office routine, bureaucracy, and the death of fellow officers in the line of duty. Unlike detectives, policemen fear discovering that they will turn corrupt or are beginning to share traits in common with their criminal adversaries, by also adopting illegal tactics, although for the purpose of apprehending criminals.

WEEK SEVEN: Monday, October 27, 2014

PERFORMANCES, nonfiction work documenting a performance, event, or concert of dance, music, opera, operetta, theatrical stage productions, magic, circus, stand-up comedy, burlesque, or other vaudeville or variety stage acts. Although the work being performed may be fictional, as with a stage play, the intent of the work in hand is documentation of that performance rather than a fictional narrative about it.

WEEK EIGHT: Monday, November 3, 2014

MINI-SERIES, multiple-episodes, fictional program of limited duration, shown on a daily or weekly schedule, usually lasting fifteen hours or less in total running time.

WEEK TEN: Monday, November 10, 2014

MADE-FOR-TV MOVIES, individual fictional work presented on television, usually from 90 minutes to three hours in length (which may include commercials), and is not part of a regular series or mini-series.

WEEK ELEVEN: Monday, November 24, 2014

TELEVISION SPECIALS, A single television program on a specific occasion, such as an award show, a holiday presentation, or a performance.

P O I N T S S Y S T E M

Based on 1000 points:

50 points, 2 page SNL review, after the 1st week (due 9/22)

250 points, 2 to 5 page review, after the 4th week (due 10/13)

250 points, 2 to 5 page review, after the 7th week (due 11/3)

250 points, 2 to 5 page review, after the 10th week (due 11/24)

100 points, attendance

100 points, participation