Introduction

Television was introduced as an experimental technology in the 1920s and 1930s in Europe, Asia, the former Soviet Union, and the Americas, and following the Second World War it rapidly became a widely accepted form of mass communication around the globe under a variety of national regulatory arrangements. Among early postwar adopters were France, who kept the production, distribution and broadcasting of television programs as a state monopoly in 1945; England, as a subsidized public service in 1946; the United States, as a commercial medium in 1948; Canada, as national system in 1952; Japan, in 1953; as dual public and commercial networks; and Australia, as a free and governmentally regulated broadcast service in 1956. Although television’s long-term business cycle – its innovation and diffusion as a novel technology, establishment and system growth as a communications industry, maturation and popularity, and specialization and diversification – took decades to unfold (Cunningham, 2000), its widespread adoption as an important source of news, information, and entertainment quickly led to a multifaceted approach to its study. Initially, scholarly analysis focused on television in several definitive ways – as a cultural form, an industry, a technology, and as a medium shaped by national policy – and this eventually expanded to encompass its study as a global influence and its audience(s). Early attention by social scientists, especially among those in the United states, brought focus to this comprehensive vision by paying particular attention to television’s social impact (see, for example, Bogart, 1956). (Bogart (1956) covered television’s history, appeal, content, and consumption, effect on other media, relationship with advertisers, and influence on politics and youth.)

However, as Grindstaff and Turow (2006) have observed, since the 1950s, sociology’s dominant conceptual approaches to the study of television have fallen short in two key ways. One is their inability to account for video cultures – the new media environments that develop from the “continually emerging sets of multifaceted digital-interactive technologies” (p. 103) – that have grown around contemporary television’s production, distribution, and consumption. The other is the inadequacy of sociology’s theoretical approaches to the study of television – the political economy perspective that largely attends to issues of power at a macrolevel along with how ownership and control of television and the organization of television production practices shape and influence content, and the cultural perspective that focuses more on the expressive and symbolic dimensions of television programming and reception – to keep up with the industry’s transformation. As Grindstaff and Turow (2006) observe, “contemporary changes in the medium threaten to make past research on television appear quaint and anachronistic” (p. 103), but this theoretical lag should challenge scholars to find ways “to draw from enduring perspectives from the older work and assess how they apply to the new-media environment” (p. 103).

In this article we consider the issues raised by Grindstaff and Turow’s (2006) thoughtful assessment of television sociology. We agree that there is a need to update existing theoretical approaches for capturing television’s newer formulations, especially television’s more extensive global presence on the one hand and its deeper penetration of everyday social life on the other. Over two decades ago, media scholar George Gerbner (1993) observed that “Mass media, particularly television, form the common mainstream of contemporary culture. They present a steady, repetitive, and compelling system of images. For the first time in human history, most of the stories are told to most of the children not by their parents, their schools, or their church but by a group of distant corporations with something to sell” (p. 207). This was echoed nearly a decade later when leading media sociologist Todd Gitlin stated that “the obvious but hard-to-grasp truth is that living with the media is today one of the main things Americans and many other human beings do” (2001: p. 5).

More recently, this fact was underscored when leading communications scholar Sonia Livingstone challenged colleagues, in her 2008 presidential address to the International Communication Association, to more thoughtfully probe how “the media mediate everything, entering into and shaping the mundane yet significant relations among individuals and between individuals and society” (2009: p. xi). (In positing this challenge, Livingstone drew the distinction between mediation, “in which the mass media comprise one of many influential but independent institutions whose relations with the media can be usefully analyzed” and mediatization, which implies that “that all influential institutions in
society have themselves been transformed, reconstituted by contemporary processes of mediation” (2009: p. 2). While mediatization – the subordination of important social institutions to the media – remains an open question, mediation does not.) In short, with media now so unquestionably ubiquitous and so widely recognized as permeating every facet of social life, sociology is at a crucial juncture if it is to remain relevant as a contributor to the study of media in general and to the field of television, in particular.

To this end, we discuss foundational work and recent developments on topics that are central to the study of television – media technologies and social life, audiences, production, and globalization. For each, we draw upon research from the fields of communication and media that are relevant to sociological concerns alongside scholarship by sociologists to understand the video cultures of today’s television.

**Media Technologies and Social Life**

Television’s initial cultural setting was the household. Although there is scattered early ethnographic work about its presence in extensions of the domestic sphere such as taverns, hotels, and hospitals (e.g., May, 1999), television’s ‘ambience’ was more thoroughly conceptualized when Anna McCarthy (2001) examined the personal uses of television in public spaces that included airports, train stations, retail outlets, and the like, outside the home. McCarthy’s research enabled scholars to focus comparatively on the ways in which the medium interacted with its setting, and how that interplay shaped its use by viewers. McCarthy’s conceptualization built upon the important scholarship by Lynn Spigel (1992) on television’s contribution to the evolution of the post–Second World War (WWII) domestic sphere. Spigel’s (1992) work demonstrated how the public’s adoption of television as a domestic medium was influenced not just by the quest for audiences by large corporations, but also and equally importantly by the subjective responses to the technology by housewives of the 1950s whose then-prescribed social responsibility as homemakers made them gatekeepers of that domain. It was the response of housewives who ultimately shaped not only television’s acceptability as a presence in the domestic realm, but equally importantly its cultural form, because in order for family gatekeepers to find the medium acceptable, its content had to be seen as relatable. (The marketing of the Princess telephone by Bell Telephone (Lupton, 1993) and of the cell phone by Nokia (Delic and Ainamo, 2005) are other examples of how technological innovation, in order to become widely adopted, had to be subordinated to the cultural expectations of potential users before they could become instruments of sociable interaction.)

A consequence of the research on television’s early adoption spawned the important line of scholarship on audiences, which we discuss below. However, it is first necessary to address the significance of how recent new technologies of distribution that include the secondary marketing of series on digital video disk (DVD) (and in the older physical format of videotape), TV subscription outlets like video-on-demand (VOD) and pay-per-view, and streaming over the Internet through other so-called over the top electronic services such as Netflix and Hulu have transformed access to the medium and are creating new forms of consumption. These forms of a la carte access were preciously anticipated by W. Russell Neuman in *The Future of the Mass Audience* (1991), in which he wrote of the future fragmentation of the mass audience and its fallout, niche programming. This (r)evolution in access is highly socially significant because it has implications for how we organize as a society around access, including as voluntary communities of like-minded individuals who share interests and tastes; how we conduct ourselves in public spaces, such as the workplace, that integrate the leisure/entertainment/information content that television offers; how consumption of the traditional serialized narrative structure of television has evolved into ‘binge’ or ‘marathon’ viewing wherein the watching of a series becomes like consuming a novel and allows for greater scrutiny of aesthetic quality (Chmielewski, 2013; McNamara, 2012); and the prevalence of so-called social TV that consists of real-time conversations happening online while viewing (Jurgensen, 2013). According to Jenkins (2006), these developments have so profoundly transformed the processes of media consumption that they have given rise to a “convergence culture” between media users and producers that has enhanced the extent to which audiences eagerly anticipate and avidly participate in developments in media narratives (Leaver, 2013; Milner, 2009). At the crux of this cultural shift is the development of what Jenkins calls a “transmedia impulse” for storytelling (2006: p. 133), a narrative “universe” that arises when audiences trace and combine plots that unfold across multiple media distribution formats (books, movies, comic books, games, and fan-generated knowledge and content). (Fans have always relied upon secondary and tertiary texts to supplement their reading of primary texts (see Fiske, 1987), and they have created a robust industry out of fan fiction (Alter, 2012), but Jenkins (2006: p. 98) argues that convergence culture relies upon collective intelligence on the part of the consumer and the audience to read an entertainment franchise or brand (i.e., a narrative universe) horizontally across formats and platforms. While Fiske’s textual layers and Jenkins’s convergence culture are clear adjuncts to the primary text that are partly audience-generated, Gray’s (2008) concept of paratext regards promos, trailers, advertising, and the like as overt attempts by the industry to direct audience expectations of the primary text.)

Transformations in media consumption like these will continue to evolve, and they are readily sociologically contextualized. It is well known that marketers target consumers on age-based demographic characteristics, and while 18- to 49-year-olds are the single most important consumer market post–WWII (Turow, 1997), the child/youth (‘tween’) market has become equally important (because broadcast networks and advertisers seek to establish an early relationship with consumers), especially as an indicator of the adoption of new media technologies. Although the transformations in television consumption described above and the emergence of other online use patterns are presently more prevalent among online teens, GenY, GenX, and Younger Boomers relative to older age groups (Turow, 2011: p. 494), as the range of distribution technologies becomes more accessible, simplified, and understandable, consumption practices will eventually change for everyone. That said, recent statistics suggest that traditional
broadcast television will be around for some time to come. (Due to space limitations we are unable to address the growing ‘posttelevision’ scholarly literature which examines the future of traditional broadcast television in a world of convergence culture; see, for example, Spigel and Olsson (2004) and Lotz (2013).) Recent Nielsen data indicate that “teens consume the vast, vast majority of their video content via traditional television” (Juenger, quoted in Flint, 2013: p. B1), despite their ready adoption of new media formats and technologies. Finally, the introduction and adoption of new distribution technologies and transformation of consumption practices indicate there is still much for sociologists to learn about the impact of the social uses of these technologies on society and in everyday life. Cultural differences reflected by chronological age are often presumed (see Freese et al., 2006, for example), but recent analysis suggests chronological age is less relevant to the ways in which viewers relate to television content (Harrington and Bielby, 2010; Harrington et al., 2011). Finally, large questions still remain about the societal implications of the Internet, which is the genesis of this revolution. These include the relationship of the digital divide to inequality, the extent to which the Internet furthers social isolation or social capital and community formation, its beneficial or detrimental impact on politics, its impact on bureaucratic structure and worker control, and its potentially diversifying, hyper-segmenting, or massifying effect on societal culture (political elections and terrorism being equally compelling if diametrically opposed uses) (DiMaggio et al., 2001).

Audiences

The audience is crucial to the existence of television, not only as a market that creates demand for the shows advertisers subsidize through commercials, but also as the locus of interpretative activity that contributes to making the content of television programs culturally significant. As an industry, television is in the business of creating and selling programs, but from the industry’s standpoint its real business is the creating and selling of audiences — as consumers who will buy what they see advertised, and as commodities to be marketed to advertisers who sponsor the shows. Interpretative activity is shaped by the audience’s social activities and cultural identities as it seeks out and consumes particular programs. These two views of the relevance of the audience to television have created separate lines of scholarship from different disciplinary perspectives and only recently, through the study of fandom, are they in potential dialog with one other.

The measurement of the television audience that the industry relies upon to understand its market grew directly out of measurement techniques used in radio; these included the systematic measurement of audience size that yielded information about a potential market, and the measurement of program ratings that indexed a show’s popularity (see, for example, Laswell, 1948; Lazarsfeld, 1940). Because the concept of reaching the largest possible audience of potential consumers is pivotal to the success of commercial television, early research by sociologists on audiences focused on the concept of the mass audience, the broad reach that advertisers desired and that networks needed to establish themselves. Although then-influential scholarly work of the Frankfurt School aligned the notion of the mass audience with a vulnerability to persuasion by powerful social institutions, others challenged the presumptive notion of the audience as a mass of indistinguishable individuals, groups, or categories (Lang, 1957; Rosenberg and White, 1957) (Subsequent research has revealed how audience segmentation (e.g., social status, gender, age, employment, religion, and political affiliation) is associated with media use (Roe, 2000; van Eijck and van Rees, 2000; van Rees and van Eijck, 2003))., and still others who directly studied media effects challenged the presumption of persuasiveness, arguing that “media content was filtered by interpersonal networks, by individual need, and by selectivity in exposure and perception” (Katz, 1977: p. 22).

Issues of measurement precision have always been a matter of ongoing discussion between the industry and ratings companies, the leading one being A.C. Nielsen, because advertisers rely upon the accuracy of ratings data to determine advertising rates and where best to place their sponsorship. Recent innovations by Nielsen to the measurement of TV viewership to better capture the impact of new digital technology upon audience engagement include joining with Twitter, Inc., which is the leader in real-time television engagement, to create a new, separate industry metric “that will gauge penetration based entirely on data from the popular microblogging website and social network” (O’Connell, 2012). Another modification is Nielsen’s decision to expand beyond the traditional TV definition of television by introducing a comprehensive plan to capture all video viewing including broadband, Xbox, and iPads (Block, 2013). A still unresolved debate between the networks and Nielsen is the networks’ push for advertisers to pay for live ratings plus online and digital video recorder (DVR) viewing within 7 days, as opposed to the live ratings plus 3 days they pay for now (Bond, 2013). (DVRs, which are present in nearly half of all homes with a television, are primarily used to record scripted fare, not sports programming or awards shows. The television industry would like to see DVRs phased out and video-on-demand (VOD) become the predominant alternative viewing platform because VOD does not allow commercials to be skipped (Flint, 2012).) In short, viewers’ use of digital technologies has changed the very definition of the practical ways in which audiences construct their viewership, and this has, in turn, transformed not only the commodification of the audience but also traditional dynamics between the industries of advertising, marketing, and television.

The study of fandom has opened up intriguing avenues of study for television scholars that align the characteristics of audiences with aspects of their engagement. Two decades ago, the study of Star Trek fans by Henry Jenkins (1992) and Camille Bacon-Smith (1992), and of soap opera fans by Harrington and Bielby (1995a), launched the first wave of fandom studies, the study of fans’ interpretative communities. These foundational works, along with Joli Jensen’s (1992) penetrating insights into cultural assumptions about fans in general, established the importance of studying fan cultures in order to understand the social legitimacy, meaning, and significance of intensive viewing practices. The wealth of research produced in the second wave of fandom studies documented how fandom is integrated with modern life (see Gray et al., 2007), and yet a great deal of work
remains to be done on fans’ individual motivations, enjoyment, and pleasures, which comprise the third wave of scholarship on fandom. This entails, in particular, "furthering our understanding of how we form emotional bonds with ourselves and others in a modern, mediated world" through fan communities (2007: p. 10). (For example, new media technologies have transformed how fans record encounters with a celebrity. Fans’ insistence on taking a photo of oneself with a famous person has all but replaced the standard artifact of the autograph (Villarreal, 2013).) In another example, as ever more people spend more of their lives online, social media sites are now, also, becoming a public space for the conduct of traditional cultural rituals such as mourning the death and preserving the memory of beloved cultural figures (Khatchatourian, 2013.) Very recent scholarship on fandom’s contribution to the social bonds that comprise everyday life, how individuals utilize fandom as a resource for navigating the boundaries of ascribed sociodemographic categories such as age, gender, race, and social origins, and even fandom’s role in rewriting of the institutional structure, organization, and dynamics of the life course offer rich insight into the ever-deepening embeddedness of media institutions like television in the lives of individuals in the twenty-first century (Catson and Reid, 2011; Harrington and Bielby, 2010; Harrington et al., 2011; Harrington and Brothers, 2010). However, as some have already noted, fandoms, whether they are virtual or face-to-face, are still stratified communities with cliques, hierarchies, and conflict (Pearson, 2010) and associated power dynamics (Harrington and Bielby, 1995b), as is the case in all societies.

Production

Guided by the production of culture perspective (Peterson and Anand, 2004), the sociological study of television as a system of industrial organization has yielded considerable insight into how television, as a culture industry, fabricates expressive-symbolic elements. In conjunction with the concepts of the art world (Becker, 1982), the culture world (Crane, 1992), and the fiction complex (Griswold, 2000), the production of culture perspective captures the organizational complexity of the television industry and its myriad institutional participants, such as policy makers who determine availability of content or products from other sources, professional critics who appraise product quality, and audiences whose taste preferences influence producers and shape product trends. Early work influenced by the production of culture approach focused primarily on elaborating the structure and dynamics of television’s industrial systems per se (see, for example, Muriel Cantor’s 1971 study of the television producer and Intintoli’s 1984 ethnography of the production of soap operas). However, over time, scholars incorporated analysis of other pivotal aspects of the industry such as industry boundary spanners and gatekeepers who serve as intermediaries that link the industry’s loosely coupled components, target innovation, and move products along (Hirsch, 1972), and industry executives’ use of symbolic or ritualistic practices to manage the extreme uncertainty, risk, and ambiguity in audience preferences (Bielby and Bielby, 1994). As a whole, this body of work reveals that television strives to be a highly rationalized industry, but does not necessarily succeed at this goal.

The disconnect between the industry’s rationalized aspects and its extreme business uncertainty opened the door to research on how the distinctive features of creative industries like television shape the subjective work experience of its employees. Important work by Hesmondhalgh (2007) (Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2011) reveals that there is a chasm between scholars who celebrate creative jobs in the technology-driven economy, where there is flexibility, safety, autonomy, intrinsic satisfaction, name recognition, and the integration of conception and execution, and those who recognize that knowledge economy jobs are also marked by high levels of insecurity, casualization, and long working hours that result in self-exploitation. Research on localized production cultures among industry workers has specifically targeted the individual-level sense-making that creative workers undertake as they labor (Caldwell, 2008). Questions about sense-making become particularly relevant when studying workers who use information and communication technologies that allow the labor of production to be, on the one hand, dispersed across geographic locations, and, on the other, ‘virtually’ close transnational collaborations. How is collaboration enacted? How are artistic conventions understood? A recent line of scholarly work focuses on the analysis of change in television formats and production in the ‘postnetwork’ (i.e., mass/broadcast) era of multichannel, multiplatform television (Lotz, 2007), and its effect on traditional television formats such as the talk show (unchanged due to its segmented format that satisfies Internet-affected taste for ‘video snacks’) and the nightly news (in decline because of competition from on-demand availability of news around the clock). It remains to be seen how the study of localized production cultures in particular and the production of culture more generally will be affected as distinct lines of inquiry and as scholarly paradigms by the developments of the postnetwork era, in particular, as the demand for new job skills arises and established ones die out, whether a postbroadcast era will continue to translate into a wider range of desirable program options (pay cable networks have already vastly enhanced the content, artiness, and quality of serialized dramas (McNamara, 2013)), what the textual attributes and features of newer program options might be, and how this broadening of program options will affect the industry’s labor market, and access to it, for talent behind the camera as well as in front (Ross, 2011).

Television’s Globalization

Why has sociology lagged as an equal contributor to the analysis of these industry developments? In this section we discuss one last development in the television industry, its globalization. (Use of the term globalization here is in the sociological sense of the increasing interconnectedness of different parts of the world. Our use here refers specifically to cultural globalization, which Crane (2002: p. 1) defines as “the transmission or diffusion across national borders of various forms of media and the arts.” See also Giddens (1990). We recognize the debates among globalization scholars about the adequacy of their own conceptualizations of culture and
globalization (see Bielby, 2010).) With few exceptions (Cantor and Cantor, 1986; Havens, 2006; Bielby and Harrington, 2008), not only has this topic received limited attention by sociologists, it reveals in precise ways where concerted theoretical work is needed in order for sociology to keep abreast with the industry’s transformation.

The study of the global market for television was launched by the now-classic United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) study by Nordenstreng and Varis (1974), which provided one of the earliest attempts to systematically document the export of television programming. Their work uncovered a ‘one-way flow’ of television content from the United States, Britain, France, and the Federal Republic of Germany to the rest of the world, with the United States leading this group. Although their statistics revealed that a large number of hours of airtime were exported, it is now well understood that importing was deployed for a limited time by nations in the process of building their own emerging national television systems, and that as a strategy this proved to be far more cost effective in the short run than underwriting local productions to fill schedules and attract audiences. Subsequent findings by Varis (1984) provided equally interesting evidence that other countries were also major producers of programming for international distribution within regional markets; these included Mexico, which distributed throughout Latin America, and Lebanon and the United Arab Republic, who were major producers for the Middle East. Still others, like India and Brazil, had robust internal industries, which subsequently developed into vigorous export markets. Since the pioneering work by Nordenstreng and Varis, vital regional geolinguistic markets – such as Japan, which is a major supplier throughout Asia and South Asia and has a global reach that includes the West, Egypt, which supplies to the Arab world, India to the Indian populations in Africa and Asia, and Hong Kong and Taiwan to the Chinese-speaking population – have developed based on common cultural, linguistic, historical, and geographic similarities (Sinclair et al., 1996).

Statistics like those from UNESCO about television markets abroad were the basis for early and compelling assertions of US cultural imperialism by communication scholars (Schiller, 1976). A more recent (1990s) version of these concerns is the work by media scholars who study the internationalization of media conglomerates as purveyors of US cultural hegemony, global cultural homogenization, and cultural synchronization (Herman and McChesney, 1997; McChesney, 2004; Miller et al., 2001). Even more recently, there is renewed interest in programming content, which, it is argued, foregrounds neoliberal values such as consumption (Couldry, 2010); this is yet another iteration of a macro-oriented, top-down approach.

Arguments like these are often provocative and compelling, and they can be a helpful starting point for trying to understand key questions about the power of national media culture around the world and the landscape of diverse media markets. However, too often discussion of global media ends rather than starts at questions of imperialism (Tunstall, 1994). Their generally macrooriented, top-down analyses note the increasing power and scope of a small number of media corporations around the world; however, this is a problem because broad statistics about the distribution of shows or the ownership of conglomerates, although interesting and obvious, also locks us into assumptions and narrows our explanations and understanding of the global market. Important questions are missed when one focuses only on the broad picture of television trade flows or industry consolidation, especially in such an unpredictable market (Cantor and Cantor, 1986). For instance, although national industries have developed many business strategies that include coproductions and the selling of formats (TV show concepts that are repackaged to suit particular (national) markets and tastes (Freedman, 2003)) in an attempt to systematize revenue from abroad, even these arrangements are subject to the vagaries of potential buyers who must be responsive to cultural proscriptions and policies, as well as to audience preferences (Esser, 2010). Also left undetermined is why specific programs are marketed, adopted, or rejected by distributors. Even larger questions loom about how television programs are transformed at the local level in diverse international contexts of reception and interpretation.

This theoretical gap directs us to so-called middle-range approaches that bridge micro- and macroconcerns and target mesolevel conceptualization, evidence, and analysis (Sinclair et al., 1996). Mesolevel analysis attends to the concrete operational and cultural logics of global television markets: the features and operations of the marketplace rather than the market per se; the cyclicality of the forms and practices of the business of the industry rather than a presumed teleological development; industry participants who are located at all levels of organizational settings rather than just industry leaders or other highly visible decision makers; and the possibility that television series are malleable cultural products rather than immutable texts with inherent meanings (Bielby and Moloney, 2008). In short, it is necessary to study not only the production of television/video cultures, but also their distribution, and the contexts and mechanisms of their distribution, at many concrete levels (Bielby and Harrington, 2008). In sum, if a small number of huge media corporations now dominate the majority of media industry markets, this is a useful starting point for investigation of global television ownership and control and its consequences. But research must move beyond this important starting point. A useful research focus would be seeking understanding of the institutional logics of the organizations that make up the global marketplace for television and its video cultures, and targeting its mechanisms for managing market uncertainty in its business transactions, and, how local cultures affect these arrangements/solutions. This conceptual vantage point invites attention to organizations, participants, market features, discourses, locations, and properties of the cultural products produced (which pose a challenging management issue because they are so culturally/symbolically laden and their success or failure is so difficult to predict). More importantly, it would call for concerted attention to the locally specific ways in which such mechanisms are culturally understood, practiced, and engaged, (see Chung and Hamilton, 2001; Wherry, 2012). Finally, it would pay close attention to the consistency of findings that indicate reception by audiences is a crucial middle-range factor in this market (Gray, 2007; Kraidy, 2009; McMillin and Fisher Keller, 2009; Sanson, 2011).
Conclusion

The research reviewed here provides several challenges for future sociological research on television’s video cultures. The theoretical gap noted by Grindstaff and Turow (2006) that consists of the distance between the now dominant approaches to the study of television – the political economy perspective and the cultural perspective – calls for concerted attention by scholars of culture industries. Such efforts call for a bolder approach to reading across disciplinary boundaries and attending to scholarly developments in cognate fields, while at the same time not losing sight of what is inherently sociological in that quest. For those still interested in macrolevel debates, a useful starting point might be the nuanced, encyclopedic synthesis and review of the vast body of evidence that is used to invoke notions of cultural imperialism and cultural globalization (Hesmondhalgh, 2007; Mirlees, 2013). For those interested in the fertile opportunities for expanding conceptualization of the middle range of television’s video cultures related to globalization and cultural production, there is useful work by cultural geographers who study regional/urban agglomerations of cultural production and distribution (see Scott, 2005, for example). There is also useful work by media studies scholars who examine how the institutional logics of politics and markets of other countries thwart television distribution (Curtin, 2005). For those interested in closing the theoretical gap in other ways lies the opportunity to explore the vastly overlooked topic of the properties of television as a cultural form (Bielby and Harrington, 2004; Mittell, 2004), the embeddedness of its form in everyday life (Lembo, 2000), and its critical appraisal and analysis (Bielby et al., 2005). Together, these topics made up an important part of early scholarship on television (see Boddington, 1990), which, regrettable, been all but abandoned and yet remains pivotal to understanding television’s ubiquity, popularity, societal penetration, and global presence. In conclusion, regardless of how or where one enters the gap, what is essential is building out from more established lines of thought and traditions and finding new challenges and opportunities for empirically grounded insights.

See also: Artists, Competition and Markets; Audience Measurement; Audiences, Media; Culture and Institutional Logics; Culture, Production of: Prospects for the Twenty-First Century; Globalization and World Culture; Internet and Culture; Narrative Networks; Networks and Cultural Consumption; Organizations and Culture; Television: General.

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