THE TELEVISION WILL BE REVOLUTIONIZED

Second Edition

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NEW YORK UNIVERSITY PRESS
New York and London

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www.nyupress.org

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Lotz, Amanda D.
The television will be revolutionized / Amanda D. Lotz. — Second edition.
pages cm Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-4798-6573-4 (hardback) — ISBN 978-1-4798-6525-3 (pb)
1. Television broadcasting. 2. Television broadcasting—United States. 3. Television—Technological innovations. 4. Television broadcasting—Technological innovations. I. Title.
PN1992.5.L68 2014
384.55'0973—dc23 2014015124

New York University Press books are printed on acid-free paper, and their binding materials are chosen for strength and durability. We strive to use environmentally responsible suppliers and materials to the greatest extent possible in publishing our books.

Manufactured in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Also available as an ebook

For Wes, Sayre, and Calla

Every book has its own story about the process of its creation—call it a book’s biography. Part of th biography of the first edition of *The Television Will Be Revolutionized* is that I returned the proofs New York University Press three days after the birth of my first child, in July 2007. So watching th child head off to kindergarten in the fall of 2012 gave the age of the book an uncommon physic form. Oddly, it was easier to fathom that it was time for kindergarten than that the insights of the boo were now five years old.

Much has happened in the television industry in these intervening years, though much has als remained unchanged. When the first edition went to press, I was playing around on the beta version Hulu—though there was little content, YouTube was still a start-up, the broadcast networks ha clunky interfaces for streaming the very little content they made available, and there was nothing b movies or advertorials available through video on demand. A cable executive interviewed for th edition noted that the speed with which broadband-delivered video became ubiquitous caught eve most industry insiders by surprise. Those on the forefront had tried out the slow-streaming, block early ventures in this area and didn’t think much of the experience. Then it all seemed to chang overnight. Netflix, HBO GO, smartphones, tablets, TV Everywhere, oh my! The vast proliferation content through various broadband providers is addressed in all of the book’s revised chapters, as has affected every aspect of the industry and provides the biggest paradigmatic adjustment from th first edition.

The revised second edition updates developments throughout the television industry over the la seven years, focuses the book more on broad frameworks for thinking about these changes than c cataloging a multiplicity of initiatives and experiments, and makes general improvements upo certain aspects that I found suboptimal when I revisited it. In some places, details about the conditio of the industry in 2006 remain because they provide a valuable benchmark of the transition that allo the book to be a history of the present, while other details have been eliminated. Though ma consider the book to be about the post-network era, I saw the contribution of the first edition primari as a calling into existence and systematic explanation of the multi-channel transition period of th 1980s and 1990s. This context building prepares us to be able to talk about and theorize a pos network era and remains unchanged and unchallenged by the last seven years. The second revis edition maintains that contribution here and also expands on what can be said of the post-network e as it has come into greater relief. The structure and organization of the book remain largely intac substantive adjustments are noted below.

It is the curse of a project like this to be inevitably out of date. During the time lag of th production process alone, new developments will occur. There are even developments that transpir before I submitted the manuscript that I elected to exclude because their consequences and likeliho of lasting impact, though potentially substantial, were not yet clear (Aereo; Chromecast). Here, I’ focused more on frameworks for understanding developments than on cataloging what differe companies are doing in 2014 because of the inevitable change. For example, YouTube seems to have new monetization strategy about every nine months, so instead of detailing the strategy in place at th moment of manuscript submission, I focus more on the industrial differences of advertising a subscription economic models and the consequences they’ve produced for content in other media. find my voice bolder here than in the first edition, but I’m a conservative prognosticator by natu

I'm more enamored with the consequences of new technologies, regulations, or economic strategi ~~than with crystal ball gazing, and when teaching the book, am interested in encouraging my studen~~ to think about new developments in this way as well. It remains an obvious class assignment to hav students investigate what has happened since the book was written; and I'll have done my job well I've given them enough tools here to make arguments about why, how, and to whom those change matter.

When I first proposed the revision, I suspected I would need to add a great deal to the first versio but instead found a considerable amount I wished to cut. To me, the first edition now read as thoug the author felt she needed to prove her mettle on the topic by offering a detailed and exhaustiv recounting of the vast experiments in each industrial process—and that was probably the case. Here rest on the reputation of my past work and do less to chronicle each new thing. Maybe I've omitte something that will prove important in time, but the last seven years have offered countless lesso about television use, distribution, and financing, and I chose to focus more on areas now offerin some evidence and consistency, rather than the most current thing. I don't doubt that a few yea hence I'll either be back at this or we'll deem that a new book is needed and that this one has becon a historical text. The frameworks the book uses for thinking about television are the parts that will li on regardless of further redevelopment of industry practices and changes in the companies th dominate them.

The introduction is now more succinct, and the detailed discussion of the different eras has be moved into the first chapter. In its place, I provide a new section that argues that we need to beg speaking of television content with more specificity when we consider the post-network era. I pos the categories of prized content, live sports and contests, and linear viewing as three suc categorizations. I use these different ways of experiencing content throughout the book to illustra how industrial adjustments affect each differently.

Except for the addition of the era explanations, chapter 1 remains the most unchanged. This boo has been successful in reaching a variety of audiences, and this is the chapter that most marks it as scholarly endeavor—which makes it more and less interesting to different audiences. In some way the distinction of phenomenal television that I offered in 2007 is now made more precise throug discussion of prized content and live sports and contests, which are distinctions defined as much b viewer behavior as by content. Given that only a narrow group of early adopters experiences televisi in the ways made possible by post-network distribution technologies, it is difficult to think muc further about the uses of television in the post-network era beyond what was possible in 2007.

Adjustments to chapter 2, which focuses on technology, are mostly of the "update" variety. Th development and fast penetration of smartphones required significant adjustment in the discussion mobile uses of television, although with the exception of sports programming, these devices are us more for "portable" television than for "mobile" (live) television in the United States. I've also adde two tables charting key moments in the shift to nonlinear viewing and significant milestones digitally distributed U.S. sports.

Chapter 3 includes new discussion of funding from outside the industry, new funding an distribution models such as the 10-90 sitcom, and the production mechanisms of series original produced for online distribution. Other sections are updated; most notably, I include a discussion the emerging use of social media in promotion. The conclusion to this chapter is also new.

I've reframed chapter 4's discussion of shifting windows. Strategies that seemed important in 200 have been revealed to be but transitional practices in the broader evolution to nonlinear viewi norms. An abbreviated discussion of reallocation, repurposing, and DVD sales remains—as these we important strategies in the trajectory of change—and I've added extensive new discussion of video o demand and broadband streaming. Addressing the emergence of Netflix was a much-neede component, not only because of what Netflix does, but also because its competition pushed establishe entities to adopt endeavors such as TV Everywhere far more quickly than would have occurre otherwise. The discussion of distribution to the home is more streamlined, as the arrival of th DOCSIS 3.0 standard largely eliminated the distinction of IPTV that existed in 2006. I've updated th competitive and regulatory framework to acknowledge the role—albeit limited—of telco servic providers and Google Fiber, the evolution of net neutrality as a regulatory issue, cable and Intern bundling, and the fact and fiction of "over-the-top" access as it had developed by 2014. Because of th increased technical language and jargon, I have added a table defining different delivery technologi early in the chapter; I've also added a time line chronicling the technological developments in th evolution of digital television distribution.

I have adjusted the framing of chapter 5 from *advertising* to *financing* to better address the varie of subscription and transaction financing structures being used by nonlinear television. The chapt now opens by addressing key differences between advertiser-supported and viewer-supporte financing and the necessity of keeping these distinctions clear when we consider how content received. In many ways, HBO and Netflix are more alike because they are non–advertiser-supporte subscription services than different because one comes in through cable and the other over broadba —a distinction I suspect will be technologically nebulous the next time I revisit this book. condensed discussion of advertiser-supported alternatives to the thirty-second advertisement remai and the sponsorship section now addresses sports programming more specifically. I've expanded th discussion of efforts to save the thirty-second ad to include discussion of pre-roll video ads th support Hulu and YouTube. I also explore how new dynamic ad insertion technologies now make possible for advertisers to monetize advertisements in VOD (video on demand) to an extent likely expand this nonlinear form of distribution.

The exploration of audience measurement in chapter 6 has been updated to match the reframing the previous chapter away from an exclusive focus on advertiser-supported television. I' reorganized the chapter to make the steady progression of new measurement norms develop throughout the last decade more systematic, and updated data based on new interviews with executiv at Nielsen and follow-up interviews with some who were quoted in the first edition.

Chapter 7 is still built upon the same case studies as the first edition. When I considered replaci them with newer shows, I ultimately determined that I would lose more than I gained. The origin case studies are extraordinary "firsts" that have given rise to so many similar successors that there not much that is distinctive about newer shows; these case studies have become the new normal. Th opportunity to take an even longer view of the original case studies and the more expansiv distribution some have experienced also strengthens them through added richness. I have moved th discussion of *The Shield*'s early advertising struggles from the advertising chapter and incorporated into the case study, and also moved the discussion using *Arrested Development* as an ideal text for post-network distribution method to its case study. I've addressed the "progeny" of the different case in the conclusion to each case study, including addressing *Off to War* as a precursor to YouTub original content.

The conclusion now looks ahead more than the previous version did, as I imagine what televisio might be like at the point when the post-network era has truly arrived. I extend my personal u anecdotes to identify the extensive ways my own television use has changed in the last seven year and ~~return to the discussion of the distinctions of prized content, live sports and contests, and~~ line television.

Without doubt, the most satisfying part of returning to this project was coming to find that the “en of television” discourse had finally abated and that considerable evidence existed suggesting that th moving pictures and sounds we’ve long characterized as “television” are enjoying expande storytelling possibilities and integration into the lives of those who consume them. I know that th terrain will continue to evolve, and I am not interested in tying the future of television to its continue distribution by broadcast network or cable wire and channel. The passing of these technologies do not mark the death of television, but the passing of inferior distribution systems that were the be technologies available in another era. Exploring how new distribution technologies enable new way of financing and producing the moving pictures and sounds we know as television provides much consider in the years ahead.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Second Edition

As much as I'd like to claim that I managed the task of a revised, second edition on my own, this w decidedly not the case. As *The Television Will Be Revolutionized* reached its fifth birthday, I thoug I'd do a blog post updating it. That developed into a new introduction. After breakfast with Er Zinner, it became a revised, second edition. Thanks for giving me the opportunity to really extend th life of the book, Eric.

A fabulous cohort of students in my graduate Analyzing Media Industries class had what was eithe the curse or the blessing of applied learning: they helped provide feedback on what was most neede for the update and identified preliminary data sources. The perspectives of voices outside my hea were important for pushing me toward the considerable revision contained within. Special thanks Derek Granitz and Amanda Cote for struggling with the more challenging chapters, and extra speci thanks to my indomitable research assistant, Kitior Ngu, whose exceptional diligence is gracious matched with patience.

The scope of revisions required new research. I'm very thankful for the time and insight provide by Evan Shapiro, Jon Weiser, Jon Mandel, Brendan Kitts, Frances Croke Page, and Brian Fuhrer. Th additional research was funded by a grant from the University of Michigan Associate Professo Support Fund, for which I'm also thankful. And a note of appreciation to the Cable Center's Barc Library for permission to use the late 1980s cable program guide image.

I offer personal thanks to those who reached out with kind words after reading the first editio Even a second edition can be a long and mostly solitary process, and it was a tremendous motivator know that the work had proven helpful, been appreciated, and reached a broad audience. The scope the revision and the speed with which it came together were enabled by the patience of Wes, Sayr and Calla and our it-takes-a-village mates, Beth and Jay Ellis, who are largely responsible for an work and life balance we've achieved. Finally, I offer sincere thanks to family and friends who hav made life rich outside my fascination with television.

First Edition

The examination of the operation of cultural industries is a less common pursuit among media studi scholars; perhaps one reason is that this type of research poses particular challenges. Executive offic and the day-to-day operation of cultural industries are not easy for critically minded academics access, but over the last five years I've attended a wide range of industry events and forums th offered meaningful glimpses into these worlds and informed this research in crucial ways. Th research is built upon four weeks of participant observation of media buying, planning, and researc departments and immersion in a number of industry conferences, including the Academy o Television Arts and Sciences Faculty Seminar, November 2002; the National Association o Television Program Executives (NATPE) Conference and Faculty Seminar, 2004–2007; the Future o Television Seminar sponsored by Television Week, September 2004; the International Radio an Television Society Foundation Faculty/Industry Seminar, November 2004; the International Consum Electronics Show, January 2006; the National Cable and Telecommunications Association Nationa

Show, April 2006; and the Future of Television Forum, November 2006. Visiting these industr ~~meetings and extensive reading of trade press provided more information about the industry~~ than could meaningfully report. The precise sources of all of the anecdotes, cases, and analysis in th following chapters are not always explicitly acknowledged, but my understanding of indust operations and struggles derives primarily from these sources. Immersing myself in the space of these industry events helped me understand the paradigm of thought that dominated the industry at variou points in this adjustment, as everything from formal conference presentations to casual conversation overheard in hallways and ballrooms contributed to my sense of industry concerns and perspectives.

Many organizations, individuals, and funding sources enabled my research in crucial ways. I a incredibly grateful to the National Association of Television Program Executives Education Foundation, expertly managed by Greg Pitts, for the various ways a Faculty Development Gran Faculty Fellowship, and the organization's educator's rate and programming provided firsthand acce to many of the executives making decisions about the industrial changes chronicled here. The Facul Development Grant, and generous hosting by Mediacom, also offered invaluable perspective on th upfront buying process.

The Advertising Education Foundation's Visiting Professor Program allowed me to spend tw weeks observing the operation of the media buyer Universal McCann, and a schedule careful arranged by Charlotte Hatfield exposed me to the many dimensions of buying, planning, and researc information that was exceptionally helpful in composing the advertising chapter. Thanks also Sharon Hudson for her work on this great program and all those in the industry who support it.

I was honored by the International Radio and Television Society Foundation in November 2004 a the Coltrin Professor of the Year as a result of a case study exercise I wrote to explore the issue examined in this book with my students. In addition to providing a fine honor, IRTS constructed number of excellent panels of industry executives who spoke to many of the central issues an provided valuable information and perspective. I am also grateful to the faculty who joined me in Ne York and participated in the case study. Thanks to IRTS, Joyce Tudryn, Stephen H. Coltrin, and al those who support IRTS for these opportunities.

Funding and support from the Denison University Research Foundation, NATPE Education Foundation, and a University of Michigan Rackham Faculty Grant and Fellowship all supporte various aspects of travel and industry conference fees upon which my research heavily relied. Cour release in the winter of 2006 and a summer stipend allowed my attendance at a marathon of indust conferences and enabled focused and fast work, which has aided in the timely contribution of th book.

Many working in the industry offered insight in formal and informal interviews and responded to mail queries. The detail of description I offer here would have been impossible without their generou explanations. Thanks to Laura Albers, Pamela Gibbons, Todd Gordon, Heather Kadin, Deb Kerin Michele Krumper, Jon Mandel, Mitch Oscar, Rob Owen, Frances Page, Brent Renaud, Shawn Ryan Andy Stabile, Stacy Sullivan, and Susan Whiting for their time and insights.

Introduction

As I was dashing through an airport in November 2001, the cover of *Technology Review* displayed o
a newsstand rack caught my eye. Its cover story was titled "The Future of TV," and the inside page
provided a smart look at likely coming developments.[1] Even by the end of 2001, which was lon
before viewers or television executives truly imagined the reality of downloading television shows
pocket-sized devices or streaming video online, it was apparent that the box that had sat in our hom
for half a century was on the verge of significant change. The future that the author, Mark Fischett
foresaw in the article depicted the television world that would be available to early adopters by th
mid-2000s fairly accurately (by "2000s," I mean the first decade of the twenty-first century, not th
century in its entirety). His focus, though, was on the living room television set, and his vision did n
anticipate the portability of computing that would develop over the late 2000s to break dow
distinctions between television and "computer" screens, or that mobile phones would so quick
become pocket computers and portable televisions. But right there in his third paragraph is th
sentiment that television and consumer electronics executives uttered incessantly beginning in 2006
the mantra of the television future: "whatever show you want, whenever you want, on whatever scre
you want."

Even though Fischetti presciently predicted the substantial adjustments in how we view televisio
where we view it, how we pay for it, and how the industry would remain viable and vital, many oth
headlines in the intervening years predicted a far more dire situation. Reports and articles bo
ominous titles like "The End of Television as We Know It" (IBM Business Consulting Services), "Th
Death of Television" (*Slate*), "Why TV Will Never Be the Same" (*Business Week*), and "How O
Media Can Survive in a New World" (*Wall Street Journal*).[2] By 2007, a *Wired* article better captur
the emerging contradictions with the title "The TV Is Dead. Long Live the TV."[3] Predicting th
coming death of television became a new beat for many of the nation's technology and culture write
in the mid-2000s. When television contrarily persisted, the naysayers turned instead to the domina
cable delivery model, announced the imminent demise of the cable industry, and suggested th
legions of viewers would soon cancel cable subscriptions. Sounding the death knell for cabl
prognosticators proposed that viewers would go "over the top" (OTT) of their cable boxes to acce
favorite shows through Internet delivery of content by using services such as Netflix, Hulu, iTunes,
a wide range of authorized and unauthorized web-based sources; Max Fisher's *Atlantic* article "Cab
TV Is Doomed" is indicative of the new apocalyptic theme.[4] But despite such claims and endle
fawning over the latest gadget or gizmo that would usher in the demise of television or cable, bo
persisted. Showtime's CEO, Matt Blank, wryly joked at the 2013 Cable Show that industry journalist
favorite topics were companies with no revenues and no earnings, followed by those with son
revenues and still no earnings; "old" television companies like his that were flush with both proved
little interest.

The journalists weren't alone in their uncertainty about the future of television or even th
definition of television, as new ways to use television and new forms of content confounded eve
those who used the device every day. In 2004—before much legal or illegal streaming of video onlin
occurred—the longtime broadcast television executive Rich Frank told a Las Vegas ballroom full o

television executives about a recent visit with his young grandson. He asked the boy which netwo was his favorite, expecting to hear a broadcast network or perhaps Nickelodeon in response. B without a moment's hesitation the boy replied, "TiVo." By 2013, a child might instead answe "PBS.org" or "the videos on daddy's phone." If the period from 2000 through 2010 led audiences t imagine that television would become something different than it had been during the preceding ha century, the period from 2010 through 2014 introduced and normalized aspects of the future television, such as the presumption that "television" is not only viewed on a television set. By th time, the industry slowly but meaningfully expanded viewers' ability to watch "whatever show yo want, whenever you want, on whatever screen you want."

We may continue to watch television, but the new technologies available to us require new ritua of use. Not so long ago, television use typically involved walking into a room, turning on the set, ar either turning to specific content or channel surfing. Today, viewers with digital video recorde (DVRs) may elect to circumvent scheduling constraints and commercials, while others download stream the latest episodes of their favorite shows, either within or outside the conventional setting the living room. And this doesn't even begin to touch upon the vast array of content created outsic the television industry that appears on video aggregators such as YouTube or social networking sites.

As a result of these changing technologies and modes of viewing, television use has becon increasingly complicated, deliberate, and individualized. Television as we knew it—understood as mass medium offering programs that reached a broad, heterogeneous audience and spoke to th culture as a whole—is no longer the norm in the United States, though most certainly neither is goir "over the top." But despite what many initially thought, changes in what we can do with televisio what we expect from it, and how we use it have not been hastening the demise of the medium; instea they are revolutionizing television.

To explore this revolution, this book offers a detailed and extensive behind-the-screen exploratic of the substantial changes occurring in television technology, program creation, distribution, ar television economics, why these practices have changed, and how these changes are profound affecting everyone from television viewers to those who study and work in the industry. It examines wide range of industrial practices common in U.S. television and assesses their recent evolution order to explain how and why the images and stories we watch on television find their way to us they do in the twenty-first century. These changes are so revolutionary that they suggest the nasce development of a new era of television, the effects of which we have only begun to detect.

What Is Television Today?

Television is not just a simple technology or appliance—like a toaster—that has sat in our homes fo more than sixty years. Rather, it functions as both a technology and a tool for cultural storytelling. W know it as a sort of "window on the world" or a "cultural hearth" that has gathered our families, to us stories, and offered glimpses of a world outside our daily experience. It brought the nation togeth to view Lucy's antics, gave us mouthpieces to discuss our uncertainties about social change throug Archie and Meathead, and provided a common gathering place through which a geographically va nation could share in watching national triumphs and tragedies. A certain understanding of wh television was and could be developed during our early years with the medium and resulted from th specific industrial practices that organized television production processes for much of its histor Alterations in the production process—the practices involved in the creation and circulation television—including how producers make television programs, how studios finance them, and ho ~~audiences access them, have created new ways of using television that now challenge our~~ bas understanding of the medium. Changes in television have forced the production process to evol during the past twenty years so that the assorted ways we now use television are mirrored in an enabled by greater variation in the ways television is made, financed, and distributed.

We might rarely consider the business of television, but production practices inordinately affect th stories, images, and ideas that project into our homes. The industrial transformation of U.S. televisio has begun to modify what the industry creates. Industrial processes are normally nearly unalterab and support deeply entrenched structures of power that determine what stories can be told and whic viewers matter most. But beginning in the mid-1980s, the U.S. television industry began reinventin itself and its industrial practices to compete in the digital era by breaking from customary norms program acquisition, financing, and advertiser support that in many cases had been in place since th mid-1950s. This period of transition created great instability in the relationships among producers an consumers, networks and advertisers, and technology companies and content creators, which in tu initiated uncommon opportunities to deviate from the “conventional wisdom” or “industry lore” th ruled television operations. Industry workers faced a changing competitive environment triggered b the development of new and converging technologies that expanded ways to watch and recei television; they also found audiences willing to explore the innovative opportunities these ne technologies provided.

Rather than enhancing existing business models, industrial practices, and viewing norms, rece technological innovations have engendered new ones—but it is not just new technologies that hav revolutionized the television industry. Adjustments in how studios finance, make, and distribu shows as well as in how and where viewers watch them occurred simultaneously. None of thes developments suggested that television would play a diminished role in the lives of the nation th spends the most time engaging its programming, but the evolving institutional, economic, an technological adjustments of the industry have significant implications for the role of television society.

The industry remains in the throes of rapid and radical change in 2014 as the televisio transformation moves from a few early adopters to a more general and mass audience. As new use become dominant and shared by more viewers, television’s role in culture continues to evolv Understanding these related changes is of crucial interest to all who watch television and think abo how television communicates ideas, to those who study media, and to those who are trying to kee abreast of their rapidly changing businesses and remain up-to-date with new commercial processes.

Despite changing industrial practices, television remains a ubiquitous media form and a technolog widely owned and used in the United States and many similarly industrialized nations. Yet the va expansion in the number of networks and channels streaming through our televisions and the vari ways we can now access content has diminished the degree to which societies encounter televisio viewing as a shared event. Although once the norm, society-wide viewing of particular programs now an uncommon experience. New technologies have both liberated the place-based and domest nature of television use and freed viewers to control when and where they view programs. Relate shifts in distribution possibilities that allow us to watch television on computer screens, tablets, an mobile phones have multiplied previously standard models for financing shows and profiting fro them, thereby creating a vast expansion in economically viable content. Viewers face more conte choices, more options in how and when to view programs, and more alternatives for paying for the programming. Increasingly, they have even come to enjoy the opportunity to create it themselves.

Although television maintains the technological affordances of a mass medium that, in principl remains capable of serving as the cultural hearth around which a society shares media events—as v did in cases such as the Kennedy assassination or the *Challenger* explosion—it increasingly exists an electronic newsstand through which a diverse and segmented society pursues deliberately targete interests. The U.S. television audience now can rarely be categorized as a mass audience and is instea more accurately understood as a collection of niche audiences. Television has been reconfigured recent decades as a medium that most commonly addresses fragmented and specialized audien groups, but no technology emerged to replace its previous norm as a messenger to a mass a heterogeneous audience. The development of broadband distribution substantially affected t circulation of ideas and enabled dissemination to even international audiences, yet the Internet allov us to attend to even more diverse content and provides little commonality in experience.

Television's transition to a narrowcast medium—one targeted to distinct and isolated subsections the audience—along with adjustments within the broader media culture in which it exist significantly altered its industrial logic and has required a fundamental reassessment of how operates as a cultural institution. For the last sixty years, we have thought about television in certa ways because of how television has been, but the truth is that television has not operated in the way v have assumed for some time now. Few of the norms of television that prevailed from the 1950s in the 1980s remain in place, and such norms were themselves the results of specific industria technological, and cultural contexts long since passed. In particular, the presumption that televisio inherently functions as a mass medium continues to hold great sway, but the mass audiences onc characteristic of television were, as the media scholar Michael Curtin notes, an aberration resultir from Fordist principles of "mass production, mass marketing and mass consumption."[5] Consequentl previous norms did not suggest the "proper" functioning of the television industry any more than d subsequent norms; rather, they resulted from a specific industrial, technological, and cultural conte no more innate than those that would develop later.

Understanding the transitions occurring in U.S. television at this time is a curious matter relative conventional approaches to exploring technology and culture. Historically, technological innovatic primarily has been a story of replacement, in which a new technology emerged and subsumed the ro of the previous technology. This indeed was the case of the transition from radio to television, television neatly adopted many of the social and cultural functions of radio and added pictures correspond with the sounds of the previous medium. The supplanted medium did not fade away, b repositioned itself and redefined its primary attributes to serve more of a complementary th competitive function. But it is not a new competitor that now threatens television; it is the mediu itself and those who try to retain practices now clearly suboptimal.

The changes in television that have taken place over the past two decades—whether the gro abundance of channel and program options we now select among or our increasing ability to contr when and where we watch—are extraordinary and on the scale of the transition from one medium another, as in the case of the shift from radio to television. And it is not just television that ha changed. The field of media in which television is integrated also has evolved profoundly—mo directly as a result of digital innovation. The audience's experiences with computing and th emergence of the mobile phone as a sophisticated portable screen technology better thought of as "pocket computer" than a "phone" are now as important to understanding television as the lega behaviors of domestic viewing. Various industrial, technological, and cultural forces have begun radically redefine television, yet paradoxically, it persists as an entity that most people sti understand and identify as "TV."

This book explores this redefinition of television specifically in the United States, although the changes are also redefining the experience with television in similar ways in many countries arour the world. From its beginning, broadcasting has been "ideally suited" technologically to transgre national borders and constructs such as nation-states; however, the early imposition of strict nation control and substantially divergent national experiences prevailed over attributes innate to th technology.[6] Many different countries experienced similar transitions in their industrial compositio production processes, and use of this thing called television at the same time as the United States, b precise situations diverge enough to make it difficult to speak in transnational generalities and lead my focus on only the U.S. experience of this transition. As Graeme Turner and Jinna Tay telling assessed in 2009, "'What is television?' very much depends on where you are."[7] The specific form the redefinition—as it emerges from a rupture in dominant industrial practices—is particular to eac nation, yet similarly industrialized countries are experiencing the transition to digital transmissio the expansion of choice in channel and content options, the increasing conglomeration of the indust among a few global behemoths, and the drive for increased control over when, where, and ho audiences view "television programs." The development of an increasingly global cultural econom also has led the fate and fortune of the U.S. television industry to be determined beyond nation confines.

Situating Television circa 2014

During its first forty years, U.S. television remained fairly static in its industrial practices. maintained modes of production, a standard picture quality, and conventions of genre and schedule, a of which led to a common and regular experience for audiences and lulled those who think abo television into certain assumptions. Moments of adjustment occurred, particularly at the end of th 1950s when the "magazine" style of advertising began to take over and networks gained control their schedules from advertising agencies and sponsors, but once established, the medium remaine relatively unchanged until the mid-1980s. First, the "network era" (from approximately 1952 throug the mid-1980s) governed industry operations and allowed for a certain experience with television th characterizes much of the medium's history. The norms of the network era have persisted in the minc of many as distinctive of television, despite the significant changes that have developed over the pa twenty years. I identify the period of the mid-1980s through the mid-2000s as that of the "mult channel transition." During these years, various developments such as the growing availability cable service and new cable channels, videocassette recorders (VCRs), and remote controls change our experience with television, but did so very gradually, in a manner that allowed the industry continue to operate in much the same way as it did in the network era.

Signs of a subsequent period, a "post-network era," began to emerge in the early 2000s. Mar changes from the norms of the multi-channel transition are readily identifiable, but it remains to early to know the ultimate characteristics and conventions of the post-network era. What separates th post-network era from the multi-channel transition is that the changes in competitive norms ar operation of the industry become too pronounced for many of the old practices to be preserve different industrial practices are becoming dominant and replacing those of the previous eras.

These demarcations in time, which are intentionally general, recognize that all production process do not shift simultaneously and that people adopt new technologies and ways of using them at vari ~~paces. By the end of 2005, adjustments in how people could access programming—particular~~ through DVR use and purchase of full seasons on DVD—enabled a small group of early adopters experience television outside the linear schedules of network programmers in a manner characterist of a preliminary post-network era.[8] By 2014, a greater range of viewers were engaging television places other than the living room screen, but such Internet, mobile phone, and even DVR time-shifte viewing accounted for only a small fraction of overall viewing. As an illustration, Nielsen data fro the second quarter of 2013 indicated that the aggregate of time per month spent watching time-shifte TV (12 hours, 35 minutes), using a DVD/Blu-ray device (5 hours, 10 minutes), using a game conso (6 hours, 27 minutes), using the Internet on a computer (not specifically for viewing video conter (27 hours, 21 minutes), watching video on the Internet (6 hours, 28 minutes), or watching a video on mobile phone (5 hours, 45 minutes) amounted to only 63 hours and 46 minutes, a good bit less tha half of the 146 hours, 37 minutes viewers still spent watching "traditional" TV.[9] Indeed, much abo the nuances of shifts in behavior is lost in aggregate averages, and change of this scale is necessari gradual and profoundly varied when more individualized behaviors are considered. Even as I ma final edits to this manuscript in early 2014, it remained impossible to assert that a majority of t audience had entered the post-network era or that all industrial processes had "completed" t transition, but the eventual dominance of post-network conditions appeared to be inevitable.

Table I.1. Characteristics of Production Components in Each Period

Production component	Network era	Multi-channel transition	Post-network era
Technology	Television	VCR Remote control Analog cable	DVR VOD Portable devices Mobile phones Tablets Digital cable
Creation	Deficit financing	Fin-syn rules Surge of independents End of fin-syn Conglomeration and coproduction	Multiple financing norms Variation in cost structure and aftermarket value Opportunities for amateur production Challenging promotion environment
Distribution	Bottleneck Definite windows Exclusivity	Cable increases possible outlets	Nonlinear access TV Everywhere Netflix streaming MVPD app availability Erosion of time between windows and exclusivity
Advertising	30-second ads	Subscription Experimentation with alternatives to 30-second ads	Coexistence of multiple ad models—30-second ads, placement, integratio branded entertainment, sponsorship Multiple-user supported models—transactional and subscription
Audience measurement	Audimeters Diaries Sampling	People Meters Sampling	Cross-platform Census measurement Digital program ratings Online campaign ratings

The characteristics of the three phases of television, explored in more detail in chapter 1, a summarized in table I.1.

And So, the Television Will Be Revolutionized

The world as we knew it is over.

—Les Moonves, president, CBS Television, 2003

The 50-year-old economic model of this business is kind of history now.
—Gail Berman, president of entertainment, FOX, 2003[10]

These bold pronouncements by two of the U.S. television industry's most powerful executives on begin to suggest the scale of the transitions that took place as the multi-channel transition yielded new industrial norms characteristic of a post-network era. Television executives commonly traffic hyperbolic statements, but the assertions by Moonves and Berman did not overstate the case. He they reflected on the substantial challenges to conventional production processes as a result scheduling and financing the comparatively cheap but widely viewed unscripted ("reality") televisio series that flooded onto network schedules in the early 2000s. Yet the issues brought to the fore by th success of unscripted formats offered only an indication of the broader forces that threatened to revi decades-old business models and industrial practices.

A confluence of industrial, technological, and cultural shifts conspired to alter institutional norm in a manner that fundamentally redefined the medium and the business of television. The U. television industry was a multifaceted and mature industry by the early years of the twenty-fir century, when Moonves and Berman made these claims. As post-network adjustments becam unavoidable, many executives expressed a sense that the sky was falling—and indeed, the scale changes affecting all segments of the industry gave reasonable cause for this outlook. A single simple cause did not initiate this comprehensive industrial reconfiguration, so there was no one blame and no way to stop it.

An important harbinger of the inevitability of the post-network era occurred in mid-2004, when th rhetoric of industry leaders shifted from advocating efforts to prevent change to accepting the prese and coming industrial adjustment. This acceptance marked a transition from corporate strategies th sought to erect walls around content and retard the availability of more personalized applications television technology to efforts to enable content from traditional providers to travel beyond the line network platform.[11] In his detailed history of the invention of media technologies, Brian Winsto illustrates how existing industries have repeatedly suppressed the radical potential of ne technologies in an effort to prevent them from disrupting established economic interest Unsurprisingly, the patterns Winston identifies also appear in the television industry, in whic "supervening social necessities" such as a desire for greater control over television content l inventors to create technologies that provided markedly new capabilities (such as the DVR), whi those with business interests threatened by the new inventions sought to curtail and constrain us access.[12] Nonetheless, many of the conventional practices and even the industry's basic busine model proved suboptimal in this new context and resulted in crises throughout all components of th production process. Considerable uncertainty persists about the new norms for programming and ho power and control will be reallocated within the industry.

New technological capabilities and consumers' response to them forced the moguls of the netwo era to imagine their businesses anew and face fresh competitors who had a vision of a new era. suggested by the duration of the multi-channel transition, this industrial reconfiguration oft produced unanticipated outcomes and developed haphazardly. Much of the sense of crisis within th industry resulted from the inability of powerful companies to anticipate the breadth of change and develop new business models in response. Those who dominated the network era sensed the businesses to be simultaneously under attack on multiple fronts, which often led to efforts to stif change or deny the substance of the threats to conventional ways of doing business.[13] Entrenche ~~network-era business entities consequently did not lead the transition to the post-network era;~~ rathe mavericks such as TiVo, Apple, Google, and Netflix identified businesses that connected wit viewers' desires and forced industrial evolution.

Contrary to the persistent headlines, television is not on the verge of death or in any way dyin Although indications of all kinds of change abound, there is little to suggest that the central bo through which we view will be called anything other than television in this lifetime. Adjustmen throughout the television industry will not turn us into "screen potatoes" or lead us to engage "monitor studies." We have processed and will continue to process coming changes through ou existing understandings of *television*. We will continue to call the increasingly large boxes that serv as the focal point of our entertainment spaces *television*—regardless of how many devices we need connect to them in order to have the experience we desire or whether they are giant boxes, flat shee of glass mounted on walls, or some technology yet only imagined. We are even likely to conceptualiz almost all video that conforms to the conventions we've come to associate with television *television*, even if we stream it years after its production, if we watch it on personal-size mobile phon screens, or if it is produced for entities never distributed as television, such as Netflix or Amazon. Th U.S. television industry may be evolving, the experience of television viewing may be evolving, b our intuitive sense of this thing we call television remains intact. A revolution is on its way, but it wi not overthrow television; the growing accessibility and manipulability of video will expand i sovereignty and embed it ever more deeply into our cultural experience.

The adjustments characteristic of a still largely imagined post-network era will be far mo profound than the changes evident so far. One thing revealed by the current conditions of the nasce post-network era is that television content no longer can be considered uniformly. Since the earl 2000s, the broad constellation of television programming has fractured into at least three distin entities that are fundamentally different in ways very meaningful to the commercial underpinnings the industry.

One type of content enabled by the post-network era is what I distinguish as "prized content Prized content describes programming that *people seek out and specifically desire*. It is not a matter watching "what is on"; prized content is deliberately pursued. Prized content also compels *son* audience members to follow news of its development, to read endless chatter on blogs and news site to seek out missed episodes, control viewing, and even pay for this most valued content. Prize content is determined by the audience member—what I prize may not be prized by you—though the may be features more likely to make content prized by larger or specific audiences. Prized content is post-network-era phenomenon that emerges in defiance of the technological affordances of mi twentieth-century broadcasting, which created the norm of a linear content flow that provided specif content at certain network-determined times and that has served as the dominant organization f television. Though these norms remain entrenched and still persist in 2014, post-network-e affordances of digital distribution enable prized content to be viewed in more deliberate ways, thoug also in accord with the traditional linear scheduling. The opportunity to experience televisio independently from an externally determined flow fractures the monolithic television experience create this category of prized content.

Emergent distribution technologies have enabled a television practice that allows greater selectio —perhaps parallel to the transition in filmgoing in the mid-1940s, when audiences began seeking o particular films rather than continuing the rote behavior of going to the theater each week and viewi whatever movie was playing. Many observers reference examples of what I consider prized content ~~declarations of a "new golden age" of television or in "Best of" lists developed in the last decade~~.[14] sampling of content of the last fifteen years that was prized by a significant audience might inclu *The Sopranos*, *Mad Men*, *The Wire*, *Lost*, *West Wing*, *Friday Night Lights*, *Breaking Bad*, and *Downto Abbey*, among many others. Notably, that significant audience may only be two to three millio viewers, far from the mark of contemporary mass hits that are watched by many more, but that ma not inspire the same passion as prized content. Audiences with different tastes might include *Re Housewives*, *Jersey Shore*, or *Duck Dynasty* as similarly compelling cases of prized conten underscoring how *prized content is not an aesthetic or evaluative distinction* assessed based features of the show, but is distinguished by how audiences desire to experience it.

Prized content is so compelling that it suffers from interruption, be it the interruption commercial pods or the interruption of a week's passage between conventional "airings." The med scholar Jason Jacobs has also identified disruption—and digital television's ability to eliminate an reduce it—as a defining distinction of what I'd categorize as the network and post-network eras Preliminary data about the use of video on demand and DVR playback by genre reveal that the f greatest use of these devices is to view dramas, which affirms the idea that many viewers particular desire a different experience with this narrative form than traditional television experience h allowed.[16] The desire for control over pace of viewing and the opportunity to re-view enables—an perhaps even makes superior—nontraditional economic models such as direct, transactional paymen Rather than model existing norms of viewer behavior, engagement with prized content might be mo comparable to how audiences read a novel.

A second distinct type of content is that of "live sports and contests." Indeed, live sporting even are far from new—they can be found among the earliest broadcasts—but as the break from the mult channel transition has become more profound, the exceptionality of live sporting events has becon inescapable. Live sports, as well as live televised contests such as *American Idol* or *Dancing with t Stars*, resist all of the ways the technologies and distribution opportunities of the post-network e enable audiences to disrupt prized content from residual viewing norms and economic strategies. A they do with prized content, audiences place high value on watching particular contests as specifical *sought-after* content, but full enjoyment of this content features *exceptional time sensitivity* th necessitates live or near-live viewing. The formats of most contests naturally allow for action break which has made sports programming resistant to the commercial-skipping and illegal-downloadi technologies that have imperiled the economics of other programming forms.[17] Sports and contes thus remain optimal for the traditional mechanisms of television advertising and the economics th support it, and also offer seemingly endless opportunities for sponsorship and branding, furth expanding their economic value.

Sports programming has been a frequent topic in discussions of the future of television precise because the increasing fees demanded by rights holders and eventually passed on to television viewe —whether or not they *view* sports—have grown so significantly as to threaten the equilibrium programming costs. The investment house Sanford C. Bernstein & Company released research in 201 illustrating that live sports accounts for 20 percent of viewing by cable subscribers but 50 percent the cost of their subscriptions.[18] The journalist Derek Thompson captured the dilemma of costs an audience demand for televised sports well: "Without live sports," he asserts, "the TV business cou fall apart; and because of live sports, the TV business could fall apart."[19] The value of live televis sports has increased because so little other programming continues to unite comparatively lar audiences who watch at an appointed time and remain captive through the commercials. When we ta of ~~the future of "television," we must do so in a way that acknowledges that the features~~ th distinguish prized content and live sports and contests prepare them for very different industri norms.

I distinguish the final type of programming as "linear content," though most recognize this as pla old television. Not long ago, all television was linear, and much of what is viewed still is. Line content is *what people watch when they watch "what is on*," or it might be distinguished by the notic of "I'm going to watch television" as opposed to "I'm going to watch *Sons of Anarchy*." Like sport linear content is viewed live, but likely with much less intention than most sports. The motivation f viewing is not watching particular content, but a desire for companionship, distraction, entertainment that may or may not make the content the viewer's focus. Linear television might be th television viewed when you sit down in the evening to see what's on; it is the morning talk show th airs as you ready for work, and the evening news that plays as you prepare dinner. By definition, line content is not time-shifted, so the established model of advertising remains effective, if "effective" a term that could ever really describe the economic benefits of airing commercial messages in conte that viewers attend to only casually.

I offer these categories of television to illustrate the need to speak of particular types of televisio content and make content-specific claims when postulating coming economic models. These thre categories don't quite contain all viewing, and I'm sure we can imagine many instances that prese features of multiple categories. My point is to begin to speak of television viewing with great specificity, because viewers' increased ability to manage viewing differently has significan implications throughout television's industrial norms. Creating terminology that acknowledges th different attributes that are enabled by technological and distribution affordances of the post-netwo era aid in crafting a more sophisticated conversation about television's present and future. Thoug disruptions to conventional practices occur—such as iTunes sales of single episodes beginning 2005 or Netflix's rich subscription-based on-demand offerings beginning in 2010—acknowledging th range of content now characteristic of television helps make clear that it is a variety of practices an norms that are imperiled, rather than television per se.

Key aspects of the post-network revolution include the enabling of new types of programming suc as prized content and the establishment of profound distinctions in the experiences and econom possibilities among existing programming types such as live sports and contests and linear conten Another emerging aspect of the revolution can be found in the growing mechanisms for organizin and packaging content, whether by emergent *aggregators* such as Netflix or Hulu, emergent *devic* such as Roku and Boxee, or emergent *applications*, whether those enabling live streaming of channe over computers or devices such as gaming systems that enable accessing television content throug Internet connection. We remain at a most nascent stage of what I suspect will be a massive disruptio of norms of television delivery, and it is too soon to predict common viewing behaviors in the futur Nonlinear viewing—that is, viewing not at an externally appointed time—whether by DVR, video o demand (VOD), DVDs, or streaming—has become a primary way of engaging television for som viewers, though these behaviors remain irregular or completely unused by many more. Nonline viewing calls into question the continued need for previous ways of organizing television, such as th "channel," and these early years of preliminary post-network formation have featured the addition new channel-like distribution and aggregation "middlemen" such as Netflix, Hulu, and YouTube tha are each trying to reorganize the content experience. Adding more middlemen, at the same time th channels become increasingly superfluous, seems a short-lived disruption, though one likely to aid longer-term paradigm shift.

The following pages update understandings about television's industrial practices from whic others might build analyses of the substantial adjustments occurring within other media systems an their societies of reception. The book also contributes to the necessary rethinking of "old" media new contexts. The deterioration of the foundational business model upon which the commerci television industry long has operated suggests that a substantive change is occurring. Examining th industry at an embryonic moment of norm creation sheds light on how power is transferred durin periods of institutional uncertainty and reveals how new possibilities can develop from emergin industrial norms. There is a similarity between the industrial moment considered here and th examined in Todd Gitlin's 1983 book *Inside Prime Time*.[20] Both books chronicle the consequences industrial practices of the television industry at the close of an era. Gitlin, however, captured th moment unintentionally, while this work is reflexively aware of the transitory status of the practices explores.

Perhaps paradoxically, I take a particular type of television—"prime-time programming"—as th book's focus. Despite significant industry changes, as I completed the book, prime-time programmin remained the most viewed and most widely discussed form of "television," though its high costs d not make it the most lucrative. The post-network era threatens to eliminate time-based hierarchies, b the distinctive status of prime time is determined as much by its budgets and production practices by the time of day in which it has traditionally "aired." Changing industrial norms bore consequenc for all programming. Adjustments in production components also affected affiliate and independe stations in significant and particular ways, but the breadth of these matters prevents me fro addressing them here. Although the affiliates represent a large part of the television industry, th consequences of post-network shifts affected these stations in substantially different ways dependin among other things, on whether the station was owned and operated by a network, whether it w located in a large or small market, and the network with which the station was affiliated.[21]

The next chapter develops the distinctions of the network era, multi-channel transition, and pos network era with greater detail and briefly steps away from the book's main focus on how shifts industrial practices and business norms affect programming to meditate on some of the more abstra and bigger issues—some might say theories—called into question by these institutional adjustmen Concerns about how television operates as a cultural institution, the adaptation of tools used understand it, and the development of new ones aid us in thinking about intersections of television an culture that may not be the primary concern of those who work in the industry. Such questions an concerns are nonetheless of crucial importance to the rest of us who live in this world of fragment audiences and wonder about the effects of the erosion of the assumptions we have long shared abo television.

Each aspect of production examined in chapters 2 through 6 changed on a different timetable in th course of the multi-channel transition. By 2005, profoundly different technological capabilities an distribution methods had emerged, though these new possibilities were pushed further by 2010, on broadband distribution of full-length professional content suggested greater change. Thoug indications of post-network technologies and distribution norms may now be evident, other productio components remain insubstantially adjusted. Thus, each of these chapters focuses on a particul production component—technology, creation, distribution, financing, and audience measurement- and explores the process of transition, what practices have changed, and their consequences wi