



Welcome to the Today Show for December 31st, 1959.

This handout will help guide you along with our decade in review.

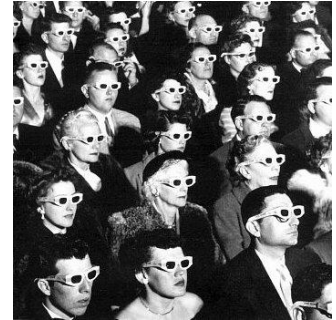
Television:

- Central form of media and expression, center of family unit
 - Popular form of entertainment for children
- 3 shows
 - The Honeymooners
 - First situational comedy, sitcom
 - The idea of the American dream
 - I Love Lucy
 - First time woman is center of show
 - Leave It To Beaver
 - Dysfunctional family dynamics
- Technology improved television: bigger size and better clarity



Film:

- Film rivaled television
- 3 themes
 - Adventure films
 - Related to the Cold War and the fears of the unknown
 - War of the Worlds, The Day the Earth Stood Still, Creature from the Black Lagoon, Seven Samurai
 - Entertainment films
 - Took American minds off of Cold War
 - Singin' In the Rain, Some Like it Hot
 - Social Introspection films
 - Questioned what it means to be American
 - 12 Angry Men
 - Alfred Hitchcock - Rear Window, Vertigo (revolutionary film techniques to build suspense)



Literature:

- Theme of the conflict between the "self-satisfaction" of post World War II prosperity and questioning the truth of American values
- "50s Happy Days" optimism: people have the power to change their lives for the better
 - Self-help books and radio expressed these values
 - Combining Christian values with optimism and self improvement
 - Self-help Christian advocates Norman Vincent Peale, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen
- Questioning conformity and American values
 - Beatniks: counterculture movement
 - Alternate societies or worlds
 - Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
 - Science fiction novels as a result of space exploration finds
 - Martian Chronicles by Ray Bradbury



i. Amctv.com, "The Top Ten Films of the 1950s - AMC blog."
 ii. Historymatters.gmu.edu, "Complete Nudity Is Never Permitted: The Motion Picture Production Code of 1930."
 iii. Kclibrary.lonestar.edu, "American Cultural History - 1950-1959."
 iv. Laapush.org, "1950s."
 v. Muse.jhu.edu, "Project MUSE - The Fifties: Transforming the Screen 1950-1959 (review)."
 vi. Ushistory.org, "Land of Television."