History, part 2

Radio evolves into Television
Early Radio

Situation comedies ("Amos n’ Andy"), comedy-variety ("Jack Benny"), soap operas, game shows. Many familiar types of TV shows started on radio.

"Amos n’ Andy" very popular then, criticized now; racial stereotyping.

Orson Welles’ "War of the Worlds" terrified millions, 1938.

War of the Worlds (start at 3:00)  War of the Worlds 2 (play start-1:50; 4:25-8:55)

News: Pearl Harbor bulletin
Radio Network Decline

Network radio began to decline after 1948 because of television.

Radio reinvents itself

WDIA, Memphis; WLAC, Nashville – R&B music; influenced rock ‘n roll.

Radio reinvented itself with Top 40; other radio formats evolved from Top 40.

KLIF - Top 40 (play start; move to 5:30)

Gordon McLendon, KLIF, Dallas, innovator of Top 40 radio.
FM Radio’s slow rise to dominance

Early radio (thru the ’50s) almost entirely on AM.

Edwin Armstrong patented FM in 1933. FM hindered by the push for TV, World War II.

Mid- to late-’60s. FM began to grow in popularity.

By early ’80s, 75% of all listening on FM.

Out of despair, Armstrong killed himself in 1950s.
Early TV Development
John Logie Baird – mech. System
Philo Farnsworth – image dissector.
Vladimir Zworykin – iconoscope.

Invention of television
Zworykin - disappointed in television

TV’s debut
1939 World’s Fair, NY.
Development held up by WWII.
TV takes over
1948 – TV audience grew by 4,000%.
UHF band created
Original 13 VHF channels (2-13) were not enough.
1948, FCC freeze on new TV licenses.
1952, FCC created UHF band (channels 14-83).

UHF stations lagged behind
UHF signals inherently weaker.
Manufacturers not required to equip new TVs with UHF until 1962.

Color
Agreement on a color system, 1953.
All-color network programming, mid-1960s. Color TV promos
The “Big 3” Networks

Economics seemed to favor no more than three major networks. FCC ordered NBC to sell off “NBC Blue;” it became ABC, 1948. DuMont lasted from ’46-’55, then went off the air.
The “Golden Age” of TV

Before videotape in mid-’50s, most programs were live.

Many original plays; much of network programming targeted at an urbane, educated audience.

But other programs were very broad in their appeal (Sid Caesar).

“I Love Lucy” one of the few programs shot on film. Made reruns possible, profitable.
Television matures

Invention of videotape in mid-1950s made recording of programs practical (click image).

Women and minorities became more prominent as performers and characters; Nat King Cole first black performer to host network show, 1956.

Coverage of JFK assassination in 1963 signaled TV news becoming dominant source of information.
Fox joins the “Big 3”
Digital transition
Total transition to digital TV, 2009.
HD Radio leads radio into the digital age. Radio reaches 94% of population weekly, but “time spent listening” has declined.