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Assignment #2

The Radio

Various entrepreneurs appeared in the early 1920's marking the start of a boom in individual creativity. Broadcasters took to the airways and experimented with playing music. Musicians grew in popularity, familiarity, and trend-setting style. The public, for the first time could hear together the same music. As a result, a flood of new dances were created and the radio started a dance explosion that transcended from the Waltz in 1917 to Swing only a few decades later.

The radio changed the culture of communities. It introduced styles of music to people who otherwise would have no way of hearing it. It connected rural residents to urban life and provided them with news and other forms of media. The radio became a fixture in entertainment, whether it was in homes or local pubs, inviting people to socialize as they gathered around it. As more radios were purchased, more stations were broadcasting, and people could tailor the radio to their interests and ethnic groups.

Initially, expression on the airways was new and relatively uncontrolled by the government in the United States in its early expansion. Also in the early stages, the radio broke down hierarchies. New stations were frequently popping up and channels would overlap. Everyone had information before, but with aid of the radio, it was able to flow. News could now be transported further than with the newspaper and did not have to follow the top-down approach it always had

before. Initially, nonprofit volunteer radio stations and larger stations generally preferred by the public ran together. The nonprofit radio stations took mostly subjective form with propaganda, special-interest, religious and political stations.

In 1927, a citizen movement was started to put pressure on the government to address the issue of overlapping signals. The government then began managing the radio by restricting the amount of broadcastings on the airwaves which resulted in the subjective media stations receiving a B-class license, and more objective and popular media receiving an A-class. This effectively faded out powerful opinions and controversial ideas expressed on the radio from the majority.

Masuda's predictions held true with the information society that started from the introduction of the radio. Though, the government soon after put a grip on the airwaves and cut down on public voice being broadcasted, it was still prominent for a while before it was relatively silenced.