

An Interview with my Grandmother: Media in the '50s and '60s

Background Information:

My grandmother was born on March 5th, 1942 and she has spent all of her life in a small town called Plainfield, WI. She grew up in a household of ten with her parents, three sisters and four brothers. During the '50s and '60s my grandmother was a young girl going into her teenage years. This era of media is my grandma's favorite because this is when she found out what music she liked to listen to and what movies and television shows she enjoyed to watch.

Drive-In Movie Theaters:

Drive-ins started to really take off in the '50s. My grandma would love to go to drive in theaters with her family, friends, and then with her husband when she was old enough to marry. She explained how you could put the speaker on your vehicle window and listen to the movie from your parking space. It was a wonderful event to go to tickets were cheap, about 46 cents per person and buying food from concessions was a must. She enjoyed eating popcorn, with a coca cola, and good and plenty candy.

Name of Interviewer: Brianna Phillips

Name of Interviewee: Sharon Phillips

(Age 79)

Interviewed Via Phone on 4/13/21



Television, Movies, and Cable:

My grandma's favorite category of television was westerns and comedies. She enjoyed watching shows like The Lone Ranger, I Love Lucy, and Gunsmoke. Her favorite actor was Audie Murphy who played in many westerns and her favorite actress was Amanda Blake who played Miss. Kitty on Gunsmoke. Some of her favorite movies in the '50s and '60s were West Side Story, Bonnie and Clyde, and Shane. She started off with a simple 13 inch television set that had snowy reception and only displayed a black and white image. In the '60s my grandma had her first experience with colored television she said it was absolutely beautiful. During the 1980's she upgraded to satellite tv. Over the years television has evolved immensely, grandma loves the convenience of having slimmer tvs, and so many channels available at her fingertips.

Music, Sound Recording, and Radio:

In the '50s and '60s my grandma's favorite genre of music was rock and roll and country. Her favorite singer was Elvis Presley and her favorite band was The Beatles. A song that got my grandma on the dance floor was The Twist a dance done by swiveling your hips and became a worldwide dance craze in the early 1960s. Grandma would listen to music using a Philco floor model radio, and would set around it on the floor and listen to The Grand Ole Opry. Music meant a lot to my grandma and her family because it gave them something to bond over. My grandma never went to a lot of concerts but she remembered her first very well she went to see George Jones and Stonewall Jackson perform together along with other musicians. For sound recording my grandma would have a little Victrola record player placed in the living room. Records only costed around 50 cents back then and she would run to a local shop in Wisconsin Rapids to pick up any record she wanted. On the radio grandma would listen to programs and shows like Ma and Pa's Kettle, Rin Tin Tin, and Arthur Godfrey's Good Time Hour. The reception was never the greatest but she would still love listening to the radio with her family whenever she got the chance.

References: "1950's TV Shows - Best of 50's TV - Popular Series 1950-1959." *Classic TV Database*, www.classic-tv.com/shows/decade/1950s.

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