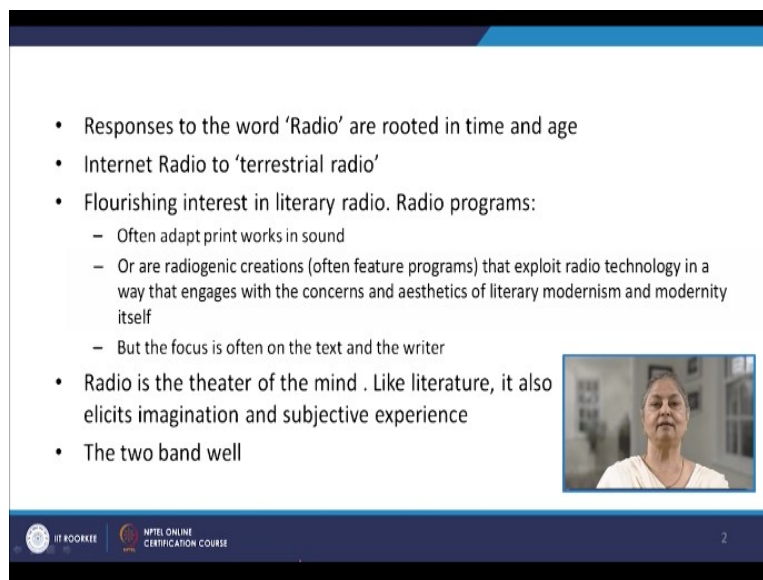


**Literature, Culture and Media**  
**Prof. Rashmi Gaur**  
**Department of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**Indian Institute of Technology – Roorkee**

**Lecture - 46**  
**Development of Media: Radio**

Welcome dear participants, in this week we would be looking at certain developments of media. In the current module, we would look at the development of radio, how this particular media technology changed the way people learn to communicate with each other, how this particular format was developed as a means of public communication and how different cultural theoreticians and academicians responded to this particular media development.

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- Responses to the word 'Radio' are rooted in time and age
- Internet Radio to 'terrestrial radio'
- Flourishing interest in literary radio. Radio programs:
  - Often adapt print works in sound
  - Or are radiogenic creations (often feature programs) that exploit radio technology in a way that engages with the concerns and aesthetics of literary modernism and modernity itself
  - But the focus is often on the text and the writer
- Radio is the theater of the mind . Like literature, it also elicits imagination and subjective experience
- The two band well

When we listen to the word radio, our responses are rooted in the time we are living in and the age to which we belong. To a person who has matured in the 21st century the word radio immediately evokes images of internet radio. On the other hand, if we talk to a person who has been brought up in the decades of 1950s and 60s, we would find that the person would immediately refer to what we have come to know today as the terrestrial radio.

So radio does not been the same thing for people belonging to different age group and that is why we find that the interest in literary radio, in media theoretical responses to this particular development have been flourishing from time-to-time. There was a time when people stopped taking this media seriously but we find that very recently there has been a renewed interest in the way this media can be understood as a part of a vehicle of cultural paradigms.

Radio programs often adopt the print work in sound only or they are radiogenic creations often feature programs that exploit the radio technology in a way that engages the concerns and aesthetics of literary modernism and modernity itself. However, in radio programs and in any activity related with use of radio, we find that the focus is often on the text and the writer. Other aspects are secondary to it when we look at this media from a critical perspective.

Of late, radio has been termed as the theatre of the mind. Like literature, it also elicits imagination as well as subjective experience and that is why we find that these two mediums of expression blend well together and radio programs have continuously adapted different literary productions for very popular programs.

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Types of Critical Approaches:

- Broadcasting historians: are actively researching the literary cultures and modernist aesthetics of radio – texts, contexts, collaborative work amongst producers and other creative personnel
- Culture – institutional policies and frameworks governing the choice of programs
- Audience-ship, national and international, diplomacy, cold war era

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If we look at the types of critical approaches towards radio related activities, we find that on the one hand there are broadcasting historians who are actively researching the literary cultures and modernist aesthetics of radio to look at the texts as well as their context as well as the collaborative work which has to be taken up by the producer along with other creative personnel.

At the same time, another critical approach has been developed by those academicians and theoreticians who look at cultural studies. They look at the institutional policies and frameworks which govern the choice and the making of the programs. At the same time, we can look at the audience-ship; we can look at and analyze how the same program can have national as well as international audience.

We also have to look at the diplomatic issues which are associated with this particular medium in very strange and cohesive way and then we can also recall how it became a medium of communication as well as propaganda during the cold war era.

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• Varied responses to Radio as a medium of cultural communication during the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century:

- Marxist critics – Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin, and Bertolt Brecht
- Sociologists – Paul Lazarsfeld and Hadley Cantril
- Media theorists – McLuhan and Walter Ong

• 1995 – Edward Pease and Everette Dennis called it a “forgotten medium”

• Two recent scholarly developments – the expanded conception of modernist culture under the name of the “new modernist studies” and the growth of sound studies as an interdisciplinary field with both aesthetic and historical implications – have, since the mid-1990s, inaugurated a new wave of literary radio scholarship.

[Source: Radio Studies and 20th-Century Literature: Ethics, Aesthetics, and Remediation. Ian Whittington <<https://doi.org/10.1111/lic3.12175>>]

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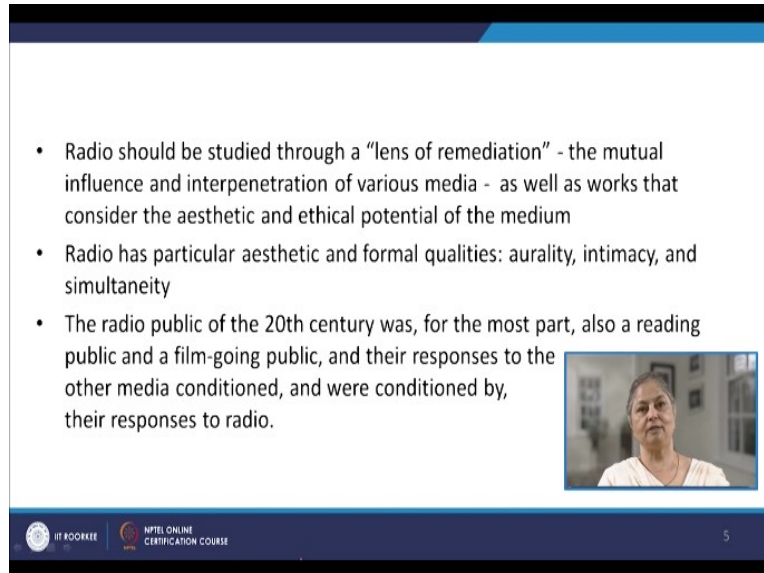
When we look at the medium of radio as a medium of cultural communication during the mid-20th century, we find that the Marxist critics, the sociologists as well as media theorists were looking at it with different perspectives. On the one hand, we have Marxist critics like Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, Walter Benjamin and Bertolt Brecht. We have done a review of their approach towards culture industry.

And we find that radio had been a major part of the development of their argument. At the same time, we have sociologists looking at this medium particularly the work of Paul Lazarsfeld and Hadley Cantril can be referred to in this direction and then we also have media theorists like Marshall McLuhan and Walter Ong. In 1995, just before the 21st century was to begin, we find that Edward Pease and Everette Dennis called radio as a forgotten medium.

But very soon we find that in the beginning of the 21st century, there has been a recent revival in interest in media technology. So two recent scholarly developments which we can refer to are the expanded conception of modernist culture under the name of new modern studies as well as the growth of sound studies as an interdisciplinary field with both aesthetic and historical implications.

And therefore we find that if not from around the mid-1990s definitely in the beginning of the 21st century a new way of literary radio scholarship has emerged.

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- Radio should be studied through a “lens of remediation” - the mutual influence and interpenetration of various media - as well as works that consider the aesthetic and ethical potential of the medium
- Radio has particular aesthetic and formal qualities: aurality, intimacy, and simultaneity
- The radio public of the 20th century was, for the most part, also a reading public and a film-going public, and their responses to the other media conditioned, and were conditioned by, their responses to radio.


These critics suggest that radio should be studied through a lens of remediation that is the mutual influence as well as interpretation of various media interacting continually with each other, as well as works that consider the aesthetic and ethical potential of the medium. At the same time, we have to be aware of the fact that radio has particular aesthetic and formal qualities which differentiate it from the print media that was the media which was dominating just before this technological development.



And these particular qualities may be listed in terms of orality, intimacy and simultaneity. The radio public of the 20th century was for the most part also a reading public as well as very soon it became a film going public also and therefore the responses of the contemporary people to the other media conditioned and also what conditioned by their responses to radio.

So even when we look at the contemporary reception of radio as such as a medium of communication, we have to be aware of this fact that the public had already experienced the revolution in terms of print media.

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- To understand how a medium conditions inter-subjective and inter-medial relations, one must understand the rhetorical and aesthetic effects that are made possible by that medium
- On the other hand, a contextual approach enables us to comprehend how radio as a medium was implicated in larger political, ethical, technological systems
- As a means of communication, radio was a sociological phenomenon which had an uncanny reach, remarkable potential for mass persuasion and also had political and economic uses



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And at the same time within a couple of decades it was exposed to other mediums like film and television to understand how a medium conditions inter-subjective and inter-medial relations. We must try to understand the rhetorical and esthetic effects that are made possible by that medium.

And at the same time we find that a contextual approach is also important as it enables us to comprehend how radio as a medium was implicated in larger system which also governed the political, ethical, cultural and technological development and physics of our experiences. As a means of communication, radio was a sociological phenomenon which had an uncanny reach; it had a bigger reach in comparison to any other thing which was experienced by the mankind earlier.

And therefore it also had remarkable potential for persuading the masses to look at a particular point of view.

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## Invention of Radio

- Telegraph, a 19<sup>th</sup> century invention, made long-distance communication possible
- Telegraph cable laid across the Atlantic connected the USA and England
- Development of telephone using telegraph technology in the 1870s
- Guglielmo Marconi, credited as the inventor of early **wireless radio**
- Marconi duplicated Hertz's experiments on wireless transmission
- Approached the Italian government regarding this; the government showed no interest
- Moved to England and patented the technology in his name



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The invention of radio is dependent on the 19th century technological developments which made long distance communication possible. The telegraph cable when it was laid across the Atlantic and it connected the USA and England as well as the development of telephone using the telegraph technology in the 1870s are very closely linked with the invention of wireless radio by Marconi.



Marconi has duplicated Hertz's experiments on wireless transmission and he had initially approached the Italian government regarding the patent and development of this technology but the Italian government had not shown any positive interest and therefore he had moved to England and patent with the technology in his name in the new country. Wireless technology which was popularized by Marconi was seen as a way to make the telegraph functional without the use of cables.

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## Initial development

- Wireless technology popularized by Marconi seen as a way to make the telegraph functional without the use of cables
- Early use of radio: limited to person-to-person communication; mostly used on naval ships to contact other ships or land stations; used by the military for communication
- Radio broadcasting—use of radio as a mass media—came much later
- Soon airwaves were crowded by amateur radio operators who could broadcast to anyone within range
- By 1912, government regulation and licenses limited and controlled radio operation





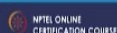


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The early use of radio were limited to person to person communication and they were primarily used on the naval ships to contact other ships or to contact the land stations and they were primarily used by the military during the First World War. However, we find that by 1912, airwaves were crowded by amateur radio operators who would broadcast to anyone within range and government regulation and licenses limited and controlled radio operations.

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- First radio transmission in 1906
- Experimental radio station, 2XG, set up in New York in 1916 by Lee de Forest
- Nightly music and news broadcasts to citizens halted during WWI
- Regulations in 1917 allowing the President to shut down stations, to prevent the interference from amateur operators, when the US joined the WWI
- Ban lifted after the war; small stations begin operations  
—programs included sermons, sports, news.



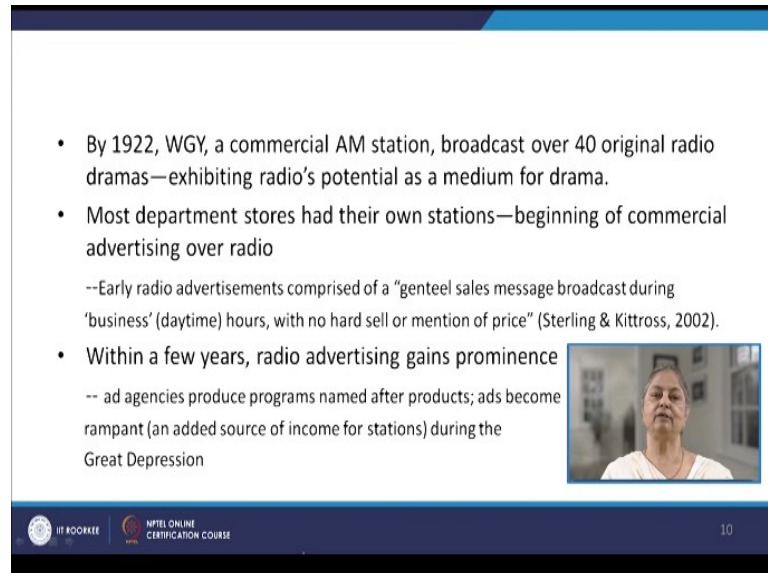


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The first radio transmission took place in 1906 and experimental radio station 2XG was set up in New York in 1916 by Lee de Forest. Nightly music and news broadcasts to citizens became very popular but during the later days of the First World War when public could access them easily and people could broadcast on individual radios, we find that the regulations to stop nighttime broadcast came out.



At the same time, we find that the world war also somehow halted the development of technology because all efforts of the people as well as the governments were guided towards the world war.

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- By 1922, WGY, a commercial AM station, broadcast over 40 original radio dramas—exhibiting radio’s potential as a medium for drama.
- Most department stores had their own stations—beginning of commercial advertising over radio
  - Early radio advertisements comprised of a “genteel sales message broadcast during ‘business’ (daytime) hours, with no hard sell or mention of price” (Sterling & Kittross, 2002).
- Within a few years, radio advertising gains prominence
  - ad agencies produce programs named after products; ads become rampant (an added source of income for stations) during the Great Depression

By the time we reach the beginning of the third decade of the 20th century, we find that a commercial AM station WGY had started to broadcast over 40 original radio dramas and this exhibited the potential of this medium for entertainment. It is during this time that we look at some very interesting developments. Most department stores had their own stations and that can be considered as the beginning of commercial advertisement over radio.


Within a few years, we find that radio advertisements gained prominence and ad agencies also cropped up which used to produce programs named after products and they became also rampant and additional income sources for stations particularly during the time of the Great Depression in the US economy.

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### Rise of Radio Networks

- Networks established soon after radio's broadcasting potential becomes apparent—huge potential for profits
- RCA starts National Broadcasting Network (NBC) in 1926
- Formation of red and blue networks carrying local programs
- Establishment of Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) in 1928; begins competition with red and blue networks (Sterling and Kittross 2002)
- Early programming focused on music; soon newer formats were developed.
- In the 1930s: News, Educational programs, Variety shows-Jazz, country music, dramas, comedies and talk shows



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It is immediately after this time of the depression that we find that networks were established after reduced broadcasting potential became apparent and people realized that there is a huge potential for profits in it. So it is around this time that we have RCA starting digital broadcasting network, formation of red and blue networks which carried the local programs, establishment of CBS Columbia Broadcasting System in 1928 which started its fierce competition with red and blue more localized networks in nature.



And early programming used to focus on music and then very soon we find that other formats were also developed. By the time, we reach the end of 1930s; the programs had started to have a lot of variety. There would be news, educational programs, variety shows including the playing of Jazz as well as country music, dramas, comedies as well as talk shows. So we find that by this time radio had established itself as a significant medium of communication as well as entertainment.

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### Radio Act of 1927

- By the mid 1920s, majority of broadcast stations owned by newspapers and department stores
- A lot of radio stations outgrew the available frequencies and government regulation became necessary
- The Radio Act of 1927 established the FRC (Federal Radio Commission) to oversee regulation of the airwaves.
- In 1928, FRC reallocated station bandwidths
- The Act allowed major networks(CBS and NBC) to capture a 70% of U.S. broadcasting market.  
Nonprofit broadcasting fell to 2% (McChesney, 1992).






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Around this time by the mid-1920s, majority of broadcast stations were owned by newspapers and department stores and a lot of radio stations outgrew the available frequencies and the situation became so fierce that government regulations became a necessity. The radio act which came out in the 1927 was established by the Federal Radio Commission of the USA to oversee regulation of the airwaves.

In 1928, FRC reallocated station bandwidths and this act allowed major networks to capture 70% of US broadcasting market and nonprofit broadcasting fell only to 2%.

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- Struggling nonprofit radio broadcasters created the National Committee on Education by Radio to lobby for more outlets.
- They demanded that airwaves were a public resource and public good should supersede commercial interests
- Communications Act of 1934 passed—failed to address these issues
- Radio continued as a mainly commercial enterprise (McChesney, 1992).

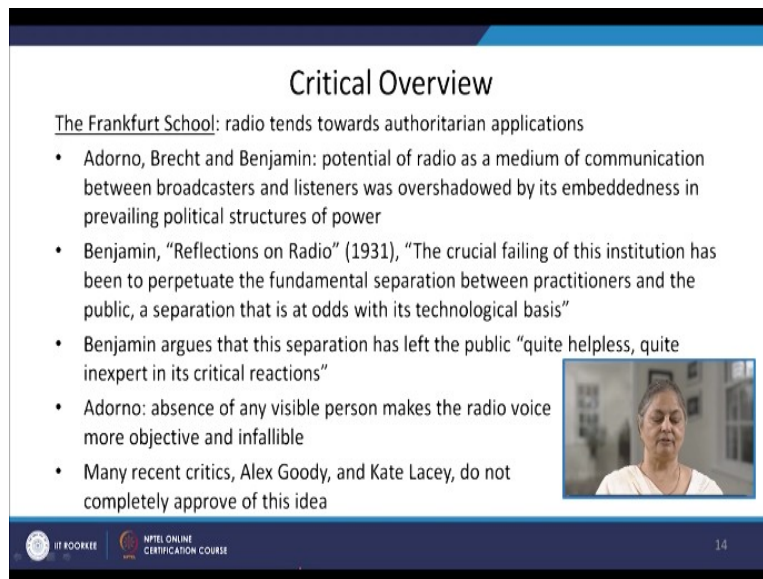




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Struggling radio broadcasters which were basically nonprofit created the National Committee on Education by radio to lobby for better and more outlets and they suggested that airwaves were a public resource and public good should supersede commercial interests. On their

demand, we find that in 1934 Communications Act was passed but it failed to address these issues and radio was continued more or less as a pure commercial enterprise.

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**Critical Overview**

The Frankfurt School: radio tends towards authoritarian applications

- Adorno, Brecht and Benjamin: potential of radio as a medium of communication between broadcasters and listeners was overshadowed by its embeddedness in prevailing political structures of power
- Benjamin, "Reflections on Radio" (1931), "The crucial failing of this institution has been to perpetuate the fundamental separation between practitioners and the public, a separation that is at odds with its technological basis"
- Benjamin argues that this separation has left the public "quite helpless, quite inexpert in its critical reactions"
- Adorno: absence of any visible person makes the radio voice more objective and infallible
- Many recent critics, Alex Goody, and Kate Lacey, do not completely approve of this idea

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It is interesting to see that around this time, critics had also started to look at this media development. Critics associated with the Frankfurt School viewed radio as being basically an authoritarian application and its vehicle. Particularly, critics like Adorno, Brecht and Benjamin looked at the potential of radio as a medium of communication between broadcasters and listeners.

And according to them, this potential is overshadowed by its embeddedness in prevailing political structures of power. It is interesting to quote Benjamin in his article "Reflections on Radio" which was published in 1931. He suggests and "The crucial feeling of this institution has been to perpetuate the fundamental separation between practitioners and the public. A separation that is at odds with its technological basis."

Benjamin has argued that the separation has left the public quite helpless, quite inexpert in its critical reactions. Adorno had also suggested that in the absence of any visible person, the radio voice automatically becomes not only more objective but also as a communicator of something which is infallible in the opinion of the general masses and therefore the Frankfurt School critics treated radio as being a very significant tool for communicating authoritarian ideology.

However, we find that more recent critics particularly Alex Goody and Kate Lacey do not completely approve of this idea and they feel that the listeners also have certain agency within them.

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**Cultural Variations**

- Germany – a tool of the totalitarian regime
- In the US, the popular appeal of Golden Age commercial broadcasting represented the triumph of radio as a demotic (ordinary/colloquial language) medium
- In the UK, BBC remained in the hands of the country's cultural ruling classes until the 1950s—a medium “torn between ideals of Arnoldian cultural prescriptivism and emergent popular demands for a more representative soundscape.”
- Studies around 1930s and 1940s highlight formal and political tensions inherent in the medium—radio can enlighten or deceive its mass audience.
- Whether it is the threat of fascist manipulation; the satisfaction of popular tastes; or an ethos of cultural paternalism
  - Density of connections between political regimes, institutional structures, and programming decisions.

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It is around this time that we also have the impact of culture or what we can term as cultural variation in the development of the programme which were being broadcasted by radio. In Germany, we find that it had become a tool of the totalitarian regime compelling the Frankfurt School critics to view radio in its limited role only.

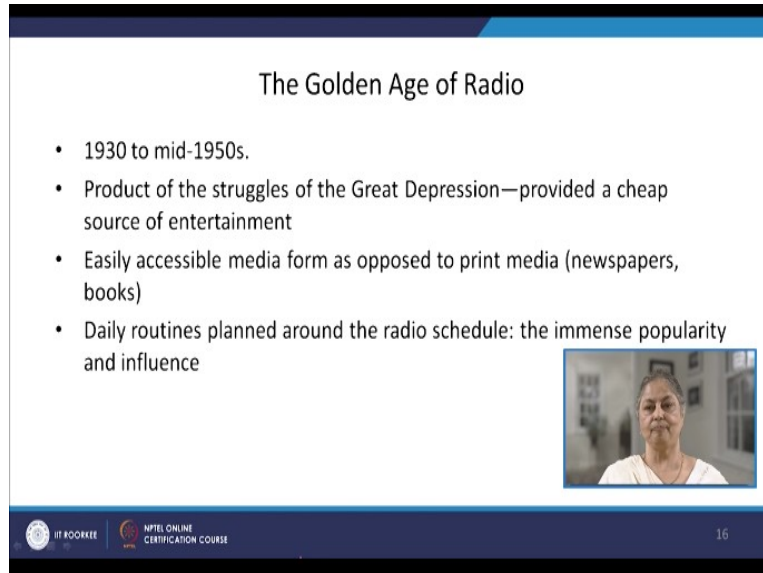
On the other hand, we find that in the United States, the popular appeal of Golden Age commercial broadcasting represented the triumph of radio as a demotic medium. Demotic medium because it used the language of everyday parlance and therefore was immediately popularized amongst the masses. On the other hand, we find that in the UK, the monopolistic BBC remained largely in the hands of the countries cultural ruling classes until the 1950s.

A medium which has been suggested as being torn between ideals of Arnoldian cultural prescriptivism and emergent popular demands for a more representative soundscape. Studies around 1930s and 1940s highlight formal and political tensions inherent in the medium. Radio can either enlighten or can deceive the mass audience and projects looked at these two extremes according to their own cultural experiences and cultural bent of mind.

Whether we view radio as a threat of fascist manipulation, as something which satisfies the popular taste or an ethos of cultural paternalism. The studies in this field indicate a density of

connections between political regimes, institutional structures and programming decisions. So this nexus has been very remarkably established in the beginning of the 20th century itself and which we find duplicated and repeated in the later date media developments.

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The Golden Age of Radio

- 1930 to mid-1950s.
- Product of the struggles of the Great Depression—provided a cheap source of entertainment
- Easily accessible media form as opposed to print media (newspapers, books)
- Daily routines planned around the radio schedule: the immense popularity and influence

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The golden age of radio is termed to be between 1930s and 1950s. It also can be considered as a product of the struggles of the great depression. During the economic depression which affected the day-to-day lives of the people, radio provided a very cheap and affordable source of entertainment. It was a media which was easily accessible and at the same time it was inexpensive.

In comparison to print media, radio was viewed only as a onetime investment and a medium which could entertain the whole families. So during this era, we find that the daily routines of the family were planned around the radio schedules and it had immense popularity and the capability to influence ideological bent of the audience also.

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### Day time and Prime Time Radio

- 4 broadcasting networks by 1934
- Evolution of a format that fed into modern TV programming
- Serial dramas and domestic programs for women during the day
- Audiences targeted with commercials according to demographics
- Origins of Prime Time—popular evening comedy variety shows
- Sketch comedies, musical performances, interviews
- Late evenings: prestige dramas—reenactment of movies and adaptations of literary pieces



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By the time, it is 1934; we find that four major broadcasting networks were providing entertainment to the masses. It was around this time, we have in evolution of a format that feeds the modern TV programming and becomes an underlying basis of demarcation and that is daytime and the prime time radio programs. Serial dramas and domestic programmes were aired for the benefit and entertainment of women during the day.


It is around this time that commercials which were targeting certain demographics of audience also started. It is in this decade of 1930s that we have the origin of what can constitute a prime time entertainment. So we have the beginnings of popular evening comedy variety shows, sketch comedies, musical performances and interviews. So in this decade, we find that depending on the demographic segregation of the audience there was a bifurcation of programmes.



Programmes which could be aired only during the day for a certain type of an audience and programs which had to be aired only during the late evenings. So the late evening time was booked for prestige dramas, reenactment of movies and adaptation of literary pieces which could be viewed and could be enjoyed by the family and it is this concept of prime time that has continued to be copied even in today's TV programming analysis.

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## Later Years

- After the Golden Age, most non-music programming shifted to television.
- Rise of Top 40 Radio-- short playlists of popular songs; commercially successful in the 50s and 60s
- Popularity of FM during the late 1960s and 1970s: capture a new demographic interested in higher fidelity and less restrictive radio formats
- After the Telecommunications Act of 1996, media conglomerates take over—number of radio stations taken over by single companies.
- Leads to predictability and profits; loss of unique programming.



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During the later years what we find that most non-music programmes started to shift towards television. During the late 1960s and 70s, we find that the popularity of the FM radio grew and it was able to capture a new demographic interested in higher fidelity and it was less restricted to radio formats. After the telecommunications act of 1996, media conglomerates take over and we find that number of radio stations are being owned by single companies.

And it is lead to predictability and profits also but at the same time, it is resulted in a loss of unique programming.

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- Influence of radio commentators and talk show hosts in shaping public opinion in times of national or international crisis (Irving E. Fang, David H. Culbert)
- Radio comedy's influence in helping masses cope up with depression, war, and social unrest (Arthur Frank Wertheim 1979)
- Representations of women in radio broadcasting; domestic dramas and their role in social imaginary
- Propagandistic nature of government-endorsed programming during World War II
- Functioning of the Armed Forces Radio Network



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The influence of radio commentators and talk show hosts in shaping public opinion in times of national and international crises has been a basis of study particularly the study of Irving Fang and David Culbert can be cited in this context wherein they have analyzed how the

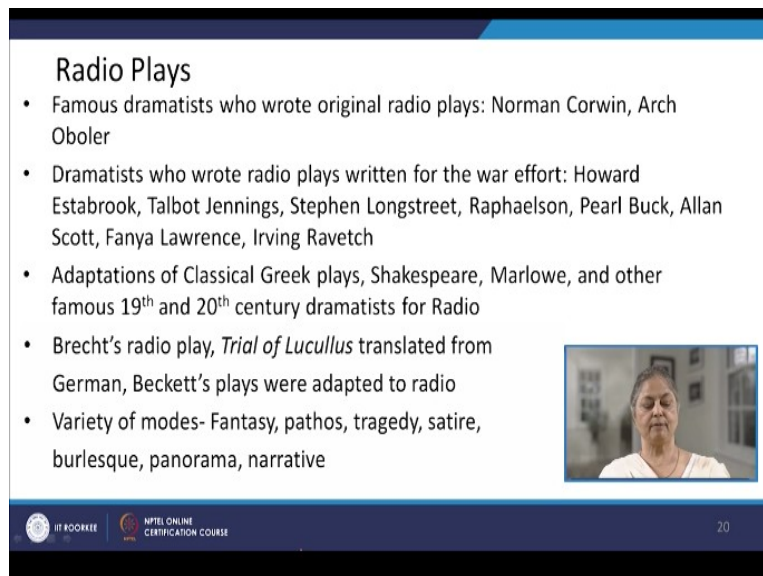


people can be swayed by the influence of a particular talk show host. Radio comedies influence in helping masses, cope up with depression, war and social unrest has been studied by Arthur Frank in 1979.

At the same time, we find that there have been changes in the way radio programmes are structured as a response to contemporary sociopolitical developments. For example, the representation of women in radio broadcasting has been largely related to domestic dramas and their role in the society is a reflection of the majority view, the patriarchal view. At the same time, we find that programmes during the Second World War can be cited to support this argument.

So we find that during the war there is a plethora of programmes which are propagandist in nature and they are induced by the government and at the same time functioning of the armed forces radio network can also be cited.

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**Radio Plays**

- Famous dramatists who wrote original radio plays: Norman Corwin, Arch Oboler
- Dramatists who wrote radio plays written for the war effort: Howard Estabrook, Talbot Jennings, Stephen Longstreet, Raphaelson, Pearl Buck, Allan Scott, Fanya Lawrence, Irving Ravetch
- Adaptations of Classical Greek plays, Shakespeare, Marlowe, and other famous 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century dramatists for Radio
- Brecht's radio play, *Trial of Lucullus* translated from German, Beckett's plays were adapted to radio
- Variety of modes- Fantasy, pathos, tragedy, satire, burlesque, panorama, narrative

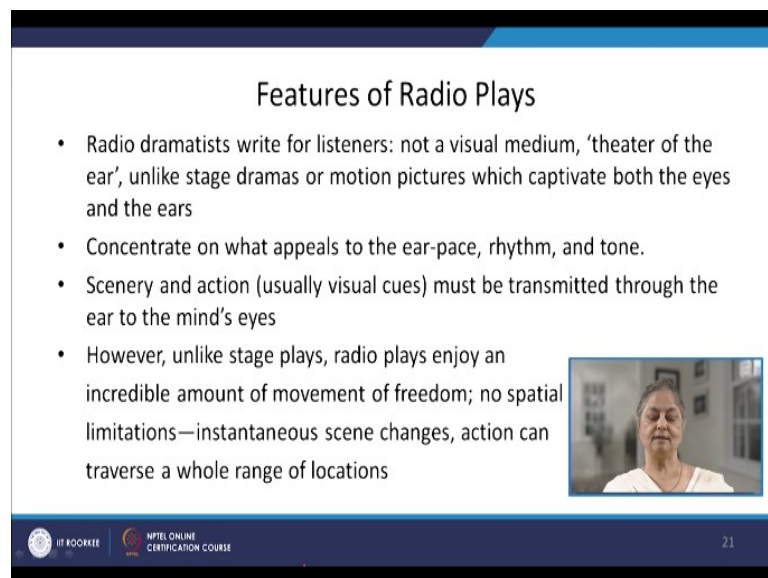
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The idea is that depending on the audience, the radio becomes a powerful medium of communication. Another aspect which becomes very important from our point of view is to look at the way radio plays were written and aired. This is a particular genre which has to be studied in addition to the literary products because they were specifically chosen writers not only to adapt the already published pieces of literature for radio dramas but also for independently writing original plays.

During the radio plays, we find that writers like normal Norman Corwin and Arch Oboler became very popular. At the same time, they were dramatists who specifically wrote radio plays for a particular effort. If Norman Corwin and Arch Oboler were writing from the point of view of social entertainment, we find that writers like Howard Estabrook, Talbot Jennings, Longstreet and others were writing basically for those programmes which could be aired to abate and support the war efforts.

At the same time, we find that the adaptations of classical Greek plays as well as the classical plays by Shakespeare and Marlowe and various other 19th century dramatists became very popular for radio broadcast. Brecht's radio play, *Trial of Lucullus* was also translated from German and was aired by BBC. Beckett's plays were also adapted to radio. During the golden period and much later after that, radio developed a variety of modes as far as its plays were concerned and they used to air fantasy, pathos, tragedies, satire, burlesque, panorama as well as narrative plays.

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The slide is titled "Features of Radio Plays" and contains a bulleted list of characteristics. To the right of the list is a small video inset showing a woman speaking. At the bottom of the slide, there are logos for IIT ROORKEE and NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE, along with the number 21.

### Features of Radio Plays

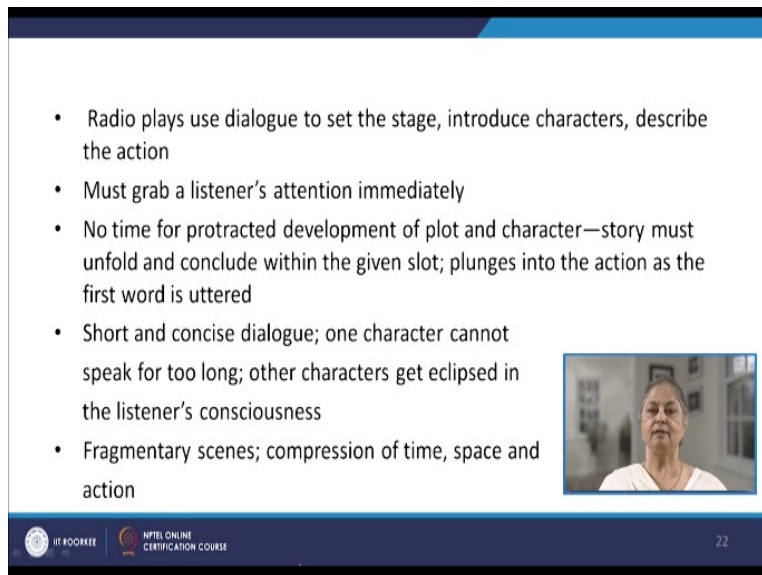
- Radio dramatists write for listeners: not a visual medium, 'theater of the ear', unlike stage dramas or motion pictures which captivate both the eyes and the ears
- Concentrate on what appeals to the ear—pace, rhythm, and tone.
- Scenery and action (usually visual cues) must be transmitted through the ear to the mind's eyes
- However, unlike stage plays, radio plays enjoy an incredible amount of movement of freedom; no spatial limitations—instantaneous scene changes, action can traverse a whole range of locations

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It is also interesting to note how the main features of radio plays are very different from the features of plays as we understand them in the context of literary criticism. Radio dramatists write only for listeners. A radio play is not a visual medium; it is to be treated as a theatre of the ear unlike a stage drama or a motion picture which captivates the eyes as well as the ears. And therefore the playwright in the context of a radio program concentrate on only what appeals to the ear the rhythm and the tone of the voice.

The scenery as well as the action have to be transmitted with the help of certain clues as visual clues are absent in the context, we find that it has to be given either through the dialogue or through the music, etc. However, unlike stage plays, we find that radio plays have a very interesting freedom to move around. For example, instantaneous scene change and action can also traverse a whole range of locations without any difficulty.

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- Radio plays use dialogue to set the stage, introduce characters, describe the action
- Must grab a listener's attention immediately
- No time for protracted development of plot and character—story must unfold and conclude within the given slot; plunges into the action as the first word is uttered
- Short and concise dialogue; one character cannot speak for too long; other characters get eclipsed in the listener's consciousness
- Fragmentary scenes; compression of time, space and action


Radio plays use dialogue to set the stage to introduce the character and also to describe the action and the dialogue has to grab a listener's attention immediately. The setting is not there for the eyes to see and the audiences are dependent only on the clues which they can listen to with their ears. So they do not have a time for protected and detailed development of plot and character.



The story has to unfold and wind up within the given slot and therefore we find that most of the radio plays directly plunge into the action as soon as the first word is uttered. Labyrinthine developments of character and action related arguments and debates and dialogues are not included in them. The dialogue is also short and concise; a particular character cannot speak for too long.

And the other characters also have to be given the opportunity. Otherwise, we find that the audience loses interest. The scenes therefore are also fragmentary and there is a compression of time, space and action.

**(Refer Slide Time: 29:16)**

- Story advances through suggestion
- Few characters; sharply distinguished to avoid confusion
- Stereotyped, stilted, intelligible characters—need to reach out to millions of listeners at once
- Extensive use of sound effects, music, filter mikes, echo chambers, and other technical devices
- Music is an important part of drama in Radio
  - Not just an ally in punctuation and continuity
  - Substitution for words
  - Enhances action
  - Intensifies mood and tone





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In radio plays, we find that the story advances through direct suggestions as there is no space for looking at the connotations and therefore we find that in radio plays a direct dialogue delivery becomes very important. There are limited characters in radio plays and these characters are also sharply distinguished to avoid any confusion. We have to remember that in the radio plays, the characters have to reach out to millions of listeners at once.

And therefore these characters are either stereotyped, stilted but it anyways they are always sharply distinguished so that the audience can understand the significance and relevance of every character independently. Owing to these limitations, a radio play also extensively uses a sound effects, it uses music, the filter mikes, the echo chambers or other technical devices and at the same time music is also used as an important part of drama.

It is not just an ally in punctuation and continuity, it also does not provide only a relief or entertainment rather it may be a substitute for words, it may be used to enhance action and it may also intensify the mood and the tone of the drama.

**(Refer Slide Time: 30:54)**

- Radio plays and their dependence on music brings back the central role of aurality in drama (lost with the print culture)
- The narrator/announcer as a figure (similar to the chorus in Greek plays) who provides unity to the fragmentary structure of radio
- Themes:
  - Simple, tactful and judicious
  - Easily comprehensible
  - Complex, difficult or controversial subjects were not popular
  - Entertaining, not challenging



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Radio plays and their dependence on music brings back the central role of orality in drama, a particular aspect which was lost with the print culture. In these plays, we find that there is also a narrator or an announcer who is a key figure so that the audience can understand the links wherever they have to be supplied. The role of a narrator or an announcer is very like to the chorus in the Greek plays.

And it provides unity to the fragmentary structure of the radio plays. The themes of the radio plays are also relatively simple and they are definitely not complex. The focus is on entertainment or on communicating a particular message in a clear way.

**(Refer Slide Time: 31:40)**

- Under the impact of communication and media studies in 1950s and 1960s, a new perspective emerged.
  - Harold Innis's *Empire and Communications* (1950) and *The Bias of Communication* (1951)
  - Marshall McLuhan's *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964)
  - R. Murray Schafer's *The Soundscape: Our Sonic Environment and the Tuning of the World* (1977/1994)
  - Walter Ong's *Orality and Literacy* (1982)
- Turned to theorizing what Ong calls the “secondary orality” of the electronic media age, an orality which serves to “retribalize mankind around acoustic communities of language, nation, race, and ideology (McLuhan).
  - Their work, particularly the thread of technological determinism, remains foundational to any discussion of the correlations which exist between radio and other media in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

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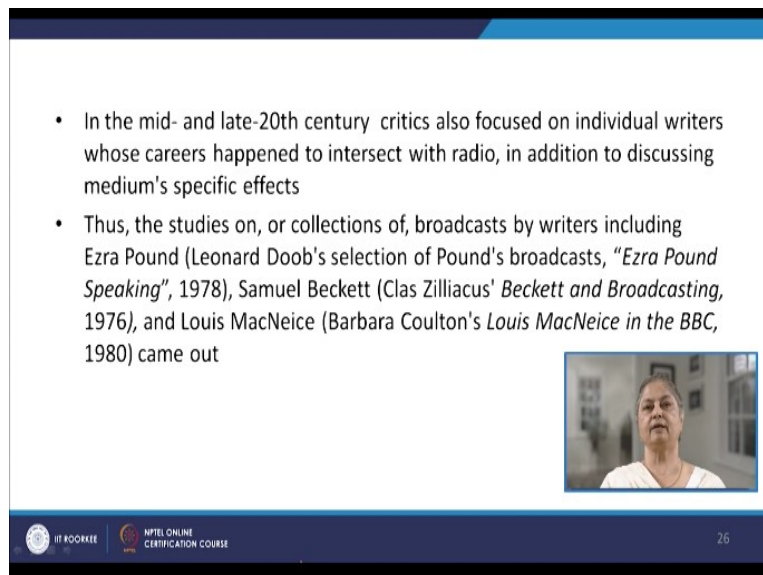
Under the impact of communication and media studies in 1950s and 1960s, we find that a different perspective towards radio studies emerged. We have seen how during the 1920s and

1930s critics were looking at a medium from the perspective of radio being a vehicle of either propaganda or culture. However, in 1950 with the publication of the works *Empire and Communication* and *The Bias of Communication* by Harold Innis a new age of radio criticism begins.

It is soon supplemented by Marshall McLuhan's writings as well as by the works of R. Murray Schafer and Walter Ong. During this time, under the impact of the media studies, we find that criticism turned to theorizing what Ong has called the secondary orality of the electronic media age-- an orality which serves to retribalize mankind and this is a phrase which has been used by Marshall McLuhan.

His idea is that the latest developments of electronic media are a retribalizing mankind around acoustic communities of language, nation, race and ideology. Their work particularly the strain of technological determinism which runs in all their writings remains foundational to any discussion of the correlations which exist between radio and other media in the 20th century as well as in the 21st century too.

**(Refer Slide Time: 33:32)**



The slide features a white background with a blue header and footer. It contains two bullet points and a small video inset. The first bullet point discusses critics focusing on individual writers whose careers intersected with radio. The second bullet point lists studies on broadcasts by Ezra Pound, Samuel Beckett, and Louis MacNeice. The video inset shows a woman speaking.



- In the mid- and late-20th century critics also focused on individual writers whose careers happened to intersect with radio, in addition to discussing medium's specific effects
- Thus, the studies on, or collections of, broadcasts by writers including Ezra Pound (Leonard Doob's selection of Pound's broadcasts, "*Ezra Pound Speaking*", 1978), Samuel Beckett (Clas Zilliacus' *Beckett and Broadcasting*, 1976), and Louis MacNeice (Barbara Coulton's *Louis MacNeice in the BBC*, 1980) came out

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In the mid and late 20th century, critics also focused on individual writers whose careers happened to intersect with radio in addition to discussing the specific effects of medium and therefore we find that the studies on broadcasts by writers including Ezra Pound, Samuel Beckett and Louis MacNeice, etc., came out.

**(Refer Slide Time: 33:52)**

- Major critical works in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:
  - Emily Thompson's *The Soundscape of Modernity* (2002) focuses on relations between sound reproduction and acoustical architecture in America from 1900–1933
  - Jonathan Sterne's *The Audible Past* (2003) examines the cultural history of listening practices that predate the proliferation of sound reproduction technologies circa 1900.
- Renewed interest in radio studies in the digital age; innovative ways of using the radio
- New evolutions of radiogenic technologies—net radio initiatives
- More than 180 community radios in India, broadcasting in languages like *Garhwali, Awadhi and Santhali*
  - Hyper-local news
  - Plays a stellar role in times of calamity, owing to easy accessibility

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The major critical works in the 21st century can be mentioned here. A major direction has been provided by Emily Thompson in her book entitled *The Soundscape of Modernity* which focuses on relations between sound reproduction and acoustical architecture in America from 1900 to 1933. Another significant direction has been taken up by Jonathan Sterne in his book *The Audible Past* published in 2003.

He has examined the cultural history of listening practice that predate the proliferation of sound reproduction technologies around 1900. So we find that even in the digital age, there is a renewed interest in radio studies and with the development of new technologies we find that innovative ways of using radio are also to be initiated. So there are new evolutions of radiogenic technologies.

And there are new initiatives combining the internet technology and radio technology. We find that more than 180 community radios are at present broadcasting in India in languages like Garhwali, Awadhi and Santhali focusing on hyper-local news. It can also be set that radio plays a stellar role in times of calamity because of the easy accessibility of this medium. So we find that radio which started its journey almost century back still has retained its relevance.

And we find that critics are also looking at this medium with renewed critical interest. In the next module, we would discuss the latest developments in television and relative literary studies. Thank you.