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Chapter 2: A History of Communication Technology

Multiple Choice Questions

1. The earliest print technology can be traced to:
    a. Ancient Chinese civilizations
    b. Gutenberg's movable type press
    c. *Publick Occurrences*, the first newspaper in the U.S.
    d. The invention of automated, steam presses in the 1800s.

2. Magazine popularity was impacted strongly by:
    a. The move by advertisers to television in the middle of the 20th century.
    b. Prohibitions on mail distribution of magazines.
    c. The high cost of paper in 1992.
    d. The introduction of the Internet at the turn of the century.

3. The number of books published per year
    a. Has been steadily increasing over the last hundred years.
    b. Has dropped dramatically since 1990.
    c. Has remained steady over the last hundred years.
    d. Has dropped inversely to the rise of cable television.

4. Early adopters of telephones were
    a. Doctors, who used them to communicate with patients.
    b. Families, who used them to communicate over distances.
    c. Schools, which used them to stay in touch with parents.
    d. Hotels, which used them to replace human messengers.

5. Weekly attendance at motion pictures was highest:
    a. During the Silent Era, from 1920-1929.
    b. During the Great Depression, from 1934-1941.
    c. After the end of World War II, from 1946-1949.
    d. During the Blockbuster Era from 1972-1985.

6. The history of radio:
    a. Demonstrates how a technology can survive for a century without innovation.
    b. Includes significant changes almost every generation, with the introduction of FM, stereo, satellite, and digital radio.
    c. Illustrates how radio reinvented itself because of competition from motion pictures.
    d. Shows a steady decline in radio ownership since 1987.

7. Cable television's greatest growth era was spurred by:
    a. The introduction of HBO and other movie channels in the 1970s.
    b. Deregulation of telecommunication industries in the 1980s.
    c. The introduction of HDTV in the 1990s.

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d. The failure of satellite television from 2003-2005.

8. Which of the following did not allow viewers to “time-shift” their television viewing?
    a. VHS videocassette recorders
    b. DVRs
    c. Blu-ray and DVD players
    d. All of the above allow “time shifting.”

9. The Internet
    a. Was an outgrowth of a U.S. Department of Defense project.
    b. Began to decline in popularity (after rapid growth) because of tablet computers.
    c. Is used more hours per day by teenagers than by any other age group.
    d. Is the most heavily regulated new technology.

10. The primary function that spurred the introduction and growth of desktop computers in businesses in the 1980s was:
    a. Internet access
    b. E-mail
    c. Accounting
    d. Word processing

Essay Questions:

1. Of all of the technologies discussed in Chapter 2, discuss which one had the most surprising history to you and why.
2. Choose two or three technologies and discuss commonalities in the history of these technologies. Then apply these commonalties to an emerging communication technology to predict its future.
3. Many technologies, such as VHS and mainframe computers, were eventually replaced by other, newer technologies. But others, such as radio and cinema, have stayed strong against competition by reinventing themselves. What makes radio and cinema different?

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