

I HEARD THE NEWS TODAY, OH BOY

BRAD'S DESK 12/8/10

AS SOMEBODY WHO'S BEEN A FAN OF THE BEATLES SINCE THEY FIRST APPEARED ON THE ED SULLIVAN SHOW, I TEND TO THINK ABOUT JOHN LENNON WHENEVER DECEMBER 8TH COMES AROUND. IT'S STILL HARD TO BELIEVE THAT LENNON WAS SHOT 30 YEARS AGO TODAY, WHILE HE HAD THE NUMBER ONE RECORD ON THE CHARTS AT AGE 40. AND IT'S STILL HARD TO BELIEVE THAT I SPENT MORE THAN AN HOUR WATCHING T-V THE NIGHT OF THE SHOOTING, WELL AFTER THE NEWS BROKE, AND DIDN'T HEAR A THING ABOUT IT.

I SAW THAT E-S-P-N HAS DONE A REPORT ON HOW IT HAPPENED THAT MOST OF AMERICA HEARD ABOUT LENNON'S DEATH FIRST FROM HOWARD COSELL, DURING A MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL GAME. THAT REMINDS ME OF HOW MUCH THE MEDIA HAVE GROWN IN JUST 30 YEARS. THIS WAS WAY BEFORE TWITTER, AND THE INTERNET, AND THE 24-HOUR CABLE NEWS CYCLE.

I DIDN'T EVEN HAVE CABLE THAT NIGHT IN 1980, IN ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS, WHEN I CAME HOME FROM COVERING A SCHOOL BOARD MEETING TO WATCH SOME T-V. THE LOCAL NEWS WAS ENDING ON THE CBS CHANNEL, AND I WATCHED THE 'MASH' RERUN THEY HAD AFTERWARD. THEN, 'THE WILD WILD WEST' ON THE SAME CHANNEL. THEN, I SWITCHED TO NBC, WHERE TOM SNYDER ON THE TOMORROW SHOW MENTIONED THE LIGHTING OF THE ROCKEFELLER CENTER CHRISTMAS TREE, AND TALKED WITH MORLEY SAFER OF '60 MINUTES' ABOUT HIS HOBBY OF PAINTING PICTURES OF THE MOTEL ROOMS WHERE HE HAS STAYED. WHEN I WENT TO BED, I TURNED ON THE RADIO, AND ALMOST IMMEDIATELY HEARD THAT JOHN LENNON HAD BEEN SHOT AND KILLED IN NEW YORK. I COULDN'T SLEEP AFTER THAT. I KEPT THE RADIO ON TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THE SHOOTING.

IT STILL SURPRISES ME THAT ALL THE T-V NETWORKS DIDN'T DISRUPT THEIR PROGRAMMING THAT MONDAY NIGHT TO TALK ABOUT JOHN LENNON, CONSIDERING IT WAS THE LEAD STORY ON NETWORK NEWS THE NEXT DAY.

NEWS CAN SPREAD VERY FAST THESE DAYS, WHICH MAKES IT MORE AMAZING TO CONSIDER HOW THE WORLD HAS CHANGED SINCE THE DAYS OF THE BEATLES.

