

# I.R.S. #7 – THE HOME STRETCH!



*Hz So Good's* 7th Annual I.R.S. ("It Really Shoulda" been a top 10 hit!) is down to the final few weeks before we tabulate this year's Top 104. So again we ask: what songs "Really Shoulda" been Top 10?

Use the "E-Z Form" at <http://www.musicradio77.com/IRS.html> and send your list of songs that make you say:

**"IT REALLY SHOULD A been a Top 10 Hit!" by April 1st.**

Any song that didn't reach the Top 10 in the U.S. is fair game - whether or not it was ever on any chart, ever released as a single or ever released in the U.S. And it doesn't matter if you don't know (or care) whether songs were Top 10 or not - we'll take care of all corrections.

It also doesn't matter how few or how many songs you send - just not more than 100, please.

Lists should be in rank order, title followed by artist, with your #1 at the top. List only one song per line.

As the I.R.S. Top 104 is a ranking of songs, do not list two sides of a single, two or more versions of the same song, or two or more songs by any artist as one entry on one line.

Only one I.R.S. form is allowed per person.

Random I.R.S. filers will receive "refunds" such as 4-disc sets of this year's Top 104, free appraisals from [Forever Vinyl](#) and other prizes.

**Please include your full name and complete mailing address at the end of your list to be eligible for any prizes**

(and so we can mention you during the countdown of the Top 104 on [Rewound Radio](#)).

**Listen for the complete countdown of the 7th Annual I.R.S. Top 104 on [Rewound Radio](#) starting Friday April 11<sup>th</sup> (just before that other IRS deadline).**

**Check out and join the [I.R.S. group on Facebook](#) for updates and more details.**

Preparers are standing by.



a division of



“Fighting to Stay Free”

#182...March 2014

**And now, ladies and gentlemen...**

## 10 THINGS THAT HAVEN'T BEEN REPLACED

(AND MAYBE SHOULDN'T BE)

The Internet – and natural evolution of media, entertainment and life in general - isn't all it's cracked up to be. Some remnants of our earlier days on Earth should not only be preserved but embraced either because they were better than what's come along since, or the more likely situation: nothing has really replaced them.

Submitted for your approval, ten examples of this, beginning with the one nearest and dearest to my heart. Somehow I sense there are a lot more where these came from.

## DJS WHO WERE BIGGER THAN THE MUSIC THEY PLAYED



We hear the word “curator” a lot these days related to music subscription services, but it’s hard to top the radio host when it comes to passion for and recommendation of music. Some reading this will recall an era when DJs like Scott Muni - whether on top 40, R&B, country, rock, really any format - served as expert and gatekeeper: if it was new and worthy of your attention, he or she would play it or it didn’t matter.

DJs were bigger than the music in another way that nothing online can replace: they were our friends. We tuned in to hear them even more than the music. They’d come on before and after nearly every song not just to talk about what they’d played (and not the artists’ personal lives or gossip, but the music itself) but to entertain, often offering a humorous take on the world around us, and keep us company.

The combination of recorded music’s greater accessibility and radio’s decision to follow the consumer toward a music-intense presentation has, perhaps ironically, de-emphasized the medium’s greatest gift: its ability to be personal and, unlike Pandora et al, deliver more than just music. At the same time it has made it easier for even those growing up with live personality radio to forget about the skills involved in being a communicator, skills that have not been passed down to most of the current generation of air talent. It’s ironic that in an era when people have less personal contact than ever, opting to text or post in social media, there wouldn’t be a greater need for DJs to fill that void.

## TV VARIETY



Just as radio served to make sense of music, TV was once proud to be the clearinghouse for all current entertainment. The variety format brought the best of live performance – theater, comedy, musicians and yes, plate-spinners and puppeteers – into every home. While it can be argued that *Entertainment Weekly* does now what *The Ed Sullivan Show* did then, reading about what’s new and hot is a long way down from seeing and experiencing at least a slice of what’s out there. And while the current economics of television can be blamed for killing the variety format, it’s surprising that no one online has taken the baton and offered a modern-day weekly review of everything we need to see or know about.

## PAID CRITICS

Online writing and reporting has decimated the respect once reserved for the arts, not only because anyone can write anything but because so many web-based pop culture sites have become fixated on attention-getting guerilla tactics such as “Why (currently hot pop act here) Sucks” stories. As a result, the idea of paid critics as the go-to arbiters of what’s good and bad has become old hat. After all, if anyone can submit any review for any movie, play or performer they’ve seen, or any new single/album they’ve listened to, what makes the professional opinion such a big deal? How about this: the best critics understand (or ought to understand) all the elements contributing to a great work of art – the production, the writing, the backstories of the performers, etc. – more than those of us who don’t bother or have the time to break down a movie or album to examine what went into it. And that brings us to...

## SISKEL AND EBERT



While there’s nothing wrong with having hundreds of reviews of just-opened movies at the click of a mouse, it doesn’t touch entrusting the decision to see or not to see to critics whose passion for film itself makes for great viewing. During a near 20-year run on television, Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert were themselves the best advertisement for going to movies. In the end, it didn’t matter whether the pair agreed or disagreed (the latter always better), or liked or hated a film: like the DJs mentioned earlier, they became bigger than what they discussed every week. Even if I had no desire (or more realistically, no money) to see movies (such as this time each year, the calm before the summer storm), Siskel and Ebert were must-see just to know what was going on at the multiplex. They always made reviewing look easy, even though it clearly isn’t. With so many students of film out there, why another team of critics with the same smarts and chemistry (or lack thereof) hasn’t emerged via any video source to help make sense of movies (and for that matter the Oscars) is a head-scratcher.

## SERVICE



Prince said it best in one of his biggest hits: “This life you’re on your own.” With the possible exception of Apple, good help isn’t easy to come by anymore. If you’ve ever tried

to Google information about your specific problem or get answers on any company's help page, or spent an hour (or entire day) on the phone with Verizon, you understand. In other words, the modern day equivalents of gas station attendants who cleaned your windows and checked your oil no questions asked – or closer to the pop culture world, the person in the record store who could help you find that song or suggest what album your significant other might like – are poor substitutes.

## DEDICATED GAME SHOW HOSTS



Just as radio has attempted to 'borrow' talent from other media hoping name recognition translates to ratings, what few network game shows are left have done the same. Not to take anything from Drew Carey, a brilliant comedian who replaced the iconic Bob Barker as host of *The Price Is Right* several years ago, but like being a radio DJ (which many game show hosts were at one time) being 'master of ceremonies' is a special talent in and of itself. Beyond Ryan Seacrest and Carson Daly, is this species extinct?

## ANNOUNCERS



Related to the above, here's another broadcast type that's fallen off the radar except for the occasional late night talk sidekick-throwback, such as *The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon's* Steve Higgins (Steve who?). The announcer was one of the best things about pre-TV radio to make the move to the visual medium, even if on the surface that didn't make a lot of sense. But they adapted by being not only the "identifying voice" of a show but also by playing foil to its host, sometimes getting the best lines.

## NOT KNOWING WHAT'S IN OUR FOOD



We may be healthier for all we now know about what's really in a McDonald's hamburger, but are we happier? Fast food and chain restaurants – and before those, local car hops and burger joints - may have questionable reputations in this day and age, but they were, at their peaks, rites of passage and family destinations. Put another way, they've given us shared experiences as a nation. Granted, we're seeing a new wave of burger and not-so-fast food places, but a lot of that business is take-home, so the experience of going out to eat for simple American food continues to fade as we become less united by activities that were once standard fare (as well as by the rise of vegetarianism, veganism and gluten-free diets).

## THE CENTER OF TOWN



Sure, you could still run into your neighbors at the mall or local sterile collection of chain retailers. That and the growing-more-every-day choice - staying home, shopping on Amazon and refraining from any contact with the outside world – have rendered Main Street obsolete. The commercial viability of the small town 'square' may be a thing of the past (with the exception of the well-to-do communities where it's survived by going super-upscale), but there's something to be said not just for its obvious charm but the idea of immersing oneself into the community by spending time there. It's safe to say nothing's truly replaced this.

## THE BEATLES



Little needs to be said about this after the recent 50th-anniversary blitz. Except that, it was very much like the current generation of artists and media practitioners saying, we give up. No one or nothing has, and perhaps ever will, replace them.

*Hz So Good* online (current issue and archive back to 2010) at  
<http://www.60s70s.org/HzSoGood/>.

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