



I'm finding out after much study, our old thinking about the act that destroyed our beloved Manhattans' "Radio Row" was a cause probably in of it's self.

Even tho "Radio Row" folks were evicted by the Port Authority and dumped on the trash heap, to make way for the Twin Towers project, research didn't show all of the facts. High rent values and lack of interest by the new breed was another cause. Others said electronics moved to Asia! Not the fault of the World Trade C.

Harry Elias, VP of JVC of America stated he frequently purchased kit parts there in Radio Row and it was a high traffic area for the radio parts era. Elias said "All of the stores were next door to each other and you'd have guys out front hawking their wares. One of the biggest was Hudson Radio; they had parts for everything in electronics."

Following a wan period of the 1940's, when parts were diverted for the war effort, business exploded with the advent of television and HI-Fi audio. - But Radio Row at least in its original incarnation, was not to last. Within 20 years, after the transistor revolutionized the consumer electronics industry and sent tube sets into oblivion, demand for electronics parts faded and Cortlandt Street stalwarts like Harvey, Harrison and Leonard Radio added finished goods or died. As one vender recalled, "The parts business began to dry up in the transistor era and by the late 1960's it was all finished goods down there.

Alas, this second Radio Row renaissance, which produced such second generation A/V dealers as J&R Music World, Crazy Eddie, Trader Horn - would also be short lived. As industry veteran and CES founder Jack Wayman noted, most of the Cortlandt Street storefronts would fall victim to the "progression from single stores to local chains to great superstores as product proliferated inside and outside electronics."

Indeed, the success of such New York metro area chains as Crazy Eddie, Trader Horn, Newmark & Lewis, Tops, Brick Church, P.C.Richard and SaveMart, with their wide selection, sharp pricing and aggressive advertising, marked the beginning of the end for Radio Row. Editors note "J&R Music World lives today in 2006 with a nice internet WEB."

"They couldn't compete with the local broad based retailers, "Wayman said - although most of the regionals themselves would later succumb to market saturation and the onslaught of national chains." According to Wayman, as well as a recent History Channel documentary on the World Trade Center - bulldozers and wrecking balls sounded the final death kneel for Radio Row, as buildings were condemned and city blocks razed to make way for the Twin Towers. "They lost their footprint down there to the Trade Center," he said. Progress?