

# Random Thoughts 66

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## American II

### Jukebox

Jukeboxes were also popular up until the late 1960s. A jukebox is a partially automated music-playing device<sup>1</sup>. You could find them in diners and bars. The jukebox contained lots of popular records which could be selected by pressing keys that had letters and numbers on them. There were also small boxes interspaced along the counter which were connected to the main jukebox. You could look at the list of songs on the records and play a song you liked by depositing a coin, which when I was young was a dime (ten cents), and then pressing the letter-number for that song. The song would then be played throughout the room. Sometimes we would even dance to the music!

### Drive-in<sup>2</sup>

There were basically two kinds of drive-ins: one for diners and the other for movie theaters. In both places you could enjoy the services offered in the comfort of your car. In Oregon we are able to get a driver's permit at the age of 15 and a driver's license at the age of 16. That means we could get a car while we were still in high school and many students did. I did not have my own car, but I did have a motorcycle. Nevertheless, I could always use one of my family's cars when I wanted to use a car, such as on a date.

Drive-in restaurants, basically diners, had a large parking area. A waitress, often on roller skates, would come to your car to take your order. Then when the order was ready, she would bring it back on a tray that could be fitted against the car window. So we could sit in the car and listen to our car radio while we ate in the privacy of the car. When finished, we flashed our car lights and the waitress would come and take away the tray.

Drive-in theaters were also very popular up until the mid-sixties or so. I believe there used to be some in Japan, too, but I never went to one here. There were two in my small town where I grew up. We mostly went to them when we were in high school and on dates because we could "make out"<sup>3</sup> in the privacy of the car. Drive-in theaters had a shop where you could buy popcorn, soft drinks, candy, and even hot dogs. I don't remember any of the movies I saw at drive-in theaters, but I do remember my dates!

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<sup>1</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jukebox>

<sup>2</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Drive-in>

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