

## History of Television Archives

by Kathleen McGuire for Howard Besser

### Introduction

The extensive loss of silent film is an oft referred to maxim used as a call to arms for film preservation. Estimates of the exact loss differ; at best, 20% of silent era films have survived, but most estimates fall closer to 10%.<sup>1</sup> This loss of early content is indicative of the initial priorities of filmmakers and studios, which lay in the most immediate needs of the industry and mainly related to new content.

By the time television became a prominent force in the culture, film archives and the basic infrastructure for long-term safeguarding of film had been established. Despite this, the devastating loss of early cinema was repeated with television. Figures related to early television loss are difficult to find, however the figures that do exist indicate that television loss runs even deeper than with silent film. A *Washington Post* article from 1975 states that, “It is estimated only 5 percent of the total amount of network television programming produced since 1948 has been consciously preserved and maintained.”<sup>2</sup> If this figure were to include programming since 1975, the percent would rise significantly, however that should not undercut the depths of loss related to the earliest period.

As a form of entertainment and channel for new sharing and education, television permeated the culture and, through its position in the home, became an intimate part of people’s lives. The importance of television for study in multiple disciplines is obvious and there is a strong consumer desire to have archival television available for leisurely enjoyment. Despite this, television preservation continues to be problematic and the depth of the loss of early, and even more recent content, is continually being revealed.

In 1977, the International Federation of Television Archives was established to support television archivists and television archives (or, archives with television collections). Initially, it was hoped that the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAP) would incorporate television under its mission. Despite many arguing that a single organization would be more effective, FIAP chose not to adjust its mission. In Penelope Houston’s *Keepers of the Frame*, Ann Hanford is quoted as saying that, even in 1997 “there are still quite a lot of people in the film world, though not as many as in the past, who think that television is not quite respectable.” Houston goes on to point out that, “More significant, in practical terms, is FIAP’s need to demonstrate to the film industry that its heart remains pure and non-profit making. To let in the television companies, with their dependence on sales – of for that matter any of the commercial film libraries – would change the character of FIAP beyond repair.”<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> “Film Preservation 1993: A Study of the Current State of American Film Preservation, Volume 1: Report.” *Library of Congress*. June 1993. <<http://www.loc.gov/film/study.html>>. Accessed 25 Sept 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Stevens, George Jr. “Television Archives?.” *The Washington Post*. 12 Apr 1975. A 10.

<sup>3</sup> Houston, Penelope. *Keepers of the Frame*. British Film Institute: London, 1994. 145.

Houston's point speaks to the very different nature of television as compared to film. This difference reaches beyond just commerce and is evident in the mode of production as well. When considering the development of television archiving, these modes of production are an important backbone for understanding why the field developed as it has. The general neglect of the individuals and companies charged with the care of content is one of the main issues in early film preservation. This issue is also relevant to television, however issues related to technology and workflow are more central to the lack of preservation and the lack of development of a defined structure for television archiving.

In the case of the earliest television broadcasts, the available technological of the period prevented the long-term retention of programming. Originally presented as live broadcasts, capturing television broadcasts required additional technology that was not available for the earliest broadcasts. Although there were several early experiments related to recording television, the first successful technology for recording programs, kinescopes or telerecordings, was not introduced until 1947. Kinescopes were films that captured television through a camera set before a television set. While the technology had its benefits, it introduced a new cost into television production and was used sparingly. Since television is a production medium based on immediacy, the primary recognized use of kinescopes was rebroadcast not preservation.

In his book The Television Heritage: Television Archiving Now and in an Uncertain Future, Steve Bryant analyzes the kinescopes held by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), examining what programs were chosen for recording. He notes that initial technology was both crude and rarely used and that the kinescope recordings related mainly newsworthy events that were expected to repeat throughout the day. The other major type of programming represented in the BBC kinescope collection is 'firsts.' These 'firsts' generally feature important cultural content or recognizable public figures. Bryant found that scripted programs are rare in the BBC collection.

The content Bryant found in the collection related closely to the needs of production. In an essay on the history of video in television broadcasting, Jeff Martin first looks at kinescopes, the precursor to video. Kinescopes quickly developed into an important tool in television broadcasting and played an important role in the market expansion of the major networks. During the time that kinescopes were in use, the networks were in their infancy and many markets had only one or two channels. Kinescopes enabled these one or two channels to carry content from all the major networks and not rely only on live broadcasts. Stations would broadcast certain content live and supplement that content with recorded programs broadcast via kinescope. Following the development of the coaxial network cable, which allowed transmission of programming from coast to coast, Martin notes that kinescoping became even more important as a way to adhere to programming times. A series broadcast live on the east coast would be kinescoped for west coast playback three hours later.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Martin, Jeff. "The Dawn of Tape: Transmission Device as Preservation Medium." The Moving Image. Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring 2005: 45-66.

Despite the development of kinescopes and their important, as stated above, scripted programming is not well represented in television collections. Bryant speculates that the reason for this was that the programs did not have recognizable re-use value. Also, agreements with the performers in scripted programs often stipulated that the program could only be used for a single airing, with some contracts even stating that the film had to be destroyed after a single airing.<sup>5</sup> Some broadcasts would return the film to Eastman Kodak to receive and receive a small kickback for the 'salvaged' film. Although the possibility for preserving television emerged with kinescopes, they primarily remained a means of transmitting programming with their preservation potential recognized for the most limited of content.

With the emergence of videotape in the 1950's, television production gained a way of capturing programs within the production workflow. The first broadcast using two-inch videotape took place on November 30<sup>th</sup>, 1956. Video steadily gained prominence in television production and, due to its cost benefits, became a more appealing option than kinescopes. Analyzing the economics of video versus kinescopes, Martin found that an hour of kinescope recording in 1958 would cost approximately \$110-120 per hour, while video cost \$300. "How did tape become cheaper?" Martin asks, "Reuse. A daily program might have one reel of tape to be used again and again each day until it wore out." He goes on to note that a single tape having one hundred passes was not uncommon. Like the kinescope, video was used for transmitting content, not for long-term safeguarding.

The reuse and erasure of video is one of the main explanations of why so much early television has been lost. The practice of destroying television content by reusing videos became an accepted production process that continued well into the establishment of television. As Martin's numbers show, video was expensive and reuse was the key to driving down costs. In a piece about the establishment of the UCLA Film and Television Archive, one of its founders and early directors, Howard Suber said, "Networks don't preserve their news programs beyond what is required legally. They think saving 50 bucks by erasing tape and using it again is worth more than having a record of their newscast."<sup>6</sup>

As networks expanded and the cost of videotape declined drastically, content was lost, not through reuse of videos, but through the wholesale junking of entire collections. Margaret Compton notes that, "In the 1980's and 1990's, entire archives of local news film, tapes, and VTRs were dumped in landfills to free up station space." Much of the material that remains, Compton says, is a result of archivist on dumpster diving missions. Although she is speaking directly about localized programming, the larger networks behaved the same way.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Bryant, Steve. The Television Heritage Television Archiving Now and in an Uncertain Future. The Broadcasting Debate 4. BFI Publishing: London, 1989.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas, Kevin. "A Good Home for Old Films at UCLA Archive." *Los Angeles Time*. 1 Mar 1972; F1.

<sup>7</sup> Compton, Margaret. "The Archivist, the Scholar, and Access to Historic Television Materials." *Cinema Journal*. 46, no. 3, Spring 2007; 129-133.

Related to the issue of physical space concerns, another problem that slowed the establishment of television preservation was the overwhelming volume of television constantly being created. This was a problem even in the early history of television when the number of broadcasters was minimal. The problem only worsened as the number of stations proliferated. Due to the volume of content, the need for appraisal and selection policies at television archives is influential in determining what the ‘history of television’ is. Most networks did not have determined appraisal policies; if a policy was in place, it was generally to maintain selected representative episodes of a series. This is a problematic policy. How is a specific episode determined to be ‘representative?’ Who is charged with making the selection? A *New York Times* piece from 1983 that acts as a call to arms for the preservation of television archives states that, “Separating the wheat from the chaff is a challenge that archivists would rather avoid, because they know that the interests and tastes of the future are hard to predict.”<sup>8</sup>

In the case of news, the Vanderbilt Archive serves as a model for appraisal; they capture the nightly newscast from the three major broadcasters, and CNN and Fox News, as well as selected special broadcast. However, this policy also draws attention to the trouble with capturing and preserving television. Although it can be expected that most stories covered during other news broadcasts taking place throughout the day will be included in the nightly broadcast, the way the story is presented and the facts will change with each broadcast. Tracking such changes has obvious value to researchers.

Television material also lends itself to reuse, which effects how the networks view their own collections. Most of the major networks maintain libraries, not archives. While this means that the content is available and not forever lost, the intentions for the content remains related to production and not preservation. While this structure may, by default, result in the long-term safeguarding of the programming, it is not the intention and not the archival ideal.

While each of these issues stunted the development of the field of television archiving, resulting in incalculable content loss, a small number of archives have emerged in the field to confront these issues and protect television for long-term use. The development of television archiving has been slow moving, and it lacks infamous personalities and recognized figureheads, such as those who are central to the history of film archiving. Despite this, there are several trailblazers and trailblazing institutions in the history of television preservation that had to creatively determine unique and roundabout ways of saving television and providing the public with its collective cultural history.

## **TELEVISION ARCHIVES AND COLLECTIONS IN THE UNITED STATES**

While the earliest iteration of television ‘archives’ exists in the aforementioned network libraries, it was external entities that initiated major collection and real *preservation* of television. In the United States the largest television collections reside at the UCLA Film and Television Archive and the Library of Congress. Both organizations are mainly

---

<sup>8</sup> Lacayo, Richard. “Preserving the Best of Today’s Programming for Tomorrow’s Viewers.” *The New York Times*. 30 Oct 1983. H31.

noted for their film collections. However as two of the earliest and most successful television collectors, their collections are of infinite importance.

## **MAJOR INTERDISCIPLINARY ARCHIVES**

### *UCLA Film and Television Archives*

The University of California at Los Angeles was one of the earliest adopters of film and cinema as a source of theoretical and practical study. The UCLA Film and Television Archives have evolved into the second largest archive in the United States.

Prior to the formal establishment of the archive the impetus for preserving materials was at work within the University's academic departments. By the mid-1950's, Ernie Rose and Raymond Fielding, professors in the school's department of cinema, began collecting materials that would eventually be incorporated into the formal archive. Rosen in particular was interested in television programming and gathered a modest number of kinescopes including episodes of *I Love Lucy* and *Drama of the Week*. The programs were secured through production houses that had the kinescopes but did not have any use for them.<sup>9</sup>

The film archive at UCLA was officially established in 1965, at the urging of several professors. Bob Epstein, a lecturer in School of Theatre Arts –Film Division, Harold Schwartz, and chair of the Critical Studies department, Howard Suber, were the particularly relevant figures to the archive's development and ultimately took on much of the work in its operation.

The television arm of the archive was established a year later, in 1966. This establishment of the television archive was done through a formal announcement, which many thought was premature and overstated both the television collection and the resources available for a television archive at UCLA. In an essay about the development of UCLA's archive, Robert Rosen writes, "In 1966, when faculty members Arthur Friedman and Ruth Schwartz and Television Academy president Robert Lewine announced the establishment of the National Television Library at UCLA, the ambition of the name belied the modest holdings." Schwartz became head of the television arm.

Although the formal announcement and lofty title of the archive implied UCLA was serious about television preservation and strove to be the major 'national' television collection, the early years of the television archive illustrated these points as a lot of talk with little action. In another piece about the institutions history, Robert S. Birchard recalls a tale of a collection of one-inch videos from the government sponsored *Social Security in Action* program that were long stored "under a stairway" on a university soundstage. The videos were donated to the school, but "had not been deemed important enough to be part of the [television] collection," despite "including interviews with Harold Lloyd, Helen Hayes, and other film and entertainment personalities." After Birchard, then a student at the school, witness the tapes being used as "streamers" in set dressing on the soundstage, he arranged for Schwartz to view the Harold Lloyd episode.

---

<sup>9</sup> Fielding, Raymon. "Archival Misadventures at UCLA: The Earliest Years." *Moving Image* Volume 5, No. 1, Spring 2005; 125-8.

This successfully convinced her to take control of the collection, however, Birchard identifies this story as exemplary of “how informal (read clueless) the television arm of the library was at the time.”<sup>10</sup>

The early days of the UCLA Film and Television Archives were volatile as the founders attempted to develop its protocols and work from a miniscule budget. Initially, Suber and Epstein positioned the film and television archives as ‘film study collections,’ however quickly found “the two functions are virtually inseparable.” Part of the impulse to define the collection as a study collection was due to their position within a university and because professors and students continuously used the collection for educational purposes. Epstein and Suber saw this type of access as being in opposition to the policies of an institution like the Library of Congress, who provided only limited access materials, and only to copies, not originals. However, the two recognized also recognized the importance of preservation and saw that “that the sad history of film preservation [was] being repeated with television.”<sup>11</sup> Epstein first proposed adding a preservation program to the Archive in 1975 and recruited AFI preservationist Bob Gitt for the job. The Archive was unable to afford to implement the preservation program or hire Gitt for several years due to funding deficits, however it is clear that the preservation impulse emerged early in the Archive’s establishment.

The Archive grew fairly quickly, as UCLA acquired major film collections from Paramount and Fox that the studios were planning to junk. With the growth, it slowly formalized and began developing institutional policies and infrastructure. Over time, the Archive has acquired many major television collections and the number of television programs now held by UCLA is second only to the Library of Congress. Early collections include the ABC collection, which features 24,000 programs from the early 1950’s through the end of the 1970’s and includes episodes from most of ABC’s primetime programming including *Charlie’s Angels*, *Disneyland*, *Leave it to Beaver*, and *The Mickey Mouse Club*. An early television collection contains representative content from each major networks, as well as programs from the defunct DuMont network and local stations. UCLA also holds several topic specific collections and collections related to known personalities. Topic specific collections often related to subjects that are of interest to the UCLA library or topics that are represented in the film arm of the archive such as media related to Chicano culture and Film Noir television. Individual collections held by the Archive include a Jack Benny collection that holds 220 episodes of his television series and an Edward R. Morrow collection with his earliest newsreels. A final television collection of interest is UCLA’s collection of over 10,000 commercials. The breadth of UCLA’s television holdings, which date from 1948 to the present, offer an unparalleled completeness of deep value to researchers.

*Library of Congress: Motion Picture Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division*

Unlike the UCLA Film and Television Archive, which developed haphazardly and through the hard work of a few dedicated individuals, the television collection at the

---

<sup>10</sup> Birchard, Robert S. “Nitrate machos vs. Nitrate Nellies: Buccaneer Days at the UCLA Film and Television Archive.” *Moving Image*. Vol. 4, No. 1, Spring 2004; 119-129

<sup>11</sup> Thomas.

Library of Congress (LOC), the largest in the world, emerged from a well-established government infrastructure. Film's inclusion in the collections at the LOC was begun right when the medium originated. In 1894, the acceptance of paper prints for copyright deposit began. A Division of Prints was established in 1897 to care for these items. In 1912 with the passing of the Townsend Act motion pictures were recognized "as entities in their own right for copyright purposes." At this point, however, the Library was not capable of storing nitrate film, so materials had to be returned to producers following copyright registration. Formal collection of films took hold in the late 1940's, when the Library was able to secure storage space, and later build its own vault.<sup>12</sup>

Although there are obvious lacks in the Library's early film collection process, particularly during the period between the end of paper print collection in 1916 and the building of the vaults in the late 1940's, copyright deposit provided a helpful impetus for collection development. The collection of television began early, in 1949. The collection policy was lacking, however, and resulted in holes in the television collections. In the LOC publication Three Decades of Television, the collection policy of the LOC and its susceptibility to these collection holes, particularly in the case of television is outlined. The Library's collections are built primarily through "selectively retaining deposit copies of materials registered at the Library for copyright protection," although it does accept donations and purchase particularly desirable materials.

In the case of television, the early view of television as a temporal medium made many producers not bother to seek copyright protection. Another problem that emerged in developing the LOC television collection was uncertainty about what constituted "published" in the case of television. "As had been previously established with film, performances by broadcast did not *per se* constitute publication; publication came at a later point, when the material had been fixed and offered for sale, lease or rental." This problem was addressed in the Copyright Act of 1976, however this copyright confusions combined with producers disinterest in retaining their own materials created in a dirge of early television at the LOC.

While these problems fell mainly outside of the LOC's control, another problematic issue was the LOC's general attitude, which "paralleled that of the scholarly community in general" as well as the producers of television and "underestimated the social and historical significance of the full range of television programming." In the mid-1970's, as the call for better television archives began to emerge, the failings of the LOC in this area were brought into question. In his *Washington Post* piece, Steve Bryant argued that the development of television archives was dependent on the Office of Telecommunications Policy in the White House developing protocols which included initiating "a presidential directive to federal agencies, including the Library of Congress and the National Archives, to re-order their priorities and place emphasis on the visual record of our culture equal to the emphasis now put on the printed record."

---

<sup>12</sup> Slide, Anthony. Nitrate Won't Wait. McFarland Classics; Jefferson, North Carolina, 1992: 40.

Until the mid-1960's, the LOC used its loose selection process to collect only a very minimal number of television works. In Three Decades of Television it reads, "The Library chose only an occasional sample of entertainment series –e.g., one episode of *The Honeymooners* – and the so-called "quality" programs." At this point the library also collected only via copyright and would not accept outside television collections or purchase programs. In 1966 the Motion Picture Section reference staff took on responsibility of selecting programs for inclusion in the collection. Armed with the knowledge of what programs researchers most often requested, television collection expanded and the LOC began adding "all network documentaries and telefeatures, and a healthy sampling of entertainment series and other types of programming." By 1979 the LOC held 14,000 programs.

Although making up for the programming that was lost as a result of the lackadaisical attitude was impossible, this shift in selection leadership resulted in a "maturation" of the collection and initiated a series of events that showed the LOC's new dedication to television. An indicator of this dedication was the hiring of Eric Barnouw as chief of the Motion Picture, Broadcasting and Recorded Sound Division of the LOC in 1978.<sup>13</sup> A historian and scholar, Barnouw's had a strong interest in broadcasting and documentary. His book *Tube of Plenty: The Evolution of American Television*, released two years prior to his hiring, was an early and seminal entry into the field of television studies. While his tenure was short (he left the position in 1981), selecting such a figure to head the department showed television was gaining some prominence in the collection.

In the mid-1970's, the LOC began actively capturing and accepting deposits of television news. The news collection now includes "nearly complete weeknight broadcasts of *ABC Evening News* (1977-1992), numerous issues of *Nightline* (beginning in 1987); nearly all CBS news programs (1975-1993); [and] an extensive collection of *Macneil-Lehrer Newhour*." The LOC does not have any *NBC Evening News Broadcasts*, and ABC and CBS stopped depositing their news programs in the early 1990's. Since then, the LOC has acquired masters of these broadcasts from the Vanderbilt Television News Archive, however content acquired through Vanderbilt is not available for access at the LOC, but is accepted only for the purpose of providing long-term care.

Over time, the LOC made several major television acquisitions. The Library is home to over 10,000 programs from National Educational Television (NET, the precursor to PBS) and PBS. These programs, which range in date from 1955-1969 (when NET became PBS) were deposited in three groups, one in 1965-1967, one in the late 1970's- early 1980's, and a final group in 1993, which came as part of a major agreement that LOC entered into with PBS. The major agreement of 1993 resulted in the LOC receiving all PBS programming with expired distribution rights as a gift. This agreement, from which the LOC is receiving content on an ongoing basis, has added over 30,000 programs to the collection and is one of the largest television collections at the library.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup> Rouse, xv.

<sup>14</sup> "Television (Motion Picture and Television Reading Room Library of Congress). Library of Congress. < <http://www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/tvcoll.html#char>>. Accessed 18 Aug 2008.

In 1986, the LOC made another huge television acquisition by accepting an NBC-TV collection that included, “some 20,000 additional programs and events which reflect the middle years of the twentieth century and television’s early years.”<sup>15</sup> This deposit helped flesh out the LOC’s television holdings, adding content created during the period that the LOC neglected television. This collection, however, was received primarily as kinescopes and the majority are negatives and separate soundtracks. The LOC has transferred a limited number of titles, but much of the material is unavailable to users without the specific creation of new viewing copies. The LOC television collection has continued to grow via copyright deposit, and, although appraisal for acquisition remains difficult, the collecting policy for television is cognizant of the value of all types of programming and selection takes all forms of cultural relevance into consideration.

While UCLA and the LOC represent the major television collections not just in the United States but in the world, there are many important television archives that have developed over time with collections that, although often limited, when considered together contain a passable look at the history of television.

## **TELEVISION NEWS ARCHIVES**

### *Vanderbilt Television News Archive*

One of the earliest and most important specialized television archives emerged at Vanderbilt University. Upon discovering that the major networks retained only limited selections of their daily news programming, Vanderbilt alumni Paul C. Simpson decided to provide seed funding to the University library to establish an operation that would record the nightly news off-air for later consultation. Simpson’s funding was supplemented by additional funds from two Nashville based foundations. On August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1968, the opening day of the Republican National Convention, the Vanderbilt Television News Archive (VTNA) began recording ABC, CBS, and NBC’s nightly news broadcasts using three borrowed Ampex 1 inch video recorders. Simpson expected that the VTNA would be a temporary testing facility, and approached the LOC with the idea of becoming the permanent site for the operation. Although interested, the LOC ultimately did not take it over.<sup>16</sup> The first three years were so successful that in 1971 a separate staff was developed for the VTNA and it began to receive funding from national sources.

In 1972, VTNA began to index each evening newscast “to the nearest ten second interval.” The indexing including information about who was presenting a story, what information was included in a story and “where it originated.” The indexing was then compiled into guide forms, updated occasionally, that were made available to colleges, universities and individual scholars upon request. This practice of close indexing of content is now common among networks and stock houses looking to best serve producers who will purchase footage. However, VTNA’s indexing took place prior to when this practice became commonplace and, furthermore, was enacted to benefit research activity and not support monetary gain.<sup>17</sup>

---

<sup>15</sup> Rouse, vii.

<sup>16</sup> Hildebrand, Lucas. “The Revoultion was Recorded.” Unpublished Manuscript. 14

<sup>17</sup> Culbert, David H. “The Vanderbilt Television News Archive: Classroom and Research Possibilities.” *The History Teacher*. Vol. 8, No. 1, Fall 1974; 7-16.

As the valuable activities of the VTNA received more attention, the major networks, so keen on neglecting their own material, began to take notice. In 1973, CBS sued Vanderbilt. Simpson had made contact with the major networks prior to establishing the VTNA, “hoping that they would cooperate and even fund the endeavor.”<sup>18</sup> Although CBS, at that point in time, was not actively retaining its materials or seeking to profit off of them, it claimed that off air recording of nightly news broadcasts was a copyright infringement. It demanded the VTNA cease recording its news broadcasts and surrender all recordings to CBS. VTNA responded by claiming its off-air recording of news programming was allowed under the First Amendment and the Fairness Doctrine because they provided access to the content as an educational service.<sup>19</sup>

The lawsuit, which went on for three years, ultimately sided with Vanderbilt and resulted in a major amendment to the copyright law. Section 108 (f)(3) of the United States Copyright Law, enacted under the Copyright Act of 1976 is often referred to as the Vanderbilt Clause. It reads:

“Nothing in this section . . . shall be construed to limit the reproduction and distribution by lending of a limited number of copies and excerpts by a library or archives of an audiovisual news program, subject to clauses (1), (2), and (3) of subsection (a).

Thus, the copyright law supported VTNA’s activities. During and following the lawsuit, the VTNA received a significant amount of attention. Its activities, helped to draw attention to the problem of television archiving and the losses that had occurred in the genre of television news.

Despite the cultural value of VTNA, the budget of the archive was volatile, coming to a head in 1992 when Vanderbilt University considered closing it. “Between 1985 and 1992, it had lost \$1.6 million, \$380,000 in fiscal 1992 alone, and that on expenses of just \$300,000.”<sup>20</sup> Although the University ultimately did not close the Archive, the staff, which had already been reduced from 22 in the 1970’s to 13 by the early 1990’s, was further reduced to just five.<sup>21</sup>

This storm was weathered, and VTNA remains a valuable and oft-consulted resource for a variety of academic areas. VTNA currently holds over 850,000 news stories totaling more than 30,000 hours of content. The regular nightly news collection has each evening news broadcast from ABC, CBS, and NBC from 1968 to the present. VTNA began capturing content from CNN in 1995 and holds copies of its major nightly programs from 1995 to the present: *WorldView*, *Wolf Blitzer Reports*, *NewsNight*, and *Anderson Cooper*

---

<sup>18</sup> Hildebrand, 14.

<sup>19</sup> Hildebrand. “The Revolution was Recorded: Vanderbilt Television News Archive and the making of TV History.”  
<[http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p\\_mla\\_apa\\_research\\_citation/0/9/5/4/1/p95417\\_index.html#get\\_document](http://www.allacademic.com/meta/p_mla_apa_research_citation/0/9/5/4/1/p95417_index.html#get_document)>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

<sup>20</sup> Rosenstiel, Thomas B. “Nation’s only TV news archive mad fade out Little known library at Vanderbilt houses rare tapes for research. But a shoestring budget is badly frayed.” *Los Angeles Times*. 20 Sept 1993: 5.

<sup>21</sup> Hildebrand, 19.

360. On January 15, 2004, *Fox News Reports* was added to the daily line-up. In addition, major events and news stories such as presidential news conferences, presidential speeches, political conventions, wars, and national crises are captured in more detail.

In the early 2000's, the VTNA began a large-scale digital initiative that found it capturing news broadcasts digitally and converting archival content from video to digital format. This project has enabled Vanderbilt to make their content available through an online database to research institutions via subscription.<sup>22</sup> Like the establishment of the archive and the entry into content indexing in the 1970's, this mass digitization and wide-range accessibility is an additional instance of foresight on the part of the forces behind the Vanderbilt Archive. The importance of this television archive cannot be overstated; for 40 years it has successfully served researchers of all forms. In a statement that is echoed in much of the commentary about VTNA, Robert Lichter of the Center for Media and Public Affairs states it has "virtually given birth to the academic study of television news."<sup>23</sup>

## Major Network News Archives

### CBS

Following the lead of VTNA, interest in television news gained momentum as some major archives began collecting news, and small, specialized archives started to emerge. CBS, during their conflict with VTNA, started to consider preserving content through both internal and external options. It developed the CBS News Archive in 1969 as the information department for the news division. Not traditional archive acting in the long-term interest of the material, the CBS News Archive instead was the source for newsmakers to go to update stories, reuse materials, and provide material for sales. Preservation was an afterthought. Despite this lack of concern about preservation, the CBS Archive grew to include a significant amount of content such as all news broadcasts since 1974. While updated information about the collection is difficult to uncover, William Adams and Fay Schreibman wrote in their 1978 book Television Network News that the collection included; selected videotapes of entire broadcasts from 1960-1974, audio of all broadcasts 1950 – 1978, selected kinescopes of entire broadcasts 1948-1960, selected outtakes, TV new series such as *CBS Reports*, *CBS News Specials*, *CBS Special Reports* from 1950 on, *60 Minutes*, *Magazine*, *Face the Nation*. *In the News*, *30 Minutes* for their entire run.<sup>24</sup>

Taking a step towards actual preservation, CBS approached National Archives and Records Service (NARA) in 1972 to began working out an agreement that would have CBS depositing their news programs with NARA for long-term care. This agreement

<sup>22</sup> "TV News Archive, world's largest collection of news broadcasts, celebrates 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary." Vanderbilt University. <<http://sitemason.vanderbilt.edu/myvu/news/2008/08/05/tv-news-archive-worlds-largest-collection-of-news-broadcasts-celebrates-40th-anniversary.62268>>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

<sup>23</sup> Rosenstiel,

<sup>24</sup> Adams, William and Fay Schreibman ed. Television Network News. George Washington University: Washington D.C. 1978. 100-104.

was finalized in 1974. NBC made a similar agreement in 1976, and ABC in 1977. Through these agreements, NARA set up an operation comparable to VTNA to record each nightly newscast and also captured some specialized and particularly historic news content.<sup>25</sup> CBS has a separate archive for their entertainment division.

*ABC News Film/Tape Library and Archives/ ABC Broadcast Operations and Engineering*

As with CBS, the ‘archival’ impulse at ABC related mainly to news programming and was more for the purposes of reuse and consultation for new news pieces than true preservation. This is evident in the use of ‘library’ in its title. Writing for the 1997 *Television and Video Preservation* report to the Library of Congress, employees Nancy Hiegel and Joel Kanoff discuss the library primarily in terms of reuse and production demands. The collection dates to 1960 and currently holds 1.2 million videos and 100,000 films.<sup>26</sup> This includes nightly news programs of all sorts and news magazines that have appeared throughout the corporation’s history. In the 1997 report, the collection policy of the library remained selective. It reads, “We tend to err on the side of inclusively. By necessity, however, we do have to make some difficult choices . . .”<sup>27</sup> While the library does contain some valuable resources, it functions primarily for internal referencing and stock sales.

In 1993, the then President of the ABC Television Network Group supported a project proposed by Preston Davis, who was then the President of ABC Broadcast Operations and Engineering. Davis suggested that ABC take on a massive preservation effort that would involve “building the foundation of what eventually will be a unified network film and tape archive - - carefully housed, properly maintained, and consistently indexed.” At that point the network had “approximately 1 million separate reels and cassettes of Network-owned materials.”<sup>28</sup> Recognizing the daunting task it faced, and the danger much of the content was in, in 1994 ABC began construction on the Media Conservation Facility, which would be used for videotape preservation, conservation, appraisal, and dubbing.<sup>29</sup>

*NBC News Archive*

In the 1997 report to the Library of Congress, NBC News Archives Manager Stanford Singer claimed the archive had been relied on as a “support mechanism” for more than fifty years. While the NBC News Archive implies that it is a rich resource that holds content such as *Meet the Press*, beginning with its first broadcast in 1948, like the other network news libraries and archives, the primary focus is reuse and sales.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup> Adams, 100-104.

<sup>26</sup> “Learn About Internships Available at ABC News.” [ABC News](http://abcnews.go.com/Site/page?id=3069947). <<http://abcnews.go.com/Site/page?id=3069947>>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

<sup>27</sup> Library of Congress, 15.

<sup>28</sup> Library of Congress, 3.

<sup>29</sup> “The Media Conservation Facility at ABC Television Network.” [Library of Congress](http://www.loc.gov/film/pdfs/tvabcchilson.pdf). <[www.loc.gov/film/pdfs/tvabcchilson.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/film/pdfs/tvabcchilson.pdf)>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

<sup>30</sup> “About Us.” [NBC News Archives](http://www.nbcnewsarchives.com/nass/AssetDetailHandler.do?signal=guestAboutUs). <<http://www.nbcnewsarchives.com/nass/AssetDetailHandler.do?signal=guestAboutUs>>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

### **Small/ Specialized News Archives**

Other smaller sources for television news preservation are dispersed throughout the country. The Louis Wolfson Media History Center, established by the Miami-Dade Community College, the Miami-Dade Public Library, and the University of Miami in 1986 is now the designated moving image center and archive for the state of Florida. It began, however, following a large donation of television news films. The films, all 16mm, were donated by WTVJ, the longest running broadcaster in Florida who began broadcasting in 1948. The archive also holds 10,000 hours of television news programming from the 1970's on video including edited news stories, complete broadcasts, documentaries, government programs, sports pieces and entertainment pieces. Taking a cue from VTNA, in 1991 Wolfson began recording local news off-air, capturing a valuable resource that supports their mission of collecting Florida related content.<sup>31</sup>

Texas Tech University began the CNN World Report Archive in 1991. This archive holds a complete run of CNN World Report from its first airing in 1987.

### **SCRIPTED SERIES/ PROGRAMS ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS**

#### *Library of American Broadcasting*

The University of Maryland is home to the Library of American Broadcasting (LAB). The Archive was founded in 1972 under the name Broadcast Pioneers Library and was stored at the National Association of Broadcasters in Washington D.C. until 1994. LAB contains only a small film and video collection, focusing "primarily on promotional materials and samples of network programming." The archive is rich, however, in non-moving image sources about broadcasting, such as archival papers, books, scripts, promotional materials, and audio including oral history.<sup>32</sup> The University of Maryland Library is home to another broadcasting collection, the National Public Broadcasting Archives, which contains papers and other materials related to several facets of broadcasting, with a focus on radio. It is likely the establishment of this Archive in 1990 was part of the impetus for moving LAB to Maryland.<sup>33</sup>

#### *Center for the Study of Popular Television*

Located at Syracuse University, the Center for the Study of Popular Television contains several television collections that hold some valuable local programming, entertainment programming, and political content. The collection includes 245 episodes of the program *Omnibus*, and a near complete collection of the program *Inside Albany*, a local news magazine that ran for over 25 years. The Center also has scripts and audio related to television research.

### **TELEVISION COMMERCIAL COLLECTIONS**

#### *Julian P. Kanter Political Commercial Archive*

---

<sup>31</sup> Library of Congress. 565.

<sup>32</sup> "Library of American Broadcasting." [University of Maryland](http://lib.umd.edu:7000/LAB/about.html). <<http://lib.umd.edu:7000/LAB/about.html>>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

<sup>33</sup> "Origins of NPBA, UM Libraries." [University of Maryland](http://www.lib.umd.edu/NPBA/origins.html). <<http://www.lib.umd.edu/NPBA/origins.html>>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

Held by the University of Oklahoma under its Political Communication Center, the Julian P. Kanter Political Commercial Archive (PCA) is the largest archive of political advertisements in the world. Purchased by the University of Oklahoma library in 1985, the collection was begun by Julian P. Kanter, a private collector, in 1956. The collection has grown to include over 90,000 political advertisements from both television and radio and the University actively seeks donors to assist them in adding to the collection. The Radio materials date from 1936 on; the television content begins in 1950.

#### *Television Advertising and Culture Archive*

Brooklyn College is slowly building an archive of commercials in The Television Advertising and Culture Archive (TACA). The commercial collection at Brooklyn College began sometime in the 1970's or early 1980's following the donation of the Celia Nachatovitz Diamant "Classic Television Commercials" collection. This collection, comprised of two volumes of commercials totaling 87 spots, was a companion to the Lincoln Diamant book Television's Classic Commercials, published in 1971. Since this modest beginning, TACA has made some major acquisitions including the Ted Bates Collection, which has 7,000 commercials made between the 1950's and 1980's, and a large private collection of 2,000 commercials mainly from the 1980's and 1990's. The Archive actively seeks more content to enhance their collection.

### **OTHER**

#### *American Film Institute/ Television Archives Advisory Committee*

Established in 1967 primarily through a grant from the Nation Endowment for the Arts (NEA), the American Film Institute (AFI) was created to "enrich and nurture the art of film in America."<sup>34</sup> While this goal has been achieved through a range of activities, the organization had a strong archival bent from its origination. One of AFI's first activities was a nationwide effort to collect nitrate films for long-term preservation. This initiative began in 1967, almost immediately after the organization was established. The origination of AFI is of interest to the field because its reliance on public funding is seen as a shift in public interest in preservation.

The AFI's dedication to enriching the field led to its participation in one of the earliest United States based film preservation organization. The Film Archives Advisory Committee (FAAC) was created in 1969 as an effort for film archives to cooperate to share information about their holdings and their preservation activities. It was hoped that an organization like FAAC would enable preservation efforts by ensuring that work was not duplicated at various archives, and to help archives have access to the best preservation elements available.

Although FAAC focused entirely on film, it served as the model for the Television Archives Advisory Committee (TAAC). AFI's showed a strong early interest in television preservation prior the eventually creation of TAAC. The organization first decided to devote time and effort to television preservation at its board of trustees meeting in December of 1972. The group determined that their nitrate program had been

---

<sup>34</sup> "AFI History." American Film Institute.  
<<http://www.afi.com/about/history.aspx>>. Accessed 17 Sept 2008.

successful enough that it could handle new television initiatives. In 1973, AFI began forming a plan for television preservation and requested that the NEA allow the organization to devote some of its funding to television preservation. This request was denied in 1974.<sup>35</sup>

Despite this, AFI moved forward and in 1974, organized a meeting in Washington D.C. with the intention of creating a National Coordinating Committee of Television Archives. Following this meeting, AFI established a steering committee for the proposed group. This movement did make enough of a splash for the Ford Foundation to “convene an Ad Hoc Committee on Television Preservation to provide guidance to the Foundation that may be used in the subsequent awarding of grants in the field of television.” The organization, however, did not materialize as planned.<sup>36</sup>

The origins of TAAC lay in another series of Library of Congress meeting, which took place in February in 1977. The point of these meetings was “to explore questions of mutual interest and ways to further cooperation.”<sup>37</sup>The then deputy director of AFI, Richard Carlton, was dismayed when, despite its previously active involvement in television preservation, he and others at AFI were only alerted to these meetings through the general invitation.

After these meetings still led to nothing, in 1979, the AFI took on the responsibility of administering and organizing TAAC. TAAC was comprised of numerous members with vested interests in television preservation, including CBS News Archive, the Museum of Broadcasting, the National Archives and Records Service, and Vanderbilt University. The organization was funded through the same funding mandate provided by the NEA to administer FAAC, and the organizations worked closely, often referred to as FAAC/TAAC.

Upon TAAC’s establishment, the organization’s mandate expanded to include the “discussion of all issues connected with the storage, preservation, and exhibition of electronic moving images . . . however, the funding mandate of the NEA, administered through AFI, remained focused on nitrate preservation.”<sup>38</sup>Eventually, FAAC and TAAC joined and became the Association of Moving Image Archivists.

AFI also has a small collection of television programs. Although their television collection is not as notable as some of the others listed, its early dedication to television preservation was deeply important to establishing and steering the field.

---

<sup>35</sup> Slide, 84

<sup>36</sup> “A Selective Chronology of Events Relating to Television and Video Archives.” Library of Congress. <[www.loc.gov/film/tvappB.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/film/tvappB.pdf)>. Accessed 17 Sept 2008.

<sup>37</sup> Slide, 84.

<sup>38</sup> Horak, Jan-Christopher. “Statement by the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) to the National Preservation Board, in reference to the National Film Preservation Act of 1992.” Library of Congress. <[www.loc.gov/film/pdfs/famia.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/film/pdfs/famia.pdf)>. Accessed 17 Sept 2008.

*The Walter J. Brown Media Archive and Peabody Awards Collection*

Located at the University of Georgia libraries, the Peabody Awards collection holds voluminous television and radio broadcasts. Presented by the University of Georgia's Henry W. Grady School of Journalism, the Peabody Awards were first presented in 1941. Their mission, clearly updated since that time, is to "recognize distinguished achievement and meritorious service by broadcasters, cable and Webcasters producing organizations, and individuals." The award "is considered by many to be the equivalent of the Pulitzer for recognizing excellence in broadcasting."<sup>39</sup> Awards for television broadcasts were first handed out in 1948. The collection at the University of Georgia is home to nearly every entry that the Peabody Awards has received for consideration and contains approximately 50,000 items, with 1,000 new entries added each year. The nature of the awards has rendered the archive a far-reaching resource that includes "a cultural cross-section of television from its infancy to the present day, featuring news, documentary, entertainment, educational, and children's programming."<sup>40</sup>

Overtime, the University of Georgia Library has expanded their television collection beyond the Peabody Award Collection to include multiple other collections that relate to the libraries goal of collecting materials focused on Georgia. These other collections include the *Georgia Gang* Collection, which was an Atlanta based political program and the archives of the Protestant Radio and Television Center. The Archive also has collections that look beyond this scope, including the Garry Moore Collection and the Cinema Showcase Collection.<sup>41</sup>

*Museum of Broadcast Communications*

The Museum of Broadcast Communications (MBC) in Chicago was beget from an idea pitched by Chicago broadcasters Bruce DuMont. DuMont was a member of the Chicago Academy of Television Arts and Sciences when, in 1982, the organization began considering how to celebrate its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary. DuMont worked as a news producer and had often been taken aback by the disorganization of his own stations archive. This led to his argument that Chicago needed an organization that would care for the city's rich broadcasting history. After five years of lugubrious fundraising, negotiating, and searching for a home, the Museum opened in a not entirely ideal location in "the relatively isolated River City Complex on the Chicago River south of the Loop."<sup>42</sup>

Five years later, the Museum was able to move into the Chicago Cultural Center, at which point it saw an increase in visitor traffic. The museum closed in December of 2003, and has since been working on building a major facility for the organization. The new facility will increase the Museum space five-fold and will be home to expanded educational initiatives, screening spaces, and mock studios.

---

<sup>39</sup> LOC, 464.

<sup>40</sup> "Preserving the Peabody Awards Collection." *Peabody Awards*. <[http://www.peabody.uga.edu/awards\\_collection/preserve.php](http://www.peabody.uga.edu/awards_collection/preserve.php)>. Accessed 21 Aug 2008.

<sup>41</sup> "Television Broadcasting." *University of Georgia Libraries*. <<http://www.libs.uga.edu/media/collections/tvbroadcasting/index.html>>. Accessed 21 Aug 2008.

<sup>42</sup> Johnson, Steve. "Museum has Found its Medium." *Chicago Tribune*. 8 Jun 1997. 1.

The collection at MBC has grown to include over 80,000 hours of television and radio content. Although the collection is smaller than that of the most closely comparable organization, The Paley Center for Media, MBC's collection and organization behaviors are much less aligned with the industry than the Paley Centers. As DuMont intended from the outset, the collection is heavy in Chicago content, however it also includes national scripted and political content. To supplement the radio and television contents of the archive, MBC also collects photographic and printed materials related to its mission. The Museum is currently working to digitized selected portions of its collection, for both preservation and access purposes.<sup>43</sup>

### *The Paley Center for Media*

While the recent change in title from The Museum of Television and Radio may be a means of addressing this point, The Paley Center for Media does little to support the physical preservation of television materials. The Center first emerged following the commissioning of a study by the William S. Paley foundation to examine the feasibility of creating a television archive. Enacted between 1967 and 1971 by Dr. William B. Bleum, the study determined that there was a vital need to create a central collecting institution for television. This led to the founding of the Museum of Broadcasting in 1975, which opened its doors in 1976.

The Center is a private institute, accessible to any paying customer, that provides viewing stations to a collection of over 140,000 programs. Although the organization does perform some preservation actions on their materials, the primary focus of the institution is on exhibition (provided through individual access stations and on-site screenings). This goal is evident in the Center's establishment of a second outpost in Los Angeles, for which they duplicated their entire collection.

The collection has been built over time through relationships between the Center and the major networks, which allow the Center to acquire specific programs that it identifies as the best and most representative examples of high quality television. The decisions made by the Center curators and the questionable intentions of the organization have been criticized. In an essay titled "Television Research and Fair Use," Douglas Kellner noted that the collection at the Center represented a more commercial bent, saying, "Such selectivity is admirable, but it is not of great use to scholars doing more specialized work."<sup>44</sup>

## **INTERNATIONAL TELEVISION ARCHIVES**

### **UNITED KINGDOM**

#### *BFI National Archive*

---

<sup>43</sup> Museum of Broadcast Communications. <<http://www.museum.tv>>. Accessed 22 Aug 2008.

<sup>44</sup> Kellner, Douglas. "Television Research and Fair Use." *Fair Use and Free Inquiry*. Ed Lawrence, John Shelton and Bernard Timberg. Ablex Publishing Corporation: Norwood, New Jersey, 1980.

The oldest “film-related institution of its type in the world,” the British Film Institute (BFI) was founded in 1933. The Institute began slowly by taking on responsibility for a scholarly journal, and also started collecting books, photographs, and some films. The preservation and archiving aspects of the BFI began in 1935 with the establishment of the National Film Library, which became the National Film Archive in 1955.

An interest in television emerged in the late 1950’s under the direction of the organization’s first curator, Ernest Lindgren. A television officer was appointed at the BFI in 1959; in 1961 “the BFI made a policy decision to include television under its remit,” and in 1962 a television selection committee was formed.<sup>45</sup> Active collection of television, however, did not occur for a lengthy period due to budgetary woes at the Institute.

An early problem with the collection of television at the BFI was its relationship with the BBC. Penelope Houston notes that, “In the 1960’s and 70’s there seemed to be a certain amount of squabbling between the BFI and the BBC as to whether the BBC was running what the National Film Archive, from its own lofty perspective, regarded as a ‘proper’ archive.”<sup>46</sup> What Houston seems to imply through this statement is both that the BFI expected that the BBC was not properly maintaining their materials (they weren’t) and that, due to the BBC’S main interest in production and claiming proper in-house maintenance of their materials, a relationship between the organizations was slow to form.

The first major development in the relationship between the two was the establishment of a grant by the Independent Companies Television Association (ICTA), an organization comprised of all BBC stations, in 1969. This grant provided the National Archive with funding to purchase programs from individual stations for preservation and long term care. The first grant supplied enough money for the BFI National Archive to purchase 75 programs; it continued to increase for each subsequent year.<sup>47</sup> Houston points out that this arrangement was beneficial to the broadcasters because it did not force them to adjust their production process and also forced the BFI to choose what they acquired while not forcing the networks to make their library holdings widely available.

In 1984, with the BBC’s encouragement, the BFI began recording programs off-air for long-term preservation, the cost of which the ICTA grant assisted in covering. This was somewhat problematic because the NA only had off-air recording access to the programming that was shown in its region. To attempt to collect more localized program, the encourage such stations to send them dupes of their programs, or contact the NA before deaccessioning any content.<sup>48</sup> Currently, through the off-air process, BFI captures about 25% of the total output from ITV, and BBC’s main stations (Channel Four and

---

<sup>45</sup> Bryant, 24. Nowell-Smith, Geoffrey. “The British Film Institute.” *Cinema Journal*. No. 4, Summer 2008: 127.

<sup>46</sup> Houston. 145.

<sup>47</sup> Bryant, 17.

<sup>48</sup> Bryant, 24, 26.

Five) for long-term preservation. The funding is now “subject to statutory provision under the terms of the 1990 Broadcasting Act and the 2003 Communications Act.”

Working even more closely with the BBC, in August of 1990 the two entities developed an access arrangement that allows “researchers, academics, and students [to] view anything from the output of BBC1 and BBC2 since that date, and from BBC3 and BBC4 since their inception.”<sup>49</sup>

In 1993, The National Film Archive changed its title to incorporate television becoming the National Film and Television Archive. This title was again changed in 2006 to the BFI National Archive.<sup>50</sup> In 1994 the BFI was acquiring approximately 7,000 television titles a year “or double the rate for films.” Currently, the organization has 625,000 television programs.

### *BBC Archives*

The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) currently reigns as the largest broadcasting corporation in the world. Incorporated in 1927, the BBC began television broadcasts during the experimental era, in 1932. The BBC was the only television broadcaster in the UK until 1955, and, even with the establishment of competition, remained and remains the dominant force in United Kingdom programming, and a dominant force in the international market. The early programs produced by the BBC are the seminal to the study of the development of British television.

Although the same production problems outlined at the beginning of this piece are applicable to all television archives regardless of where they are located, the BBC exhibited a small amount more foresight than the United States based archives in regards to acknowledging the potential long-term life of their materials and well as the reuse potential of news items. A film department, the BBC Television Newsreel department was charged with creating materials that could be stored and reused for newsreels. Established in 1948, it was the origin of the broadcaster archive. Much of the nitrate materials from this department survived and now reside at the BFI National Archive in London. In his study of the history of the BBC Television Archives, Steve Bryant found that an “embryonic archival policy” emerged at the BBC by the late 1950’s when the station was actively saving a few episodes of programs as examples.<sup>51</sup>

Despite this early bout of archivally minded activity, it would be more than twenty years before formal discussions of a BBC archive began. The BBC did have a library, which, like the libraries and archives of the major U.S. based networks, acted to support broadcasting endeavors, not the long-term care of the programs. Even this library was

---

<sup>49</sup> “Television.” *BFI: National Archive: A Portrait of the Collection*. < <http://www.bfi.org.uk/nftva/portrait/television.html>>. Accessed 21 Aug 2008.

<sup>50</sup> “Ernest Lindgren.” *Wikipedia*. < [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest\\_Lindgren](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Lindgren)>. Accessed 21 Aug 2008.

<sup>51</sup> Bryant, Steve. *The Television Heritage: Television Archiving Now and in an Uncertain Future*. *The Broadcasting Debate* 4. BFI Publishing: London, 1989. 10.

fairly unformed and disorganized. In his piece, Bryant discussed the potential of video in the promotion of long-term preservation of materials, however notes that this potential was not fulfilled. The BBC library did not even collect the videotape collections that were dispersed throughout the BBC enterprise until 1974.<sup>52</sup>

While videotape did not immediately cause the BBC powers to recognize the possibility of creating an organized archive, there were several conditions and happenings in the early 1970's from which preservation concerns emerged. An instance of mass erasure of videotapes in the early 1970's that resulted in a great deal of lost content contributed to a great deal of discussion and debate about developing an organized archive. Also around this time, the Corporation began to recognize the value of nostalgia and celebrating its own past. It was disturbing and financially problematic to find this past literally erased and, thus, un-celebrateable. Lastly, in the early 1970's, the BBC began to distribute content to other stations. This inadvertently helped in the 'preservation' of programming because many copies were being made and dispersed increasingly the likelihood that one copy would survive.<sup>53</sup>

A problem with developing an organized archive, or even archival policy at the BBC was the size of the organization, the various types of relationships between stations, and how dispersed the enterprise was and is. The BBC system is structured as a system of major stations and a number of individual franchises that rely on contract renegotiations to continue their operations. These stations are generally fairly small, and preservation does not register as a high priority.

The first major step made by the BBC to establish an organized internal archive took place in 1976 when the Briggs Committee was established. The Committee was formed to examine the archival needs of the enterprise and makes recommendations on how the BBC should move forth. BBC Archives expert Adam Lee finds that the mid-1970's are the clear turning point "when the librarians and archivists became more actively involved in the management of the collection . . . If you look at the retention levels there . . . you'll see that it actually goes up quite a lot in percentage terms."<sup>54</sup>

Following the committee's recommendations, the BBC initiated an internal archival policy that would result in the formal establishment of an archive. As of 1985, the collection policy was to save all newsworthy materials and nearly all scripted programming. Examples of game shows and other types of programming were kept. In 1980, the Independent Broadcasting Authority, who controlled negotiations with franchises, began to add a preservation clause to its contracts. While the actual archival practices at each franchise vary, the contract clause drew attention to the need for franchise to be concerned about preservation.<sup>55</sup> It was also in the mid-1980's that the

---

<sup>52</sup> Bryant, 13.

<sup>53</sup> Bryant, 13.

<sup>54</sup> Lee, Adam. "The BBC Television Archive." [BBC Archive](http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/tv_archive.shtml?chapter=6). <[http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/tv\\_archive.shtml?chapter=6](http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/tv_archive.shtml?chapter=6)>. Accessed 20 Aug 2008.

<sup>55</sup> Bryant, 22.

organization began working more closely with the BFI to better support the long-term care of their programming.

Adam Lee notes that the BBC Television Archive has and continues to suffer from some bad publicity. More recently, there was public awe over missing episodes of *Doctor Who*, a flagship series for the BBC that began running in 1963 and has amassed over 750 episodes overtime.<sup>56</sup> Its current archival policy is to record all programs and keep all scripted programming, entertainment programming, newscasts, and current affairs programs. It remains selective when it comes to other content, such as game shows. The BBC has a close relationship with the BFI National Archive and offers them all programming prior to deaccessioning or destroying it. Although the archive at the BBC does primarily exist for program reuse, it has an internal preservation department that ensure the items are fit for reuse and is actively digitizing the materials for easier access and long-term preservation of the master materials.<sup>57</sup> Between television and radio materials the archive currently holds approximately 4 million physical items. Within these 4 million items are 600,000 hours of television content.<sup>58</sup>

## FRANCE

### *Institut National de l'Audiovisuel*

The Institut National de l'Audiovisuel (INA) came into being in 1975, following the audiovisual reform law in 1974. The law charged the INA to be instituted and responsible for the conservation of France's audio-visual materials, provide access to those materials, and offer professional training in audio-visual conservation.

When it was formed in January of 1975, the legislation, funding, general framework, and activities were all controlled and determined by the state. Overtime, the organization developed and had to adjust its operations to successfully compete with the commercial sector. In 1985, INA began to operate commercial television stations. As a producer, INA has created over 2,000 works; 1,500 of those were for television.

In 1986, changes were made to the audiovisual reform law that resulted in a major refinement of INA's mission. Although it still operated from the public sector, INA Enterprises, a commercial division, was established.<sup>59</sup>

Further refining its mission, in 1992 a mandatory deposit law for all French broadcasts was passed. INA was given responsibility for the deposits, and the French Inatheque was established as a distinct department to deal with the incoming content.

---

<sup>56</sup> "Dr. Who." *Wikipedia*. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor\\_Who](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doctor_Who)>. Accessed 21 Aug 2008.

<sup>57</sup> Williams, Adrian. "Preserving the Television Archive." *BBC Archive*. <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/archive/preserving.shtml?chapter=1>>. Accessed 21 Aug 2008.

<sup>58</sup> Lee.

<sup>59</sup> <http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/byform/mailling-lists/exlibris/2001/11/msg00062.html>

INA collects a total of approximately 300,000 hours of television and radio annually, and the collection holds over 2.5 millions hours of television and radio. The collection dates back over sixty years and hold some of the earliest, experimental French broadcasts.

Through the support of the government and its own commercial success, INA has developed into one of the most forward acting archives in the world. It has worked with digital materials for some time and has a policy in place for the capture of digital sound and moving image for long-term preservation. In 2002, as part of its mandatory deposit operations, INA took on capturing the output of twelve cable and satellite channels for preservation.

Perhaps the most public of INA's digital initiatives is its massive "Safeguard and Digitization" project. Started in 1999, this project has resulted in the digitization of over 200,000 hours of materials, mainly radio and television content, as well as a comprehensive website from which the content can be accessed. The website provides the bulk of the content for free as a service to the public. Approximately 20% of the content has been deemed by the state to be unique creative content for which INA must provide retribution to the creator. The fee for this content, however, remains fairly nominal. INA hopes to have "all the endangered archives processed and saved" by 2015.<sup>60</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> <http://www.casparpreserves.eu/Members/InaGrm>