

"WGBH has created an unparalleled public media archive with over 350,000 master-level materials on various formats including videotape, film and audiotape. These materials, many vulnerable to complete deterioration, must be preserved and digitized so that they can be available for future generations. We are literally in a race against time."

KAREN CARIANI, DAVID O. IVES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
WGBH MEDIA LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES

1963 Civil Rights March on Washington, D.C.



Selected Collections From the MLA

With some 350,000 media resources in various forms, the MLA represents one of the nation's most important archives of public media history. The following are just a small sampling of programs and series in the extensive collections.

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S MEDIA

Arthur
Curious George
If You Live in a City, Where Do You Live?*
The Kindergarten Child*
Long Ago and Far Away*
Rebop*
Teaching Math: A Video Library
The New Voice*
Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego?
Zoom

HISTORY, ART & CULTURE

American Experience*
American Playhouse*
Antiques Roadshow
Ascent of Man
Boston Symphony Orchestra
Julia Child and Company*
Korea: The Unknown War*
Masterpiece
Rock and Roll
Vietnam: A Television History

JOURNALISM

The Advocates
Basic Black*
FRONTLINE*
FRONTLINE Special Report: Comrades*
Louis Lyons and the News
The March on Washington
The Nader Report
Say Brother*
War and Peace in the Nuclear Age
WGBH Ten O'Clock News*

SCIENCE

Discovering Women*
Evolution
Fast Cars and Science
The Machine That Changed the World
NOVA*
NOVA/FRONTLINE Special Report
NOVA ScienceNow
Of Science and Scientists
Race to Save the Planet*
Science by the Sea

*Indicates items supported by NEH challenge grant.

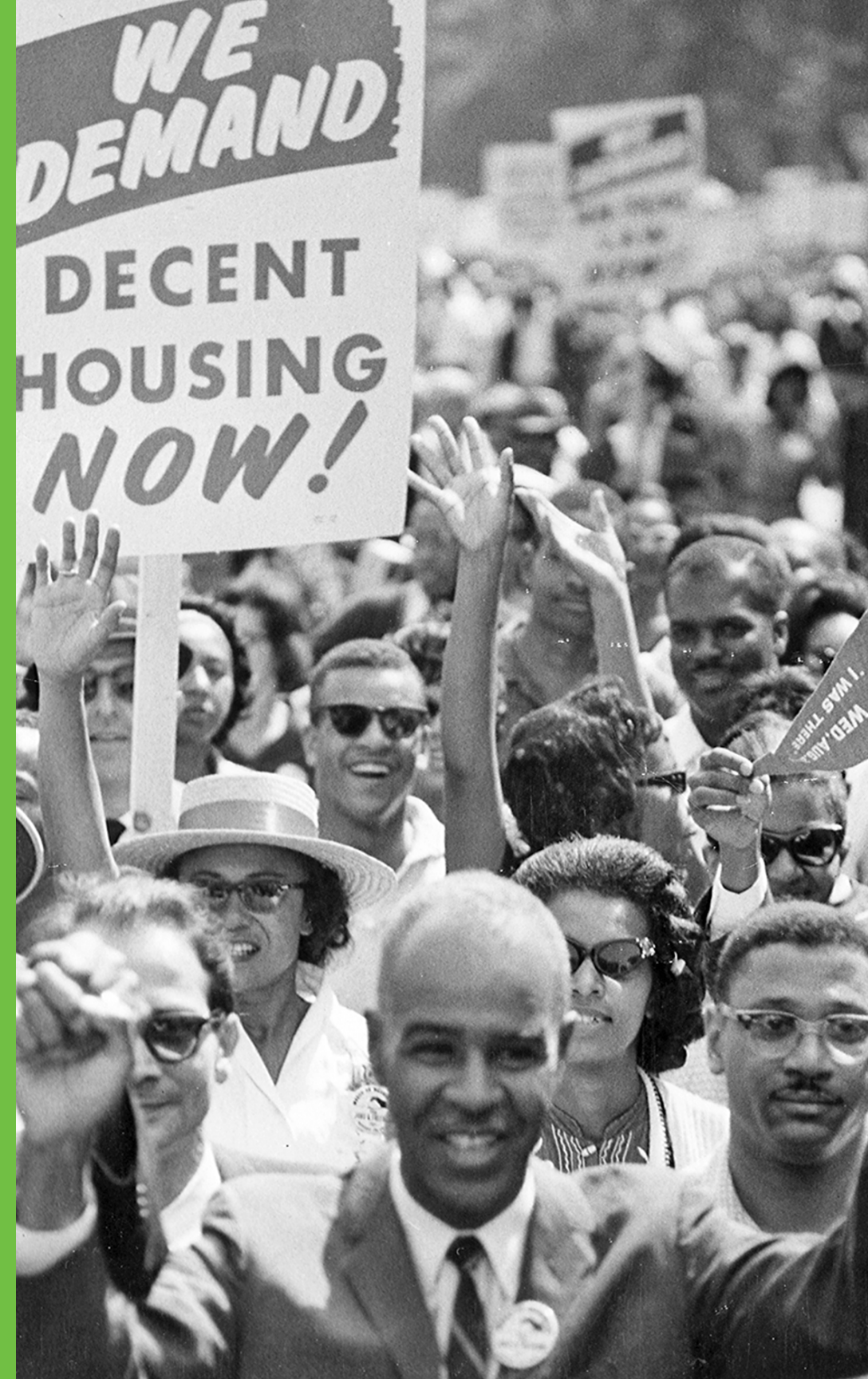
7%

AMOUNT OF CONTENT DIGITIZED

PRESERVING & SHARING

Media Library
and Archives

The Campaign for WGBH



A RACE AGAINST TIME

“There are not enough funding resources for preservation projects like ours,” laments Karen Cariani, the David O. Ives Executive Director of the Media Library and Archives.

“There is a rich history that has been chronicled over the years by public media. Yet, as the years go by, this record of our nation’s history—news, culture, science—becomes increasingly vulnerable.”

Efforts to preserve and digitize the archives have been gaining steam, but time is of the essence. Volunteer transcription events and a crowd-sourced approach to digitization on demand are helpful, but efforts must accelerate. That’s why philanthropic support is so important.



83,000

NUMBER OF MEDIA
RESOURCES
DEMANDING IMMEDIATE
PRESERVATION

The 1972 cast of ZOOM, a groundbreaking WGBH-produced educational TV program, which aired on PBS for six years beginning in 1972

The Promise of Preservation

The WGBH Media Library and Archives (MLA) preserves and shares a great national treasure—one of the world’s richest archives of film, video and audio recordings dating to 1946 and covering many of the most culturally and historically important events of our time.

From the beginning, the drive and focus for WGBH has been on creating compelling programs and leading public media. Today, recognizing the extraordinary resource represented by the MLA, our attention turns toward preservation of the archive we have built and ensuring that future media assets are properly preserved as they are created.

Due to the ephemeral nature of film stock and magnetic media, much of the material in this astonishing collection is rapidly deteriorating. In order to avoid any loss, it must be preserved within the next decade, and saving the most vulnerable materials over the next four years is a central goal of the Campaign for WGBH. There has never been a better or more critical moment to support this historic effort to preserve this unique record of American culture and history.

“the world should be more like
@wgbharchives—this Open Vault is cool...”

SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENT

In 2018, WGBH received a \$750,000 challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) to hasten preservation and digital archiving activities of the WGBH collection, specifically focusing on 83,000 items most vulnerable to deterioration. The grant calls for a 4:1 match, or \$3 million in matching dollars.

“...it can be argued that WGBH is currently designing and...implementing the most ambitious and cutting-edge digital humanities project in the U.S., at least related to the history of media and technology.”

DR. JOSH SHEPPERD, Assistant Professor of Media Studies and Director of the Library of Congress Radio Preservation Task Force, Catholic University of America

In the context of this important challenge grant and the Campaign for WGBH, there’s never been a better time to support MLA’s efforts. Gifts made during the Campaign and directed toward MLA will be counted toward both the NEH challenge grant and Campaign goals. Philanthropic support can and will make a significant impact in preserving WGBH’s archives.



10-15

YEARS OF TIME BEFORE
UNPRESERVED MLA FILM,
VIDEO & AUDIO RECORDINGS
ARE LOST FOREVER

WGBH Master Control operations
in 1978 or 1979

Media by the People, for the People

The MLA brings iconic WGBH media to producers, scholars, researchers, educators, students, lifelong learners and the public through a number of venues and projects as well as footage licensing. Onsite research at WGBH is open to the public by appointment.

OPEN VAULT

MLA’s digital archive, openvault.wgbh.org, provides free online access to unique and historically important content produced by WGBH and digitized for viewing by the public. Providing direct access to vast quantities of historically significant content, the site also serves as a search tool of the archive, generally where users can request that specific resources be digitized on demand.

AMERICAN ARCHIVE OF PUBLIC BROADCASTING

In 2013, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting awarded WGBH and the Library of Congress joint stewardship of an historic collection of American public radio and television content dating back to the early 1950s with the goal of permanently preserving the collection and making it available to the public through the American Archive of Public Broadcasting (AAPB). This collaboration has

resulted in the preservation of more than 50,000 hours of programming from some 100 public media organizations across the country. More than 30,000 items are available online.

BOSTON TV NEWS DIGITAL LIBRARY

A collaboration between WGBH, the Boston Public Library, Cambridge Community Television and Northeast Historic Film, the Boston TV News Digital Library makes available local news stories produced in and around Boston between 1960 and 2000. Nearly 2,000 news programs are available online.

STOCK SALES AND LICENSING

At wgbhstocksales.org, the WGBH Stock Sales and Licensing website, producers, filmmakers and others can search rights-ready clips and discover additional material available for licensing by WGBH.



60+

YEARS OF MEDIA HISTORY IN
WGBH ARCHIVES, ONE OF THE
MOST SIGNIFICANT
COLLECTIONS IN THE WORLD

Alistair Cooke, who, for 22 years between 1971 until 1992, hosted *Masterpiece Theatre*, now *Masterpiece*, WGBH’s award-winning showcase of quality British television

Archiving Modern America

The MLA’s rich media documentation of the civil rights movement, Vietnam, presidential elections, rock and roll concerts, James Baldwin’s incisive cultural commentary and the resignation of Richard Nixon—and thousands of hours more—offers a compelling visual and audio record of our times.

“...the WGBH Archives will usher many scholars into the video age, and for the first time give researchers real access to valuable, irreplaceable data with which to inform their scholarship.”

DR. JAMES BLIGHT, Professor of International Relations, Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University

Hailed alongside the Library of Congress as “the gold standard” in media archives by noted journalist Steven V. Roberts, the MLA includes the 1963 premier episode of *The French Chef* starring Julia Child on 16 mm film; interviews and release signatures from Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X and other civil rights leaders; and early recordings from the Lowell Broadcasting Institute dating back to 1946. And that is just the tip of the iceberg. A climate-controlled vault at WGBH headquarters houses some 350,000 archival items at a cool 62°F and a dry 35% humidity. More material is housed offsite.

Preserve History. Protect the MLA.

Support for WGBH’s MLA helps ensure that American history remains available to all, so that future generations of scholars and citizens have unfettered, free access to one of America’s most significant collections of public media.

Gifts directed at specific collections or efforts within the MLA, funds earmarked for digitization and preservation, naming opportunities for facilities, endowed positions—all of these represent important ways that philanthropic support can help WGBH make history by preserving it.

LEARN MORE

Find out how you can help shape the future of WGBH. For more detailed information about funding opportunities and ways to give, please contact:

Winifred Lenihan
Vice President, Development
617.300.3804
win_lenihan@wgbh.org

Lisa Bevilaqua
Associate Vice President | Campaign Director
617.300.3684
lisa_bevilaqua@wgbh.org