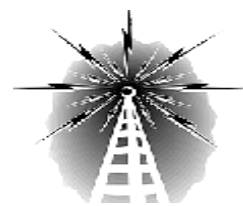


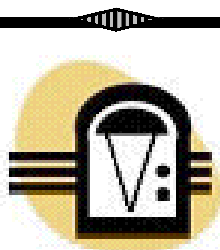
The Library of American Broadcasting **TRANSMITTER**



Volume 3, Number 1

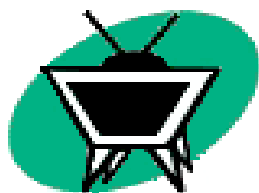
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Spring 2001



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The Transmitter
is brought to you by
the staff of the

**Library of
American
Broadcasting**

Chuck Howell
Karen Fishman
Suzanne Adamko
Michael Henry
Kristi Mashon

RENOVATION!

Our staff is pleased to announce that we are now in the final design phase of our portion of the Hornbake Library renovation project. This semester saw the completion of remodeling on the first and second floors, which now serve as the new home for Special Collections. Another milestone was the reopening of the new Maryland Room, service point for Marylandia and Rare Books, the National Trust for Historic Preservation Library Collection, and three units of the Archives and Manuscripts Department: Historical Manuscripts, Literary Manuscripts, and University Archives.

It will still be quite a few months before our new third floor location is completed, however. Here's a timeline of

the renovation project:

March – June 2001: Preliminary construction and contractor bidding period

June – December 2001: Construction phase and move to third floor

The architectural firm RTKL Associates have helped us transform our many collection requirements into designs for a new reading room, processing and exhibit areas and storage area. The finished project will double our size to 20,000 square feet – space we are sorely in need of. Watch this space for updates!



New LAB Reading Room - Rendering provided by RTKL Associates Inc. - Baltimore



NAB at LAB

By Kristi Mashon

The National Association of Broadcasters [NAB] Historical Collection, a recent addition to the Library, includes materials from past NAB conventions beginning in 1923, news and magazine articles extending through the 1990s, as well as audio cassettes and reel-to-reel tapes.

The convention proceedings are of special interest and comprise a large part of the collection. In the early years from 1923 through 1926, the conventions were simply meetings of businessmen with no distinction between general and technical assemblies. Beginning in the 1940s and especially with the United States entry into World War II, NAB began to distinguish between its various sessions – general, business, technical, and particularly special sessions relating to the war effort. In the 1940s and 50s, as television became more popular, the NAB became the NARTB (National Association of Radio & Television Broadcasters) and the conventions reflected this split. Eventually, the Association resumed its original name.

Over the years, numerous cities have hosted the convention. New York hosted the first and many of the early conventions. Over the years, Los Angeles, Atlantic City, St. Louis and other cities hosted the convention. Beginning in World War II and continuing through the 1970s, NAB held most of its conventions in Chicago before moving to its current host city, Las Vegas.

The Collection contains programs, flyers, and transcripts that show the celebrities, industry and political VIPs who attended and spoke at conventions. During the war, generals came to speak about censorship and manpower issues. In the 1950s, Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz entertained attendees when the convention was in Los Angeles. Dignitaries and industry leaders such as William Paley, former head of CBS, addressed the convention-goers on broadcasting issues. Overall, the Collection shows us an interesting snapshot of broadcasting history, especially through the NAB conventions.



The Cold War

Over the last ten months, audiovisual archivist Suzanne Adamko has been working with a multidisciplinary team of University of Maryland faculty to develop courses on the Cold War. As a result of this group effort between College Park Scholars, the departments of Journalism and Government and Politics, as well as the University Libraries, three unique courses are being offered in the Spring 2001 semester:

Overview of the Cold War (1 credit). This overview is multidisciplinary, team-taught by a group of faculty in International Relations, joined by professionals from the CIA, U.S. Military, and the University Libraries. The course provides an introduction to and context for research on the Cold War

Cold War Study Abroad—Legacies of the Cold War: Prague and Budapest (1-2 credits). Students will interact with leading Cold War scholars in Prague and Budapest; they also will meet with journalists, artists, and scientists to explore the legacies of the Cold War and the building of a civil society.

Cold War Research Projects (3 credits). The course is an introduction to the research methods practiced by scholars of the Cold War era. Taught by a multi-disciplinary team of campus professors and archivists, the class helps students explore primary source materials.

LAB has a vast amount of material relating to the Cold War and has contributed to a subject specific, searchable database. A link to this database can be found at <http://www.lib.umd.edu/UMCP/LAB/coldwar.html>. In addition to lecturing on archival research and aiding students with their research, Suzanne co-led the study abroad trip in March.

How Nielsen and Arbitron Became the Ratings Kings

By Douglas Gomery

We have come to expect Nielsen's TV ratings to offer us a wealth of audience data as a by-product of its services sold to advertisers and television organizations. But it was not always thus. Nielsen ratings only became the national standard in 1960, and for decades it shared the ratings market with Arbitron.

Before Nielsen and Arbitron, Hooper reigned. Started in 1935, the C. E. Hooper Company had risen to become the leading force in radio ratings by the time the Second World War ended. In 1945 - before TV - the Hooper system told advertisers and networks - by telephone surveys - who was listening to what radio shows. Unlike Nielsen of today, Hooper was limited to 33 cities where the four radio networks - NBC, CBS, ABC, and Mutual - could be heard simultaneously. A. C. Nielsen was then Hooper's chief challenger. Nielsen had developed a meter, which attached to the radio, recording listening information automatically when the set was on. NBC, CBS, and their affiliates hated paying either Hooper or Nielsen. In 1946, they cooperated to start the Broadcast Measurement Bureau as a way to get out from under Hooper and Nielsen's ever increasing rates. Fighting over radio ratings seems shortsighted today, but through the late 1940s radio was making millions while TV was only creating red ink.

Hooper and Nielsen successfully buried the Broadcast Measurement Bureau. In 1948, Hooper established radio ratings for the nation as a whole and compiled its first television ratings. NBC signed up because Hugh Beville, long time VP and Head of Research at NBC, and his staff decided that Hooper's random telephone method was efficient enough to estimate the network's share of 37 million radio homes (including the less than one million homes with TV sets). By

September 1949, Hooper was offering NBC three types of measures - program ratings and shares, along with limited audience demographics (principally by age and gender).

Within a season, however, Beville and staff realized that Hooper was simply tacking on questions about TV to its radio surveys. They had little confidence in data collected in this off-hand manner. As a consequence, as TV began its explosive growth period in the late 1940s and early 1950s, NBC and others soured on Hooper's telephone methodology, and looked to Nielsen. In 1948 A. C. Nielsen had also added TV viewers to its metered samples, and this seemed to work well for television.

C. E. Hooper panicked and in February 1950 sold his national TV and radio business to Nielsen. A new era had begun. Almost overnight, the broadcasting community stopped asking "How's your Hooper?," and gossip began with "How's your Nielsen?"

But in the spring of 1950, Arbitron, Trendex - and a number of others - challenged Nielsen for a share of the new TV ratings market. The new entrants were led by Arbitron, which did not use phone calls or meters, but had people keep diaries of what they watched.

Arbitron started as the American Research Bureau, founded by James Seiler and Roger Cooper. Prior to 1950, while still less than 10% of the United States homes had TV sets, Seiler worked as research director for WRC, NBC's owned and operated radio and television stations in the nation's capital. Cooper worked in Los Angeles. Independently they were both arguing that diaries were a superior methodology. The two joined forces and established their headquarters in Washington, D.C. In 1952 Arbitron measured 15 markets, and then grew quickly, not challenging Nielsen's national market numbers, but
continued on page 7

THE ANGLE ON INGA - WASHINGTON TV HOST

by David Weinstein

Inga Rundvold (*Inga's Angle*, *Afternoon With Inga*, *Today With Inga*) was a dominant personality from television's crucial early days in Washington, D.C. In 1951, Inga Rundvold, a former model and fashion columnist for the *Washington Times-Herald*, premiered her half-hour show on WNBW-TV. She continued to host a daytime program on Channel Four until 1967, the longest run of any pioneering Washington daytime personality.

Rundvold did practically everything on her shows except operate the cameras and microphones during telecasts. On screen, she assumed several roles and personas: glamorous star, expert in all domestic matters, working woman, responsible homemaker, mother, wife, saleslady, civic and professional activist. Behind the camera, she was also a television producer, which often compelled her to make savvy and resourceful decisions.

"I was the producer, the writer, the originator, everything," Rundvold said. "I never did have very much help." Rundvold may have guarded her position so carefully because there were relatively few broadcasting jobs opened to women in the 1940s and 1950s. "During the war a few women went into control room work, hitherto considered a masculine stronghold, while others became announcers, directors, sales and publicity representatives, and executives," according to a May 1947 survey of women in radio and television conducted by the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau. "As the men returned from service, women faded out of these jobs except for a few who made an outstanding success. . . Except for musical and dramatic programs, women's main chances in broadcasting are on daytime programs for women and children."



Inga, one of the many photos from the Papers of Inga Rundvold Kuhn

As television developed, women also appeared on the news as "weather girls," though almost all local and network news commentators, in Washington and other markets, were men.

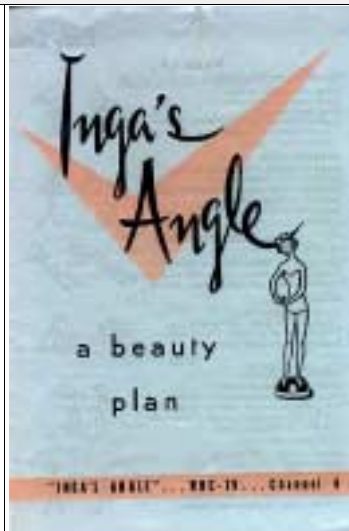
Rundvold benefitted from working with the same crew for most of her tenure on the air. As local production declined in the mid-1950s, and network or syndicated shows dominated schedules, the woman's program became one of the few creative outlets for the station engineers. "The technical crew loved to work my show because we tried everything. I mean, we had hardly any money at all. I would drag furniture from home if I wanted to make it look good...We all worked together. And we'd all sit down there with a cup of coffee after the show and say, 'Now, tomorrow, let's try this.' And we made due out of nothing. And it was fun."

Runvold knew her job hinged on her skills as a saleswoman, rather than an interviewer or journalist. She constantly devised new formats and strategies to move sponsor merchandise. In keeping with her glamorous persona, Rundvold's steadiest clients over the years were cosmetics manufacturers, women's magazine publishers, department stores and drug stores.

WNBW's studio, located in the Sheraton Wardman Park Hotel on Connecticut Avenue in Woodley Park from 1947-1958, was one of the city's fanciest hotels. To exploit the station's chic locale, Rundvold and WNBW, which later became WRC, created a studio set resembling a lavish outdoor café. Program guests and audience members sat at elegantly appointed tables, complete with fine china and flower arrangements. Rundvold glided between tables conducting interviews. There was also a separate area for Inga to conduct beauty, fashion and exercise segments.



Inga pitches a product on WRC-TV



Inga's beauty plan included diet and exercise tips, and was available to viewers by mail.

As more Washington families migrated to the suburbs through the 1950s, Inga shifted from her chic urban environment to a typical suburban setting. After WRC-TV left the Wardman Park Hotel in 1958 for bigger facilities uptown, Rundvold replaced the simulated hotel café with two more conventional, less glamorous, sets: a kitchen and a living room. Rundvold invited retailers to give home decoration advice on *Inga's Angle*. "Everybody wanted to see what you could do in your home with all these products that were available through Woodward and Lothrop," Rundvold said.

Sponsors liked the program segments relating to food, cooking, fashion and beauty. A skillful host, such as Rundvold, could use these demonstrations to sell a range of merchandise. Hosts believed, however, that viewers did not want to watch a continuous parade of products. Thus, they balanced their programs by inviting politicians, community leaders, entertainers, and assorted experts of all stripes to appear.

Alongside these local luminaries, women's programs regularly spotlighted national and international figures and discussed official Washington. On each *Inga's Angle*, Rundvold interviewed a "leading lady," usually the wife of a politician, businessman or diplomat.

By the late 1950s, national politicians such as John F. Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson and Hubert Humphrey frequently joined the leading



Rundvold meets Lady Bird Johnson

the leading ladies on Rundvold's show. Rundvold mixed these political interviews with lighter, more visual segments, creating some unusual and entertaining juxtapositions. For example, Kennedy appeared promoting *Profiles in Courage* (1957) alongside members of a local garden club. Rundvold supported the gendered division of news, in both print and television, whereby men watched serious television news discussion programs and read the news section for information, while women sought a variety of lighter fare on television and in the so-called women's pages of major newspapers.

Inga was one of a handful of pioneering local performers to remain on the air as Washington television studios drastically reduced production of local shows starting in 1955. By October 1958 there was only *Today With Inga* for five minutes after NBC's *Today*, another five-minute version of *Inga's Angle* at 9:55 a.m., and *Mark Time*, ten minutes of talk with Mark Evans, on WTOP-TV.

Over the years, Rundvold's program expanded from the five minute program of the late 1950s to a half hour slot. Today's national female talk show hosts like Oprah Winfrey, Katie Couric, and Kathy Lee Gifford owe a word of thanks to the pioneering local and network women of the 1940s and 1950s, who showed television executives that a personable woman could carry a program and command a loyal following of viewers and sponsors. More broadly, at a time when telecasters were struggling for programming which would generate local interest and make money, and nobody really knew what would work on the new medium, the pioneering local women's program hosts devised shows which appealed to consumers and advertisers. Before television was a routine part of daily life, they gave women at home during the day a reason to watch television.



Inga shared a special bond with her engineers, working with the same group of men for most of her tenure. At left as they worked together in the 1950s and right, an undated reunion photo.



David Weinstein is a senior program officer at the National Endowment for the Humanities in Washington, D.C. He spent lots of time at the Library of American Broadcasting while writing his Ph.D. dissertation (University of Maryland, 1997) on the early days of television in the nation's capital.

Karen Fishman, LAB's Assistant Curator, edited this piece from its original form. "Women's Shows And the Selling of Television to Washington, D.C." was first printed in *Washington History, Magazine of the Historical Society of Washington, D.C.* v11, n1, Spring / Summer 1999.



Fall / Winter 2000 Caption Contest

Thanks for the enthusiastic response to our 2nd Caption "Contest." We thought we'd share some winning captions with you.

First Place

"Oooh Ooh Ooh, I found my Rubber Ducky!" Jerry Schatz

Second Place

"So come on down and see us, we're broadcasting live from Tile City" Adrienne Merrill

Third Place

"No, no Senore Pavarotti. We wanted to record you singing in the SHOWER, not the tub!" Anonymous

*Nielsen / Arbitron
continued from page 3*

offering detailed market-by-market data.

Other challengers went back to the old ways. Trendex, for example, started in June 1950, and used a telephone system just like Hooper, mainly because many of Trendex's founders and chief executives started there. Pulse used face to face interviewing, an increasingly expensive process, and so limited its service to New York City. As the 1950s began, Nielsen, Arbitron, Pulse, and Trendex seemed to constitute a rating "Big Four."

But more and more advertisers wanted socio-economic data on which to base their campaigns. At first, none of these four offered much beyond program ratings, arguing their estimates were statistically significant, and offered the best value for the dollar. But as TV grew, the lack of socio-demographic information could not be ignored. When Trendex pioneered the collection of demographic information in 1957, Nielsen and Arbitron quickly followed. By 1961, all four were offering some sort of socio-demographic information on a regular basis. The crunch came in 1961 when the 1960 Census indicated Nielsen and Arbitron gave their clients the best value. Doom was spelled for Pulse and Trendex as clients defected to the other companies to capitalize on their superior data.

Thus, it took a decade for Nielsen and Arbitron to take up the mantle as the major firms in television ratings. By 1961, they had become so dominant that they could increase rates and the TV networks and stations had little choice but to ante up. Pulse and Trendex survived into the 1960s, but soon passed from the scene. Few today remember them, or that a decade earlier there was a company named Videodex, a pioneer ratings company now lost in the recesses of broadcasting's past.

Douglas Gomery is Chair, Faculty Advisory Committee of LAB, and Professor of Media History, College of Journalism, University of Maryland.



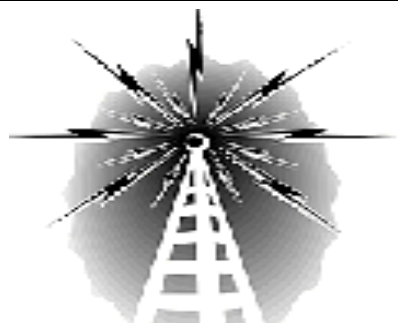
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**Think you have a witty or clever caption
for this photo?**

**Email your suggestions to us at
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