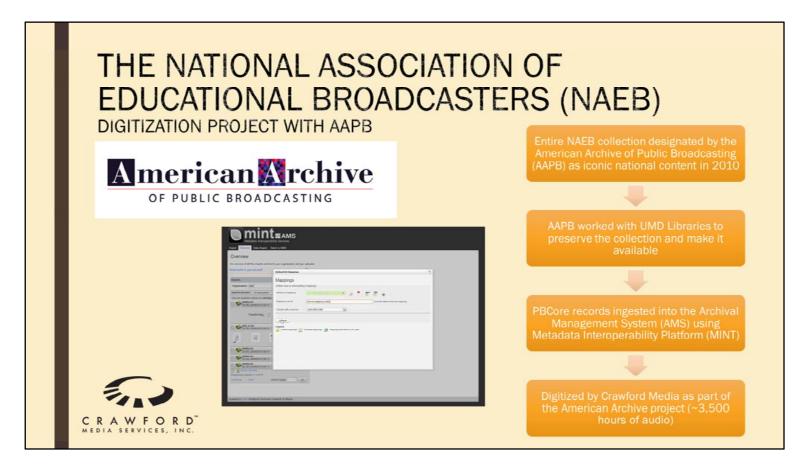


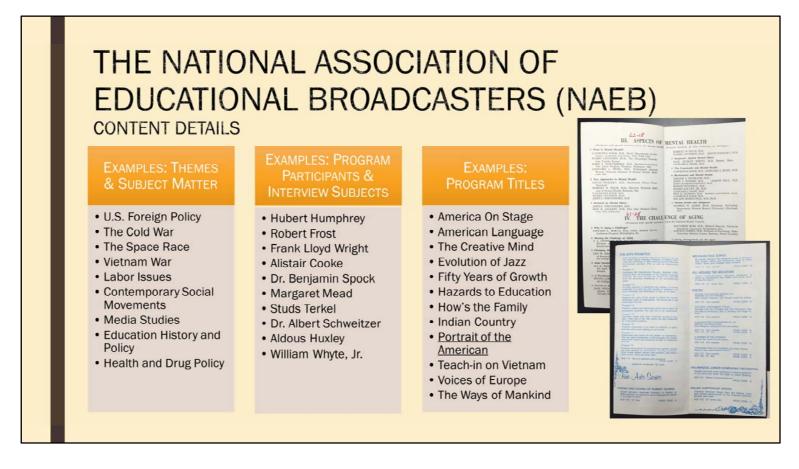
American Archive of Public Previous Broadcasting (AAPB) at CPB & current National Association of Educational work with Broadcasters (NAEB) collection radio: Unlocking the Airwaves project



In 2009 I was working as the Project Manager for the American Archive while it was at CPB. While most of the roughly 40,000 hours digitized by the American Archive were selected by participating stations, a portion of that total was reserved for iconic content of national historic significance. These were the only hours which were selected by CPB, and procured through a separate process (as opposed to giving content inventory participants the freedom to choose their own content).



I worked with Chuck Howell, Robin Pike and Joanne Archer at UMD Libraries to extract whatever item-level records we could find for the collection, map the metadata fields into PBCore, and then map those records into the Archival Management System (AMS) we had contracted AVPreserve to develop for the project. The AMS used a platform called MINT, which stands for Metadata Interoperability Platform, to map and ingest records. Once those were in the system, the AMS tracked the delivery of the reels to Crawford Media, who digitized the preservation and access files and delivered them back to UMD. The Library of Congress is in charge of maintaining all the preservation files, while WGBH manages all access initiatives. (1:13)



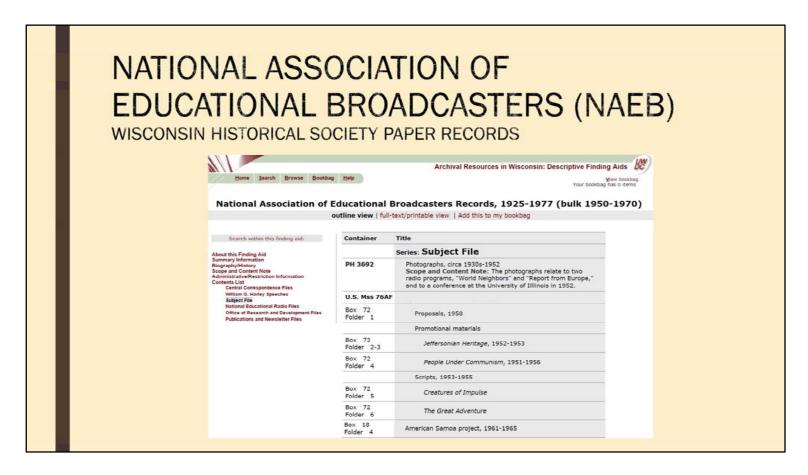
The bulk of the programs represented in the NAEB collections were produced between 1952 and 1970, a period of incredible growth, turmoil and social change in the United States. Looking at the programming entries in the paper archives, there is an impressive list of political and military figures, scientists, activists, journalists, artists and religious leaders – a "who's who" of the mid-20th century.

The use potential and research value for of this material is fairly substantial, for use by educators as primary historical documents, and for the creation of new work in journalism and documentary filmmaking.

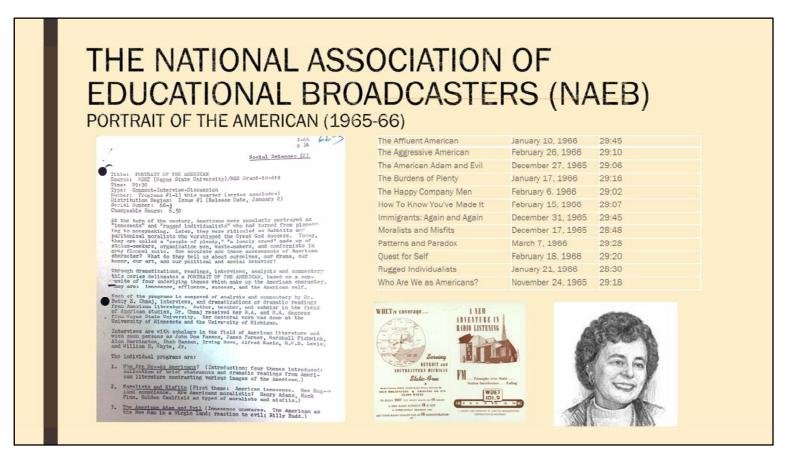
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EDUCATIONAL BROADCASTERS (NAEB)

- National Association of Educational Broadcasters (NAEB)
 - UMD Libraries Special Collections (National Public Broadcasting Archive)
 - 5,060 1/4" open reel tapes from early public radio
 - pre-NPR, 1950-1970
 - digitized as part of the American Archive project (~3,500 hours of audio)
 - Wisconsin Historical Society
 - 44.2 cubic feet, 112 archives boxes
 - correspondence, reports, promotional material and clippings, speeches, files of the Office of Research and Development and of National Educational Radio (a division of the NAEB).
 - Finding aid created and online, nothing digitized

The central premise of *Unlocking the Airwaves* is to reunite the NAEB materials, which are currently split between the Mass Media and Culture collections of the University of Maryland Libraries Special Collections and University Archives (tape collection), and the Wisconsin Historical Society (paper collection) in an online research environment alongside information about its creation and original context.



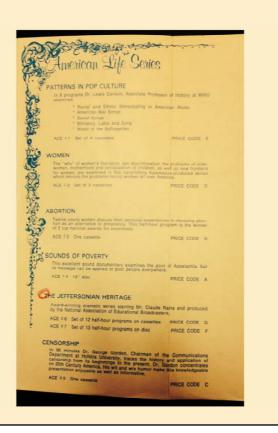
The <u>finding aid for the NAEB paper collection</u> alone reveals that it contains a depth of contextual information relevant to the study of the tape collection. Digitized paper materials from Wisconsin would reveal even more, and not just the content of the broadcast but also the circumstances of its production and its reception. This relevant contextual information related to both the subject matter inherent in the content itself, as well as the cultural and sociological forces which shaped its production and distribution. The NAEB collections account for more than a record of a specific broadcasting entity and its industrial/narrative production. They also provide an in-depth look at the engagements and events of American history, as they were broadcast to and received by the general public in the twentieth century. This may be evident in the recordings themselves, but the potential scholarly and educational insights are particularly apparent when presented with rich, contextual materials to accompany it.



A couple of highlights from the NAEB collections – here is the mid-60s series Portrait of the American, a radio show produced out of Wayne State University for radio station WDET, which "explored constructions of the American self in the domestic and global contexts of the 1960s countercultural movement, pursuing critical explorations of themes such as innocence, affluence, and success." The show was produced for NERN under a grant from National Home Library Foundation. It was produced and hosted by Dr. Betty Chmaj of Wayne State, who was the first woman to receive a Ph.D. in American Studies granted by the University of Michigan. Chmaj was one of the leaders of the Radical Caucus, a subgroup of the American Studies Association (ASA) that challenged the way things had been done in within the organization. She was also a noted feminist who was instrumental in getting the ASA to recognize the lack of representation by women in the organization, in an era where the men were more concerned with issues of civil rights and the war in Vietnam, and didn't see women's rights as a pressing issue.

'THE JEFFERSONIAN HERITAGE'

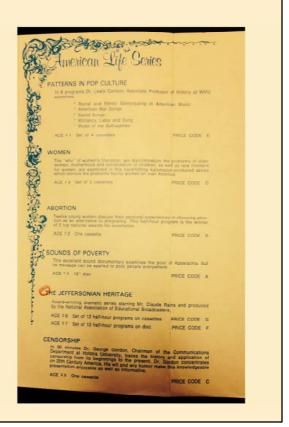
- 1952 series of 13 half-hour dramatic radio programs starring Claude Rains;
- An attempt to create radio that could be both "educational and appealing;"
- Documents the attempts by Thomas Jefferson to get an anti-slavery clause written into the constitution, while tying this history to contemporary events;
- Marketed by Aural Press of Western Michigan University as part of an "American Life Series" (other shows in the series: "Women," "Abortion," "Censorship");
- Helped convince funders (FAE and Ford) to pour millions into launching educational television.



"The Jeffersonian Heritage" was produced by the NAEB with funding from a Ford Foundation grant. It starred English-born actor Claude Rains, and was a 1952 series of thirteen half-hour radio programs syndicated for commercial-free broadcast. This was the NAEB's conscious attempt to create radio that could be both "educational and appealing," Earlier episodes covered Thomas Jefferson's attempt to have an anti-slavery clause written into the US Constitution, and later episodes then attempted to tie themes from Jefferson's personal and political history to contemporary events, "The Jeffersonian Heritage" as a media object of study alone is fascinating. But to gain an accurate picture of the importance of these broadcasts, researchers would need to understand not just the content of the broadcast Itself, but also the circumstances of its production and its reception. How did mid-twentieth century Americans engaged in remembrances of an agrarian past? How did the NAEB present Thomas Jefferson through the lens of anxieties about America's place within the Cold War world? What tropes and episodes from his life were used in drawing parallels to events that would emerge in late 1952 and shape the rest of the decade? How did the NAEB present Jefferson's own controversial relationship to slavery? How were these episodes marketed and promoted to the public?

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We used this program as a case study in our grant proposal to the NEH, so we know a couple of the answers to these questions. The NAEB paper collections also contain a brochure revealing that the series was marketed by Aural Press of Western Michigan University as part of an "American Life Series" alongside other program series such as "Patterns in Pop Culture," "Women," "Abortion," "Sounds of Poverty," "Censorship," and "The Nostalgia Merchants." Placing one highly specific (and dramatic) series against the backdrop of such broadly-conceived topical documentary programs could allow researchers to evaluate its messages and themes.

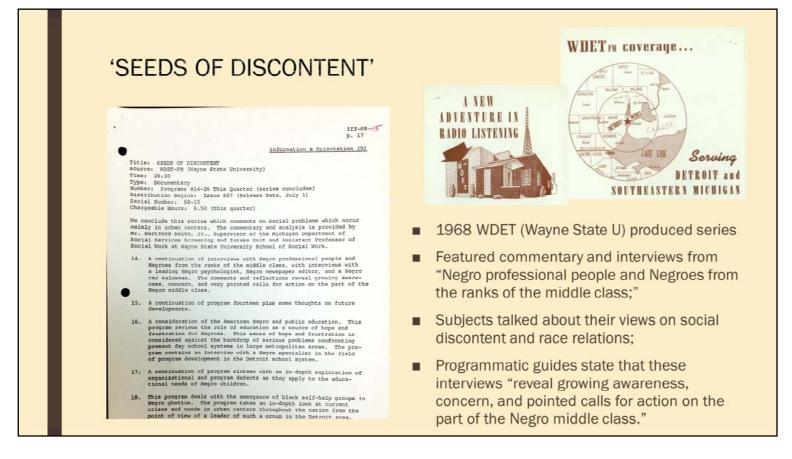
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 William Harley, NAEB History speech given at the Oldtimers Reunion, October 8, 1993

Secondly, a speech by former NAEB Chair William Harley says the following: "In 1951 we produced a dramatic history series called *The Jeffersonian Heritage* starring Claude Rains as Jefferson; a dramatic series on cultural anthropology called 'Ways of Mankind' and a series produced in conjunction with the Russian Institute at Harvard called 'People Under Communism.' The significance of this project is that our products convinced Scotty and his Board that educators were professionally competent and deserved support as they ventured into the new field of television. Thus did educational radio help the launching of educational television, for the Fund for Adult Education and later the Ford Foundation itself poured millions of dollars into projects fostering the start of education television.



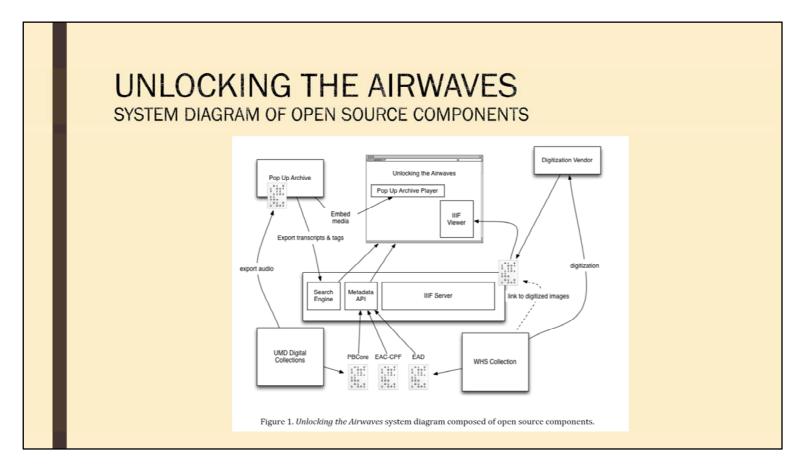
Originally founded in 1948 by the United Auto Workers and containing programming related to labor concerns, WDET was purchased by Wayne University in 1952. The NAEB collection contains several series produced during this period, centering around social issues, race and education, as well as politics, civil defense, and American Studies. These include the 1968 document`ary series *Seeds of Discontent*, which featured commentary and interviews from "Negro professional people and Negroes from the ranks of the middle class" on issues of social discontent and race relations. The paper materials at Wisconsin Historical Society contain program distribution notes sent alongside the tapes in the NERN. After describing an episode of *Seeds of Discontent* where a series of middle class 'Negro professionals' are interviewed about social problems in urban centers, programmatic guides state that these interviews "reveal growing awareness, concern, and pointed calls for action on the part of the Negro middle class." This level of episodic description is not present in the individual media records, nor is such contextual commentary inherent in the media itself.

UNLOCKING THE AIRWAVES METHODOLOGIES & STANDARDS Descriptive Standards: Encoded Archival Description (EAD) Collection-level description of paper collections PBCore Item-level description of audio collections Encoded Archival Context—Corporate bodies, Persons, and Families (EAC-CPF) Authority records for public media International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) Making images of digitized paper collections available online Methodologies: Audio Transcription and Processing (Pop Up Archive) Linked Data 'hubs' (similar to DPLA) EAD/PBCore/EAC-CPF ingested and then transformed into JSON-LD

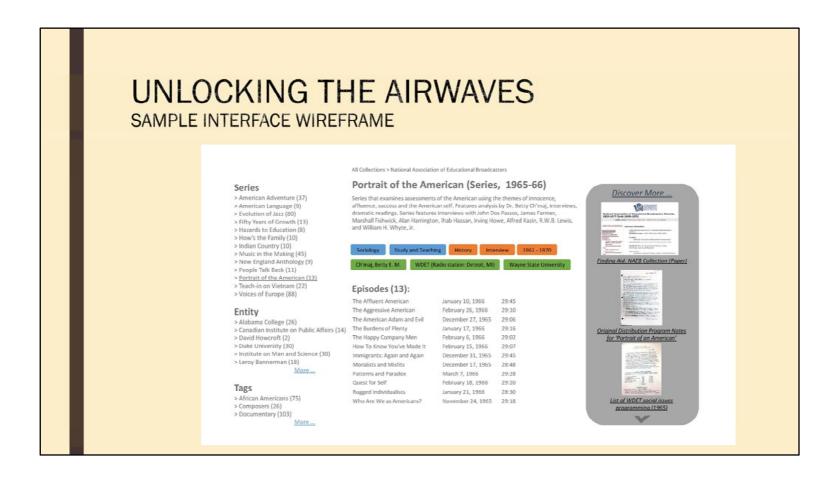
To do this, we will be working from data organized according to two major descriptive standards: Encoded Archival Description (EAD), and PBCore, a metadata standard for audiovisual media. The EAD standard will be used to establish information at the collection-level to provide context for (separate) item-level descriptions, which utilize PBCore. Over the course of the project, we will add work with another, more recent standard, Encoded Archival Context—Corporate bodies, Persons, and Families (EAC-CPF), to capture information we gather about people, organizations, and other entities related to public media collections.

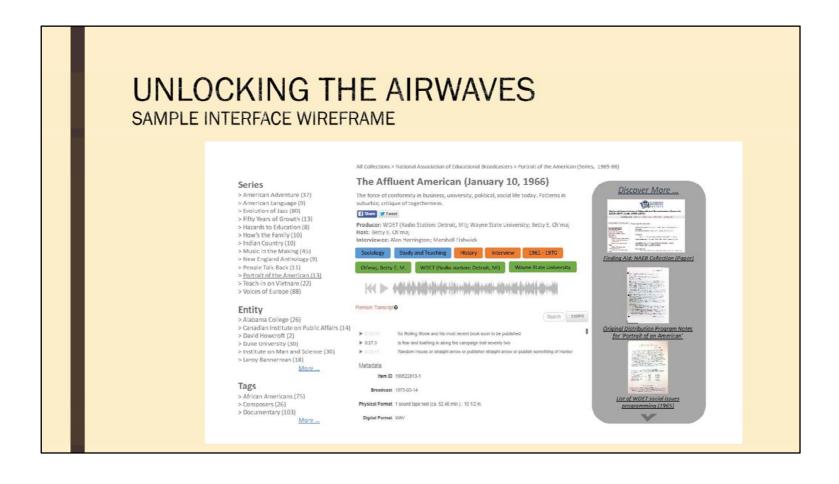
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Our model for the metadata system we will use for *Unlocking the Airwaves* will be that created for the Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), which in turn builds on metadata I ntegration work by Europeana, the major cultural heritage aggregator in Europe. DPLA ingests metadata from many different institutions through its system of "hubs." By using linked data approaches and formats, the DPLA can map this information into a profile usable by its online portal while still retaining the semantics and the provenance of the original data. At ingest time, DPLA hubs also enhance this metadata by performing additional linking to other common datasets and authority files—such as for geographic locations. *Unlocking the Airwaves* will ingest information encoded in EAD, PBCore, and EAC-CPF to create new data in the same JSON-LD (for "linked data") format published by organizations like DPLA, but specifically tailored to the use case of this project. The mapping of EAD (a document-centric format) into linked data (which is naturally network-centric) will be the most challenging element of this process but models already exist. The LOCAH and Linking Lives projects in the UK have not only demonstrated that such transformations are feasible, they also have provided software that our project will be able to adapt to this end.



Despite the many excellent platforms for digital collections—from Omeka to Drupal—these kind of all-in-one solutions focus attention—in the form of resources for both development and maintenance—on one particular tool or website, rather than on the reusable data and digital objects a website may contain. The overall design of *Unlocking the Airwaves* thus favors discrete, composable units and the provision of multiple ways of accessing project data.





Radio Preservation Task Force 2017: Metadata Infrastructure Panel Presentation (Sapienza)

