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WGBH collaborates on online archive of four decades of Boston television news

Public invited to recommend favorites at bostonlocaltv.org

Boston public broadcaster WGBH's Media Library and Archives has joined forces with the Boston Public Library, Cambridge Community TV and Northeast Historic Film to develop *The Boston TV News Digital Library: 1960-2000*, which will be an online collection of the city's television news heritage.

The project will draw upon approximately 70,000 news stories from commercial, noncommercial and community cable television to create a central online catalog available to educators, filmmakers, writers, and the general public. Among the footage are such iconic moments in Boston history as a young Barack Obama speaking while attending Harvard Law School in 1990; Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1965 after leading a march of 5,000 people from Roxbury to Boston Common; Pope John Paul II's visit in 1979; and moments from Michael Dukakis's 1988 Presidential campaign.

"Boston has been home to some of the country's biggest news stories over the past 40 years," said Karen Cariani, Director of the WGBH Media Library and Archives. "*Boston TV News* brings four major collections together into one location – an invaluable resource for generations to come."

To bring this history to life, the Boston Public Library will contribute a WHDH film collection from 1960 through the mid-1970s; Cambridge Community TV will supply its complete collection from 1988-99; Northeast Historic Film will add WCVB's work from 1970-79; and the WGBH Media Library and Archives will contribute former WGBH programs *The Ten O'Clock News* (1976-91), *The Reporters* (1970-73) and *Evening Compass* (1973-75).

"This project will bring back 40 years of television news to let us explore the issues of importance, events we all remember, and some we'd rather forget," said David Weiss, Executive Director of Northeast Historic Film. "What was it like to be here during the busing crisis? How deep was the snow in the Blizzard of 1978? How great was John Havlicek? Every day professional camera people in Greater Boston captured the most important and interesting events."

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The online collection will consist of 40 hours of digitized content, or anywhere some 600 to 700 stories. Teachers' Domain, WGBH's free digital media service for educational use, will develop classroom activities for elementary and high school students around these local Boston news stories. Additionally, Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet and Society will work with the project partners to produce a rights guide for archivists, detailing the complex issues surrounding access and reuse of the local news materials.

As the project develops, and in order to prioritize which stories should be digitized and made available on the web, the general public will be invited to recommend their favorites.

"Feedback from the public is an important component of the process," said Cariani. "This will help us learn which stories are of the greatest interest to the community, and where we should focus our preservation efforts."

Funding for this project was generously provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Service (IMLS) and the Council on Library and Information Studies (CLIR).

The WGBH Media Library and Archives provides online access to unique and historically important content produced by WGBH. For more information, please visit: openvault.wgbh.org/.

About WGBH

WGBH Boston is America's preeminent public broadcaster, producing such award-winning PBS series as *Masterpiece*, *Antiques Roadshow*, *Frontline*, *Nova*, *American Experience*, *Arthur*, *Curious George*, and more than a dozen other prime-time, lifestyle, and children's series. WGBH's television channels include WGBH 2, WGBH 44, and digital channels World and Create. Local WGBH TV productions that focus on the region's diverse community include *Greater Boston*, *Basic Black*, and *María Hinojosa: One-on-One*. WGBH Radio serves listeners from Cape Cod to New Hampshire with 89.7 WGBH, Boston's NPR® Station for News and Culture; 99.5 All Classical; and WCAI, the Cape and Islands NPR® Station. WGBH also produces the national radio news program *The World*. WGBH is a leading producer of online content and a pioneer in developing educational multimedia and new technologies that make media accessible for people with disabilities. Find more information at www.wgbh.org.

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