

= Sesame Workshop =

Sesame Workshop ( SW , or " the Workshop " ) , formerly known as the Children 's Television Workshop ( CTW ) , is an American non @-@ profit organization behind the production of several educational children 's programs ? including its first and best @-@ known , Sesame Street ? that have run on public broadcasting around the world . Television producer Joan Ganz Cooney and foundation executive Lloyd Morrisett came up with the idea to form an organization to oversee the production of Sesame Street , a television show which would help children , especially those from low @-@ income families , prepare for school . They spent two years , from 1966 to 1968 , researching , developing , and raising money for the new show . Cooney was named as the Workshop 's first executive director , which was called " one of the most important television developments of the decade " .

Sesame Street premiered on PBS in the United States in November 1969 , and the Workshop was formally incorporated shortly after , in 1970 . Gerald S. Lesser and Edward L. Palmer were hired to conduct research for the show ; they were responsible for developing a system of planning , production , and evaluation , and the interaction between television producers and educators , later called the " CTW model " . They also hired a staff of producers and writers . After the initial success of Sesame Street , they began to plan for its continued survival , which included procuring additional sources of funding and creating other TV shows . The early 1980s were a challenging period for the Workshop ; difficulty in finding audiences for their other productions and a series of bad investments hurt the organization until licensing agreements stabilized its revenues by 1985 .

After Sesame Street 's initial success , the CTW began to think about its survival beyond the development and first season of the show , since their funding sources were made up of organizations and institutions that tended to start projects , not sustain them . Government funding ended by 1981 , so the CTW expanded into other areas , including unsuccessful ventures into adult programs , the publications of books and music , international co @-@ productions , interactive media and new technologies , licensing arrangements , and outreach programs to preschools . By 2005 , income from the CTW 's international co @-@ productions of the show was \$ 96 million . By 2008 , the Sesame Street Muppets accounted for \$ 15 ? 17 million per year in licensing and merchandising fees . Cooney stepped down as CEO in 1990 ; David Britt was named as her replacement . In June 2000 , the CTW changed its name to Sesame Workshop , to better reflect its work beyond television and into interactive media , and Gary Knell became CEO . H. Melvin Ming replaced Knell in 2011 . In 2014 , Ming was succeeded by Jeffrey D. Dunn .

= = History = =

= = = Background = = =

In the late 1960s , 97 % of all American households owned a television set , and preschool children watched an average of 27 hours of television per week . Early childhood educational research at the time had shown that when children were prepared to succeed in school , they earned higher grades and learned more effectively . Children from low @-@ income families , however , had fewer resources than children from higher @-@ income families to prepare them for school . Research had shown that children from low @-@ income , minority backgrounds tested " substantially lower " than middle @-@ class children in school @-@ related skills , and that they continued to have educational deficits throughout school . The field of developmental psychology had grown during this period , and scientists were beginning to understand that changes in early childhood education could increase children 's cognitive growth .

In the winter of 1966 , Joan Ganz Cooney hosted what she called " a little dinner party " at her apartment near Gramercy Park . In attendance was her husband Tim Cooney , her boss Lewis Freedman , and Lloyd and Mary Morrisett , whom the Cooneys knew socially . Cooney was a producer of documentary films at New York public broadcasting station Channel 13 , and won an

Emmy for a documentary about poverty in America . Lloyd Morrisett was a vice @-@ president at Carnegie Corporation , and was responsible for funding educational research , but had been frustrated in his efforts because they were unable to reach the large numbers of children in need of early education and intervention . Cooney was committed to using television to change society , and Morrisett was interested in using television to " reach greater numbers of needy kids " . The conversation during the party , which according to writer Michael Davis was the start of a five @-@ decade long professional relationship between Cooney and Morrisett , turned to the possibilities of using television to educate young children . A week later , Cooney and Freedman met with Morrisett at the offices of Carnegie Corporation to discuss doing a feasibility study on creating an educational television program for preschoolers . Cooney was chosen to conduct the study .

In the summer of 1967 , Cooney took a leave of absence from Channel 13 , and funded by Carnegie Corporation , traveled the U.S. and Canada interviewing experts in child development , education , and television . She reported her findings in a fifty @-@ five @-@ page document entitled " The Potential Uses of Television in Preschool Education " . The report described what the new show , which became Sesame Street , would look like and proposed the creation of a company that oversaw its production , which eventually became known as the Children 's Television Workshop ( CTW ) .

= = = Founding = = =

For the next two years , Cooney and Morrisett worked on researching and developing the new show , raising \$ 8 million for Sesame Street , and establishing the CTW . Due to her professional experience , Cooney always assumed the show 's natural home would be PBS . Morrisett was open to airing it on commercial stations , but all three networks rejected the idea . Davis , considering Sesame Street 's stream of licensing income in the decades to come , called their decision " a billion @-@ dollar blunder " . Morrisett was responsible for fund @-@ raising , and was so successful at it that writer Lee D. Mitgang later said that it " defied conventional media wisdom " . Cooney was responsible for the show 's creative development , and for hiring the production and research staff for the CTW . The Carnegie Corporation provided their initial \$ 1 million grant , and Morrisett , using his contacts , procured additional multimillion @-@ dollar grants from the U.S. federal government , the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations , the Corporation for Public Broadcasting , and the Ford Foundation . Morrisett 's friend Harold Howe , who was the commissioner for the U.S. Department of Education , promised \$ 4 million , half of the new organization 's budget . The Carnegie Corporation donated an additional \$ 1 million . Mitgang stated , " Had Morrisett been any less effective in lining up financial support , Cooney 's report likely would have become just another long @-@ forgotten foundation idea " . Funds gained from a combination of government agencies and private foundations protected them from the economic pressures experienced by commercial networks , but caused challenges in procuring future funding .

Cooney 's proposal included using in @-@ house formative research that would inform and improve production , and independent summative evaluations to test the show 's impact on its young viewers ' learning . In 1967 , Morrisett recruited Harvard professor Gerald S. Lesser , whom he had met while they were both psychology students at Yale , to help develop and lead the Workshop 's research department . In 1972 , the Markle Foundation donated \$ 72 @,@ 000 to Harvard to form the Center for Research in Children 's Television , which served as a research arm for the CTW . Harvard produced about 20 major research studies about Sesame Street and its effect on young children . Lesser also served as the first chairman of the Workshop 's advisory board , a position he held until his retirement in 1997 . According to Lesser , the CTW 's advisory board was unusual because instead of rubber @-@ stamping the Workshop 's decisions like most boards for other children 's TV shows , it contributed significantly to the show 's design and implementation . Lesser reported in Children and Television : Lessons from Sesame Street , his 1974 book about the beginnings of Sesame Street and the Children 's Television Workshop , that roughly 8 ? 10 % of the Workshop 's initial budget was spent on research .

CTW 's summative research was done by the Workshop 's first research director , Edward L.

Palmer , whom they met at the curriculum seminars Lesser conducted in Boston in the summer of 1967 . In the summer of 1968 , Palmer began to create educational goals , define the Workshop 's research activities , and hire his research team . Lesser and Palmer were the only scientists in the U.S. studying children and television at the time . They were responsible for developing a system of planning , production , and evaluation , and the interaction between television producers and educators , later called the " CTW model " . Cooney observed of the CTW model : " From the beginning , we ? the planners of the project ? designed the show as an experimental research project with educational advisers , researchers , and television producers collaborating as equal partners " . She described the collaboration as an " arranged marriage " .

The CTW devoted 8 % of its initial budget to outreach and publicity . In what television historian Robert W. Morrow called " an extensive campaign " that Lesser stated " would demand at least as much ingenuity as production and research " , the Workshop promoted the show with educators , the broadcast industry , and the show 's target audience , which consisted of inner @-@ city children and their families . They hired Evelyn Davis from the Urban League , whom Michael Davis called " remarkable , unsinkable , and indispensable " , as the Workshop 's first Vice President of Community Relations and head of the Workshop 's Community Educational Services ( CES ) division . Bob Hatch was hired to publicize their new show , both before its premiere and to take advantage of the media attention that surrounded Sesame Street in its first year of production .

According to Davis , despite her leadership in the project 's initial research and development , Cooney 's installment as CTW 's executive director was put in doubt due to her lack of high @-@ level managerial experience and leadership , untested financial management skills , and lack of experience in children 's television and education . Davis also speculated that sexism was involved , stating , " Doubters also questioned whether a woman could gain the full confidence of a quorum of men from the federal government and two elite philanthropies , institutions whose wealth exceeded the gross national product of entire countries " . At first , Cooney did not fight for the position . However she had the support of her husband and Morrisett , and the project 's investors soon realized they could not go forward without her . She was eventually named to the post in February 1968 . As one of the first female executives in American television , her appointment was called " one of the most important television developments of the decade " . The formation of the Children Television Workshop was announced at a press conference at the Waldorf @-@ Astoria Hotel in New York City on 20 May 1968 .

After her appointment , Cooney hired Bob Davidson as her assistant ; he was responsible for making agreements with approximately 180 public television stations to air the new show . She assembled a team of producers : Jon Stone was responsible for writing , casting , and format ; David Connell took over animation and volume production ; and Samuel Gibbon served as the show 's chief liaison between the production staff and the research team . Stone , Connell , and Gibbon had worked on another children 's show , Captain Kangaroo , together . Cooney later said about Sesame Street 's original team of producers , " collectively , we were a genius " . CTW 's first children 's show , Sesame Street , premiered on 10 November 1969 . The CTW was not incorporated until 1970 because its creators wanted to see if the show was a success before they hired lawyers and accountants . Morrisett served as the first chair of CTW 's board of trustees , a position he held for 28 years .

= = = Early years = = =

During the second season of Sesame Street , to capitalize on the momentum the Workshop was enjoying and the attention it received from the press , the Workshop created its second show , The Electric Company , in 1971 . Morrisett used the same fund @-@ raising techniques as he had used for Sesame Street . The Electric Company stopped production in 1977 , but continued in re @-@ runs until 1985 ; it eventually became one of the most widely used TV shows in American classrooms and was revived in 2009 . Starting in the early 1970s , the Workshop ventured into adult programming , but found that it was difficult to make their programs accessible to all socio @-@ economic groups . In 1971 , it produced a medical program for adults called Feelin ' Good , hosted

by Dick Cavett , which ran until 1974 . According to writer Cary O 'Dell , the show " lacked a clear direction and never found a large audience " . In 1977 , the Workshop aired an adult drama called Best of Families , which was set in New York City around the turn of the 20th century . However , it lasted for six or seven episodes and helped the Workshop decide to focus on children 's programs only .

Throughout the 1970s , the CTW 's outreach efforts turned from promotion to the development of educational materials used in preschool settings . Early outreach efforts included mobile viewing units that broadcast the show in the inner cities , in Appalachia , in Native American communities , and in migrant worker camps . In the early 1980s , the CTW created the Preschool Education Program ( PEP ) , whose goal was to assist preschools , by combining television viewing , books , hands @-@ on activities , and other media , in using the show as an educational resource . The Workshop also provided materials to non @-@ English speaking children and adults . Starting in 2006 , the Workshop expanded its outreach by creating a series of PBS specials and DVDs focusing on how military deployment affects the families of soldiers . The Workshop 's outreach efforts also focused on families of prisoners , health and wellness , and safety .

According to Cooney and O 'Dell , the 1980s were a challenging period for the Workshop . Other than Sesame Street , many of its productions struggled finding an audience . 3 @-@ 2 @-@ 1 Contact premiered in 1980 , and ran in various forms until 1988 . The CTW found that finding funding for this show and other science @-@ oriented shows like Square One TV , which ran from 1987 to 1994 , was easy because the National Science Foundation and other foundations were interested in funding science education . A series of poor investments in video games , motion picture production , theme parks , and other business ventures hurt the organization financially . Cooney brought in Bill Whaley in the late 1970s to work on their licensing agreements , but he was unable to make up for the CTW 's losses until 1986 , when licensing revenues stabilized and its portfolio investments increased .

= = = Later years = = =

Cooney stepped down as chairman and chief executive officer of the CTW in 1990 , when she was replaced by David Britt , who was her " chief lieutenant in the executive ranks through the mid @-@ 1990s " and whom Cooney called her " right @-@ hand for many years " . Britt had worked for her at the CTW since 1975 and had served as its president and chief operating officer since 1988 . At that time , Cooney became chairman of the Workshop 's executive board , which oversaw its businesses and licensing , and became more involved in the organization 's creative side .

The Workshop went through a reorganization in 1995 , and laid off about 12 percent of its staff . In 1998 , for the first time in the show 's history , they accepted funds from corporations to support Sesame Street and its other programs , a move criticized by consumer advocate Ralph Nader . The Workshop defended the move to corporate sponsorship , stating that it made up for a decrease in government subsidies and financial support by PBS . Also in 1998 , the Workshop invested \$ 25 million in the cable channel Noggin , launched in 1999 by the Workshop and Viacom 's Nickelodeon . In 2000 , the profit the CTW earned from the deal , along with its 1998 spike in revenue caused in part by the " Tickle Me Elmo " craze , enabled the CTW to purchase The Jim Henson Company 's rights to the Sesame Street Muppets from the German media company EM.TV , which had acquired Henson earlier that year . The transaction , valued at \$ 180 million , also included a small interest Henson held in the Noggin cable channel . Gary Knell stated , " Everyone , most especially the puppeteers , were thrilled that we were able to bring them home . It protected Sesame Street and allowed our international expansion to continue . Owning these characters has allowed us to maximize their potential . We are now in control of our own destiny " .

The CTW changed its name to the Sesame Workshop ( SW ) in June 2000 to better reflect its entry into non @-@ television and interactive media . Also in 2000 , Gary Knell succeeded Britt as president and CEO of the Workshop ; according to Davis , he " presided over an especially fertile period in the nonprofit 's history " . Knell was instrumental in the creation of the cable channel Sprout in 2005 . Sprout ( launched as PBS Kids Sprout ) was founded as a partnership between the

Workshop , Comcast , PBS , and HIT Entertainment , all of whom contributed programming to the new network . After seven years as a partner , the Workshop divested its stake in Sprout in December 2012 .

In 2007 , the Sesame Workshop founded The Joan Ganz Cooney Center , an independent , non @-@ profit organization that studies how to improve children 's literacy by using and developing digital technologies " grounded in detailed educational curriculum " , just as was done during the development of Sesame Street . In 2009 , the SW launched a website with a library of free video clips and free podcasts from throughout the show 's history .

The 2008 ? 2009 recession , which led to budget cuts for many nonprofit arts organizations , severely affected the SW ; in 2009 , it had to lay off 20 % of its staff . Despite earning about \$ 100 million from licensing revenue , royalties , and foundation and government support in 2012 , the Workshop 's total revenue was down 15 % and its operating loss doubled to \$ 24 @.@ 3 million . In 2013 , it responded by laying off 10 % of its staff , saying that it was necessary to " strategically focus " their resources because of " today 's rapidly changing digital environment " . In 2011 , Knell left the SW to become the chief executive at NPR ; H. Melvin Ming was named as his replacement . Ming had been chief financial officer since 1999 and its chief operating officer since 2002 .

In 2014 , H. Melvin Ming retired and was succeeded by former HIT Entertainment and Nickelodeon executive Jeffery D. Dunn . Dunn 's appointment marked the first time someone outside of the SW became its leader , although he had close ties with the organization previously . As of December 2014 , the senior management at the SW consisted of : Dr. Lewis Bernstein , Executive Vice President and head of Education Research and Outreach ; Terry Fitzpatrick , who was Executive Vice President and responsible for content distribution ; Myung Kang @-@ Huenke , Executive Vice President and General Counsel and Secretary ; Daryl Mintz , Chief Financial Officer ; Sherrie Westin , Executive Vice President and Chief Marketing Officer ; and Michael H. Levine , Executive Director of the Joan Ganz Cooney Center . The organization 's board of trustees included , among others : its chair , Vincent A. Mai , who was also chairman of AEA Investors , Inc . ; Cooney , Morrisett , and Dunn .

= = Funding sources = =

After Sesame Street 's initial success , the CTW began to think about its survival beyond the development and first season of the show , since its funding sources were made up of organizations and institutions that tended to start projects , not sustain them . Although the organization was what Cooney called " the darling of the federal government for a brief period of two or three years " , its first ten years of existence was marked by conflicts between the two ; in 1978 , the US Department of Education refused to deliver a \$ 2 million check until the last day of the CTW 's fiscal year . According to Davis , the federal government was opposed to funding public television , but the Workshop used Cooney 's prestige and fame , and the fact that there would be " great public outcry " if the show was de @-@ funded , to withstand the government 's attacks on PBS . Eventually , the CTW got its own line item in the federal budget , but by 1981 , government funding for Sesame Street had been terminated .

For the first time , a public broadcasting show had the potential to earn a great deal of money . Immediately after its premiere , Sesame Street gained attention from marketers , so the Workshop explored sources such as licensing arrangements , publishing , and international sales , and became , as Cooney envisioned , a " multiple media institution " . Licensing became the foundation of , as writer Louise Gikow put it , the Sesame Workshop endowment , which had the potential to support the organization and fund future productions and projects . Muppet creator Jim Henson owned the trademarks to the Muppet characters : he was reluctant to market them at first , but agreed when the CTW promised that the profits from toys , books , and other products were to be used exclusively to fund the CTW . The producers demanded complete control over all products and product decisions throughout its history ; any product line associated with the show had to be educational , inexpensive , and not advertised during airings of Sesame Street . As Davis reported , " Cooney stressed restraint , prudence , and caution " in their marketing and licensing efforts . In the

early 1970s , the CTW approached Random House to establish and manage a non @-@ broadcast materials division . Random House and the CTW named Christopher Cerf to assist the CTW in publishing books and other materials that emphasized the show 's curriculum .

Shortly after the premiere of Sesame Street , the CTW was approached by producers , educators , and officials in other nations , requesting that a version of the show be aired in their countries . Former CBS executive Mike Dann left commercial television to become vice @-@ president of the CTW and Cooney 's assistant , and began what Charlotte Cole , vice president for the CTW 's International Research department in 2001 , called the " globalization " of Sesame Street by arranging what came to be called co @-@ productions , or independent programs with their own sets , characters , and curriculum goals . By 2009 , Sesame Street had expanded into 140 countries ; The New York Times reported in 2005 that income from the CTW 's international co @-@ productions of the show was \$ 96 million . By 2008 , the Sesame Street Muppets accounted for between \$ 15 million and \$ 17 million per year in licensing and merchandising fees , split between the Workshop and Henson Associates .

= = = Publishing = = =

In 1970 , the CTW established a department overseeing the development of " nonbroadcast " materials based upon Sesame Street . The Workshop decided that all materials its licensing program created would " underscore and amplify " the show 's curriculum . Coloring books , for example , were prohibited because the Workshop felt they would restrict children 's imaginations . The CTW published Sesame Street Magazine in 1970 , which incorporated the show 's curriculum goals in a magazine format . As with the show , research was conducted for the magazine , initially by CTW 's research department for a year and a half , and then by the Magazine Research Group in 1975 .

Working with Random House editor Jason Epstein , the CTW hired Christopher Cerf to run Sesame Street 's book publishing program . In the division 's first year , Cerf earned \$ 900 @,@ 000 for the CTW . He left to become more involved with writing and composing music for the show , and was eventually replaced by Bill Whaley . Ann Kearns , vice president of licensing for the CTW in 2009 , stated that Whaley was responsible for expanding the licensing to other products , and for creating a licensing model followed by other children 's shows . As of 2001 , there were over 600 books available in the Sesame Street library , and as researcher Renee Cherow @-@ O 'Leary stated , " the print materials produced by CTW have been an enduring part of the legacy of Sesame Street " . In one of these books , for example , the death of the Sesame Street character Mr. Hooper was dealt with in a book entitled I 'll Miss You , Mr. Hooper , published shortly after the show dealt with it in 1983 .

= = = Music = = =

According to director Jon Stone , the music of Sesame Street was unlike any other children 's program on television . For the first time , the show 's songs fulfilled a specific purpose and supported its curriculum . Cooney observed in her initial report that children had an " affinity for commercial jingles " , so many of the show 's songs were constructed like television ads .

To attract the best composers and lyricists , and to encourage them to compose more music for the show , the CTW allowed songwriters to retain the rights to the songs they wrote . For the first time in children 's television , the writers earned lucrative profits , which as Davis reported , " helped the show sustain the level of public interest in the show " . Scriptwriters often wrote their own lyrics to accompany their scripts . Songwriters of note were Joe Raposo , Jeff Moss , Christopher Cerf , Tony Geiss , and Norman Stiles . Many of the songs written for Sesame Street have become what writer David Borogenicht called " timeless classics " . These songs included the " Sesame Street Theme " ( also known as " Sunny Day " ) , " I Love Trash " , " Rubber Duckie " , " Bein ' Green " , and " Sing " . Many Sesame Street songs were recorded by well @-@ known artists such as Barbra Streisand , Lena Horne , Dizzy Gillespie , Paul Simon , and Jose Feliciano .

The show 's first album , Sesame Street Book & Record , recorded in 1970 , went gold and won a Grammy . Entertainment Weekly reported that by 1991 , Sesame Street had received eight Grammys . According to Gikow , Raposo won three Emmys and four Grammys for his work on the show .

= = = International co @-@ productions = = =

Shortly after Sesame Street debuted in the US , the CTW was approached independently by producers from several countries to produce versions of the show in their countries . Cooney remarked , " To be frank , I was really surprised , because we thought we were creating the quintessential American show . We thought the Muppets were quintessentially American , and it turns out they 're the most international characters ever created " . She hired former CBS executive Mike Dann , who left commercial television to become her assistant , as a CTW vice @-@ president . One of Dann 's tasks was to field offers to produce versions of Sesame Street in other countries . In response to Dann 's appointment , television critic Marvin Kitman said , " After [ Dann ] sells [ Sesame Street ] in Russia and Czechoslovakia , he might try Mississippi , where it is considered too controversial for educational TV " . This was a reference to the May 1970 Mississippi state commission decision to ban the show . By summer 1970 , Dann had made the first international agreements for what the CTW came to call " co @-@ productions " .

The earliest international versions were what CTW vice @-@ president Charlotte Cole and her colleagues called " fairly simple " , consisting of dubbed versions of the show with local language voice @-@ overs and instructional cutaways . Dubbed versions of the show continued to be produced if the country 's needs and resources warranted it . Eventually , a variant of the CTW model was used to create and produce independently produced preschool television shows in other countries . By 2006 , there were twenty co @-@ productions . In 2001 , there were over 120 million viewers of all international versions of Sesame Street , and by the show 's 40th anniversary in 2009 , they were seen in more than 140 countries . In 2005 , Doreen Carvajal of The New York Times reported that income from the co @-@ productions and international licensing accounted for \$ 96 million . As Cole and her colleagues reported in 2001 , " Children 's Television Workshop ( CTW ) can be regarded as the single largest informal educator of young children in the world " .

= = = Interactive media = = =

Ten years after the premiere of Sesame Street , the CTW began experimenting with new technologies . In 1979 , it began to plan the development of a theme park , Sesame Place , which opened in 1980 in Langhorne , Pennsylvania . Three international parks , Parque Plaza Sesamo in Monterrey , Mexico since 1995 , Universal Studios Japan , and Vila Sesamo Kids ' Land in Brazil were later built . One of the park 's features was a computer gallery , which was developed by a small in @-@ house team and included 55 computer programs . The team evolved into the Children 's Computer Workshop ( CCW ) in 1982 , which was disbanded and became the Interactive Technologies division of the CTW in the late 1980s . As Sesame Street researcher Shalom M. Fisch pointed out , no television show could be as interactive as computer games , even " participatory " shows like Blue 's Clues or the Sesame Street segment " Elmo 's World " . The CTW has chosen to take advantage of the contingent feedback inherent in interactive computer games by developing and creating educational software based upon the television show 's content and curriculum .

In 2008 , a new " research @-@ driven " website was created ; it reached 18 million downloads in one month . Also in 2008 , the Sesame Workshop began to offer clips and full @-@ length episodes on Hulu , YouTube , and iTunes , where " Word on the Street " segments became the most popular webcast . In 2010 , the Workshop began offering eBooks through the show 's website , including a free rotating selection of five titles . Their selection of eBooks came in a variety of formats , some of which were interactive , and covered nineteen subject areas , including letters , numbers , counting , colors , and cultural appreciation .

== Explanatory notes ==