

*Preserving Digital Public Television
In the U.S.*






A project funded by the Library of Congress
PRESERVING DIGITAL PUBLIC TELEVISION



*A Project Funded by
the Library of Congress*





“Public television has been responsible for the production, broadcast and dissemination of programs which form the richest audiovisual source of cultural history in the United States.”

**Television and Video Preservation 1997:
A Study of the Current State of American Television
and Video Preservation
Report of the Librarian of Congress**

We all know that digital technology has totally transformed television broadcasting

Program Production and Transmission –
All digital in less than a decade



Not to mention Program Distribution - *Radically altered*

YouTube Worldwide English Sign Up QuickList (0)

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Channels **Non-Profit** - Most Viewed (All Time)

Most Viewed

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Mission of Public Television in the U.S.

A network of 300+ stations ‘using the power of television to educate, enlighten, engage and inform.’

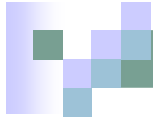
Challenge the American mind.

Inspire the American spirit.

Preserve the American memory.

Enhance the American dialogue.

Promote global understanding.



**Despite the mission to
*'preserve the American Memory...'***


Who Actually Has This Responsibility?



No One!

That's Right – No single organization or institution in the U.S. has the actual responsibility for preserving public television programs.

Consequently, there are very few formal archiving activities in place.



Preserving Digital Public Television
is based at the two public television
stations in the U.S. that produce 60% of the
national prime-time schedule.



**We are also the only two stations that have
our own program archives.**



Both stations know that meeting the demands of preservation can be costly.

We knew we could not do it alone.

The project formally began in September 2004 and will end in March 2009

Two major drivers -

- 1. Design a model repository to test a preservation environment for digital video**
- 2. Build support for shared resources and costs among a broad community of users who have no commitment to preservation**

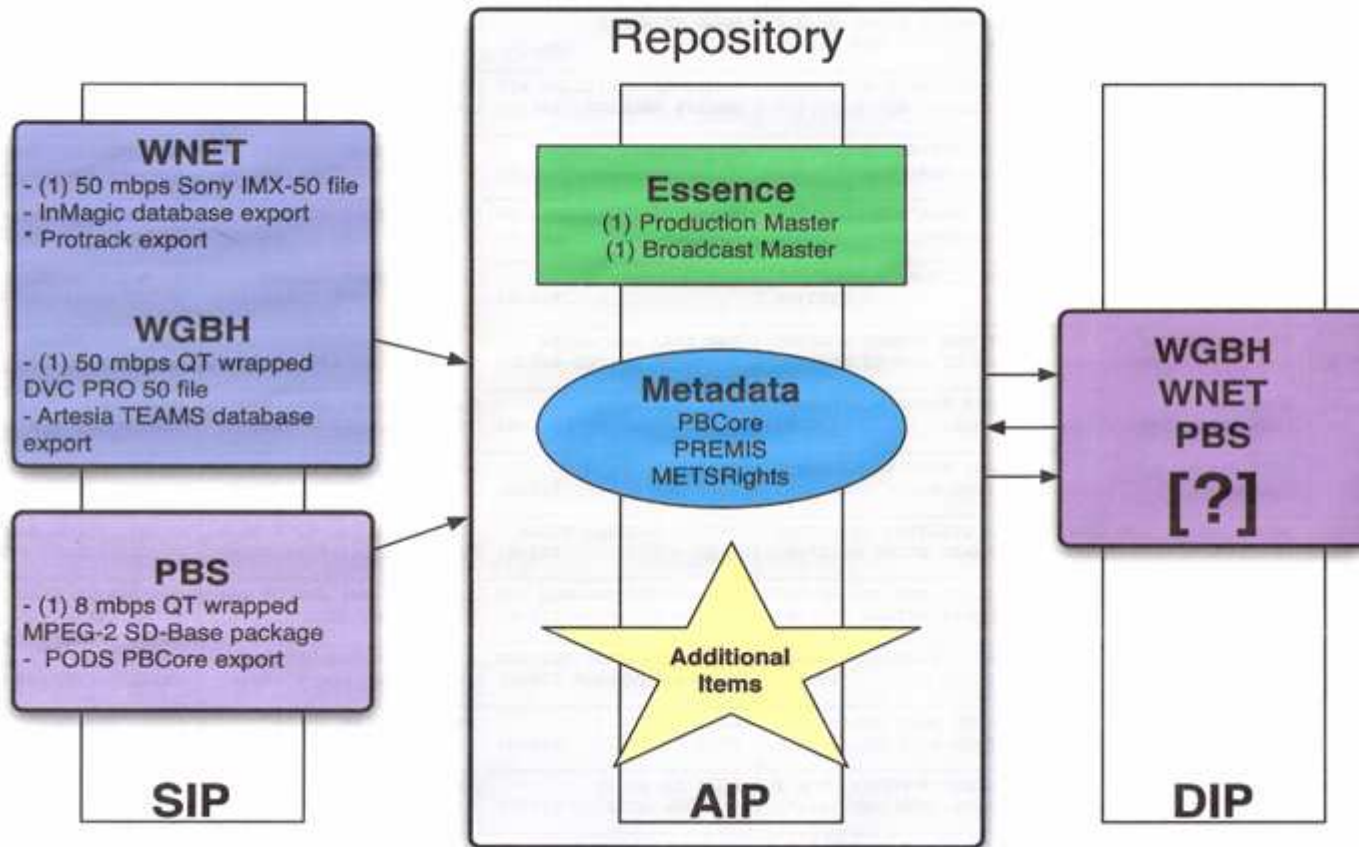


Repository Design

Technical issues rested primarily on how best to organize files and metadata to create SIPs and AIPs

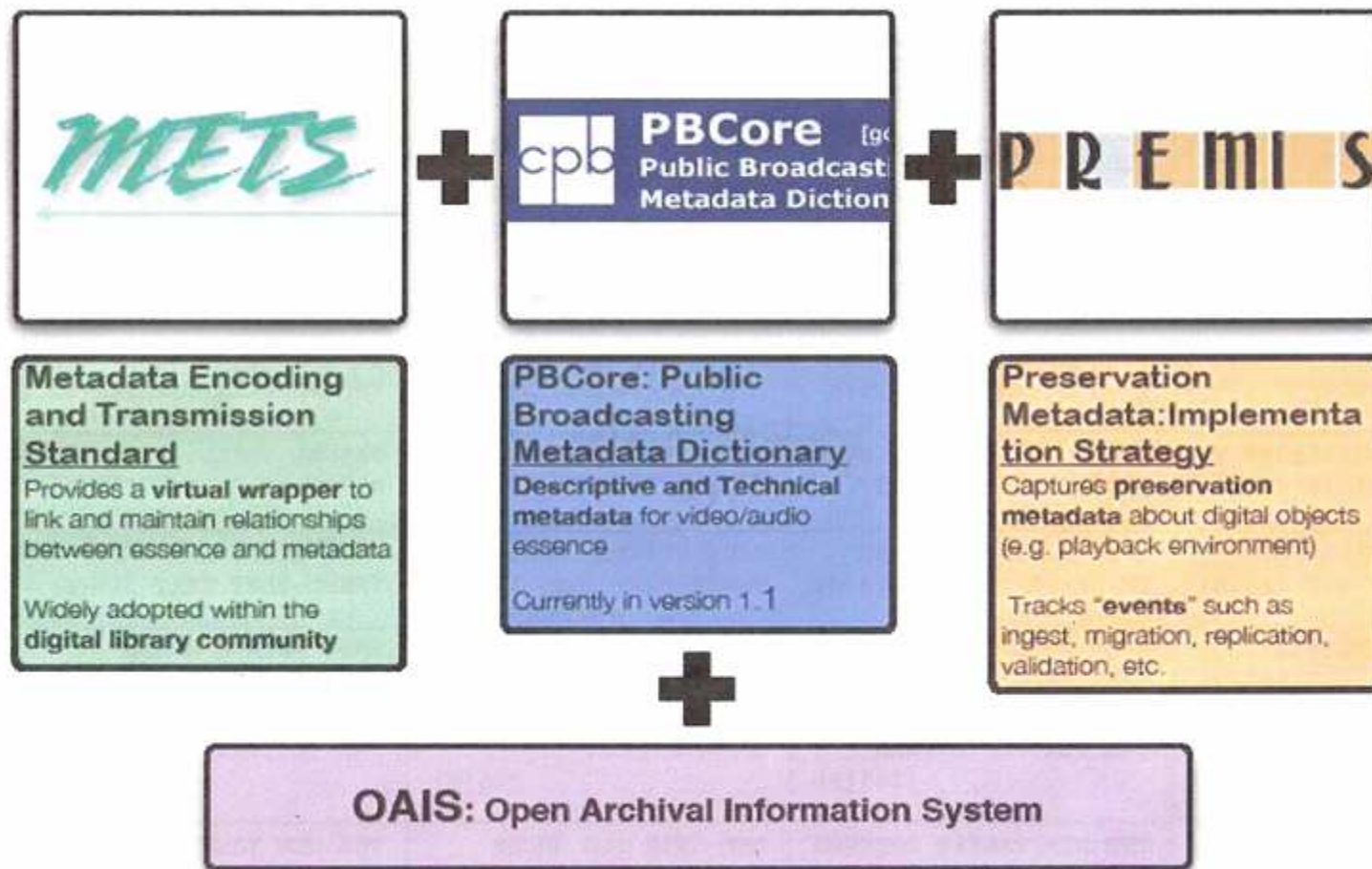
- **Digital Library Team at New York University, based on their work with other moving image archives**
- **Small sample - tested only 35 hours of content**
- **Test files came from 3 sources - Program masters from WNET and WGBH, and compressed distribution versions of the same programs from PBS**
- **File formats from each source was a different flavor**
- **Metadata information and database imports were inconsistent and idiosyncratic**

Repository Information Packages



Metadata Schema

S&M: Standards and Metadata



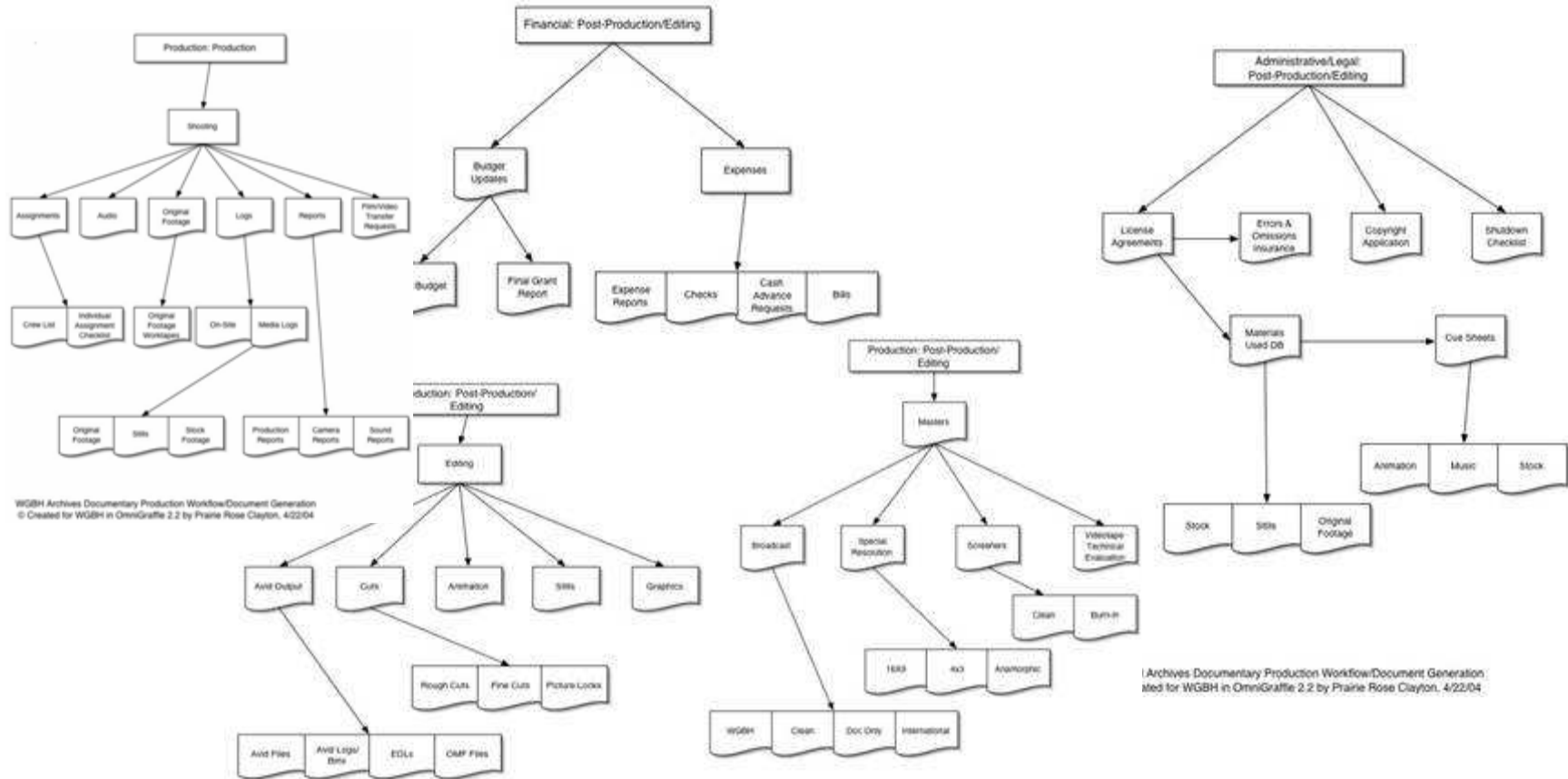


**We also analyzed production and
distribution workflows
(largely based on legacy manual procedures)
specifically to identify file formats,
video wrappers and metadata creation.**

**As you might imagine, these are complex.
We were not able to implement any changes.**

Production Workflows- WGBH

(only a sample ...)



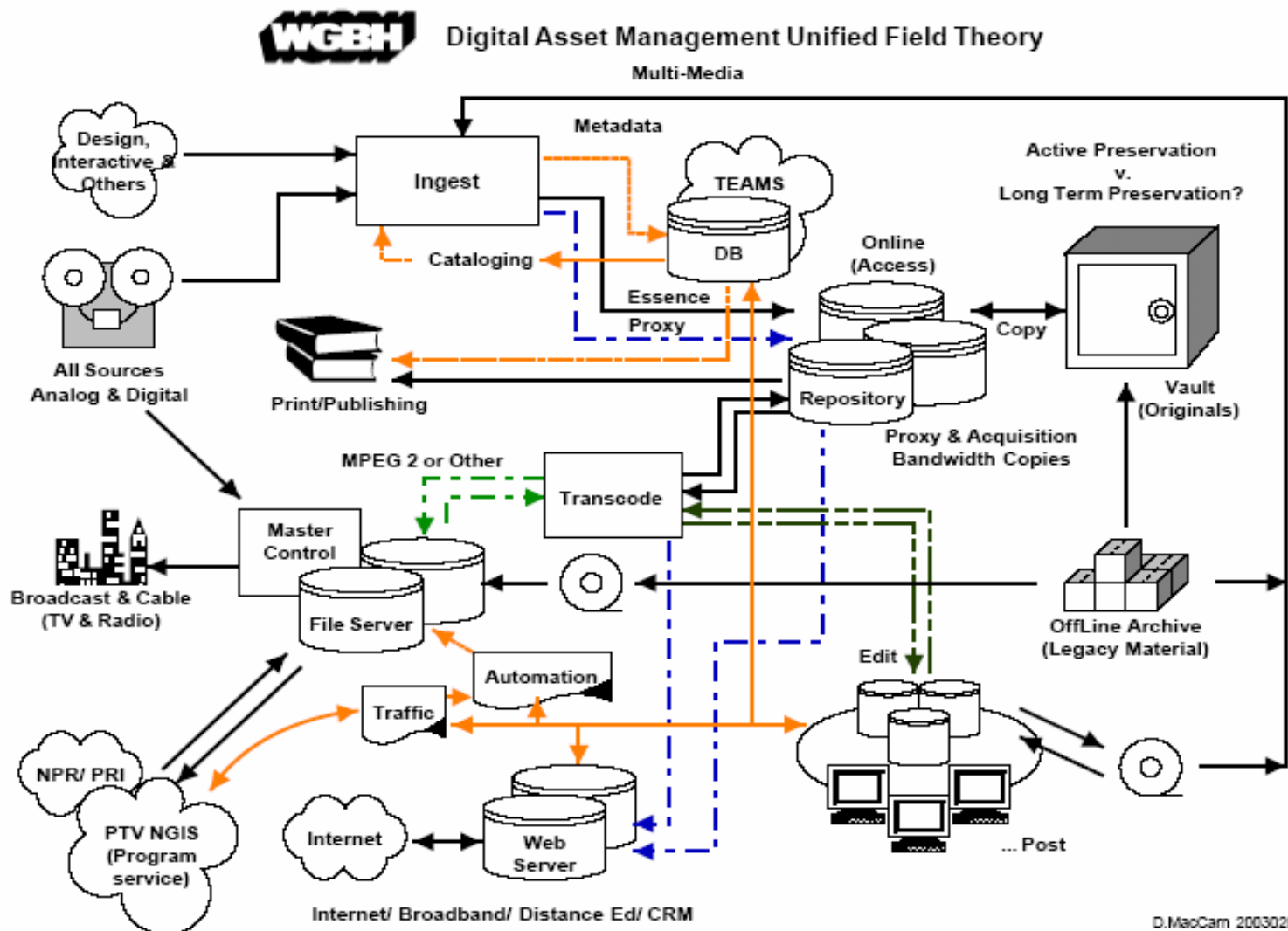
WGBH Archives Documentary Production Workflow/Document Generation
 © Created for WGBH in OmniGraffle 2.2 by Prairie Rose Clayton, 4/22/04

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Internal Station Workflows





Untangling Rights & Access

- System has generally shown little interest in programs after broadcast rights expire
- Explicit ‘preservation access’ rights are rare
- Station-based efforts have begun to produce new contract language, licensing agreements, etc.
- National efforts also underway to revise legislation, i.e. Orphan Works, ‘Section 108’, etc.
- Producing detailed report on complexity of the issues
- Looking seriously at experience outside the U.S, i.e. *BBC Creative Archives*, *VideoActive*, etc. to provide guidance
- Meanwhile, model repository will be ‘dark’ to the public



Looking at Sustainability

- 'Monetizing content' cannot be sole rationale for preservation
- Analyzing actual costs of the existing repository – not just storage, but technical, administration, operations, staffing, services and other ongoing expenses.
- Applying costs associated with adding preservation activities to a digital production workflow – to integrate into future production budgets.
- Tagging along with larger initiatives like the *Blue Ribbon Task Force on Digital Sustainability and Access* (National Science Foundation & Mellon Foundation)



Capturing Related Websites (because saving programs isn't enough)

- Working with Internet Archive to save public television websites
- Monthly crawl of 400+ station and program websites
- Saving the changes when new video and other features are added
- These will all be transferred to the Library of Congress at the end of the year



Building System-Wide Support

- **Introducing stations to Archiving Basics, i.e. importance of standards, metadata, indexing, etc. to broadcast operations, file exchanges, interoperability, and search capability**
- **Being visible at conferences, meetings and in print**
- **Tying digital preservation directly to the needs of stations to put their video online**
- **Reminding them that our content is very precious to the public, which expects to see it**

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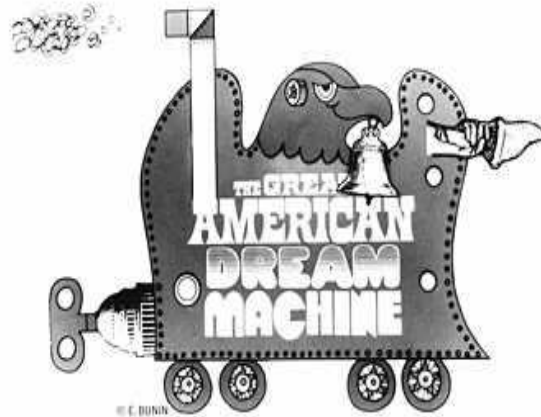
Pipeline

FUTURE PUBTV SHOWS

Documents

PUBLIC BROADCASTING
POLICYBASE

History



The first of TV's magazine series is stuck in the minds of viewers who remember it but stuck on the shelf, out of viewers' sight.

Everything old can be new again

Preserving and archiving your local video legacy is the first step toward the perpetual access that people now expect

Originally published in *Current*, May 14, 2007

EARLIER ARTICLES

Ron Hull dived into the PBS archive, found himself among old friends, 1997.

Fans prompt revival of sci-fil classic *Lathe of Heaven*, 2000.

A sinner knows the value of the archives she tossed, by preservation advocate Sharon Blair, 2002.

A primer on metadata by Mary Jane McKinven, 2002.

Why metadata matters: It greases digital wheels, by Steven Vedro, 2001.

WGBH turns to digital asset management to get its archives in order, 2003.

Kentucky network assures future for video past, 2004.

Video-rich website supports *Eyes on the* ... 2000.

For example, we produced articles for station personnel, handouts, website, etc.



“The American Archive”

In Summer 2007, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting convened a group of 35+ to discuss the idea of creating a new entity to serve both public radio and television.

There was a lot of enthusiasm.

Recognition and Funding at last !



**But not so fast - after a year,
there is little progress on
*The American Archive.***

- **Key stations and other stakeholders have not yet begun to work collaboratively**
- **Funding tied to appropriations from the U.S. Congress is subject to political conditions**

The future of this initiative is uncertain.



Lessons Learned (+)

- **Technical problems will eventually be solved, especially when private industry agrees to collaborate on standards**
- **Preservation-compliant all-digital workflows will soon be adopted (WNET is testing one now)**
- **We've brought a wide range of new national resources to public television**
- **We were successful making stations around the country aware of preservation and motivating them to explore forming local and regional preservation partnerships**
- **Station-based efforts are underway to reform Rights Management, Legal issues, and related obstacles to program access (but have a long way to go.)**



Lessons Learned (-)

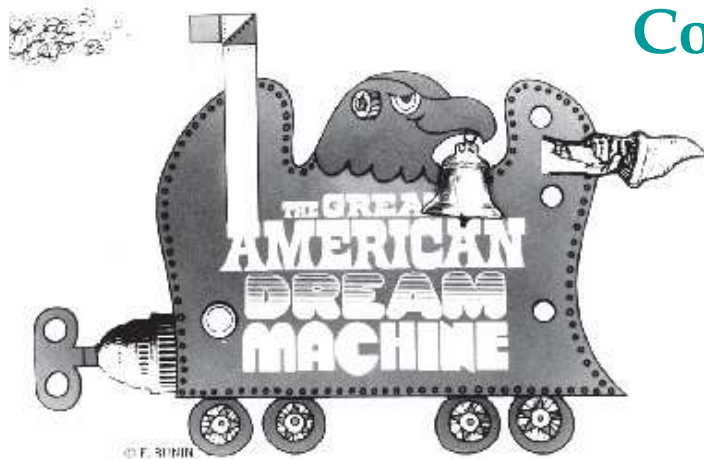
- Commitment to preservation must be reinforced, misconceptions overcome - it's not optional, but *necessary* for future access to digital content
- System unwilling to take risks on pushing boundaries for access
- Preservation costs are seen as overwhelming (especially in context of very weak U.S. economy and limited funding sources) They can be spread out & shared
- We need to make costs feasible and manageable - not competing with needs of program production

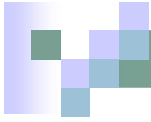
*Ultimately, biggest driver will be
the American public.*

**As viewers continue to demand that public television
be available on-line, it will prove that access can
strengthen ties between stations and viewers.**

**This message will also reach
Congress (= Federal Funding.)**

**Preserving America's
cultural heritage is
actually an important
investment in the future of
public broadcasting.**





Preserving Digital Public Television

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