



the
GIANTS
of
BROADCASTING

A Publication of the Library of American Broadcasting

VOLUME 8 – 2010

DICK CLARK
NORMAN CORWIN
SAM DONALDSON
EDDIE FRITTS

HAL JACKSON
ART LINKLETTER
RUE MCCLANAHAN

AGNES NIXON
DANIEL SCHORR
LESLEY STAHL
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Congratulations and thanks to all of today's
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CBS proudly supports the Library of American Broadcasting.



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Honoring the Past, Illuminating the Future

The Library of American Broadcasting strives to gather, preserve and make accessible to all the historical record of radio and television—from as far back as we can reach to as far forward as we can see.

Long recognized as the nation's preeminent collection of historical broadcast materials in one location, the Library was established in the basement of the National Association of Broadcasters headquarters in Washington in 1972 by a dedicated band of radio and TV pioneers determined to assure that the record of the industry's accomplishments and service would not be lost to history. The NAB was its incubator and nurturer for two decades. When the collections outgrew those premises in 1994, the Library began a second life in association with the University of Maryland at College Park. There it occupies 25,000 square feet of prime university real estate, positioned as the primary resource tracking where the industry has been, what it has accomplished and what comes next in its service to America.

The new and improved LAB has a great head start in its own mission, which is to discover and acquire the treasures of the past and present, preserve them for posterity and make them available to a wide audience of academia, industry and the public, while simultaneously keeping a weather eye on the future. In its fourth decade it is enriched by more than 9,000 books, 300 periodical titles, 7,000 pamphlets, 3,000 scripts, 1,000 oral histories (among 15,000 audiotapes, CDs and wire recordings), 10,000 audio discs, 4,000 films, videos and DVDs, 3,500 linear feet of manuscript materials and more than 225,000 photographs. It's already a resource for the ages but to us it's



only the beginning, with still a long way to go to preserve the character, the traditions, the visions and the very purpose of an industry and a medium whose products, by their nature, disappear into thin air.

Now, with the wind at our back, we are attacking the second mission—the financial challenge—by embarking on a major fundraising campaign with an eye toward providing the Library with the resources to match the demands of the 21st century.

Principal among them: acquisition

(collection building and expansion of the oral history effort); preservation (the creation of an endowment to keep the Library alive and in step with the broadcasting industry itself), and access (updating Library operations to incorporate new technologies and outreach—including wide use of digitizing and the Internet—to broader constituencies).

Why should you and others who care about broadcasting support the Library of American Broadcasting? Because everything it does helps tell the story of broadcasting's past and helps write the story of broadcasting's future. If the Library weren't already there it would surely have to be invented, and we would be asking for your help from the ground up. As it is we ask only that you participate in maintaining and improving this vital institution from the top down.

With your support, the Library of American Broadcasting will do more than outlive us all. It will tell the story of, carry the torch for and help keep alive the soul of the broadcasting industry into a future we can only imagine.

At the end of the day, it's not our Library. It's yours.

GIANTS OF BROADCASTING: THE FIRST 127

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 Gertrude Berg
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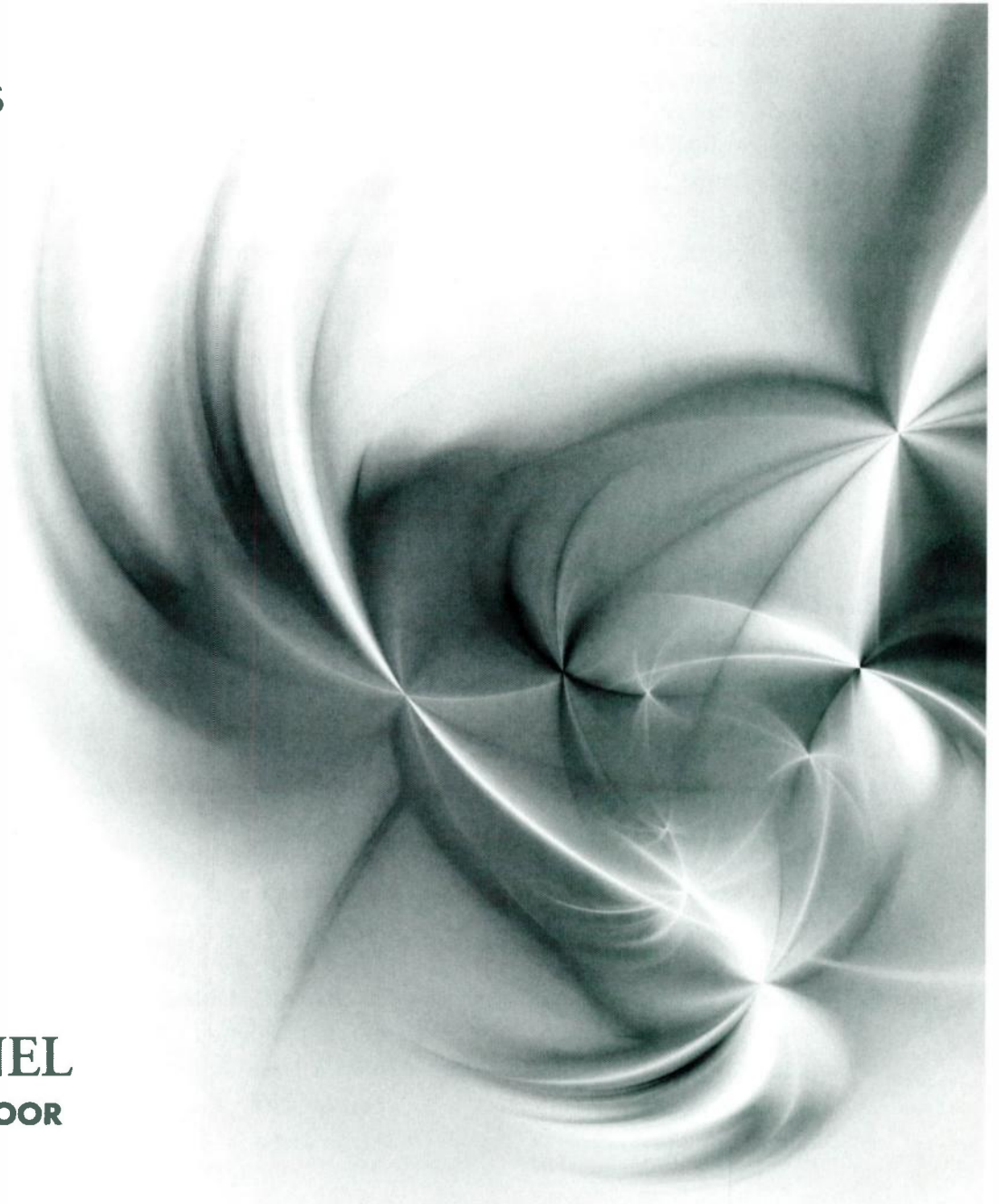
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Clear Channel salutes the 2010 Giants of Broadcasting

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OUT OF THIN AIR

THE STORY OF

the
GIANTS
of
BROADCASTING

VOLUME EIGHT – 2010

BY MARK K. MILLER



Dick Clark

Evergreen

Few people in radio or television have their names inextricably linked to an event or entire musical genre. Dick Clark has managed over the course of a 50-plus-year career to hitch his star to two: rock 'n' roll and New Year's Eve.

Richard Wagstaff Clark was born on Nov. 30, 1929, in Mount Vernon, N.Y., the son of Julia Fuller and Richard Augustus Clark.

Family connections got him into radio at age 16, working in the mailroom of WRUN-AM Utica, N.Y., which was owned by his uncle and managed by his father. He soon added weatherman and news announcer to his list of duties. While attending Syracuse University, he worked as a DJ at WOLF-AM in the summer of 1950 before graduating with a business degree in 1951. He landed more DJ stints at WRUN and WOLF before moving into television at WKTU Utica, hosting a country music show, *Cactus Dick and the Santa Fe Riders*.

In 1952 he went to Philadelphia's WFIL-AM to host *Dick Clark's Caravan of Music*. Part of his duties included substituting for the host of *Bandstand*, an afternoon music program on co-owned WFIL-TV. As described in the *Encyclopedia of Television*: "Hosted by Bob Horn, a popular local disk jockey, the show was presented 'live' and included teenagers dancing to the records that were played. As the success of the televised *Bandstand* grew,

Dick Clark took over the disk jockey duties of the radio program while Bob Horn was broadcasting in front of the cameras. In 1956, Horn was arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol, in the middle of an anti-drunk driving campaign by WFIL. Soon thereafter, Dick Clark replaced him as the host of the televised program. Clark's clean-cut boy-next-door image seemed to offset any unsavory fallout from Horn's arrest, because the show increased in its popularity."

Clark began showing recordings of the show to executives at then-third-place ABC in New York who were looking for new—and inexpensive—programming. *Bandstand* was picked up by ABC and renamed *American Bandstand* to reflect its nationwide distribution, beginning on Aug. 5, 1957 (Clark interviewed Elvis Presley for that premiere episode). The program's mix of lip-synched performances, interviews and its audience participation "Rate-a-Record" segment made it a huge hit with teenagers.

Almost overnight, Clark became the country's pop music guru. From 1963 through 1987, *American Bandstand* ran weekly, becoming one of the longest-running shows in broadcast television. And after its run on ABC was over, Clark produced it for syndication and cable's USA Network for another two years.

In 1964 Clark moved *American Bandstand* to Los Angeles and the relocation to the growing entertainment

capital fit well with Clark's increasing ambitions. In 1965 he produced *Where the Action Is* for ABC. Hosted by Paul Revere and the Raiders, it was a *Bandstand*-type show. His Dick Clark Productions then began presenting variety programs and game shows, most successfully *The \$25,000 Pyramid* and *TV's Bloopers & Practical Jokes*. Among the many awards programs the company produced was the *American Music Awards*, which Clark created as a rival to the Grammy Awards.

Clark hosted his *\$10,000 Pyramid*, which premiered on CBS March 26, 1973. The word association show moved to ABC from 1974 to 1980, during which time the top prize was upgraded to \$20,000. After a brief 1981 syndicated run as *The \$50,000 Pyramid*, the show returned to CBS in 1982 as *The \$25,000 Pyramid*, and continued through 1988, except for a three-month break. From 1985 to 1988, Clark hosted both the CBS *\$25,000* version and a daily *\$100,000 Pyramid* in syndication.

His daytime versions of *Pyramid* won nine Emmy Awards for best game show, a mark that is eclipsed only by the 11 won by the syndicated version of *Jeopardy!*. It also won Clark three Emmy Awards for best game show host.

His production company also added made-for-TV movies and in 1972, Clark produced and hosted *Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve*, the first of an ongoing series of specials still broadcast by ABC on New Year's Eve. In the more than three decades it has been on the air, the show has become a

mainstay in U.S. New Year's Eve celebrations.

At the end of 2004 Clark was unable to appear on the program while recovering from a stroke; Regis Philbin substituted as host. The following year Clark returned to the show although Ryan Seacrest served as primary host. From Dec. 31, 2005, Clark has co-hosted *New Year's Rockin' Eve* with Seacrest.

As big as he was in television, Clark didn't turn his back on radio. In 1963, he began hosting a syndicated radio program called *The Dick Clark Radio Show*. Then, on March 25, 1972, Clark hosted *American Top 40*, filling in for Casey Kasem. Several years later, Clark would become one of *AT40's* biggest rivals. In 1981, he created *The Dick Clark National Music Survey* for the Mutual Broadcasting System. The program counted down the top 30 contemporary hits of the week in direct competition with *American Top 40*.

Clark left Mutual in 1986 and then launched his own satellite-delivered radio syndication group; the United Stations Radio Network (Unistar), and began his own countdown program, *Countdown America*. It ran until 1994, when Clark sold Unistar to Westwood One Radio. The following year, Clark started over, building a new version of the USRN and a new countdown show, *The U.S. Music Survey*, that he hosted until his 2004 stroke.

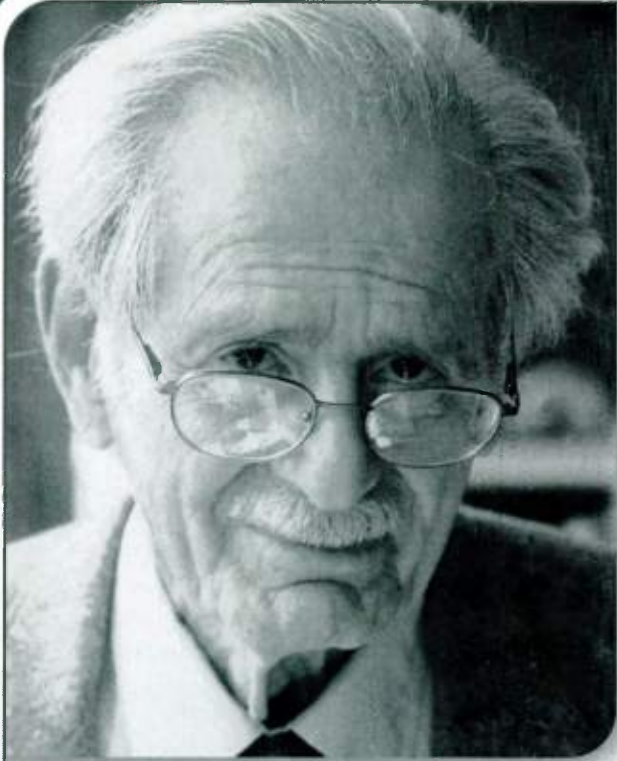
Clark's television output is prolific: More than 8,500 hours and counting.

He's won a Peabody award, four Emmys plus a Daytime Emmy Lifetime Achievement Award; has been inducted into numerous halls of fame (including the Rock 'N' Roll in 1993); and has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Often referred to as "America's oldest teenager," there was much more to Clark's success and longevity. Rodney Buxton, in the *Encyclopedia of Television*, writes that "Despite the boyish good looks and charm that are the identifying characteristics of this American icon, it is Clark's economically efficient business savvy and his uncanny ability to measure the American public's cultural mood that have been his most important assets in television broadcasting."



Dick Clark takes a call while hosting American Bandstand in 1958.



Norman Corwin

And the Radio That Was

It's hard for many of us to think of radio as anything more than a convenient provider of music, sports and diatribe from both ends of the political spectrum, but there was a time when drama, comedy, documentary and even poetry was available daily. The unquestioned "poet laureate of radio" was Norman Corwin, who was among the first producers to regularly use entertainment to illustrate serious social issues.

Corwin's programs ranged far and wide through the genres of drama and comedy, including love stories, satire, biography, fantasy, mystery, Bible stories, travelogues, history, media analyses, philosophy—and more. In sum, along with his programs on current events and the stories of America, they are superb examples of the all-but-forgotten art of radio.

Norman Lewis Corwin was born in Boston on May 3, 1910. At 17, he began working as a journalist for the *Greenfield Recorder* and the *Springfield Republican* in Massachusetts and when the latter paper established a relationship with WBZ-AM Springfield and WBZA-AM Boston in 1932, he delivered bylined news and commentary each evening. In 1935 WLW-AM Cincinnati hired him as a latenight newscaster, but as John Dunning's *Encyclopedia of Old-Time Radio* recounts, he was fired "for violating the station's policies against airing news of labor strikes."

He moved to New York City in 1936 and created a program for independent

station WQXR-AM. In 1938, Corwin began working for the CBS Radio Network. CBS scheduled *Norman Corwin's Words Without Music*, the first usage of a writer's name in a program title; the series included two of his more famous works, *The Plot to Overthrow Christmas*, a fantasy in rhyme (Edward R. Murrow compared it to the best of Gilbert and Sullivan), and *They Fly Through the Air*, an impassioned reaction to the Spanish Civil War.

In 1941 Corwin was given the timeslot and resources of CBS's *Columbia Workshop* program for six months, under the title *26 By Corwin*, which required him to conceive, write, cast, direct and produce a completely new play every seven days. According to *Current's* Tom Lewis, "The series ranks with the greatest achievements in the history of radio production. Other series followed, including *An American in England* and *Columbia Presents Corwin*, along with special programs. Almost all appeared on the CBS network."

His shows on CBS were always "sustaining"—that is, they aired with no commercials. They were, Dunning says, "carried as crown jewels in that special genre called 'prestige,' never offered for sale to any product or cause."

In 1941, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt wanted radio to help celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Bill of Rights. Corwin got the job to produce a 60-minute special that would air on all four

national radio networks simultaneously. *We Hold These Truths* was first broadcast on Dec. 15, 1941. Many radio and movie stars were featured, along with an epilogue by President Roosevelt. (National Public Radio sponsored a new version of this program in 1991, for the Bill of Rights' bicentennial.)

One of his most famous works is *On a Note of Triumph*, a celebration of the Allied victory in Europe, first broadcast on V-E Day, May 8, 1945. The program went on (from CBS's KNX-AM Los Angeles), with Martin Gabel as host/narrator and with William L. Shirer (via cable from New York) re-creating his role as reporter in the Compeigne forest covering the French surrender to Germany. With an audience of 60 million listeners, it became one of the most famous broadcasts ever produced on radio.

Corwin wrote a similar program for CBS, *Fourteen August*, which was broadcast on V-J Day on Aug. 15, 1945.

Tom Lewis summed up the difference between Corwin and others writing and producing for radio: "Corwin's reverence for the power of words, his scrupulous attention to sound and detail extracted the best from the medium and appealed to the best instincts of his listeners. They might tune in NBC for the knee-slapping laughs of *Jack Benny* or *Amos 'n' Andy*, but they turned to CBS for the drama, the documentary, the poetry and the rich fantasy and verbal ingenuity of Norman Corwin."

Corwin thrived on deadlines. "I loved what I was doing," he recalled in 1996, "I was

not conscious of it being a very great sacrifice. I was so enchanted and intrigued and challenged with the necessity to come up with a new program every week—having nothing to do with what preceded it or would follow it. I did not resent the fact that immediately after the broadcast on the ride home from the studio I'd have to think, 'What am I going to write about next week?,' and I'd get started on it the next morning. And if in two days it didn't come I would have to drop it and start on another tack. And that, of course, was a very risky, hazardous business, because I was not only writing—but I was also directing and producing them. It was complete dedication—it was exhausting and often I thought, 'What an idiot I am for taking this on, this is crazy.' But it wasn't crazy, it was made possible, made feasible by the fact that I loved what I was doing. It was like one rhapsodic dream from start to finish."

But by the end of the 1940s, radio had begun to change and in 1948 CBS canceled the *Columbia Workshop* as the network's chief, William Paley, began his talent raids on NBC to establish a stable of the nation's top entertainers that CBS could also use as it launched the CBS Television Network. After he left the network, Corwin produced a series of programs for United Nations Radio.

Corwin wrote a number of motion picture screenplays and wrote and directed two plays produced on Broadway, *The Rivalry*

(1959) and *The World of Carl Sandburg* (1960). His television credits include his 1971 syndicated series *Norman Corwin Presents*.

Corwin returned to radio in the 1990s, with a series of new programs written and directed for National Public Radio.

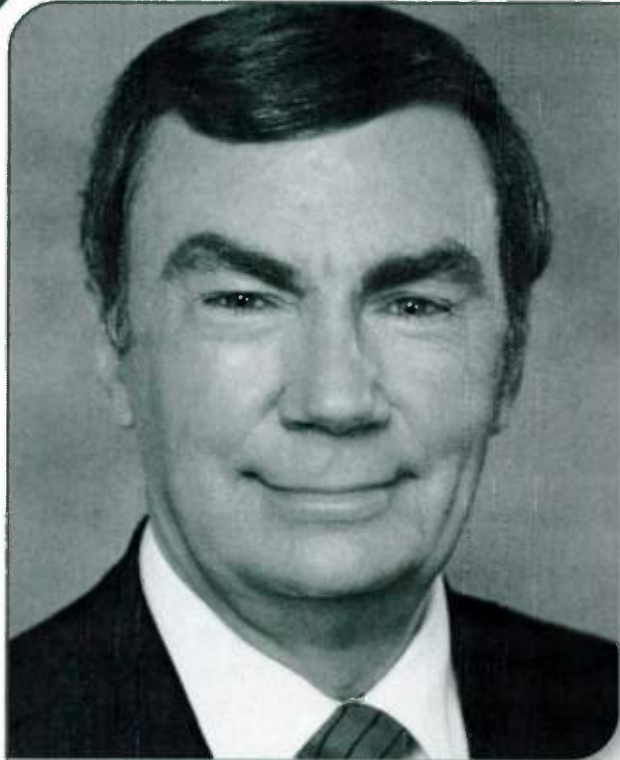
Norman Corwin celebrated his 100th birthday on May 3, 2010, and today lives in Los Angeles. He is still writing for radio and various publications and is writer in residence at the University of Southern California's Annenberg School for Communication & Journalism.

The dictionary describes a giant as 1) A legendary humanlike being of great stature and strength; 2) A living being of great size; 3) A person of extraordinary powers; 4) Something unusually large or powerful.

Norman Corwin is a Giant in every sense of the word.



Elsa Lanchester, Charles Laughton and Norman Corwin go over a Columbia Presents Corwin script.



Sam Donaldson

The One and Only

If you ask people over 40 to describe a tough, no-nonsense, persistent TV reporter with a touch of smart-aleckyness, they probably wouldn't hesitate to say "Sam Donaldson." And he'd probably be pleased.

Samuel Andrew Donaldson was born on March 11, 1934, in El Paso, Texas, and grew up in nearby Chamberino, N.M. He became interested in broadcasting at an early age and, after graduating from New Mexico Military Institute, majored in telecommunications at Texas Western College, working at local El Paso radio stations as a disc jockey, announcer and interviewer while in school.

After graduating in 1955 Donaldson served on active duty with the U.S. Army from 1956 to 1959, rising to the rank of Captain, USAR. After returning home, he resumed his broadcasting career, moving to television at KRLD-TV Dallas in 1959.

Donaldson's world expanded beyond Texas in 1961 when he became a correspondent at Washington CBS affiliate WTOP-TV (now WUSA). Ostensibly, he was covering local news, but, as *Broadcasting* magazine wrote in 1986, "the station management had a zest for national affairs, and Donaldson found himself covering the Senate and House, White House and Pentagon and various federal agencies. And after six years, ABC, then struggling to strengthen its news team in Washington, offered him a job."

While at WTOP he covered such

national stories as the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, President Kennedy's funeral in 1963, passage of the Civil Rights Act in the Senate in 1964 and Senate hearings on the Vietnam War in 1965. He also anchored the station's weekend news broadcasts, and produced and moderated a weekly interview program.

After joining ABC News in 1967 as Capitol Hill correspondent, Donaldson covered such major news stories as the Vietnam War, Watergate, the House Judiciary Committee impeachment investigation in 1974, and the Gulf War in 1991. Two days after the Gulf War ended, he co-anchored a special edition of *PrimeTime Live* from Kuwait City.

ABC named him chief White House correspondent in 1977 (he would spend a second term in that job in 1998-99), covering the incoming Carter administration. As the Academy of Achievement wrote, "Donaldson's aggressive style of questioning, much assisted by his powerful speaking voice, quickly drew the attention of the public and the immense irritation of the White House staff.

"Later that year, the fortunes of ABC's news operation took a precipitous turn for the better with the appointment of Boone Arledge as head of the division. Arledge, who had already revolutionized television sports coverage, brought the same hard-driving approach to the news operation. He expanded coverage, and lured distinguished news personalities

from the other networks with unprecedented salary offers.

“Donaldson prospered too, and the next change of administrations in Washington offered Donaldson a perfect opportunity to make an impression on the public. Although President Reagan held relatively few press conferences, Donaldson took every opportunity to press difficult questions on the new President. Television audiences became familiar with the sound of Donaldson’s voice booming over the rest of the White House press corps, even over the drone of the President’s helicopter, as the Chief Executive dashed across the South Lawn to escape his relentless inquisitors.”

That booming voice will be part of his legacy, Donaldson figures. He told the *Washington Post* last year: “I guess it’ll be on my tombstone: ‘He yelled at Ronald Reagan.’”

Donaldson has covered every national political convention since 1964 with the exception of the 1992 Republican Convention in Houston. He reported on the presidential campaigns of Senator Barry Goldwater, Senator Eugene McCarthy, Senator Hubert Humphrey, President Jimmy Carter, President Ronald Reagan and Governor Michael Dukakis. He also reported as an eyewitness on Spiro Agnew’s no contest plea in a Baltimore courtroom that forced Agnew’s resignation from the vice presidency.

An eyewitness to the shooting attempt on President Reagan’s life in 1981, he delivered the first report on any broadcast medium of that event on the ABC Radio Network.

Donaldson also anchored *World News Sunday* for 10 years (1979-89) and was a regular interviewer on *This Week with David Brinkley* from the program’s inception in 1981 until Brinkley retired in 1996. He also co-anchored *PrimeTime Live* with Diane Sawyer from August 1989 until it merged with *20/20* in 1999.

From 1999 to 2001, Donaldson hosted SamDonaldson@abcnews.com, the first regularly scheduled Internet webcast produced by a television network. On this webcast, he interviewed former Presidents Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and George Bush, along with such diverse other personalities as actor Sean Connery, comedian Janeane Garofalo, Amazon.com CEO Jeff Bezos and sports great Willie Mays.

He co-anchored the ABC News Sunday morning broadcast *This Week with Sam Donaldson & Cokie Roberts* from December 1996 to September 2002. From October 2001 to May 2004, he hosted *The Sam Donaldson Show—Live in America*, a daily news/ talk radio program broadcast on ABC News Radio affiliates across the country. In the three-hour show, Donaldson tackled the day’s top stories and important issues—getting comment from newsmakers, engaging listener calls and, of course, inserting his own unique experience and opinion.

Donaldson then appeared on ABC News NOW, the network’s 24-hour digital outlet. His daily half-hour show *Politics Live* was an unscripted dialogue with numerous guests and commentators discussing the top political news stories of the day. Donaldson was also a frequent contributor to ABCNews.com, taping video essays exclusively for the website and writing biweekly political commentaries.

In February 2009, Donaldson, then 74, announced his retirement from full-time work at ABC after four decades. But old habits die hard—he still appears on various ABC News programs, including *This Week with Christiane Amanpour*, and contributes to ABC News Radio so that viewers and listeners can still be educated and entertained by his unique inside-the-Beltway insights. When he’s not on the air he’s at home on the range: a working ranch near Hondo, N.M.



Cokie Roberts and Sam Donaldson share a moment during the 2008 Democratic convention.



Eddie Fritts

He Wrote the Book on Broadcast Politics

If broadcasting can be in someone's blood, Eddie Fritts could provide a lot of transfusions, for his career has stretched almost 50 years and taken him from a small-town AM station to the head of one of Washington's most powerful lobbying organizations.

Edward Owens Fritts was born on Feb. 21, 1941, in Cape Girardeau, Mo. His family moved to Union City, Tenn., where his father was the manager of WENK-AM. During high school, Fritts worked "as a lifeguard during the day and the world's worst disc jockey at night," in his candid description.

The family interest in broadcasting was strong and Fritts, after studying business administration at the University of Mississippi in 1959-61 and working fulltime for his father, joined WENK in 1962 as an announcer, sportscaster and salesman. The following year, he decided he wanted his own station and with his father's help in securing a loan, he launched Fritts Broadcasting in 1963 with the purchase of WNLA-AM Indianola, Miss., a 500-watt daytime-only station.

By 1978, Fritts Broadcasting Group had grown to include four more AM stations and five FM stations in Mississippi, Kentucky, Arkansas and Louisiana. To oversee his growing enterprise, Fritts bought a trailer that he used as his office, and drove it to a different station each day. The trailer was also equipped for remote broadcasts that were used to air promotional events.

Fritts became involved in broadcast trade associations through the Mississippi Association of Broadcasters. He was elected the group's president in 1972 and a few years later was appointed to the small-market radio committee of the National Association of Broadcasters where he served for two years, then spent a year on the NAB radio code board.

Next was election to the NAB's radio board and in June 1981 he was named joint board chairman, and was regarded, as *Broadcasting* wrote, "as one of the hardest-working and most politically savvy chairmen in memory. The national stage suited Fritts, who campaigned hard for the presidency, winning a close and contentious race [in 1982], then working to unify the industry behind a push for a level regulatory playing field and full First Amendment freedoms for broadcasters."

With wife Martha Dale at his side—herself a potent political force—the Fritts NAB became known as one of the most respected and effective lobbying organizations in the U.S. and a significant force in reassessing media ownership rules and regulations, which resulted in fundamental changes for broadcasting.

Among Fritts' many achievements was his role as a catalyst for the 1996 Telecommunications Act, which is generally regarded as the most important legislation regulating media ownership in the last 50 years.

He is also known for promoting the public service activities of local broadcasters in communities across the country and has actively encouraged stations' community involvement by serving on the boards of The Ad Council and the National Commission Against Drunk Driving.

In 2005, after 23 years at the helm of the NAB, the 64-year-old Fritts stepped down. Among the assessments of his tenure was this one in *Broadcasting & Cable*:

Derided by some as little more than a country businessman—in appearance, Fritts does not fit the image of a Washington power broker—he quickly figured out how to make his strategy work in Washington.

Fritts was “cut from the same cloth” as the politicians he was lobbying, says Gordon Hastings, president of the Broadcasters' Foundation. “He had been to Rotary Club meetings. He had been to the Kiwanis meetings. Eddie understands how to make a local United Way campaign work.

“Eddie Fritts,” Hastings continues, “understood how to ring the bell of every single member of the United States Senate and every single member of the House of Representatives.”

Fritts taught broadcasters that they could be powerful political forces in their own community. They had “the ultimate lobbying presence, because the lobbying was done right in the legislator's home constituency,” Hastings explains. “The smaller the market, the greater the importance of that direct connection.”

Says Russ Withers, president of Withers Broadcasting Co. and a member of the

NAB executive committee, “Nobody could compete against rolling out all the radio and TV people in all of the states. He had them organized and focused, first by letter and telephone and now by e-mail and fax.”

But at first, to transform NAB, Fritts needed money, and lots of it. So he began transforming the annual NAB Convention from a narrowly focused industry meeting where broadcasters batted around common concerns into a hardware show for all facets of broadcast-station and electronic-communications production equipment.

Enormous profits from exhibitors' fees allowed NAB to build its cash reserves. The money helps fund NAB's Television and Radio Political Action Committee (TARPAC), which donated \$883,000 to federal candidates in the 2004 election cycle and has \$354,513 in cash on hand.

Fritts' efforts to build TARPAC, along with his grassroots lobbying, soon paid off. The regulatory funk that had stuck to the industry soon began to wash off.

In 1984, at congressional urging, the FCC dropped a requirement that broadcasters meet with local community leaders to ascertain their markets' programming needs.

Significantly, the FCC also lifted restrictions limiting station-group owners to seven radio and seven TV outlets nationwide and embarked on a steady ownership deregulation drive that culminated with the 1996 Telecommunications Act.

Throughout the 1980s, other regulations hated by broadcasters fell, including the Fairness Doctrine, which required stations to air programs on controversial subjects

and include contrasting points of view.

Congress also lengthened the term for a broadcast license from three to eight years and, in all but the most egregious cases of neglecting local community needs, granted each owner virtual certainty of winning license renewal.

The legislative success had a hugely positive impact on NAB's membership levels as well.

In March 2006, Fritts launched The Fritts Group to provide telecommunications companies with strategic counsel in political consulting, government relations, international affairs and public relations. In 1982 he summed up his fascination with broadcasting and it gets to the heart of this industry leader: “Broadcasting today and in the future is exciting. There will always be something interesting, exciting and challenging.”



Eddie Fritts and President Reagan exchange warm greetings during one of Fritts' visits to the White House.



Hal Jackson

Being First Didn't Slow Him Down

Once Hal Jackson got in front of a microphone, he wasn't going to stop—and he hasn't for more than 70 years, amassing an amazing career with an impressive list of "firsts." In fact, his trailblazing ways were recognized as far back as 1949. Here's the lead paragraph from an article on Jackson that appeared on page 2 of the black newspaper *New York Age* that year: "With a line of 'firsts' longer than those of Benjamin Bannaker and a spiel as fluid as the Mississippi River during flood time, Hal Jackson, sensational new disc twirler and air-time impresario for Radio Station WLIB, has hurled himself into the hearts, minds and souls of Harlemites."

Harold Baron Jackson was born in Charleston, S.C., on Nov. 3, 1915. After being orphaned at age 9, he was shuttled between his sisters' families in New York and Washington, eventually staying in D.C., lettering in football, basketball, track, tennis and baseball at Dunbar High. While attending Howard University there, he broadcast the school's basketball and football games and also did games for the American Negro League from Washington's Griffith Stadium (where he also got a job picking up trash after Washington Senators games because it let him see the games for free).

In 1939, when Jackson approached WINX-AM Washington with an idea for an interview program, station management told him that no "nigger will ever broadcast on this station." Jackson wasn't de-

terred. With the backing of the owner of a string of barbecue restaurants, Jackson hired Erlich & Merrick, a white advertising agency, to purchase 15 minutes of airtime between 11 and 11:15 each night, six times a week without identifying who was going to be on the air. "I didn't arrive until five minutes before the show was to start, when I came in with [noted blood plasma researcher] Dr. Charles Drew. ... I went on and response was so tremendous they couldn't take me off," he recalled in 1989.

His show, *The House That Jack Built*, was so popular that, within two months, Jackson was able to buy airtime and sell ads on two additional stations—in Baltimore and Annapolis, Md. As *Broadcasting* described his typical routine, "Jackson chalked up numerous 18-hour days; first broadcasting his daily show on WINX, then driving to Baltimore for a three-hour sports program, then to Annapolis for a three-hour rhythm-and-blues program."

In 1949, he was wooed away from Washington by Harry Novik, GM of WLIB-AM New York. As the review quoted earlier suggests, he was popular, but quickly became homesick for Washington and after a year he returned to the Nation's Capital for a gig at WUST-AM. But New York would not be denied and Nathan Strauss—who wanted Jackson to break the color barrier at his WMCA-AM—lured Jackson back. There, he continued his usual busy schedule, working for three New York stations simultaneously during the next three years. "I'd start the

day at WMCA," he told *Broadcasting*, "then go across the street to Birdland [for a live broadcast on WABC-AM], then back to WLIB. And on Sundays I was doing a kid's show on [WPIX-TV] featuring Uncle Hal, The Kiddies' Pal." Plus, on NBC-TV he hosted *Frontiers of Faith*, a religious and jazz program.

Four million listeners tuned in nightly to hear Jackson's mix of music and conversations with jazz and show business celebrities on WABC and the ABC network from midnight to 6 a.m.

Jackson's groundbreaking career came to a halt in the late 1950s when he was accused, as were a number of other disc jockeys, of taking money from record companies in exchange for playing their singles. Jackson was fired. According to *Contemporary Black Biography*, "many believed Jackson had been targeted because of his involvement in the civil rights movement. He had interviewed Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his program, aired his speeches, and raised money for King's Southern Christian Leadership Council. 'It was kind of natural that he would be the target,' Professor William Barlow told NPR's *Weekend Edition Sunday*, 'but luckily he kept good books and they couldn't touch him.' The payola charges were finally dropped, and in time Jackson was able to reclaim and continue his successful career."

Jackson worked briefly at a Philadelphia radio station before returning to New York to host a program on WWRL-AM. He also began to co-host concerts in Central Park and broadcast variety shows from Palisades

Amusement Park in New Jersey. In the late 1960s Jackson produced the Miss Black Teen America contest, later called the Talented Teen contest, to offer opportunities to young African-American teens excluded from the Miss America contest.

Jackson's efforts to break down racial barriers took a personal turn in the early 1970s when he was approached by black broadcaster/investor Percy Sutton. Jackson recalled Sutton telling him: "Hal, you've been working for all these other guys for so long, why don't we buy the station so you can work for yourself?" The result in 1971 was Inner City Broadcasting Corp., which began buying radio stations (Jackson convinced Sutton to invest in fledgling FM stations which became very popular and profitable) and grew to include, in addition to WLIB-AM-FM in New York, stations in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Detroit and San Francisco.

He moved to Los Angeles to oversee Inner City's two stations there, but after a few years, he realized he missed playing music on the air. So in 1984, at age 69, when a slot on Sunday mornings opened up on WBLS-FM, Jackson moved back to New York to host *Sunday Morning Classics*. The show began at two hours, but as its popularity grew, it expanded and by 1993, it filled the 8 a.m.-4 p.m. block on the station's Sunday schedule.

Jackson still holds down the airwaves at WBLS. *Hal Jackson's Sunday Classics* now airs from 3 to 6 p.m. and his mix of

gospel, jazz, salsa and pop has been rated No. 1 by Arbitron continuously in its time slot for more than 11 years.

Jackson was inducted into the National Association of Broadcasters Hall of Fame in 1990 and in 1995 he became the first African American to be inducted into the Radio Hall of Fame. He was inducted into the Broadcasting & Cable Hall of Fame and was honored with a Pioneer Award from the Broadcasters Foundation of America.

Jackson was also a major force behind the idea to make Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday a national holiday. Because of his access to the airwaves, he was instrumental in stimulating the initial movement for the 6.5 million signatures on petitions and letters submitted to Congress to create the national holiday.

It all amounts to an amazing career in both broadcasting and public service that shows no signs of slowing after seven decades.



Hal Jackson and Billie Holiday go over notes at a 1950 Carnegie Hall concert.



Art Linkletter

*Broadcasting's
Genuine Nice Guy*

Never has the adage “Nice guys finish last” been proven more wrong than when considering Art Linkletter, whose ability to relate to both adults and children helped him create a broadcasting career that spanned decades on both radio and television.

Gordon Arthur Kelly was born on July 17, 1912, in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan. His parents deserted him when he was only a few weeks old and he never met either of them. When he was just a few weeks old he was adopted by Mary and Fulton John Linkletter, an evangelical preacher. His family moved to the United States, living in Lowell, Mass., then Point Fermin, Calif., before settling in San Diego where he graduated from high school at age 16.

He landed an announcer’s job at KGB-AM San Diego while attending San Diego State Teachers College and continued there after graduating with a bachelor’s degree in teaching in 1934, becoming program director. In 1936 he was named radio and public address system director of the Texas Centennial and then held the same position at the San Francisco World’s Fair in 1937-39.

The 1940s saw Linkletter as master of ceremonies for a number of radio shows and after moving to Hollywood, he and John Guedel created *People Are Funny* for NBC Radio in 1941, which featured

audience participation, contests and gags and served as a prototype of future game shows on radio and television. The show ran until 1942, by which time Linkletter was doing shortwave radio broadcasts for the Office of War Information. But in 1943, he was back on the air as MC of *People Are Funny*, a job that would last 20 years.

Because the show was so successful, NBC launched a TV version in 1954 and he hosted that until 1961.

He had a particular talent in putting small children at ease, which he did regularly on an entertaining question-and-answer session on CBS’s *Art Linkletter’s House Party*, which provided the material for his best-selling book *Kids Say the Darndest Things!* illustrated by Charles M. Schulz, the creator of the Peanuts comic strip. *House Party* aired five days a week on radio from 1945 to 1967 and on CBS-TV from 1952 to 1969.

As the *Los Angeles Times* noted upon his death: “To many baby boomers and their parents who watched his daytime television show *House Party*, Linkletter would always be the perfect straight man who could ask a grade-schooler a simple question like ‘What does your mommy do?’ and elicit this response: ‘She does a little housework, then sits around all day reading the *Racing Form*.’”

Other early television shows Linkletter worked on included *Life with*

Linkletter with his son Jack (1969-70) and *Hollywood Talent Scouts* (1965-66). He also acted in two movies, *People Are Funny* (1946) and *Champagne for Caesar* (1950). In addition, he also guest-hosted *The Tonight Show* three times (1962).

In the 1950s, Linkletter became a major investor in and promoter of the Hula Hoop. In 1963, Linkletter became the endorser and spokesman for Milton Bradley's Game of Life. His picture appeared on the box with the statement "I Heartily Endorse This Game," and also on the \$100,000 bills featured in the game.

He was an astute businessman with extensive business interests. According to the Associated Press, "he headed a company involved in real estate development and management and operation of cattle ranches in Montana, New Mexico and California. He held interests in oil and gas wells, owned livestock in Australia and was involved in a solar energy firm."

He was also known for his considerable philanthropy.

After leaving daily broadcasting in 1969, Linkletter continued to write, lecture and appear in television commercials. He became a popular motivational speaker and author, challenging seniors to live as zestfully as he did. Linkletter was also a crusader against drug use and an adviser to President Richard M. Nixon on drug policy and was president of the National

Coordinating Council on Drug Abuse Education and Information. This was prompted by the suicide of his youngest child, Diane, who leaped to her death in 1969 at age 20. The family blamed her death on LSD use.

Among his more than 20 books were *Old Age Is Not for Sissies* (published on his 94th birthday), *How To Be a Supersalesman*, *Confessions of a Happy Man*, *Hobo on the Way to Heaven* and his autobiography, *I Didn't Do It Alone*.

He last regularly appeared on TV as a contributor on *Kids Say the Darndest Things*, a half-hour show on CBS that Bill Cosby hosted from 1998 to 2000.

As he grew older, Linkletter also worked to help other seniors, serving as president of the UCLA Center on Aging, national spokesman for the senior lobbying group now known as USA Next and board chairman of the John Douglas French Alzheimer's Foundation. As of 2008, he continued to lecture more than 60 times a year.

Linkletter received honorary degrees from a number of universities, including Pepperdine University and the University of Prince Edward Island and was presented with a lifetime achievement Daytime Emmy award in 2003.

He was so optimistic about his

future that he had signed a contract to lecture in Washington, D.C., on his 100th birthday on July 17, 2012.

Art Linkletter died on May 26, 2010, at his home in Bel Air, Calif., at the age of 97.

He offered up his explanation for his success to the *New York Post* in 1965: "I know enough about a lot of things to be interesting, but I'm not interested enough in any one thing to be boring. I'm like everybody's next-door neighbor, only a little bit smarter." In addition, he said, he was genuinely curious about people. "You have to listen," he said. "A lot of guys can talk."



Art Linkletter and two young House Party guests enjoying an afternoon conversation.



Rue McClanahan

*Which Came First,
the Woman or
the Role?*

Strong, independent women over 50 living without husbands are not that unusual on television today, but in 1985, that concept for NBC's *The Golden Girls* attracted a lot of attention. And viewers fell in love with Rue McClanahan's saucy, sharp-tongued Blanche Devereaux.

Eddi-Rue McClanahan was born on Feb. 21, 1934, in Healdton, Okla., and grew up in Ardmore, Okla. She played her first role at age 5, the mother cat in an infant production of *Three Little Kittens*. She was at odds with her fellow performers when they giggled mid-act: "I took drama seriously even then."

After graduating from Ardmore High School, she was offered dance scholarships, but opted for the University of Tulsa where she majored in German and theater and graduated with honors in 1956.

She moved to New York following college and, three months after arriving, landed her first small theatre role. She married Tom Bish, who was also in the cast, became pregnant, divorced and returned to Oklahoma to have the baby. In 1964 she returned to New York with her son, Mark.

For most of the 1960s she appeared onstage in New York. She originated the role of Lady MacBird in the Lyndon

Johnson satire *MacBird!* and her Broadway debut was as a prostitute in *Jimmy Shine*, which starred Dustin Hoffman.

Her role in an off-Broadway production of *The Secret Life of Walter Mitty* led to some television roles, including one on the NBC soap opera *Another World*. "It was one of the most boring jobs I've ever had in my life," she said.

After her character was dropped from *Another World* she made a guest appearance in CBS's *All in the Family*, which led to a spinoff, *Maude*, starring Bea Arthur (inducted as a Giant by the LAB in 2009). In 1972 McClanahan was cast as Arthur's best friend in the program, appearing in 100 episodes until the show ended in 1978. "I felt financially secure for the first time," she said.

She continued to act on stage. In 1970 she won an Obie for her role in the Off Broadway show *Who's Happy Now?* and reprised her role on PBS in 1975.

ABC then gave McClanahan her own series in September 1978, *Apple Pie*, but it lasted only a few episodes. In 1983, she joined NBC's hit sitcom *Mama's Family* as Aunt Fran Crowley, a role that lasted its first two seasons. While shooting *Mama's Family*, she nearly died from complications during gallbladder surgery.

After she recovered came the role of a lifetime: the man-crazy Southern belle Blanche Devereaux in NBC's *The Golden Girls*. She played the owner of a house who rented rooms to three women, all of a certain age: herself, Dorothy Zbornak (Bea Arthur), Rose Nylund (Betty White) and Sophia Petrillo (Estelle Getty).

As the *New York Times* noted about *The Golden Girls*: "The show seized the No. 1 rating its first night, in 1985, stayed in the top 10 for six seasons and captured bundles of Emmys, one of which went to Ms. McClanahan for outstanding lead actress in a comedy series in 1987.

"The show, which was canceled in 1992 but carries on, profitably, in reruns, succeeded by putting smart, funny lines in the mouths of, well, seasoned women.

"To Ms. McClanahan, *The Golden Girls* was special for allowing its women to be funny and many-sided, not stock figures, recognizing 'that when people mature, they add layers,' "she said in 1985.

"They don't turn into other creatures," she added. "The truth is, we all still have our child, our adolescent and our young woman living in us."

McClanahan reveled in her role of Blanche Devereaux, describing it as "a gift from the gods." *The Golden Girls*, she said, "gave women in America the chance to feel publicly the way they felt secretly."

She told the *New York Times* that among those influenced by Blanche was McClanahan herself. "It occurred to me early on that since Blanche thought she was so irresistible and so attractive, and I looked exactly like her, why didn't I take it to heart? It's stood me in good stead," she said. In her 2007 autobiography, *My First Five Husbands... And the Ones Who Got Away*, she gave her pat answer when asked if she was like Blanche: "Well, Blanche was an oversexed, self-involved, man-crazy, vain Southern belle from Atlanta—and I'm not from Atlanta."

When Bea Arthur left the *The Golden Girls* in 1992, CBS kept its three other stars together in a sequel, *Golden Palace*, but it lasted just one year. Subsequently, McClanahan gave most of her time to supporting animal rights charities (she was one of the first celebrity supporters of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals).

She acted in movies as well and returned to the theatre, appearing both on and off Broadway.

In 2003, McClanahan appeared in the musical romantic comedy film *The Fighting Temptations*, which co-starred Cuba Gooding Jr., Beyonce Knowles, Mike Epps and Steve Harvey. She joined the cast of the musical

Wicked as Madame Morrible on May 31, 2005, continuing in the role for eight months.

McClanahan's last acting role was in the cable series *Sordid Lives* on the Logo cable network, which premiered July 23, 2008.

A breast cancer survivor, she also had heart bypass surgery in 2009, but Rue McClanahan died of a brain hemorrhage in New York on June 3, 2010.

McClanahan's longtime friend Betty White, who co-starred with her on both *Mama's Family* and *The Golden Girls*, told *Entertainment Tonight* that McClanahan was a "close friend and dear friend" and that her death "hurts more than I ever thought it would." No doubt many *Golden Girls* fans felt the same.



Blanche (Rue McClanahan) reassures housemate Rose (Betty White) in an episode of *Golden Girls*.



Agnes Nixon

*She Made
the Modern Soaps
Modern*

Agnes Nixon has experienced a lot of drama in her radio and television career of six decades—and as the “Queen” of the modern soap opera, she wouldn’t have it any other way. Her desire to tackle important social issues and her ability to lace her plots with humor significantly altered the course and focus of an entire genre.

Agnes Eckhardt was born on Dec. 10, 1927, in Chicago. Her parents divorced shortly after her birth and Agnes and her mother moved back to her mother’s hometown of Nashville. Interested in storytelling from a young age, she acted in high school and attended Northwestern University, majoring in speech and drama.

Near the end of her senior year at Northwestern, she learned that her fiancé’s fighter plane had crashed over the Aleutian Islands. Having a final submission due for a playwriting course, she decided to make her personal loss the subject of a radio script entitled *No Flags Flying*. Her professor gave her an A, praising her for its universality.

Intimidated by the skills of some of her fellow acting students (including Cloris Leachman and Charlton Heston), she decided to concentrate on her writing. Her father had other ideas, wanting her to work for him as a secretary in his burial-garment business. He arranged an interview with Irna Phillips,

the Chicago-based woman who had created the radio soap opera genre, hoping Phillips would dissuade his daughter. Instead, Phillips hired the novice writer after reading *No Flags Flying*. Nixon began by writing dialogue for the radio soap *The Woman in White* in 1947 for \$100 a week.

In 1950, Phillips moved to California to develop soaps for television and asked Eckhardt to join her, but Eckhardt wanted to move to New York and write for television. She moved, never having been in New York before, and wrote dramas for a number of early TV dramas including *Somerset Maugham Theatre* (CBS and NBC). In 1951 she married Bob Nixon and moved with him to Philadelphia on the condition that she continue her writing career. That same year she created *Search for Tomorrow* with Roy Winsor for CBS.

She was reunited with Phillips in 1957, co-creating and writing for *As the World Turns* (CBS). In 1959 Nixon took over the head writer job at *The Guiding Light* from Phillips. Nixon lost a friend to cervical cancer and in 1962 she introduced a cancer scare storyline for *Guiding Light* social climber Bert Bauer. At the time soap writers couldn’t use the words cancer, uterus or PAP smear on television, but in the end the story of Bert’s cancer scare set an example for millions of women, who followed her toward a more proactive attitude toward cancer prevention.

From 1965 to 1967 Nixon was head writer on Phillips' *Another World* (NBC), then in 1967 she created *One Life to Live* which premiered on ABC in 1968. It was set in the fictional town of Llanview, Pa. *OLTL* primarily focused on the wealthy Lord family, the Siegels, the first Jewish family on a daytime drama, and the middle-class Wolek and Riley families. Although the show was built along the classic soap formula of a rich family and a poor family, *OLTL* emphasized the ethnic and socio-economic diversity of the people of Llanview. She also introduced a character who was passing as white who changed to embrace black pride, with white and black lovers along the way.

Cancer and race were not the only controversial issues Nixon would interject into her shows. In the summer of 1970 *OLTL* told an anti-drug storyline centering on wild child Cathy Craig. After murdering her drug dealer, she was sent to Odyssey House, a New York treatment center for drug-addicted youths. In an unusual move, Cathy's portrayal—actress Amy Levitt—was videotaped while sitting in on real-life therapy sessions at Odyssey House, which were then broadcast as *OLTL* episodes.

Nixon's next effort, *All My Children*, began as a half-hour soap opera on ABC on Jan. 5, 1970. Ratings were disappointing at first (it ranked 17th of 19 soaps on the air). Nixon was executive producer and head writer of *AMC* through 1981, and remained

as head writer until 1985. In 1972 *AMC* took on the conflict generated at home by the Vietnam War. And in 1973 Nixon introduced daytime's first legal abortion by a major character, *AMC*'s inimitable Erica Kane (Susan Lucci). By 1978-79, *AMC* was the No. 1 soap in the Nielsen ratings, with an unusual 30% male audience.

In 1981-82, her *The Manions of America* nighttime miniseries on ABC traced the history of a family from Ireland to their immigration to the United States. The following year, Nixon debuted another soap, *Loving*, on ABC, breaking new daytime serial ground with a storyline that included a father sexually abusing his daughter. Other topical issues included in her scripts included AIDS and sexual harassment on *AMC* in the 1980s.

In 1992, Nixon stepped back from the grueling head writer post at *AMC*, but in early 1999, her successor in the job was fired and Nixon was asked to take over the job again. Her return was true to form: she had a major character come out of the closet and *AMC* was nominated for a Daytime Emmy.

In 2005, Nixon appeared onscreen to celebrate the 35th anniversary of *All My Children*, playing "Agnes Eckhardt." Nixon appeared on *One Life to Live* in 2008 for the series' 40th anniversary, portraying observer "Agnes." On Nov. 12, 2008, Nixon appeared on *All My Children*'s 10,000th episode as "Aggie," the ghost of the woman who started the show's home town of Pine Valley in 1870.

Carol Traynor, in *The Encyclopedia of Television*, summed up Nixon's career and contributions succinctly: "Agnes Nixon, in her long and much-honored tenure as queen of soap opera, has created a treasure trove of characters and stories as rich as Aladdin's, tales from the deepest depths of our fears and the starriest heights of our dreams."



Agnes Nixon, in costume as "Aggie," celebrating *All My Children*'s 10,000th episode.



Daniel Schorr

*His Own Man
to the Last*

If anyone was born to be a newsman, it was Dan Schorr. From age 12 until his death at 93, he reported and explained the news in whatever medium was available to him: newspapers, radio, syndicated columns, broadcast and cable TV, and finally again, radio. Through it all, he fought for what he believed in against government officials as well as his bosses.

Daniel Louis Schorr was born in the Bronx, N.Y. on Aug. 31, 1916, the son of Russian Jewish immigrant parents. He came to journalism early, getting his first scoop when he was 12. A woman fell or jumped from the roof of the apartment building where he lived, and he called the police, interviewed them about the victim and then called the *Bronx Home News*, which paid him \$5 for the tip.

He attended DeWitt Clinton High School in the West Bronx, where he worked on the *Clinton News*, the school paper. He graduated from City College of New York in 1939 while working as a reporter for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency. In 1941 he joined the *New York Journal-American* and then the Dutch News Agency.

During World War II, Sergeant Schorr served in Army Intelligence at Fort Polk, La., and at Fort Sam Houston, Tex. In 1945 he became a freelance correspondent in Europe's Low Countries, writing for, among others, the *New York Times*,

Christian Science Monitor and *London Daily Mail*. In 1953 he joined CBS News after being recruited by Edward R. Murrow (becoming part of the later generation of Murrow's Boys). With the post-Stalin thaw in the Soviet Union in 1955, he received accreditation to open a CBS bureau in Moscow.

In June 1957, he obtained an exclusive interview with Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet Communist party chief. It aired on CBS's *Face the Nation*, Khrushchev's first television interview. Schorr left the Soviet Union to go home for the holidays and, because of his ignoring Soviet censorship laws, was not allowed to return.

In January 1962, he aired the first examination of everyday life under communism in East Germany, *The Land Beyond the Wall: Three Weeks in a German City*.

In 1964, a crack developed in Schorr's relationship with CBS when he reported—incorrectly, as it turned out—on the eve of the Republican national convention that Arizona Senator Barry Goldwater would “travel to Germany to join-up with the right-wing there,” and visit “Hitler's one-time stomping ground” in Berchtesgaden, immediately after he became the Republican nominee for president. The story was very embarrassing to CBS Chairman William Paley.

At CBS, Schorr won three Emmy Awards for his coverage of the Water-

gate scandal in the 1970s and, as the *New York Times* wrote, “took pride in his often blunt reporting on the Nixon administration. In one instance he hurriedly began broadcasting after acquiring a copy of Nixon’s notorious ‘enemies list’ only to discover in reading the names aloud that his was No. 17.”

Nixon was so angered by Schorr’s reporting that he was said to have ordered the FBI to investigate him. “I consider my presence on the enemies list,” he said in a 2009 interview with *The Gazette* of Montgomery County, Md., “a greater tribute than the Emmys list.”

His friction with the administration continued in 1976 when he received and made public the contents of a secret report on illegal CIA and FBI activities. Called to testify before Congress, he refused to identify his source on First Amendment grounds, risking imprisonment. This did not mollify CBS executives, and Schorr ultimately resigned from CBS in September 1976.

He told *Broadcasting* magazine in 1983 that there was a sense of “fatal inevitability” about his deteriorating situation and ultimate departure from CBS. “There is no animus. I feel everybody was acting as they had to. I did what I had to do as a reporter and they did what they had to do to protect an important institution.”

After CBS, Schorr wrote a book and briefly taught journalism at the University of California at Berkeley; did some report-

ing for National Public Radio and the Independent Television News Association; and wrote a column for the *Des Moines Register and Tribune* syndicate.

Then in 1979, he signed on to join a bold new television experiment—Ted Turner’s 24-hour Cable News Network. It was a coup for Turner. As *Broadcasting* described it: “Before the Cable News Network had purchased its first camera, before it had signed up its first cable affiliate, before it scored its first beat, Ted Turner’s ambitious and unprecedented venture had a measure of credibility. That credibility was Daniel Schorr.”

Schorr reported and delivered commentary until 1985 when his contract was not renewed. “It must mean something that, unable to accept the dictates of my bosses, I ended up in confrontations with Bill Paley after a quarter-century at CBS and with Ted Turner after six years with CNN,” he wrote in his 2001 memoir, *Staying Tuned*. “It may be that I am just hard to get along with, but to me it always seemed that some principle was involved.”

He then became senior news analyst at NPR, a position he held until his death. There he regularly commented on current events for programs including *All Things Considered* and *Weekend Edition*. He also wrote a column for the *Christian Science Monitor* for several decades.

Daniel Schorr died in Washington on July 23, 2010, at age 93. His last commentary for NPR aired on July 10.

“I am just glad that, after being known for so many years as a tough and uncompromising journalist, NPR listeners also got to know the Dan Schorr that was playful, funny and kind,” *Weekend Edition* host Scott Simon wrote in a eulogy on the NPR website. “In a business that’s known for burning out people, Dan Schorr shined for nearly a century.”



Daniel Schorr testifies before Sam Ervin’s Senate Judiciary Subcommittee in February 1972.



Lesley Stahl

*She Left the
Glass Ceiling Behind*

Dedication, persistence, aggressiveness and toughness. Those are qualities necessary to be a good reporter. They are all qualities that propelled Lesley Stahl to the top ranks of television journalism, beginning in a time when women weren't taken very seriously in the job.

Lesley Rene Stahl was born Dec. 16, 1941, in Swampscott, Mass., and graduated cum laude in 1963 from Wheaton College in Norton, Mass., with plans to become a doctor. She then attended Columbia University to obtain a degree in zoology before entering medical school. However, she realized medicine was not for her and in 1966 she dropped out of grad school and eventually found a job as an assistant to the speechwriter for New York Mayor John Lindsay. Her exposure to the reporters covering city hall created a desire to become a journalist.

Stahl began her career in journalism as a writer/researcher with NBC in London, but soon left for a producer position at CBS's Boston affiliate WHDH-TV, where she then appeared on-air.

In 1972, CBS News initiated a new hiring policy for women and minorities in response to the Equal Employment Opportunity Act. Stahl heard about this new mandate and aggressively pursued one of these new positions. She received her big break when the Washington bureau of CBS News hired her as a general assign-

ment reporter that summer. As a rookie, she was assigned the unimportant story of a minor break-in at the Watergate Hotel and Stahl found herself in the middle of one of the most defining moments in the history of investigative journalism. In the company of the toughest, most competitive reporters in the country (including fellow 2010 Giants inductees Dan Schorr, also at CBS, and Sam Donaldson over at ABC), she began to forge her signature aggressive style.

Stahl became the first woman to report live on a presidential election night and in 1977 was the second woman to anchor *CBS Morning News*. A year later, she received the coveted position of CBS News White House correspondent, a job she held during the Carter and Reagan presidencies and part of the term of George H.W. Bush. Her reports appeared frequently on the *CBS Evening News*, first with Walter Cronkite, then with Dan Rather, and on other CBS News broadcasts.

During much of that time (September 1983–May 1991), Stahl also served as moderator of *Face the Nation*, CBS News' Sunday public-affairs broadcast. For *Face the Nation*, she interviewed such newsmakers as Margaret Thatcher, Boris Yeltsin, Yasir Arafat and virtually every top U.S. official, including George H. W. Bush and Vice President Dan Quayle.

The *New York Times*, in writing about

her style on *Face the Nation*, said that Stahl “has developed into an admirably persistent questioner who doesn’t mind being a touch offensive in the interests of dredging forth a comprehensible answer from a reluctant biggie.”

From October 1990 to March 1991, Stahl supplemented her work at the White House and on *Face the Nation* by joining Charles Kuralt as co-anchor of *America Tonight*, a daily CBS News latenight broadcast of interviews and essays.

In March 1991 she became a *60 Minutes* correspondent, a job she’s held ever since. Her interviews with the families of the Duke University Lacrosse players exonerated in a racial rape case and with Nancy Pelosi before she became the first woman to become speaker of the House were big scoops for *60 Minutes* and CBS News in 2007.

In a 1992 profile in *Broadcasting* magazine upon her induction into the Broadcasting Hall of Fame, the magazine wrote: “Her rise to network prominence was due to a widely recognized tenacity and hard work.”

Stahl won an Emmy for her timely interview of Hewlett-Packard head Pattie Dunn in 2006. Her other exclusive *60 Minutes* interviews with former Bush administration officials Paul O’Neill and Richard Clarke ranked among the biggest news stories of 2004. She was the first to report that Al Gore would not run for President, in a *60 Minutes* interview broadcast in 2002.

Lesley Stahl interviewing Russian President Boris Yeltsin for a June 1992 60 Minutes profile.

Stahl’s experiences covering Washington for more than 20 years became the subject of her book *Reporting Live* (Simon & Schuster, 1999). The stories she has covered since joining CBS News in the Washington bureau in 1972 range from Watergate through the 1981 assassination attempt on President Reagan to the 1991 Gulf War. She has reported on every U.S.-Russian summit meeting since 1978, every economic summit of industrialized countries since 1979 and every national political convention and election night since 1974.

She has a collection of Emmy Awards for her interviews on *Face the Nation* and her *60 Minutes* reporting, including a Lifetime Achievement Emmy given in September 2003. Her *60 Minutes* reports “How He Won the War,” about former FDA Commissioner David Kessler’s battle with the tobacco industry, and “Punishing Saddam,” which exposed the plight of Iraqi citizens, mostly children, suffering the effects of the United Nations sanctions against Iraq, were both Emmy winners.

Stahl jumped into cyberspace in 2008 with the launch of *wowOwow.com* (Women on the Web). The website for women to talk about culture, politics and gossip was created, is run and written by Stahl, Peggy Noonan, Liz Smith, Joni Evans, Mary Wells, Sheila Nevins, Joan Juliet

Buck, Whoopi Goldberg, Julia Reed, Joan Ganz Cooney, Judith Martin, Candice Bergen, Lily Tomlin, Jane Wagner, Cynthia McFadden and Marlo Thomas. The stories on *wowOwow* vary from one or two sentences in response to the “Question of the Day” feature to several pages of commentary, diary format reporting or transcribed conversations and interviews.

Stahl’s years in Washington have taught her several things, she told the Paley Center for Media: “Television had become the center of campaigning and governing but also of diplomacy and decision making. I also learned to have enormous faith in the system. Democracy works.’ While she now appears gentler and kinder on *60 Minutes*, appearances can be deceptive. ‘She has such a lovely smile when she sits down to talk,’ said friend Linda Wertheimer. ‘Then she asks these dreadfully tough questions. It must be sort of a shock.’”





David L. Wolper

*The Greatest Man
in Television,
or What?*

Not many people can claim to be masters of multiple genres in the cutthroat entertainment business. That's just one reason the career of David Wolper is so remarkable.

A savvy businessman, he oversaw a staggering amount of exceptional productions in a wide range of different areas of the world of entertainment: documentaries, miniseries, comedy TV series, TV movies, theatrical motion pictures and outdoor spectaculars.

David L. Wolper (he had no middle name, but used the middle initial to differentiate himself from an uncle also named David Wolper) was born Jan. 11, 1928, in New York. He attended Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, for a year, then transferred to the University of Southern California where he studied cinema and journalism until he left after his junior year to take advantage of what he sensed was a good opportunity—buying old movies and selling them to the rapidly growing crop of TV stations springing up across the country that were anxious for inexpensive programming to fill their days and nights.

His flair for showmanship was apparent early on. Wolper is still remembered for a college promotional stunt. As a publicist for a USC play written by classmate Art Buchwald, *No Love Atoll*, he dressed a student in a gorilla outfit and crashed the 1948 Academy Awards. The gorilla had a sign on its back, "U.S.C. Varsity Show No

Love Atoll." It worked and the *Los Angeles Times* ran a story about the escapade.

In 1949, Wolper dropped out of USC and with his high school buddy Jim Harris and others set up a television distribution company, Flamingo Films. The few stations were hungry for product so Wolper crisscrossed the country selling them old films, including movie serials like *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers*, various old shorts and other fare. He personally attended the opening of over 30 TV stations the day they went on the air. In 1951, in a \$30 million deal, Flamingo Films licensed the exclusive television rights to Superman. Jim Harris was president and Wolper was treasurer; both were just 23 years old. Later Wolper arranged for the Kellogg Co. to sponsor the about-to-be-produced 90 *Superman* episodes.

In 1955 Wolper decided to go into production. He acquired exclusive, never-before-seen Russian space footage. The film became a major part of Wolper's first documentary, *The Race for Space*, reported by Mike Wallace. It was the first report about the Soviet and American space race. When it was completed it was immediately sold to a sponsor, Old Spice. However, the three networks turned it down because each had a policy prohibiting airing outside independent documentaries. Undaunted, Wolper used his personal relationships with stations throughout the country to line up 108 stations, most

network affiliates, to carry the film in the same week. On March 31, 1960, the *New York Times*, on its front page, announced "Fourth T.V. Network Assembled to Show a Film Others Barred." A critical hit, *The Race for Space* received an Oscar nomination.

In 1960 Wolper signed an exclusive television contract with America's 50 astronauts for a series of specials on the space program. His CBS series of specials *Appointment with Destiny* was an early TV docudrama. And he did the first *Biography* series on TV in 1962.

Wolper's company became a major force in documentary films, with nine Oscar documentary nominations, four in a row and one win (for 1971's *The Hellstrom Chronicle*), two Peabodys and just over 100 other awards. He broke the network hold against independent documentaries when his documentary based on Theodore H. White's Pulitzer Prize winning book, *Making of the President 1960*, was shown on ABC in 1963 and won four Emmys, including Television Program of the Year. *Time* magazine labeled him Mr. Documentary. He did many TV documentaries based on books, such as William L. Shirer's *Rise and Fall of the Third Reich* and John F. Kennedy's *A Nation of Immigrants*.

"I will never forget what you did to start my career," wrote Jacques Cousteau in a letter to Wolper after he introduced Cousteau to television in 1967 with the *The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau* specials.

In 1964, Wolper sold his documentary

production unit to Metromedia but stayed on as the company's chief of operations. Breaking away from Metromedia in 1967, Wolper continued his documentary work but also tried his hand at theatrical release motion pictures.

Next Wolper tried comedy TV series. The first time out his company in association with James Komack had two hit shows: *Chico and the Man* (1974-78, NBC) and *Welcome Back Kotter* (1975-79, ABC).

It was also at this point in the 1970s that Wolper made a major career move. As the *Encyclopedia of Television* described it: "Perhaps Wolper's most significant accomplishment was his developmental work with the television nonfiction drama miniseries. In the mid-1970s, after bypass heart surgery and the sale of his company to Warner Brothers, he helped to invent the docudrama genre with his award-winning production of Alex Haley's acclaimed family saga, *Roots*. Reconstructing history in an unprecedented 12-hour film, the series was broadcast in one- and two-hour segments over an eight-day period in January 1977. Contrary to initial concerns over the high risk nature of the venture, the series brought ABC a 44.9 rating and 66% share of audience to set viewership records that place it among the most watched programs in the history of television."

He truly found his niche with the miniseries. In addition to *Roots*, his multi-night blockbusters included ABC's *Roots: The Next Generations* (1979), *The Thorn Birds* (1983) and *North and South* (1985), and CBS's *Queen* (1993).

When Wolper turned to dramatic movies for television, he concentrated primarily on dramas based on fact: with Stanley Kramer he made *The Court-Martial of Lt. William Calley* and *The Trial of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg*, among many others.

He also had a film career as a producer that spanned more than 30 years and included *The Devil's Brigade* (1967), *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* (1971), *Wattstax* (1973), *Victory at Entebbe!* (1976) and *L.A. Confidential* (1997).

Not content with just mastering the demands of both the large and small

Roots captured America's imagination (and record-breaking ratings for ABC) in 1977.



screens, Wolper tried his hand at another challenge: three major Americana outdoor spectacles. In 1975 he was appointed by President Gerald Ford as chairman of the President's Council of the American Revolutionary Bicentennial Administration responsible for overseeing and coordinating all the celebrations of the 200th Anniversary of the United States.

In the late 1970s Wolper was appointed by Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley to the committee that brought the 1984 Summer Olympics to the city, and subsequently served as producer of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the 1984 Games.

For the 100th Anniversary of the Statue

of Liberty, the weekend of July 4, 1986, Wolper was named chairman, executive producer and creator of Liberty Weekend, the four-day celebration to commemorate the anniversary and the completion of the restoration of the Statue of Liberty.

In the late 1990s, Wolper returned to documentaries when he produced three 10-hour documentary series summing up major events, trends and personalities of the 20th century.

Among Wolper's many personal awards and honors are: two Oscars, two Peabodys, four Emmys, three Golden Globes and two NAACP Image Awards as well as a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame for his television work.

In addition, he was inducted into the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Hall of Fame in 1989. In 2003 he published his autobiography, *Producer*, written with David Fisher.

Wolper's outside activities and charitable interests were as wide and varied as his career.

He served on the founding boards of noncommercial KCET-TV Los Angeles, The Thaliens, L.A. 84 Foundation, the International Documentary Association, the USC School of Cinema-Television Cinema Circulus, the International Volleyball Association and the American Center For Wine, Food and the Arts.

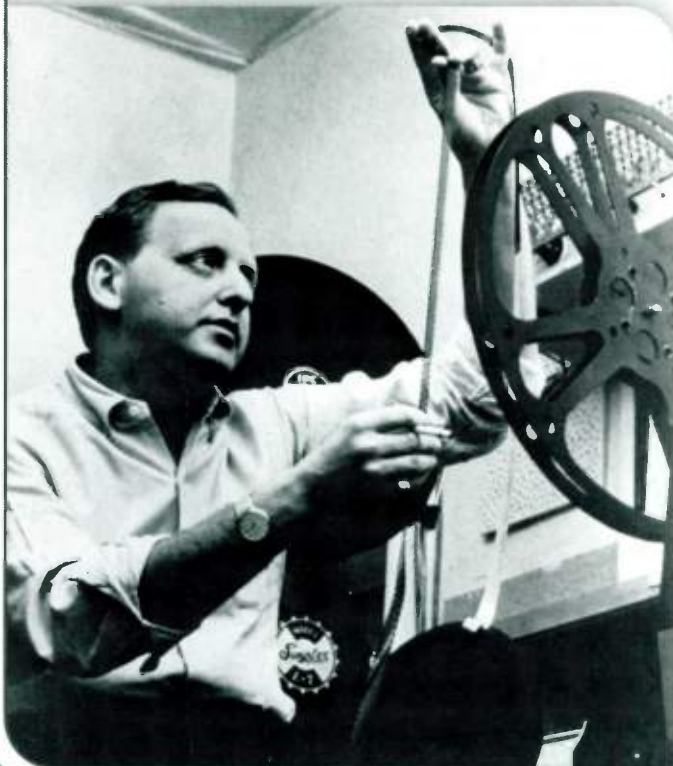
In addition, he served on the boards of the American Film Institute, The Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Foundation, the National Board of the Boys and Girls Club of America, the Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee, Mt. Sinai Hospital, the United States Golf Association Foundation, the D-Day 50th Anniversary Commission, the Martin Luther King Federal Holiday Corporation and the Museum of Television and Radio.

The David L Wolper Center is located in the Doheny Library at the University of Southern California. It contains Wolper's 50-year collection of papers, photographs, contracts, scripts, budgets, tapes and other memorabilia available for students, researchers, publications and the public. The Center also presents major exhibitions that have included exhibitions on Frank Sinatra, Willy Wonka, John Wayne, The Presidents, The Barrymores, Marilyn Monroe and the 1984 Olympics.

Wolper and his artist wife, Gloria, had three children: Mark, who is president of Wolper's production company The Wolper Organization, and Michael and Leslie who are business executives.

David Wolper died on Aug. 10, 2010, of congestive heart disease and complications of Parkinson's disease at his Beverly Hills home at age 82.

His was a life and career that could easily fill a multi-night David L. Wolper production.



David L. Wolper displays his close attention to detail while working on a project in 1965.

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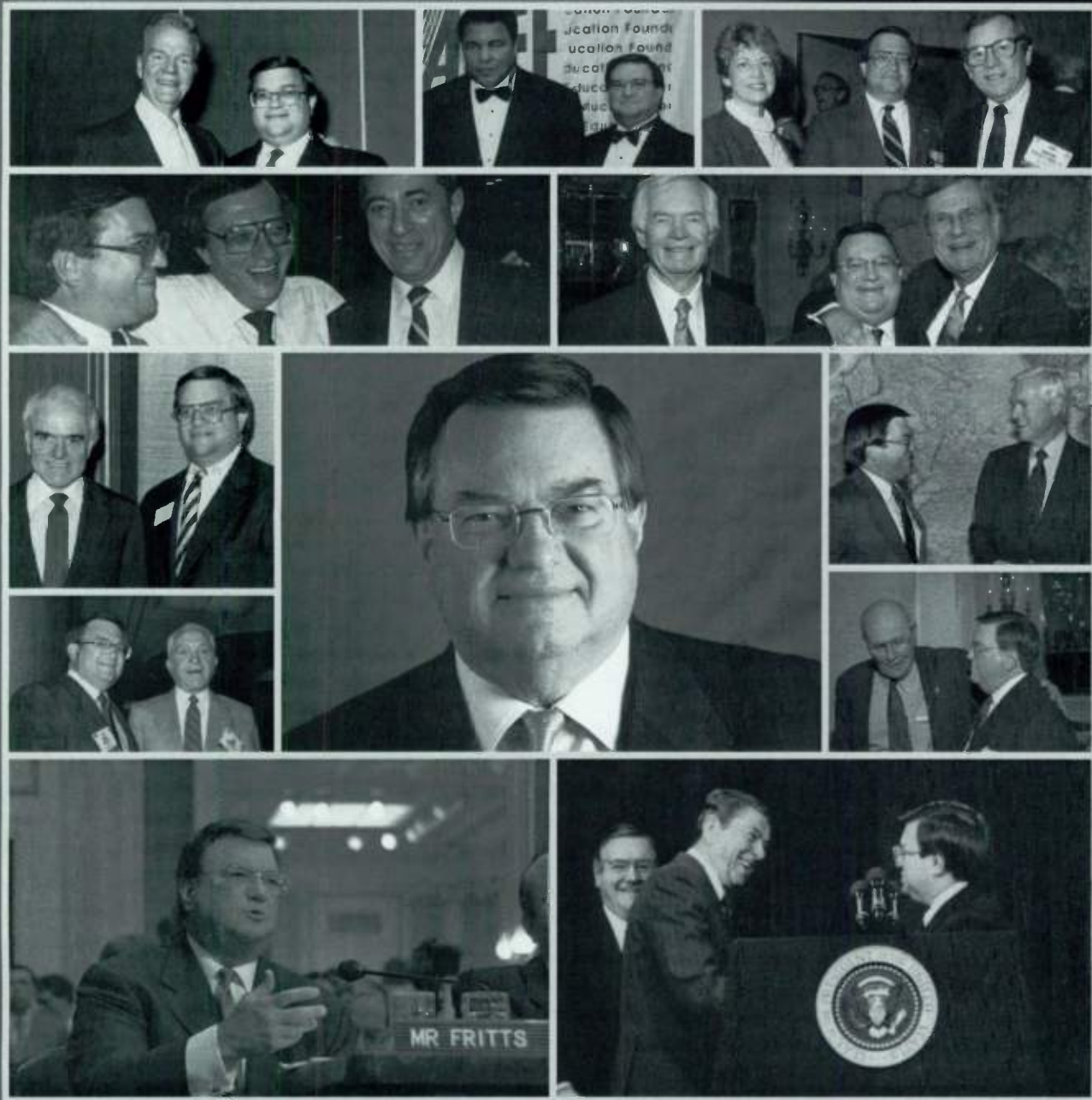
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— Jack Valenti, longtime head of MPAA, August 2003

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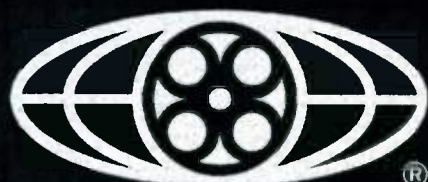




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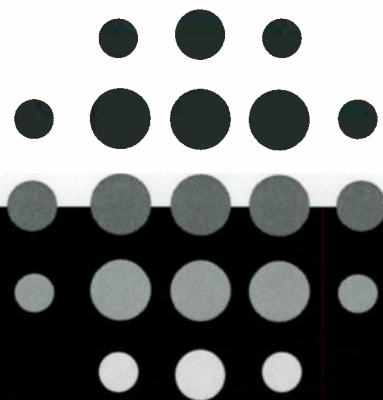
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