



The Struggle of Sound Archives in the United States

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SOUND ARCHIVES in the United States, generally speaking, are not adequately supported. There are, under the best of circumstances, many problems involved in creating such archives, and even greater problems are involved in insuring their survival and growth. In order to understand these problems, it is necessary to begin with an in-depth discussion of what the materials of recorded sound mean in traditional library circles.

BACKGROUND OF SOUND ARCHIVE DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

Administrators of large, traditional libraries have developed almost unconscious, but nevertheless real and pervasive, systems of categorizing communications media by the presumed respectability and desirability of these media as library materials. For centuries after the invention of printing, and until approximately fifty years ago, the only printed material considered proper in the library was the familiar book. Setting aside, for the moment, the fact that library administrators are frequently responsive to the interests and demands of library users, the first choice in large libraries is frequently the collecting of rare books (incunabula, art books, first editions); certainly this is the case in collecting historical and archival material. In descending order of collecting priorities, the rare book is followed by standard trade books, periodicals, technical reports, and newspapers. Materials such as sound recordings, films, maps, and other such media (most of which are relatively new) can generally be found near the bottom of the priority list of development policies, budgets, the allocation of space, personnel, financial and moral support, etc. This attitude is not peculiar to the

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United States; to perhaps an ever greater degree it pervades the library systems of other countries.

This pervasive commitment to the book on the part of librarians, if not the rest of society, may be explained by Marshall McLuhan's statement that "the medium is the message."¹ His idea that society is largely structured by the kind of media through which it communicates, not by the contents of the communications, suggests that librarians continue to use the book to project a message which is not consistent with all of the interests and needs of society. This book-oriented attitude has seeped almost unnoticed into the very core of librarianship, and influenced most librarians and their library systems to a degree they hardly realize.

Today there is a revolution in media and in communications which indicates even more significant changes in the near future. The appearance of the ideas of Marshall McLuhan, critical and controversial though they may be, indicates that massive changes are needed in the realm of information science, libraries, and other institutions and organizations involved in the storage and dissemination of knowledge. For these reasons, it seems that the term "librarian" (from *liber*, book) is outmoded. The "librarian" of today and tomorrow must be a person entrusted by society with the task of acquiring, preserving, and making available knowledge in any permanent and usable medium.

The book-oriented attitudes described are partially responsible for irreparable damage to many of our cultural records. As an officer of two major organizations which deal with special materials, the author has visited many libraries and special collections and has seen many sad and frustrating situations involving gross neglect of special materials. Even in large library systems, collections of fragile phonograph records and tapes are often piled in basements and attics, exposed to the ravages of rodents and thieves, and subject to extremes of heat and humidity. In many cases, the material had not been removed from the original boxes in which it was stored when donated and delivered to the library. For this reason many private collectors are becoming increasingly disenchanted with the library's ability to preserve and provide access to sound recordings.

It is generally and truthfully argued that such situations are often due to lack of funds. Most libraries are understaffed and do have to struggle along on inadequate budgets. But even within this operating framework, budget cuts and funding delays often seem to affect the collections of special materials first; these materials are afflicted with a

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

perennial case of second-class citizenship in the library hierarchy of needs. Invariably, administrators have responded to such criticisms with such statements as: "Our basic and paramount responsibility is to maintain the high standards of excellence of our book collections which have taken generations to build, and to this end we must direct all our energies and efforts." How does one respond to such statements? One can argue that the cost of maintaining an adequate collection of sound recordings is relatively low, that the media revolution has created inexpensive cassettes and tape recordings, that young people place great importance on sound and video recordings, etc. These arguments often fall on deaf ears.

The conditions afflicting the state of sound recordings seem to be perpetuated by unfortunate formulas that determine the amount of support provided to libraries and special collections. These formulas determining the allocation of financial resources seem to be based largely on the amount of funds needed to build book collections. Little weight is given to collections of materials other than books. In considering international acquisitions programs, for example the Farmington Plan, one sees that our libraries and educational programs could have been enriched by world-wide coverage of sound recordings and other special materials, just as the plan enriched our book holdings.

The present situation is quite serious because librarians, in their eagerness to cling to a particular and traditional medium, are often willing and happy to relinquish the custody of new types of materials to inexperienced hands. Thus, instead of being provided with the protection, admirable procedures of access and control, and other techniques developed for books by American librarianship through the years, librarians have often abandoned the new materials as undesirable. Often sound recordings are given away to music departments, films or video tapes are given to theater arts departments, maps, and prints are given to geography or art departments, etc., with often disastrous results. Sometimes collections of special materials have become almost the personal domain of one professor or department and are jealously guarded against "outsiders"; in other cases the materials are deprived of the most elementary measures for preservation and security, and placed at the disposition of any faculty member or student of the department on a self-help basis, without any control whatsoever.

Insistence on printed media as virtually the only means of storing and transmitting knowledge and scholarship has seriously handicapped the development of educational and training programs concerned with

new media. A vicious circle has been created and to break it will require immense energy. Speaking from the vantage point of a detached observer, British librarian Eric Cooper recently made these observations on the quality of training provided for professional librarians in the United States:

It would seem to be that, as elsewhere, the music and recorded-sound services operated in the western world are often the Cinderella of the library service. Schools and colleges of librarianship do not, as yet, give enough attention to producing courses for librarians who wish to specialise in operating gramophone record collections. The result is the usual one—the music library staffs have to develop their own techniques and skills in an area where, until recent years, little helpful information was in print. Hence the diversity of organisation and varying standards of public service. . . . The schools and colleges offer little training in the area of sound recordings and staff employed in phonorecord lending libraries are forced to improvise and learn from experience. This is costly, and provides poor standards of public service. Consequently, gramophone record librarians lack qualifications or status and so are often regarded as inferior to specialists in charge of other departments. The gramophone librarian learns his profession as he goes along, and he keeps on doing it because he loves the job, and who knows, he may one day land one of the major posts, as and when one becomes vacant.²

Cooper has well summarized the general situation in most schools of librarianship in American colleges and universities.

Blame for the low status of special collections must also be shared by faculties and scholars in the areas of the humanities and the social sciences, strongholds for the tradition Marshall McLuhan has identified as the "Gutenberg galaxy."³ Perhaps this is best illustrated by an incident that took place a few years ago at the University of Washington. Milo Ryan, Curator of the Phonoarchive at the University, reported that a student majoring in political science learned of the abundant resources stored at the Phonoarchive and decided to prepare a major paper on the Moscow Conference of 1943.⁴ The Phonoarchive had not only material which covered the conference, but also had the extensive recorded report which Secretary of State Cordell Hull delivered to Congress at the conclusion of the meeting. The student made considerable use of these resources for his paper, reporting first hand on what Secretary Hull had told the American people about the conference. The student received a failing grade for his paper with an appended note from his professor explaining that the research procedure was not acceptable, a sound recording was not a valid research tool, and only written materials could be considered as valid research sources. The rationale for the failing

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

grade was so ludicrous that Ryan and other faculty members promptly intervened and managed to demonstrate the validity of the student's research.

Ryan and his assistants were justifiably alarmed by the trend this incident might represent. As a result, one of Ryan's colleagues (who was then conducting a seminar in historiography), agreed to undertake a major survey to query established and reputable historians for their opinions about sound recordings as valid historical sources. The results of this survey showed that among historians there seem to be no negative attitudes towards recorded sound materials for historical research although many historians contacted admitted a considerable lack of experience in using these sources.⁵ Even though the results of the University of Washington survey were not negative, neither were they encouraging. Lack of familiarity can result in lack of interest; this means that there is not a demand that these new materials be placed in college and university libraries. The lack of demand by the faculty, coupled with the librarian's lack of enthusiasm, can only generate the familiar justification that there is little room for these new materials in scholarly libraries which are otherwise well supplied with research materials. It may take many years to solve the problems created by this vicious circle.

Oral history is another branch of scholarship which reflects some of the tendencies of neglect discussed above. For many years, standard practice was to discard the tapes of the interviews after their contents had been transcribed into print. In other words, the sound recording was considered only a necessary evil, sort of a sound equivalent of shorthand. It was not until the late 1960s that some oral historians realized something which should have been evident from the start—that some aspects of the taped interview could not be transcribed into print. In a summary of an Oral History Association meeting, *Library Journal* reported: "Historians also pointed out the need of preserving original tapes, even when transcripts have been made, because of qualities in the tape which cannot be reflected in the typed transcript, but which could be invaluable to historians."⁶

Finally, something must be said about the relationship between libraries and the broadcasting media. When one surveys the scene, not only in the United States but abroad as well, it is evident that lack of contact and foresight has caused losses of recorded materials that stagger the imagination. There is no doubt that in the field of current events, as well as in the arts, radio and television stations are daily of-

fering priceless historical and cultural materials. Yet, due to the stations' nature as organs of diffusion rather than preservation, the mostly ephemeral fare offered, and the serious union restrictions that materials be broadcast usually only once, most broadcasts are lost. Very few stations or networks have developed comprehensive archival facilities; even those who have done so operate facilities exclusively for the staffs of the respective institutions and, because of labor costs and union restrictions, are generally closed to even qualified scholars and students. This whole area is one where enterprising librarians could perform valuable services. One such service would maintain a selective program of air checks and record on tape important news, speeches, literary and artistic panels, musical offerings, and so on.

One must recognize, of course, that this is an area fraught with many problems. In undertaking such a project, the library must necessarily respect commercial and artistic rights and avoid any possibility of unfair commercial competition. Proper guidelines could, however, easily be established which would protect the rights of artists and broadcasters while also providing a mechanism for preserving a priceless cultural and historical heritage. Lack of systematic air checks and proper guidelines for collecting and preserving material can result in such occurrences as the following:

Perhaps the most dramatic example of both the role of the private collector and the absurd strictness and fear of some performing societies was made public some three years ago [i.e., 1963], when one of the last and greatest performances of the late Dinu Lipatti (Mozart's concerto #21 in C [K. 467]) was released by Angel records. The well-known critic, Irving Kolodin, was puzzled by the long delay and low technical quality of the release, and sought an explanation from the recording company. Quoting Walter Legge, recording director for EMI in England . . . [Kolodin wrote]: "The concert (of August 23, 1950) was broadcast but owing to the rules of the Swiss Musicians Union, the tapes were destroyed three weeks after the transmission. For eight years, Madame Lipatti and I searched Europe in hope of finding a recording taken from the air by an amateur. In 1959, two materialized in one week, both recorded by amateurs, one in Zürich and the other in Copenhagen. Angel's engineers in London worked for a year to produce from the better of these primitive originals the most acceptable sound."⁷

Despite the unquestioned value of a project which would systematically collect air checks and the ease with which it could be carried out, the author knows of no library undertaking such a project. Instead, there are many instances where radio stations have been forced to de-

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

stroy accumulated materials that represented potentially valuable contributions because none of the libraries which were contacted showed any interest in accepting donations of the material.

Clearly, we are still living in the midst of the Gutenberg era as far as the acceptance of sound archives by libraries, colleges, universities, librarians, and faculties is concerned. This, then, is the background against which sound archives have developed in the United States. How they have fared in an atmosphere which ranges from complete indifference to lukewarm and begrudging acceptance is considered by examining the circumstances surrounding the creation and development of some specific archives.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOME SPECIFIC SOUND ARCHIVES

In his survey of libraries of recorded sound in the United States, Eric Cooper wrote: "One can find small communities of a few thousand people with quite a reasonable little library [of sound recordings] at their disposal, while a large town with a population of hundreds of thousands or more just a few miles away has nothing at all to offer and no obvious intention of doing so."⁸ Cooper's comments describe quite accurately a situation that is quite common in the United States.

A student in a large Western university expressed the frustrations which can result from this paradoxical allotment of resources when he wrote the following in a letter to his campus newspaper: "A campus of some 27,000 students has no facilities for listening to classical music. . . . The Department of Music has a fine library of classical records but these cannot be borrowed for use off campus and there is nowhere on campus where they can be played. . . . Why are there no facilities elsewhere? The situation is a disgrace."⁹ In contrast, both a much smaller college located fifty miles away and a public library system thirty miles away have developed excellent facilities to promote the use of sound recordings among their students and patrons. They have built up large libraries of classical, popular, and spoken records for home use; they have pioneered in the use of tape cassettes, and even loan cassette tape players.

These striking contrasts illustrate the erratic way in which sound archives have developed in the United States. Very often their development has had nothing to do with the size of a metropolitan area. In general, the development of sound archives seems to reflect the attitudes of relatively few individuals who have been in a position to make administrative decisions. In many cases, the strong development of a

first-rate audio collection has been due largely to the strength, tenacity, and almost visionary faith of either one person or a small group of individuals.

In order to see how archives have developed, some brief accounts of sound archives will be given. This is not a comprehensive survey of all archives, or even the most important ones. However, except for the geographical bias, it is probably a fair enough sampling to give the reader some concept of the interesting way these institutions have been developed and also some idea of the fascinating resources they contain.

NATIONAL VOICE LIBRARY¹⁰

This remarkable archive is basically the work of one man, G. Robert Vincent who, since childhood, has been fascinated by recorded sound. In 1912, he recorded a message for his boys' club from Teddy Roosevelt (this was to become his only recorded ad-libbed speech); since then he has been an inveterate collector of recordings of the human voice. For about ten years he was a close friend and co-worker of Thomas A. Edison. When Edison closed his business he gave Vincent his entire collection of original wax cylinders. He was an officer during World War I, and after the Armistice remained in Europe for several years collecting more voice recordings. In the 1920s he established a sound studio in New York, and for the next two decades preserved on discs the voices of some of the most famous political, literary, and artistic figures of the time. During World War II he developed the famed V-discs. After the war he supervised the sound recording installations of the United Nations Conference in San Francisco and those of the Nüremberg War Crimes Trials; for two years he was Chief of Sound and Recordings for the United Nations. In 1949 he resumed his collecting activities in his New York sound studio. By the time he retired and moved to California in the late 1950s, he had accumulated the largest collection of voice recordings in the world—nearly 8,000, including those of the voices of people representing virtually every major field of human endeavor.

Vincent realized the value of his collection, but knew the impossibility of continuing it as a one-man enterprise. He explored the possibility of donating it to some major university library, and although several institutions showed interest, but there was one major problem. He did not want to see his life-long project turned into a mausoleum of recordings stored for years to come in the dusty attic of a university library. To avoid any possibility of this happening, he made it a condition of

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

the donation that he be appointed curator of the archive at a modest salary. He wanted to continue to enlarge the collection through his world-wide contacts, and to insure that adequate facilities were provided to keep the collection open and functional. He wanted the collection to become a living, growing archive serving all legitimate scholars and students. One would think, given the priceless nature of the material and the impressive qualifications of the donor, that dozens of university libraries would have welcomed the chance to house such a unique resource. Nothing like this happened, however, both the University of Southern California and the University of California at Los Angeles, two major universities located only a few miles from Vincent's home, turned down his offer. Many other fine schools across the country also decided they could not accept the offer. Vincent has vividly recalled the profound despair and disillusionment he experienced during those years.¹¹

Finally, in the early 1960s an offer complying with his stipulations came from the librarian of Michigan State University at East Lansing; Vincent accepted the offer. The location of such a collection in a small town of the Midwest, quite removed from national communications and media centers, is to be regretted; but this reflects the erratic way in which sound archives have developed in the United States. However, Michigan State University has given full support to Vincent in his efforts to make the collection a living and functional archive. In a few years the National Voice Library has become a major asset of the University; the collection has more than doubled in size, reaching the impressive number of over 20,000 recordings, unquestionably the world's richest source of the recorded human voice.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY ARCHIVE OF RECORDED SOUND

One of the prime forces behind the creation of this archive has been William R. Moran, a Los Angeles petroleum geologist and an executive of the Union Oil Company. A great opera enthusiast and record collector, he has traveled all over the world collecting opera and other vocal recordings. His collection, now totalling approximately 30,000 records and tapes, is considered one of the world's best collections of opera.

Moran recognized the need for archival collections and wanted to see a large institution undertake the collecting of recordings—not only opera recordings, but other types as well. He was an alumnus of Stanford University, and after much prodding finally convinced the authorities of his alma mater to lay the basis for a general, comprehensive ar-

hive of recorded sound. The archive finally took shape in the late 1950s as an adjunct to the Stanford University Music Library.

From its inception, it was planned that the archive would be all-encompassing, that is it would collect all types of recordings: spoken, broadcasts, classical music, popular music, opera, folklore, ethnic recordings, jazz, etc. This wide collecting scope, coupled with the prestige of the parent institution, has a vast potential. One hopes that, given proper support, the archive will eventually become a sort of Library of Congress of recorded sound for the West Coast. But that, unfortunately, is still quite far from the present reality of the archive.

At the time the archive was created the Music Library at Stanford was located in overcrowded quarters, sharing part of the building that had been the residence of the university president. The news of the creation of the archive, combined with the prestige of the university and the large number of people in the San Francisco Bay area who have in one way or another collected recordings, resulted in a deluge of donations and it was utter chaos. Records were received by the thousands and had to be piled in cupboards, basements, attics, and even along corridors. It is estimated that the collection now runs to more than 100,000 recordings.

In the late 1960s a modest salary was allocated to hire a library assistant to work full time with the collection, and the university provided some additional space in two other campus locations. The addition of a full time employee meant that at least part of the collection could be put into shape, the duplicates could be sorted out, and a minimum of reference and dubbing services could be provided. Also, the Archivist and Music Librarian, Edward E. Colby, together with Friends of the Archive, has mounted a number of fine exhibits and organized special lectures and programs featuring some of the unusual recordings and memorabilia stored in the archive. Recently, however, faced with serious budget cuts, the library has eliminated the full time position of library assistant for the archive. Consequently the archive has had to drastically curtail its programs and virtually suspend all reference services; as a result, most of the collection has again become dormant.

JOHN EDWARDS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION¹²

The origin and bulk of this, the world's best collection of American country and western music and memorabilia, was the work not of an American but of a young Australian, John Edwards. Although he never visited the United States, he accumulated, through unbelievable ef-

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

forts, an immense collection of country and western music and associated materials. He died tragically in Sydney as the result of a car accident in 1960 when he was only twenty-eight years old. Deeply in love with America, John Edwards asked in his will that his collection be sent to the United States, and that it be used for the advancement of scholarship and not sold or given to anyone outside the U.S. Writing about this collection in an article in the *Los Angeles Times*, British journalist Bob Houlton wrote:

But at the time, country music was a complete anathema to the American cultural establishment. Perhaps, if the music had died out, say 20 years ago, there might have been an interest in a revival. . . . Liberals were faced with a dilemma. For years they had maintained that an artist's ideology was immaterial—the thing that counted was the performance. Yet, there were a number of talented C&W [country and western] performers who were quietly, but firmly, segregationists. It was easier to pretend that they did not exist. . . . country and western music . . . was rural, southern, white, working-class culture. . . . It was ultra-commercial, and successful. It was the utter antithesis of everything the cultural establishment would fight for down to the last tax-deductible dollar. . . . If John Edwards had searched for an area of American culture that was resistant to scholarship, with the possible exception of the Mafia, he could not have found anything tougher than the country and western music field. He should have also remembered that all countries are blind to their own culture to a greater or lesser extent. The choice of the United States as the repository for his collection was not wise. Any western European country would have cherished the collection. Japan would have been the best choice. Imitation is often the most sincere form of appreciation, and Japan boasts singers who can sing hillbilly songs in an authentic rural Kentucky accent without understanding a word of English!

In any other country a grant would have been made from the treasury. Industrialists would have endowed a chair in American Commercial Country Music. Perhaps a bewildered American ambassador would be given the task of dedicating a new research institute. But nothing like this happened in the United States. Instead, the U.S. Customs insisted that anyone "importing" the Edwards collection would have to pay duty on its assessed value. Only the United States would levy a tax on a priceless chunk of its own culture.

However, there is something in the American spirit that thrives on adversity. John Edwards' wishes were carried out due to the organizing ability, perseverance, and sheer cussedness of Americans, all of them country music buffs. It was a typical American operation.¹⁸

It was decided that the best means of fulfilling the wishes of John Edwards was to establish a foundation. The John Edwards Memorial Foundation (JEMF) was established as a nonprofit corporation in the

state of California in 1962. The collection and the offices of JEMF are temporarily housed in the crowded quarters of the Folklore and Mythology Center of the University of California at Los Angeles. The foundation has not found much support from sources other than the center.

Because of the many unique features of the foundation and its special task of documenting a segment of Americana which has heretofore gone largely unnoticed by librarians, it may be well to quote its objectives:

1. To further the serious study, public recognition, and preservation of that form of American folk music commonly referred to as *country, western, country-western, hillbilly, bluegrass, mountain, cowboy, old time, and sacred*; to study and preserve parallel material referred to as *race, blues, and gospel*.

2. To gather, store, and maintain phonograph records, photographs, biographical and discographical information, scholarly works and articles, and other material pertaining to such music.

3. To archive, catalog, and index this material so that it can be most useful to interested persons.

4. To compile, publish, and distribute bibliographical, biographical, historical and discographical material.
5. To publish and distribute scholarly articles in this area; to reprint and republish, with permission, works originally appearing in this area, in books, magazines, and journals.

6. To sponsor and promote field collection of music.

7. To stimulate academic research in this area, and to instruct and educate the public to the value of such music as part of its cultural heritage.¹⁴

Most of the work of the John Edwards Memorial Foundation, including the *JEMF Quarterly* and a remarkable series of discographies and reprints, is carried out with the help of donations, benefits, dues paid by the members of the Friends of JEMF, and the sheer determination of a small group of dedicated workers and volunteers. The following account may suffice as a report on the present condition of the foundation: "Three employees and an executive secretary function out of an

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

office 18' × 9'. The majority of our holdings are in the office with us, but in addition we have materials stored all around the folklore suite. Moreover, we have about 2 dozen cardboard boxes of papers and records stored under tables, against walls, etc. An additional 2,000 records or more have been donated to the Foundation but at present remain in the hands of donors because we have no space to store them."¹⁵ In a recent interview, the former executive director of the foundation, Edward Kahn, said: "When all the artists are dead we'll have money. When it's too late we'll have more money for our projects than we need. We will become antiquarians."¹⁶

WESTERN SOUND ARCHIVE

This is a nonprofit organization located in the small community of Los Osos in central California. It is the lifelong project of Nathan E. Brown who, by supporting himself through a job in the local post office, dedicates all his efforts and energies toward maintaining and enlarging this remarkable archive that already contains several thousand records (LPs and 78s) and about 2,500 tapes. The specialty of the archive is orchestral music, with special emphasis on the styles of many famous conductors. Through immense collecting efforts and contacts throughout the world, the archive has accumulated an impressive quantity of extremely rare records—deleted recordings, rare 78s, air checks, transcription discs, etc. Brown has even managed to publish an excellent catalog of the holdings of the archive which is updated by periodic supplements.¹⁷

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON PHONOARCHIVE

In the late 1930s and 1940s many radio network affiliates of the West Coast found it far from satisfactory to broadcast live the programs originated by the parent organizations in New York. Newscasts broadcast in the East at 8 A.M. and 6 P.M. were heard in the West at 5 A.M. and 3 P.M. respectively. A number of Western stations began experimenting with delayed broadcasts recorded on acetate or, during the war, on glass discs. Most stations destroyed the discs shortly after the broadcasts to avoid the problem of storage. A notable exception was station KIRO-CBS of Seattle. With an uncanny sense of history, its management decided to store the records rather than destroy them. Shortly after the war, the policy of recording and saving discs was abandoned as the tape recording medium became available. The disc recordings were packed and hauled away to a basement at the transmitter site several

miles away on an island in Puget Sound. Fortunately for historical records, the material remained in storage, apparently forgotten, and survived several changes in management of the station.

Milo Ryan, Professor of Communications at the University of Washington, had worked at the KIRO offices for a brief period when the delayed broadcasts were recorded. Years later, he needed some wartime speeches for a course he was teaching in radio propaganda. Until he asked the station if he could borrow some of the material for use in his classes, the existence of the discs was not known to the new station management. They were found and the entire collection was transferred to the University of Washington School of Communications.

Despite the importance of the rediscovery of this gold mine of history in sound, Ryan found little enthusiasm or support from the university or other educational institutions in the area. Finally, in 1957 the CBS Foundation gave a grant of \$10,000 to the University of Washington School of Communications to enable it to transfer the aging discs to tape, set up a suitable center for their use, and prepare a catalog. Two years later, the transfer to tape was completed, and the catalog was published in 1963.¹⁸

The fact that even major networks do not keep adequate archives of their material was soon dramatically shown. At least three LP record albums drew on material from the collection of the Phonoarchive. One of these was the Columbia album, *Edward R. Murrow: A Reporter Remembers* (02L-332, 400), which contains some of Murrow's most important and dramatic wartime broadcasts from London. Under Ryan's direction the phonoarchive has become one of the nation's best repositories of recorded broadcasts of current events. Despite this achievement, the work of the archive has received little support, financial or otherwise, and apparently funds are not available to prepare an updated list of its holdings. In a paper entitled "Here are the Materials; Where are the Scholars," Ryan said: "I am certain that if we were to take, for example, the entire body of Murrow reports, transcribe them, and publish them, the scholars would dance with ecstasy, if you can imagine such a thing . . . one doesn't need McLuhan to learn that our culture is still in the age of Gutenberg."¹⁹

LAWRENCE LIPTON ARCHIVE

Lawrence Lipton is a journalist, poet, columnist, and author living in Venice, California (a suburb of Los Angeles). Because of his direct, outspoken, and controversial style he has been compared to H. L.

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

Mencken. He could be considered a precursor of Marshall McLuhan, for he has long been an advocate of the new media. In the 1950s he produced *Jazz Canto* (World Pacific LP WP 1244), a recording of poetry readings with jazz. In 1956, in an article published in *The Nation*, he strongly advocated a return to the tradition of reading poetry aloud. His ideas were considered controversial at that time; one of his main contentions was that the poem on the printed page is to the poem what the score is to a piece of music.²⁰

Since the start of World War II, using first disc and then tape recording equipment, Lipton has been recording poetry readings, radio and television newscasts, and programs that reflect the social and artistic changes in American society. His collection, which now numbers approximately 3,000 tapes (nearly 10,000 hours) contains extremely rare air checks, readings, and interviews with practically every poet and artist of the West Coast avant-garde. For several years he has been looking for a suitable library interested in his collection. He has insisted that any institution accepting the collection must provide modern and adequate facilities and equipment; he wants the collection to continue to grow and be a functional, operating collection, fully open to the public with provisions for loaning dubs to students and young people. His experience has been similar to that of G. Robert Vincent, with the reactions from libraries being those of total indifference.

THE OPERATIC ARCHIVE, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT SANTA BARBARA

The origin of this archive was inspired to a great extent by the donation to the library of Lotte Lehmann's personal collection of recordings and memorabilia. A very active music librarian, Martin Silver, and a sympathetic library administration joined forces to complement Lehmann's collection with an operatic archive. The music library at Santa Barbara was outfitted with first-rate equipment, accessories, and listening stations. Through the efforts of Silver, and with the full support of the library administration, funds were raised to extend the collection by acquiring the fine operatic collection of the late collector and detective story writer, Anthony Boucher, who lived in Berkeley. Boucher was a collector of operatic and vocal recordings, and for many years drew on his collection for his Pacifica Network radio program, "Golden Voices." Before his death he accumulated a collection of approximately 8,000 records.

Again, one has some regrets that such an excellent operatic collection is being built in a rather isolated location; some observers feel that a

CARLOS B. HAGEN

better location would have been the San Francisco Bay area. On the other hand, one can only admire the creation of this archive and what it represents. It is an excellent functional collection of vocal recordings, and it is continually growing through new additions. Silver and his associates are in the planning stages of a project to produce a computer-generated catalog of the collection. Unfortunately, recent and serious budget cuts not only threaten progress on this important project, but also threaten the growth and development of the archive.

THE LATIN AMERICAN MUSIC CENTER OF INDIANA UNIVERSITY

This archive of scores, recordings, and associated materials is extremely interesting because of the way it reflects Latin American practices of governmental subsidies to the arts, which include the recording and diffusion of musical performances—practices which are quite alien to the United States.

Established at Indiana University in 1961 under the joint sponsorship of the University's School of Music and the Rockefeller Foundation, the center has the largest and most representative cross section of contemporary Latin American music anywhere in the world. The Center also works closely with another phonoarchive at Indiana University, the Archives of Traditional Music, one of the best collections of ethnic and folk music in the United States. The Latin American Music Center is directed by Juan A. Orrego-Salas, a composer from Chile.

In most Latin American countries, music and dance ensembles are heavily subsidized by the governments, and virtually every music performance is recorded. For example, the University of Chile has an excellent facility with studios and equipment to record most of the musical performances in the country. Immediately after recording, the dubs are offered free of charge to any station in the country that wants to broadcast them. The tapes are stored indefinitely in the archives of the various universities or institutions responsible for the recording. On payment of a nominal fee, copies of these tapes can be obtained by any legitimate scholar or student, or by radio stations. These practices have not caused any serious damage, either to the performers or the composers. On the contrary, they have been very advantageous in that they have publicized the works of local composers and musical ensembles.

Most of the recordings deposited in the Latin American Music Center have been obtained in this way from the institutional sources in Latin America. The center makes available copies of most of these tapes to any legitimate scholar or educational institution in the United

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

States. The Latin American Music Center is a remarkable operation, its growth is continuous, and scholars and students are offered full access to the material. It is a welcome exception in the world of sound archives.

THE FUTURE FOR SOUND ARCHIVES

After acquisitions and preservation, what should sound archives do? This is one of the most vital questions the administrator of a library or archives must answer. In the case of sound archives, the answers are fraught with many problems. The answers will, of course, have ramifications for the future acquisitions policies of the archives. What should these policies be and what options do they have? The immense size of our cultural heritage in sound makes specialization almost mandatory. Furthermore, the difficulties faced by the Stanford University Archive of Recorded Sound lead to some sobering thoughts about the implications of wide-ranging collecting activities. The alternate approach, specialization, would seem to be the answer, but this creates new problems. Specialization will mean that students and scholars will have to be provided with the means for quick access to materials deposited in distant archives. An efficient network of national scope is needed to provide for the transmission of facsimile sound prints (dubs) and a system of interlibrary loans.

The technology for such a network of sound archives is available, and has been available for some time, but there are major stumbling blocks. Besides critical financial limitations, and the resulting staff shortages and relatively primitive physical conditions of most archives, the matter of copyright has emerged as a major deterrent to interlibrary cooperation in the provision of access.

Copyright has become a sort of artificial, self-induced phantom for librarians. They have erred grievously in their interpretations of the legal framework for the duplication of sound recordings. Virtually every legal authority will assure one that the traditional concept of fair use does indeed apply to sound materials. In the case of out-of-print materials, there is simply no question in legal minds of the applicability of the fair use doctrine. Furthermore, the fair use doctrine also applies to commercial printed materials as long as the library does not engage in unfair competition.

The extremely timid and reticent attitude of librarians can be traced, at least in part, to the tactics used by record companies to discourage piracy and unfair competition in their commercial world. This is cer-

tainly a real problem, and one of international proportions. Since technically speaking there was no copyright for sound recordings until the beginning of the interim copyright law this year, record companies have advanced the theory that their products are protected very much like unpublished manuscripts. That is, they claim recordings are protected by common law copyright, and therefore copies cannot be made for any purpose other than private listening in the home. Familiar notices to this effect are affixed to practically every commercial record. The stand of the manufacturer has, of course, been totally discredited in many court cases. However, for some strange reason, it seems to have had a long-standing effect on librarians. Time and time again, in every proposed revision of the new comprehensive copyright bill, legislators have fully recognized the traditional doctrine of fair use for librarians and scholars, applying it not only to printed materials but to all other library materials as well, despite what seems to be an appalling lack of interest on the part of library groups and associations in assuring fair use for nonprint materials.

This timidity and lack of interest has resulted in some extreme cases of neglect involving the survival of basic historical materials. There have been collections of extremely valuable and fragile 78 rpm disc recordings subject to continuous deterioration and destruction. Curators of these collections, when asked if provisions are being made to re-record the material on tape, reply: "I would like to do it, but I can't because I have heard that this would be against the copyright laws." This attitude has also had its impact on the educational use of materials. There have been cases in which students using sound facilities to fulfill listening assignments for coursework were physically searched to insure that they did not bring portable cassette recorders into the library for the purpose of re-recording their listening assignments. This is an incredible procedure considering the almost reckless abandon with which libraries have permitted (at least until recently) virtually unrestricted access to Xerox reproductions of printed materials. Why such stringent control of sound recordings? The usual answer is that "the copying of records could go against the copyright laws and the library could get into trouble by allowing students to re-tape their assignments and take them home."

Those who work on the West coast, and the scholars and students they serve, are affected by a gross misinterpretation of the copyright laws. Major sound libraries in the East consistently refuse to make dubs of their material, insisting that the material can be used only on

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

the premises. The unbelievable and frightening paradox is that in an age of technology, an age which recognizes the crucial significance of communications, so many librarians of the new media, on the basis of the artificial copyright ghost, seem intent on returning to the Middle Ages when scholars had to travel from one country to another for the purpose of consulting unique research material. This attitude contrasts sharply with that found in some of the smaller college and public libraries mentioned; the progressive libraries not only provide cassette recordings, but also loan out playback machines to patrons who do not own their own equipment.

The field of sound recordings also has its villains, and librarians and sound archivists should be aware of their existence. One class of villains is the commercial pirate who, until quite recently, was undermining the commercial interests of recording companies. However, his illegal activities will soon be drastically curtailed by the new interim copyright law which provides legal protection for the record industry. Another more subtle kind of pirate is the one who offers to sell air checks of radio and television programs to schools and libraries. His activities are more difficult to curb. A major deterrent will surely be the emergence of a number of quite reputable independent companies which legally market such programs with due payment of royalties to the artists and broadcasters.

Still another kind of villain that may seriously affect sound libraries is the private collector who is a "hoarder." Without casting any reflections on the thousands of legitimate collectors (many of whom we can number among the notable friends and benefactors of libraries), we need to comment on the hoarder. He is the collector who, motivated by a vision of eventual commercial gain or driven by psychological quirks similar to bibliomania, wants to be the only one to own a certain recording and tries to see that no one else will own it or have access to it. There are well-founded rumors that a handful of these collectors have established and even incorporated archives that serve merely as fronts for their unscrupulous hoarding activities; this is a problem that curators of sound libraries and especially prospective donors should be fully aware of. The best deterrents in this case are education, the exposure of such practices, and the establishment of a code of ethics for sound collectors, both private and institutional. This is one area where the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) could be of immense value; in fact, ARSC has already established a committee to formulate

a code of ethics. Unfortunately, preparation of the code seems to be moving at an exasperatingly slow pace.

Another major danger is well illustrated by the experience of G. Robert Vincent in finding a home for his National Voice Library. Many institutions, universities, and libraries are eager to accept donations of materials. Announcements of such gifts enhance the annual report and provide the public relations department with good material. However, all too often the collection ends up in a basement or attic, totally closed to the public for years to come. The best approach on the part of the donor is that taken by Vincent; i.e., strong conditions should be placed on the donation and it should be given only to an institution that assures adequate quarters, facilities, and public services for the materials donated. Given the utter indifference of most librarians to the new media, it is most likely that such conditions will result in the rejection of the donation.

This situation is extremely grave, for this is a period in which large quantities of recordings, especially 78 rpm disc recordings, are being disposed of daily throughout the country. There is, of course, an immense amount of duplication and much of the material in these collections is of low quality. However, many contain priceless materials that should be preserved. Faced with this situation and the lack of interest of most libraries in accepting even a part of such collections, the author, in a recent communication to the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, proposed the establishment of what he called "chartered collectors."²¹ These would be private collectors to whom colleges and universities would route materials they have no interest in accepting. However, in exchange for the materials routed or leased to them by institutions, the "chartered collectors" would give written guarantees that the material would be kept in their collections and would be made available on demand to legitimate users. In other words, the material would be given to them on a permanent lease basis with the very important conditions of accessibility attached to the donations so as to exclude any possibility of hoarding.

Finally, some brief comments on a frequently asked question: What is the outlook for sound archives in the United States? It has already been stated that the term "librarian" is erroneous and dangerous, for it is not descriptive of the true function of a person who should be entrusted to keep and make available human knowledge in any form. However, this view is far from being the prevailing one among library administrators, library organizations, or schools of librarianship. Mem-

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

bers of the library profession still seem totally committed to the Gutenberg tradition of the print media. Their unshakable, unbending faith and commitment to these particular media is admirable; yet it may also be very dangerous. By ignoring the new media and the techniques necessary to handle them, librarians are, perhaps unconsciously, causing immense damage to our cultural heritage. Looking to the immediate past, there has not been much enthusiasm in library circles for accepting the new and the unfamiliar.

In the 1950s, faced with the revolution of information retrieval, the library profession was reticent to accept the new. As a result of this attitude, virtually the entire field of information retrieval divorced itself from libraries and moved, for the most part, into the scientific and technological community. The information science community could have greatly benefited from a much closer cooperation with librarians, a cooperation which would have resulted in a mutually beneficial sharing of experiences. The lack of closer contacts has resulted in costly mistakes and much duplication. Now, years after the schism, the science of information retrieval has become a well-established field with thousands of specialists and powerful associations. At the time they were faced with the new information technology, few library schools recognized that nineteenth-century methods could not serve the communications needs of the twentieth century. Only recently, one begins to see schools of library science recognizing the existence of a serious gap and a resulting alienation; now they are trying to prepare students for the new information technologies.

In the 1960s librarians faced the explosion of the underground press. Granted, the materials produced by these presses are often controversial and even shocking to some people. However, anyone with some social and historical sensitivity should have seen that the underground papers were documenting a most important social change, not only in the United States, but throughout much of the world. American librarianship has an admirable record of supporting freedom of expression and fighting censorship. Given these facts, one would have expected that librarians would have recognized the importance of the new publications and avidly collected them. Unfortunately, nothing like this happened; on the contrary, practically every major academic and public library seemed to take the same attitude: "This is junk, and as such has no place in any respectable library." Now, only a few years later, one finds that the first writings of some of the most influential poets, writers, and thinkers of an immense social revolution were published by

the underground press. Libraries are now spending thousands of dollars trying to acquire back runs of issues of underground papers and publications. Early issues of underground papers have become collectors' items. Publications that any enterprising librarian could have obtained for a few cents (or even free in some cases) are often selling for as much as \$50 apiece and more.

In the 1970s this society is facing the immense revolution of electronic media. Technology has produced audio and video recordings, cable television, and inexpensive cassette recorders. How have librarians responded to these innovations in the communications media? As this discussion of sound archives has demonstrated, they have responded with unbelievable indifference and even hostility. But history has shown repeatedly that the tide of progress cannot be stopped. We ignore it at our peril, for it will not go away. As Bob Dylan says in one of his songs:

Your old road is
Rapidly agin'
Please get out of the new one
If you can't lend your hand

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As the present now
Will later be past
The order is rapidly fadin'
And the first one now
Will later be last.
For the times they are a-changin.'²²

Librarians would do well to ponder Bob Dylan's words, for in the case of sound archives, one sees a repetition of the type of response which served them so badly in dealing with innovations of the underground press and the science of information retrieval. There are also two interesting trends. Young people, reared in the electronic media and versed in their potentialities will demand more and more of these materials as rightfully theirs in libraries and schools. And, perhaps responding to such demands, some of the best audio and video facilities are often not seen in large, traditional university libraries, but in some of the small colleges and even in high schools.

The lack of interest in library circles for the new media is causing another interesting trend; that is the emergence in many universities of the so-called media centers or communication centers. One fears that, as was the case in the revolution of information retrieval, one will again

The Struggle of U.S. Sound Archives

see the development of a large gap and a mutual alienation which could cause serious and costly duplications and mistakes. As in the past, engineers and technicians may be deprived of the wealth of experience of the library profession. And, perhaps years from now, when the media centers are firmly established, schools of librarianship go will out of their way to train their students in the uses and potentialities of the new media.

A generation or more from now, when the library administrators of today, so indifferent to the new media, will be long gone and forgotten, the few dedicated persons responsible for creating and maintaining, under unbearable conditions, the sound archives discussed, will be remembered with the kind of respect and admiration that we have today for a man such as Hubert Howe Bancroft. This may be of little consolation to those dedicated individuals who are struggling to introduce the new media into the very reluctant and tradition-bound library world, but it is the situation today.

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CARLOS B. HAGEN

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