

DEMONSTRATION VIDEO TRANSCRIPTION

Uncovering CUNY's Audiovisual Heritage

Kelly Haydon, CUNY-TV

Hello, everyone. My name is Kelly Haydon, and I am the project manager of Uncovering CUNY's Audiovisual Heritage. Now, before we begin, there are a few important notes. One is that I am speaking to you from northern Queens in New York City on the ancestral lands of the Mantinecock, an Algonquin people. I'd also like you to know that I am usually referred to by the gendered pronouns she and her, and, for accessibility purposes, the images in the presentation contain alt-descriptions for screen readers.

CUNY is an acronym for the City University of New York, one of the largest public university networks in the country: 25 campuses and over 200,000 students. Each campus has a library and archive and a mountain of unique material. These are documents that tell the story of New York City since the nineteenth century, when New York's public university system began as a preschool.

But some of these documents are recordings that can't be viewed by the naked eye. They require a playback device called VTR, videotape recorder. Videotape technology is obsolete, hard to find, even harder to preserve. This is due to the swift pace of its degradation and the costliness of digitization.

Enter CUNY-TV. CUNY-TV has produced and aired educational content since 1985, the heyday of videotape production. CUNY-TV storied history is another presentation. But I can at least show you a cool archival gift of one of our early bumpers, which I will play for you right now.



This is Channel A. The City University of New York.

In 2020, CUNY-TV was awarded a multiyear Digitizing Hidden Collections grant made possible by the Council for Library and Information Resources. The project has uncovered nearly 1,000 hours of content that documents New York's political and cultural life in the last quarter of the twentieth century.

Uncovering CUNY aims to implement a shared resources model that makes use of the station's robust audiovisual preservation infrastructure to provide equipment, storage, and services that are cost prohibitive for the libraries and archives in the network. The Archives Department at the station performs ongoing digitalization of the station's massive tape-based archive of over 80,000 media objects.

These three images visually summarize the transformation from a mysterious tape to playback on our top of the line, multiformat digitization rack.

In addition to digitizing, the department follows the Open Archival Information System framework, known as OAIS, for its digital preservation workflow. Digital preservation masters created from analog sources are

transformed into archival ingest packages, or AIPs. The packages are then transferred to LTO tape, which are duplicated and stored in different geographical locations.

Open-source tools are used throughout the digitization-to-preservation workflow. I love talking about these tools, but it exceeds the scope of this report.

Long story short: We got it. CUNY-TV's audiovisual preservation infrastructure is secure, stable, and ever adapting to new technologies.

There are five school libraries participating in the project: Bronx Community College, College of Staten Island, Medgar Evers College, Hunter College, and Baruch College.

After two years of coordinating efforts with the libraries of these institutions, we'll have digitized over 1,000 media objects, of which 70 percent are available online on Internet Archive in adherence to unique accessibility guidelines.

The online assets are also captioned using a mix of automated software and manual captioning by humans.

I'd like to spend the minute or two that I have left showing off some clips from my favorite works in the collection. I thought I'd make a 60-second trailer on Uncovering CUNY projects. I'm no editor and the juxtapositions are a bit abrupt, but I tried to capture the diversity of the material that is now freely available to researchers, filmmakers, and the public at large. After the trailer, I'll be sure to give you links and other tips on how to find the material.

Rudy Giuliani: New York City now must be competitive.

Corey Booker: I want people to hold me responsible and hold me accountable for what's going on.

Shirley Chisholm: It means that I was a pragmatic political animal who is misunderstood.

Jerry Carlson: Welcome to Cinema Then, Cinema Now, the film series with lively discussion.

Reverend: This enshrinement of George Washington Carver in the Hall of Fame for Great Americans.

And that's a wrap.

For access to these collections, you can search Uncovering CUNY'S Audiovisual Heritage in the subject tag at www.archive.org.

And if you would like to access any of this content for your own purposes, please feel free to email archive@tv.cuny.edu.

Note: The video corresponding to this transcript is located at <https://youtu.be/dGHGfaetaJ8>.