

**A GUIDE TO THE
DONLEY F. FEDDERSEN PAPERS**

National Public Broadcasting Archives
University of Maryland Libraries

Processed by: Debra J. Gousha, April 1994
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6.25 lin. ft.

BIOGRAPHY

Donley F. Feddersen was born in Clinton, Iowa in 1915. He attended Niobrara High School in Niobrara, Nebraska, and earned his diploma there in 1931. He went on to receive his AB in 1937 from Wayne State Teachers College in Wayne, Nebraska, where he majored in Education and English. From 1937 to 1941 he was employed by the Norfolk High School in Nebraska. Feddersen also attended Northwestern University in Illinois where he completed a Masters degree in Theatre and Interpretation in 1942. He continued at Northwestern working towards a Doctorate while also being employed as a Teaching Assistant there. Although he completed his Doctoral course work in 1944, he was unable to complete his dissertation because of an offer of a permanent position on the faculty at Northwestern.

Feddersen began his career in public broadcasting as an instructor at Northwestern University in 1944. By 1954 he had advanced to the rank of Professor. From the years 1945 to 1947 he was the Director of The Northwestern University Reviewing Stand, a program that was produced by the University for broadcast on the Mutual Broadcasting System. In 1947 he became Chairman of the Department of Radio-Television-Film, a post which he held until 1956. During this time he also served as Director of the NBC-Northwestern Radio-Television Institute. In 1950 he was named to the Broadcast Advisory Committee of the United States Information Agency. At that time he was the only member appointed from the field of educational broadcasting.

During the years 1952 to 1956, Feddersen also directed and moderated the public affairs discussion program, Chicago Forum of the Air. In 1953, the Chicago Council on Foreign Relations cited this program as the winner of its annual award for the local radio series which had contributed the most to the promotion of world understanding.

In addition to his teaching and broadcasting duties Feddersen also found the time to write. In 1955 his book, The Egghead and the Others was published. Sydney Head, in Broadcasting in America: A Survey of Television and Radio, described Feddersen's work as "a gem of satire," and goes on to say that, "the whole catalogue of prejudices betrayed by the intellectual snob when faced with the monstrous advent of television has been neatly exposed by Donley Feddersen".

Beginning in 1956, Feddersen decided to devote all of his creative energies solely to the design and production or production supervision of programs and program series for "publication" via national educational television. In this year, Northwestern University granted him a leave of absence so he could accept a short term assignment as Program Associate with the Educational Television and Radio Center, then located in Ann Arbor, Michigan. While there he became the NET liaison and consultant to NBC at the beginning of the NBC-NET Educational Television Project. During the year of his tenure more than 100 programs were telecast nationally. After his eighteen month tour of duty with NET, he returned to his teaching duties at Northwestern in January of 1958.

In June of 1958 Feddersen was offered a position at WTTW, Chicago's educational television station, with the understanding that he could continue his work at Northwestern University on a reduced load basis. He began his work at Chicago Educational Television as Northwestern University's representative on the Educational Advisory Committee, a group which laid the groundwork for the establishment of the station. In 1958 he held the position of Program Consultant and in only four months he was named the Program Manager. In 1959 he became the Director of Special Projects and had the principal responsibility of designing and producing program series intended for national distribution through NET. While working for WTTW, Feddersen was responsible for more than 50 programs which were accepted by NET for national distribution. Some of these include: American Memoir with John Dodds (American Culture since 1900); The Big Count with Philip Hauser (The Story of the 1960 Census); Meeting of Minds (Discussions between Russian and American educators); America Looks Abroad with Carter Davidson (Foreign Policy processes and issues); Beginnings (Interviews with distinguished Americans); Fact and Fancy with Rita Criste (Creative Dramatics for youngsters); Children Growing with Maria Piers (Guidance for parents); and many others.

In September of 1960, Feddersen, resigning from his positions at Northwestern and Chicago Educational Television, became Director of Television Programming at the National Educational Television and Radio Center which had moved to New York. In this post he was responsible for the design of the NET program schedule and for the activities of the six Program Associates and six assistants and secretaries who had comprised the operational force of the NET Program Department. He was also responsible for the planning, selection and production supervision of the 520 half hours of program material which NET supplied annually to over 70 affiliated non-commercial etv stations.

In 1964 Feddersen left NET to take a temporary position at the University of Florida. In 1965 he accepted a permanent position at Indiana University. His titles were Chairman of the Department of Radio and TV in the College of Arts and Sciences and Director of Radio and TV Services for Indiana University and General Manager and Director for station WTIU when it went on the air. He was responsible for developing a PhD program for the academic department, as well as completing the application for licensing and equipping and hiring personnel for the new TV station. When he had fulfilled his responsibilities to the academic department he resigned his chairmanship and devoted his full energies to the work connected with the station. This was the position he held until his death in April, 1979.

Donley Feddersen was the husband of Frances R. Feddersen and the father of four children. He was noted and admired among his colleagues as a man who held strong principles when it came to supporting high standards and excellence in public broadcasting.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Donley F. Feddersen Papers cover the years 1956 to 1978, and contains some undated material. The bulk of the material is from 1956 to 1964. The collection documents Feddersen's work as first Program Associate with the Educational Television and Radio Center, and then as Director of the Television Programming Department of the National Educational Television and Radio Center. It also includes correspondence and position papers concerning the CPB/PBS conflict over the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's January 10, 1973 resolution on the restructuring of the Public Broadcasting Service as well as additional writings and memorabilia relating to the Public Broadcasting Service.

The collection consists of three series:

- Series 1: Educational Television and Radio Center (ETRC)
- Series 2: National Educational Television and Radio Center (NETRC)
 - Subseries 1: Administrative Files
 - Subseries 2: Programs
 - Subseries 3: Station Relations
- Series 3: Personal Papers

PROVENANCE

The Donley F. Feddersen Papers were donated to the National Public Broadcasting Archives, University of Maryland Libraries by his wife Frances R. Feddersen in September of 1993 and by Edwin G. Cohen in July of 1997

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series 1: Educational Television and Radio Center (ETRC), 1956-1958 and undated (0.50 linear feet)

This series documents activities by Donley F. Feddersen as Program Associate for the Educational Television and Radio Center. Documents include budgets, correspondence concerning station WTTW (Chicago, IL), as well as materials regarding programs produced with the National Broadcasting Company as part of the NBC-ETRC Project. Materials are arranged alphabetically by type or folder title.

Series 2: National Educational Television and Radio Center, 1959–1964 and undated (1.50 linear feet)

This series documents activities by Donley F. Feddersen as Director of Television Programming at the National Educational Television and Radio Center. Materials have been arranged into three subseries, described below.

Subseries 1: Administrative Files, 1958-1963 (0.75 linear feet)

This subseries consists of budget files, correspondence, documents concerning legal and technical issues as well as reports on office routines, instructional television library, and the program department. Materials are arranged alphabetically by topic, and then chronologically.

Subseries 2: Programs, 1960-1964 and undated (2.75 linear feet)

This subseries consists of program proposals, reviews, scripts and scheduling information. The proposals, reviews and scripts are arranged beginning with general information, and then alphabetically by program categories. These files contains correspondence between Feddersen and the Program Associates Curtis Davis, Brice Howard, and Sumner Glimcher. It also includes correspondence with Paul Taff, Assistant Director of Television Programming and with Basil Thornton, Director of International Programming. Scheduling information materials are arranged alphabetically by folder title and then chronologically. These materials include oversize distribution charts which are boxed at the end of the collection.

Subseries 3: Station Relations, 1961-1963 and undated (6 folders)

This subseries consists of documents concerning interaction between the National Educational Television and Radio Center with affiliated stations. Materials include a file on administrative procedures, minutes and supporting materials of affiliates meetings, and a tentative catalogue of program exchange between stations. Materials are arranged alphabetically by folder title and then chronologically.

Series 3: Personal Papers, 1964-1978 and undated (0.25 lin ft.)

This series documents Donley F. Feddersen's position regarding the disagreement and conflict generated by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's January 10, 1973 resolution to restructure the Public Broadcasting Service. Also included are assorted personal papers collected by Donley F. Feddersen and consists of additional writings of his, NAEB memorabilia, and a newspaper clipping. The arrangement is alphabetical by subject or document type.

BOX INVENTORY

SERIES 1: EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION AND RADIO CENTER

Box	Folder	
1	1	Budget 1956-1958
	2	ETV – Notes for Specials 1957, nd NBC-ETRC Programs
	3	<i>Arts and the Gods</i> 1957 <i>International Geophysical Year</i>
	4	Background 1956-1957, nd
	5-6	Scripts 1957
	7	Mathematics 1957
		Program Schedules – Distribution Charts 1959-1960. See oversize box 6
	8	WTTW, Chicago 1956, nd

SERIES 2: NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION AND RADIO CENTER SUBSERIES 1: ADMINISTRATIVE FILES

		Budget
2	1-2	1959 (2f)
	3	1960-1961
	4	1962-1963
		Correspondence and Memoranda
	5	1958-1959
	6	1960-1961
	7	1962-1963, nd
	8	Instructional Television Library 1963
	9	Legal 1960-1962, nd
3	1	<u>NET News</u> Winter 1963
	2	Office Routines and Procedures 1960-1962, nd
	3	Program Department Report 1961
	4	Technical 1959-1963, nd

SUBSERIES 2: PROGRAMS

		Proposals, Reviews and Scripts
	5	Extra Preliminary Project Data Sheets 1961-1963
	6	Program Planning 1961-1963
	7	Proposal File 1962-1963
	8	Civil Defense 1961
Box	Folder	

- 3 9 Environmental Revolution 1962-1963, nd
 Fine Arts and Music – Curtis Davis
 10 1961-1963, nd
 11 *American Memoir: Ad-land Revisited*
- 4 1 Foreign Acquisitions 1960-1963, nd – Basil Thornton
 2 History 1960, nd
 3 Humanities – Brice Howard. 1961-1963, nd
 4 International and Social Sciences – Sumner Glimcher. 1961-1963
 5 Public Affairs – Donald S. Hillman, Paul Kaufman, Al Perlmutter. 1961-
 1964. nd
- Schedules
 Distribution Charts – see oversize Box 6
 6 Scheduling Information
 7 WNBT Program Guides. December 1962, Summer 1963, October 1963

SUBSERIES 3: STATION RELATIONS

- 8 Administrative Procedures and Mailing List. 1962, nd
 Affiliates Meeting
 9 October 19-21, 1961
 10 April 15-18, 1962
 11 October 1962
 12 March 20-22, 1963
 13 Station Depository Exchange: Tentative Catalogue. February 1963

SERIES 3: PERSONAL PAPERS

- CPB/PBS Conflict
 5 1 Correspondence. December 1972 – February 1973
 2 Position Papers. January, March 1973
 3 Meeting report - January 9, 1976
 4 National Association of Educational Broadcasters 1978 Awards Luncheon,
 October 30, 1978
 5 Newspaper clipping - "TV Hone for Political Wits," January 22, 1964
 6 Poem - "A Witches' Tale" [n.d.]
 7 Position paper - "Dominant Characteristics of the U.S. Public Television
 System," June 8, 1978

SERIES 1: EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION AND RADIO CENTER (CONT'D)

Ovs Box

		Program Schedules – Distribution Charts
6	1	Block One Stations. May 1959 - January 1960
	2	Block One Stations. November 1959 – July 1960

**SERIES 2: NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION AND RADIO CENTER
(CONT'D)**

SUBSERIES 2: PROGRAMS (CONT'D)

Ovs Box

		Program Schedules – Distribution Charts
		Block One Stations
6	3	May 1960 – January 1961
	4	August 1960 – April 1961
	5	November 1960 – July 1961
	6	October 1961 – September 1962
	7	May 1962 – April 1963
		NET Schedule Projection. September 1962 – 1963
	8	March 30, 1962
	9-10	May 1, 1962 (2)
	11	Time Schedule. Fall 1962
	12	Fall 1962
	13	Spring 1963