

**A GUIDE TO THE PAPERS OF
GERALD SLATER**

National Public Broadcasting Archives
University of Maryland Libraries

Processed by: Karen E. King
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0.25 lin. ft.
BIOGRAPHY

Gerald Slater received a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from New York University. He started his broadcasting career in the commercial end of the field, working for Columbia Broadcasting System from 1960 to 1967. First, from 1960 to 1962, he was a network supervisor, responsible for all operating departments during evenings and weekends as he supervised "on-air" operations for CBS Television Network and WCBS-TV. From 1962 to 1965, as production supervisor, Slater was responsible for production budgets for CBS News. Then, from 1965 to 1967, Slater served as manager of News Production Services. In this job, he created a liaison department between CBS News Division and CBS Television Network to provide central administration of all operations between the two divisions.

Slater's first job in public broadcasting was as director of operations for the Public Broadcasting Laboratory from 1967 to 1969. In this job, he organized all operations of this \$15 million experimental weekly television venture funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation to create original drama, arts, and public affairs programming for the first nation-wide public television network. Then, from 1969 to 1970, he worked as a communications specialist for the Ford Foundation. There, as a member of a three person staff responsible for the administration of \$18 million in annual television programming grants, Slater initiated, evaluated, and selected program proposals to be funded.

From 1970 to 1975, Slater worked as general manager of the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) as he was recruited to organize the first U.S. public television network. His responsibilities included establishment of all operating procedures, design of the public network broadcasting land line and satellite distribution systems, as well as setting policies and directing the Programming, Public Information, Business Affairs, Advertising, Station Relations, Operations and Engineering Departments. He negotiated a reduced rate from AT&T for distributing network programs and he set the policy for the relationship between PBS and member stations. In 1973, he was named vice-president of broadcasting at PBS, where his duties included station relations and public information.

From July 1975 to 1989, Slater was executive vice-president of WETA TV/Radio. Here, he managed all operations of public broadcasting stations WETA-TV and WETA-FM in Washington, DC, making final decisions on all programs, and directing 200 employees including producers, executives, on-air talent, engineers, and technicians. He also represented public broadcasting on official visits to Japan and the Soviet Union. Some specific accomplishments Slater did for WETA include creation of "Smithsonian World" co-production series with the Smithsonian Institution and work as Executive in Charge for station in creating the MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour.

From 1989 to the present, Slater has been working for Rock Creek Productions, serving clients such as the American Museum of National History, Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Maryland Public Broadcasting Commission, and the New York City Board of Education. He currently lives in Washington, DC.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The Papers of Gerald Slater cover the dates September to November 1971, and contains some undated material. The collection documents the controversy surrounding the 1971 conflict between the Public Broadcasting Service and National Educational Television over investigative reporter Paul Jacobs' story on the Federal Bureau of Investigation and its possible inclusion in the satirical series "The Great American Dream Machine." Types of documents include correspondence, photocopied articles, and transcripts. Correspondents include former PBS president Hartford N. Gunn and former FBI director J. Edgar Hoover.

The collection consists of one series:

Series 1: "The Great American Dream Machine"

PROVENANCE

The Papers of Gerald Slater were given to the University of Maryland Libraries by Gerald Slater in October 1990.

SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series 1: "The Great American Dream Machine," n.d., September-November 1971 (0.25 lin. ft.)

This series documents the decisions surrounding the Paul Jacobs' report in which three men alleged that the FBI recruited them to bomb buildings and other acts which the FBI would then blame on radicals. The documents were organized in both chronological and narrative order, focusing on the transcripts, National Educational Television, the Public Broadcasting Service, responses from both the stations and the audience, the self-investigative show "Behind the Lines," and finally press reports which document and summarize the events.

BOX INVENTORY

SERIES 1: "THE GREAT AMERICAN DREAM MACHINE"

Box	Folder
1	Transcripts
	1 Original
	2 Revisions
	3 Revised
	National Educational Television
	Correspondence
4	FBI, Seattle Police September 1971
5	Stephen Glauber - Norman Sinel September-October 1971
6	Al Perlmutter - producer Statements
	Public Broadcasting Service

- 7 Memoranda, Correspondence October 1971
- 8 Phone/TWX Messages September-October 1971
- 9 Interviews with Hartford N. Gunn October 6, 1971
- 10 Letters to Press October 1971
- 11 MacDonald Investigation October-November 1971
- Responses
- 12 Station
- 13 Audience
- 14 "Behind the Lines" October 8, 1971
- 15 Press & UPI Articles October-November 1971