

April 2009

People Profile: Nan Rubin

Editor

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Recommended Citation

Editor (2009) "People Profile: Nan Rubin," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 21: Iss. 2, Article 17.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.2560>

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Maintaining Momentum

Since **Preserving Digital Public Television** began, broadcasting has shed its analog systems and moved completely into a digital universe. This project has been able to impress on the public television system the message that digital preservation is not an optional “add-on” cost, but a requirement for any future use of the materials. In this, the project has been instrumental in transforming an attitude of indifference to one that acknowledges the value of properly managing our collective archival holdings.

In a further indication of support, for the very first time **CPB** allocated preservation funding to pilot **The American Archive**. **The American Archive** will develop a repository for public radio and television, and **PDPTV** anticipates making a significant contribution to this initiative.

Viewers keep reminding us that public television programming is precious and has made an indelible imprint. What remains is to continue building commitment across the entire system, so the critical responsibility for saving this American media legacy will be shared, sustained and nurtured over time. 🌱

Endnotes

1. <http://digitalpreservation.gov>.
2. <http://www.ptvdigitalarchive.org>.
3. “From **Wikipedia: An Open Archival Information System** (or **OAIS**) is an archive, consisting of an organization of people and systems, that has accepted the responsibility to preserve information and make it available for a Designated Community. The information being maintained has been deemed to need ‘long term preservation,’ even if the **OAIS** itself is not permanent.”
4. <http://www.pbc.org>.
5. From **Wikipedia**: The **Dublin Core** metadata element set is a standard for cross-domain information resource description. It provides a simple and standardized set of conventions for describing things online in ways that make them easier to find. **Dublin Core** is widely used to describe digital materials such as video, sound, image, text, and composite media like Web pages.
6. <http://www.oclc.org/research/projects/pmwg>.

Rumors

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Just got word that **The Informed Librarian Online** has selected an article from *Against the Grain* as **Editor’s Picks**. Each month a few journal articles are highlighted for readers. The April 2009 issue of **The Informed Librarian** picked **Bryan Carson’s** article in the December 2008/January 2009 issue (v.20#6,p.62) – “Is Open Source Software a

against the grain people profile

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Nan Rubin

BORN AND LIVED: 1949, Newton, MA. Have lived in Ohio, Colorado, Washington DC, New York City.

EARLY LIFE: Hippie, Folkie, Lefty, Techie.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: 30+ years building community radio stations and community media with special focus on facilities, technical planning and creating infrastructure. Put two community radio stations on the air, in Cincinnati and Denver. Long-time supporter of ethnic public media, particularly Native American projects. A founder of the **National Federation of Community Broadcasters** and the **World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters**. Producer of **The Hidden Jews of New Mexico** radio series, one of the most popular programs ever aired on **NPR**. Organizer of the **Highlander Media Justice Gathering**, which helped launch the modern media reform movement. A primary team member involved with restoring the **WNET** broadcast signal after all analog and digital transmitters were destroyed at the **World Trade Center**. Last five years, have been Project Director of **Library of Congress NDIIPP** project **Preserving Digital Public Television**.

IN MY SPARE TIME: I make Jewish papercuts in non-traditional designs [www.nanrubin.com]. I produce segments for a weekly radio program on progressive Jewish politics and culture aired on **WBAI**, the **NYC Pacifica** station. [<http://www.beyondthepale.org>]. I dabble in handwriting analysis.

FAVORITE BOOKS: *A Distant Mirror*, **Barbara Tuchman**. *The Lymond Chronicles*, **Dorothy Dunnnett**. *Mass Communications and the American Empire*, **Herbert Schiller**. *The Rabbi’s Cat*, **Joann Sfar**.

PET PEEVES: Lima beans.

PHILOSOPHY: “You don’t need to be Jewish to love Levy’s.” (real Jewish Rye bread...). “Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic” – **Arthur C. Clarke**.

MOST MEMORABLE CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: Signing my first community radio station on the air in Cincinnati. Being invited on the **Martha Stewart Show** to demonstrate papercutting techniques. Being invited to make presentations on digital preservation to the **Blue Ribbon Task Force for Digital Sustainability**, and to the **National Library of Medicine**.

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW: Help community media win significant access to the digital spectrum. Help bust open the copyright stranglehold on access to archival video. Develop activities to train volunteers to take on distributed cataloging. Create a new **Foundation for the Preservation of Television**, alongside the existing **Foundation for Film Preservation** and **Foundation for Preservation of Recorded Sound** chartered by **Congress** ten years ago.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I’d like to see a better understanding of the importance of digital preservation, an ongoing commitment from the system to support preservation and access, improved open source tools to manage files, and more robust outlets for archival video. But given the very uncertain future of funding for public media, at this moment it’s very hard to know what direction things will actually take. 🌱



Violation of Antitrust Law: Considering the Case of Wallace v. IBM.” This article is fulltext on the **ATG** Website.

www.against-the-grain.com
www.infosourcespub.com/

Speaking of preserving, it is important to read all the articles in this issue of **ATG**, but I would like to especially point you to **James J. Jacobs’** article about government information.

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