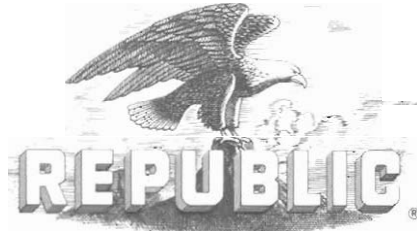


JAN 21 1993

MOTION PICTURE, BROADCASTING  
AND RECORDED SOUND DIVISION



Jan. 21, 1993

ERNEST KIRKPATRICK  
Film Archivist

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS OF NATIONAL FILM PRESERVATION BOARD

Questions to Industry

(1) - Collection

Republic's film library consists of the following (approximate numbers):

- 1400 features and westerns.
- 1500 cartoons and/or short subjects.
- 52 serial chapterplays (from 12 to 15 episodes each)
- 1058 TV series episodes (½-hr and 1-hr) -- Republic-owned.
- 2880 TV series episodes " " -- NBC-owned but distributed by Republic.

(2) Preservation problems.

Many of the older films are on nitrate stock, sometimes incomplete.  
Some pictures have been edited in the past in two or more versions, leading to much confusion for printing or preserving.

(3) - Preservation efforts:

Because of limited funding and personnel, Republic does not have a regular on-going preservation program, although management is committed to the concept. In the past, certain groups of films have been selected for preservation, regardless of commercial need. But many projects are started to fulfill specific needs because of sales to cable or TV. Others are taken up because of requests from management, the Film Foundation, Martin Scorsese, UCLA Film Archives and others.

Some accomplishments:

HIGH NOON - Gary Cooper, Grace Kelly. 9 reels.  
Republic retimed and treated original action & track negative-- then produced a new safety composite finegrain - in 1990.

In addition, the Library of Congress has created its own finegrain and sound track from elements supplied by us.

PURSUED - Robert Mitchum, Teresa Wright - 11 reels.

337 A classic case of a confused collection of 35mm printing elements that could not be matched. This project was undertaken by Bob Gitt of UCLA. He pieced together various reels of safety and nitrate negative. He then had a track re-recorded and put through noise reduction process. We now have good finegrain and magnetic track.

REPUBLIC PICTURES CORPORATION

Accomplishments (cont.)

I'VE ALWAYS LOVED YOU - Catherine McLeod, Philip Dorn - 12 reels

Republic's first Technicolor picture (1946). We started with 35mm original Tech 3-strip negative and 35mm nitrate YCM masters, but no 35mm track material. UCLA took on this project, collected funds from Republic, the National Endowment of the Arts and other sources. A new 35mm track negative had to be created from 16mm sources. Then the 35mm nitrate Technicolor 3-strip negative was cleaned, re-timed and synched with new track. First trial print, corrected low-con print (made for us), and then new safety YCM separation masters made

ARCH OF TRIUMPH (Charles Boyer, Ingrid Bergman).

Another multiple-version picture. The original was (apparently) 14 reels, 131 minutes. UCLA chose to preserve this version, and has a safety composite finegrain that was made in 1982. Republic chose go with the 121 (13-reel version). Using one of several nitrate finegrains, Republic had a new safety composite finegrain. (There is also a version that runs 111 minutes, our 16mm negative for TV).

Organizational resources:

Republic does not have a full-time staff devoted exclusively to film restoration. We use existing personnel from Film Services Department to place the appropriate orders and move material to the labs or to UCLA as needed.

Criteria for preservation priorities

Sometimes preservation projects are based simply on need, by a sale of a picture to TV or cable. In other cases, interest may be expressed by management, the Film Foundation or others. We do not necessarily go by the number of stars the film rated on release. Our goal is to preserve every film in the library. Realistically, that might be a bit over-optimistic.

Duplication:

We encourage other entities such as Library of Congress and UCLA Film Archive to make duplicate elements. It ensures full protection. We do not normally use these materials for our own commercial purposes, except for an occasional taping from a first trial print.

Preparation

We leave this up to the experts at the film laboratories.

Formats for preservation copies:

This depends upon what we have to work with. In many cases, we are working with nitrate negatives. In this instance, we make safety finegrain, then tape cassettes to check quality. But if we have only nitrate finegrain to work with, we will order safety dupe negative, and probably a check print. Also a viewing cassette.

(4) - Copyright.

Our legal department is in charge of copyright renewal and enforcement of our rights. Copyright infringement is an ongoing problem that has been around for many years. The lawyers will have to answer those questions. However, I do not believe that cooperating with film archives or educational institutions contribute to copyright problems.

Legal incentives might include some sort of tax advantage to companies that preserve film.

Public domain materials should be handled carefully to make sure that all requests for use of same are legitimate.

(5) - Storage and Access.

Our film material is being moved from our Beatrice Street building (about 75% completed) to commercial film and tape storage firms in the area that are temperature and humidity-controlled. Our nitrate material is held by UCLA Film Archives, and the cans are opened and checked for deterioration about every six months.

Do your older films circulate?

With the proliferation of cable, some of our older feature films and TV shows are being sold. This calls for preparing tape masters, and sometimes leads to a minor restoration or preservation of film elements.

Information regarding company holdings:

No complete catalogue of all titles in the library is available, but computer listings can be generated. I cannot think of a reason for an individual to have this information. However, a bank might have to have it for a pledgeholder's agreement.

Data-base.

We have not as yet entered information regarding the holdings in a data base, but this is just around the corner. The program has already been written and just needs a few kinks straightened out. I believe it is on the agenda for 1993.

ERNEST KIRKPATRICK