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LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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MOTION PICTURE, REEL
AND RECORDED SOUND

National Film Preservation Board
Library of Congress
M/BR/S Division
Washington, D.C. 20540
ATT: Steve Leggett

March 14, 1993

Dear Board Members:

As a professional media researcher for film and television productions I have contributed to historical documentaries such as Within These Walls: A Visit to the White House, The Great Upset of 1948, and biographies of Marian Anderson, Dwight Eisenhower, Herbert Hoover, Benjamin Spock, Larry Adler, and A. Philip Randolph. As a media scholar with 25 years of experience using the media materials in the nation's capital, I authored two of the Scholar's Guides sponsored by the Woodrow Wilson Center at the Smithsonian Institution.

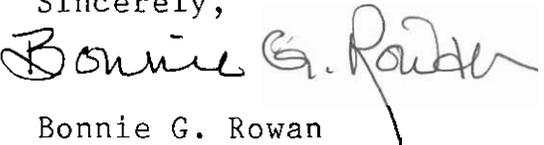
I want my voice added to those demanding that public funding of film preservation, cataloging, and storage carry with it an obligation to make these materials accessible to wide audiences. It is a scandal that there have been deeds of gift which gave all responsibilities for preservation to the taxpayers and almost all benefits to the donors. Scholarly use is a benefit for the taxpayers but how many scholars each week wish only to view films?

Great numbers of Americans spend their time, their education dollars, and their cable fees on historical documentaries. The choice of film clips of the past...both from factual and fictional productions...is limited by restrictive agreements. The concern here is that some of those agreements cover materials which taxpayers are paying to preserve.

The Library of Congress and other film archives which receive federal funds should be proudest of the materials which get out and into mass circulation. They should be reminding the taxpayers that their efforts are adding to the richness and accuracy of the images in television and classroom documentaries which in many cases are the history teachers of today.

There is a constituency out there, ready to fight to preserve our media heritage if it can be shown that the cause is "...promoting broad public availability..." (Twentieth Century Music Corporation vs. Aiken, 1975).

Sincerely,


Bonnie G. Rowan