Finding Aid for the LACMTA Transit Videos Collection

Finding aid prepared by Patrick A. Stawski, revised by Noah Geraci.
Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Library and Archives
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URL: http://www.metro.net/about/library/
Contributing Institution: Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority Library and Archives
Title: LACMTA transit video collection
Identifier/Call Number: 05-DPGTL
Physical Description: 81 linear feet, 27 shelves
Date (inclusive): 1979 - present
Abstract: The LACMTA Transit Video Collection contains over 700 items in video format from the 1970s forward, including staff training videos, public service announcements, and television news clips.
Physical Location: LACMTA Research Library and Archive
Language of Material: English, Spanish
Conditions Governing Access
Open for research. Digitized copies of some materials from this collection available via YouTube. Advance notice required for physical access to collection. Contact LACMTA Research Library and Archive to make an appointment.
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], LACMTA transit videos collection, 05-DPGTL. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Agency Research Library and Archive.
Acquisition Information
The Transit Video Collection was started by the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) and has continued to grow through the years. Copies of in-house productions are transferred from the Public Relations Department to the archive. Copies of non-MTA productions are provided by production companies to the archive.
Processing Information
Processed by Patrick A. Stawski, 2006; revisions by Noah Geraci, 2016.
Custodial History
Items in this collection have been in the continuous custody of the transit agency library and/or archive.
Biographical / Historical
The videos held in this collection were produced and/or collected by the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and its predecessor agencies. The scope and content note provides more detail regarding the context of creation of these videos, which agency departments were involved, and out of which functions and activities they were produced.
Scope and Contents
The Transit Video Collection contains over 700 items in video format from the 1970s forward. Items originated in a variety of video formats: VHS, Betamax, 3/4 inch U-matic, and other commercial-grade video formats. The majority of the collection has been reformatted to DVD. Transit agencies represented in the collection include the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD), the Los Angeles County Transportation Commission (LACTC), and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (LACMTA). The majority of the collection was produced, shot, and edited by agency departments. In addition, some work was contracted out.
Items in the Transit Video collection can be grouped into three distinct logical series based upon the function or activity that generated them:

- **Communications**: Much of the material was shot during the course of public relations or publicity functions that were the responsibility of the Communications, Press Relations, or Media Relations departments. Typically, these items include footage of ceremonies, milestone dates, accomplishments, speeches, panels, conferences, and other public events that document the agency's activities. Some items are of an advertising and/or public awareness nature and amount to full-blown programs, such as ad campaigns for the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics. In this vein, there is a significant body of anti-graffiti programming documenting graffiti on Los Angeles buses in the 1980s and 1990s. Still other items are simply b-roll for broadcasters, i.e., images of a train or bus going by while the newscaster is doing a voiceover. Finally, some items contain overhead footage of rail rights of way for insurance purposes.
• **Training**: Some material was meant for employee training and orientation. This material covers safety, operations, equipment, diversity, sexual harassment, and other human resource issues, and thus are primarily the product of the Human Resources Department.

• **Private Production**: The transportation agencies have also collected non-agency material such as local news clips that feature agency equipment or operations, or is transit-related in some way. Radio TV Reports Inc. provided many of the news clips.

**Arrangement**
Items are arranged by a control number assigned by the library and archive. A complete listing of holdings is available from the archive.

**Subjects and Indexing Terms**
Local Transit -- California -- Los Angeles County
Advertising -- California -- Los Angeles County -- Videotape cassettes
Public Relations -- California -- Los Angeles County -- Videotape cassettes
Occupational training -- California -- Los Angeles County -- Videotape cassettes