

Austin Hoyt was a producer, writer and director for WGBH Boston.



Austin Hoyt was a Producer and Executive Producer at WGBH Boston from March 1965 to March 2003 when he founded his own company, Austin Hoyt Productions, Inc.

"The Great Famine", a one hour film that aired on April 11, 2011, is the story of the work of the American Relief Administration (ARA) to combat starvation in the new Soviet Russia from 1921-23. It focuses on two ARA volunteers and the obstacles they overcame: a dilapidated Russian transportation system, obstructionism by the Bolshevik government, unforgiving weather, and the emotional hurdles of dealing with dying children. In the background are the distrust and the political agendas of an ardent anti-communist, the ARA's director Herbert Hoover, and the leader of Russia's new regime, Vladimir Lenin. It is also the story of how two countries overcame their ideological barriers to cooperate on a vitally important project.

"George H. W. Bush," a 3.5 hour biography of the 41st President, aired on *American Experience* May 5th and 6th, 2008 launching more than 20 hours of Presidential portraits in a major PBS initiative for the 2008 elections.

"Victory in the Pacific," Hoyt's two-hour film on the final year of the war in the Pacific, aired on *American Experience* May 2, 2005. It was nominated in 2006 for three Emmy Awards: Outstanding Historical Programming - Long Form, Outstanding Achievement in Writing, and Outstanding Achievement in Research. The US Department of State sponsored Hoyt and this film on a tour of the United Kingdom.

"City of the Century," three 90 minute episodes on the history of 19th century Chicago, aired on *American Experience* in January 2003.

American Experience was awarded a Prime Time Emmy in 1999 for his four-hour biography of Douglas MacArthur.

Hoyt won a Peabody Award for his contributions to *American Experience*'s special series of Presidential portraits - biographies of Ronald Reagan (1998) and Dwight Eisenhower (1993). The National Endowment for the Humanities selected "Ike" for a film festival held in

April 2005 at the National Archives celebrating its 40th anniversary. Hoyt was one of two speakers at the event.

"The Richest Man in the World: Andrew Carnegie" (1997), his *American Experience* two-hour special, received the Eric Barnouw Award from the Organization of American Historians.

Other credits include Executive Producer for WGBH for two co-productions with Brook Associates, London, "The Churchills" (1997, 2003) and "The Windsors: A Royal Family" (1994, 2002) and a co-production with Thames Television for the six hour series, "Korea: The Unknown War" (1990).

Hoyt produced and wrote two hours of the 13-part series War and Peace in the Nuclear Age (1989): "The Education of Robert McNamara" and "Carter's New World."

He was executive producer of the three-part series Mexico (1988) which examined Mexican politics since its revolution. He produced and wrote the second hour, "From Boom to Bust."

In 1985 Frontline aired a four-part Special Report "Crisis in Central America" which won a Peabody Award. Hoyt was executive producer and produced and wrote part four, "Battle for El Salvador."

His examination of one of Ronald Reagan's presidential initiatives aired in 1983 as "Reagan's New Federalism: Shift or Shaft?"

He produced and wrote two films in the 1983 13 part series Vietnam: A Television History: "LBJ Goes to War (1964-1965)," for which he won both an Emmy and a Writer's Guild of America Award, and "Tet, 1968." ABC selected "LBJ" to air on Ted Koppel's Nightline.

He produced and wrote "Wildcatter," the premiere program of the business series Enterprise (1981).

Hoyt launched Ben Wattenberg on his television career in 1976 with In Search of the Real America: A Challenge to the Chorus of Failure and Guilt, a 13 part series affirming American values often disparaged in the late 1960s and early 1970s. He produced the first program "There's No Business Like Big Business" which won the Tuck Award for the Advancement of Economic Understanding. The series showcased the neo-conservative movement, which gained ascendancy when Ronald Reagan was elected President in 1980.

In 1975 Hoyt was executive producer of the children's series ZOOM for which he received an Emmy nomination.

In 1969 he helped format a local debate program as a national series, which became The Advocates, a live courtroom style approach to public policy. He was a producer of The Advocates for five years.

From 1967 - 69 he was WGBH's producer for PBL, the Public Broadcast Laboratory, funded by the Ford Foundation to demonstrate the possibilities of public television. His credits included "Ronald Reagan at Yale" (1967); an introduction to Harold Pinter's "The Dwarfs" (1968); and in 1969 "Multiply and Subdue the Earth," an examination of Ian McHarg's ecological approach to land use planning. "Multiply and Subdue" was in wide distribution on the first Earth Day a year later when the environmental movement was launched.

1967 he won the UPI Tom Phillip's Award for "LSD: Lettvin vs. Leary" in which MIT professor Jerome Lettvin challenged the high priest of LSD, Timothy Leary. It aired on NET Journal.

In 1966 Hoyt was a reporter for The News at Ten, WGBH Boston's first local news program.

He began his career in journalism as a general assignment reporter for the Niagara Falls Gazette in 1963 and worked as a stringer for TIME's Boston bureau from 1965 to 1967.

Hoyt, Yale '59, served on the board of directors of the Yale Alumni Magazine in the early 1980s and on an advisory board to the USIA in 1984-85, during the Reagan administration.

In 1962 he organized a six-week 620 mile descent of the Back River across the Canadian barren lands to the Arctic Ocean, in two canoes, the first since the Royal Navy and the Hudson's Bay Company in the mid 19th C. Hoyt's account of the trip was published in Sports Illustrated in 1963. His log, "On to the Polar Sea," is in the Stephenson Collection in the Baker Library at Dartmouth College.