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Highlights of Pacifica Radio's 50 Year History of Radio Broadcasting



- 1946 Lewis Hill moves from Washington DC to the San Francisco Bay Area and begins work toward creating a radio station dedicated to a "pacific world in our time."
- 1949 Pacifica first goes on the air April 15 as KPFA-FM in Berkeley CA.
- 1950 Opponents to the Korean war are among the many minority viewpoints given freedom of speech on Pacifica during the McCarthy era.
- 1951 Pacifica receives the first major foundation grant (Ford Foundation) for the support of a non-commercial radio broadcast operation.
- 1953 Philosopher/author Alan Watts begins a regular program on KPFA that continues until his death in 1973.
- 1954 An on-the-air discussion promotion of marijuana use results in the California Attorney General impounding the program tape.
- 1955 Poets Allen Ginsberg and Lawrence Ferlinghetti bring the Beat Generation to the airwaves. A few years later the FCC questions Pacifica's broadcast of some of their works as "vulgar, obscene and in bad taste."
- 1956 Pacifica wins its first broadcast awards for a program on the First Amendment by Alexander Meiklejohn and a children's series of *Robin Hood* by Chuck Levy and Virginia Maynard.
- 1957 Pacifica/KPFA wins its first George Foster Peabody Award for "distinguished service and meritorious public service" for programming that takes strong issue with McCarthyism.

