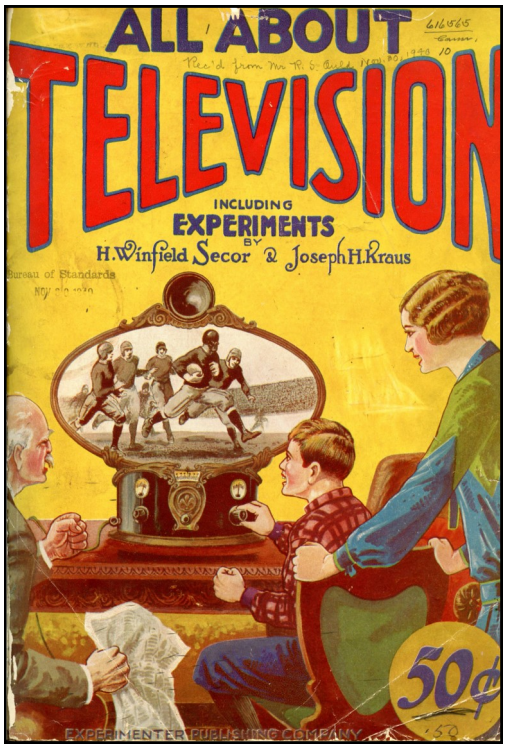
National Capital Radio & Television Museum

Artifact of the Week:

All About Television:
A 1927 Magazine



During the 1920s experiments to develop a workable television system were underway in several countries. The public began clamoring for news of this exciting new technology. This week's artifact is a special 112-page magazine called *All About Television*, published in 1927 by the Experimenter Publishing Company in New York. The cover is an artist's conception of what a future television set might look like.

Hugo Gernsback, the founder of the Experimenter Publishing Company, was known as an early promoter of science fiction, but his company created popular magazines such as *Science and Invention* and the widely-read *Radio News.* Gernsback enthusiastically and correctly predicted that radio and television would change society and that electronics had the potential to affect many different aspects of life.

In his preface to this publication, Gernsback predicted today's smart phones: "The day will probably come when television attachments will be placed upon every telephone, and whereby it will be possible to see your friend or your business acquaintance, no matter how far away he is from you." He also anticipated the ascendancy of electronic television: "This [mechanical scanning disc TV] is not the final solution of television. The final device will have no cumbersome moving apparatus, but will be greatly simplified."

This 50-cent magazine (about $7.50 in today's dollars) was sold at newsstands everywhere. Its articles described research progress at U.S. laboratories and beyond, e.g., John Logie Baird's work in England. At the time, most researchers were working on mechanical scanning disc television, so articles emphasized that approach. All are extensively illustrated with photos and diagrams. Surprisingly, the magazine contains relatively few ads. For anyone trying to understand television's state of the art in 1927, this publication is invaluable.

The Museum's extensive library contains thousands of books and magazines. They are available to serious researchers by appointment. The collections are described on our website (https://ncrtv.org/collections-2/).

We appreciate your support of the museum so that historical artifacts like this one, and the stories that go with them, can be preserved for future generations. THANKS!