

# How the Flying Circus Got To America

- 1970 Time-Life Films
  - Time-Life films, which had the broadcasting rights for Python in America, decided that British comedy wouldn't work in America and wasn't worth the cost of converting the material from the European PAL to American NTSC video formats.
- 1970 Canadian Broadcasting Corp
  - CBC broadcast series 1 in 1970, then took it off the air
  - In response to protests in Montreal, they put it back on the air until 1975
- Summer 1974
  - BBC prepares to wipe the Python BBC tapes
  - Standard practice in the Light Entertainment division to save tape
  - Ron Devillier, station manager for Dallas PBS station KERA, asks to view the Python tapes despite BBC telling him that he probably wouldn't like them
  - Devillier loves the tapes and organizes 11 other PBS stations to put in enough money
  - The Pythons run on PBS from 1975-1980

# How the Pythons Got the BBC Masters

- 1975 ABC-BBC deal
  - ABC bought the rights to season 4 from the BBC
    - They chopped Season 4 up into two 90-minute specials, inserting commercials into the programming
- Using Terry Gilliam's US citizenship for standing, the Pythons sued the BBC for breach of contract.
  - The Pythons had a clause in their contract that gave them editorial control.
  - The Pythons won the case, but too late to prevent ABC from broadcasting their chopped-up versions
  - Instead of a million-dollar cash settlement, the Pythons asked for rights to the BBC masters
  - BBC granted the Pythons the rights to the Flying Circus masters anywhere in the world, except the U.K., where it retained the broadcasting rights.
    - BBC executives did not think the rest of the world would be interested in the Pythons
    - They were wrong