

# CLIPS



AN INTERNATIONAL COALITION FOR AUDIOVISUALS  
FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY

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## DESIGNING A LEGAL FRAMEWORK



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...on the efforts being made to develop policies and legislation for democratic media around the world: Bolivia, Canada, the Netherlands, Kenya, Singapore and the United States.

PLUS

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## GETTING THERE AND STAYING THERE OR BUILDING A REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY MEDIA IN THE NETHERLANDS

Many game theorists would probably agree with me that a game can hardly exist without rules. One of the most important lessons OLON had to learn in order to achieve its

goals was that in order to get a regulatory framework for community media it was important to adapt to the rules of the lawmaking game. OLON, the Dutch federation of local radio and television organisations, represents almost 400 local community stations nation wide. In February 1982, OLON published its first policy document promoting the establishment of independent local radio and television organisations. The policy paper presented a solid financial position and even demanded radio FM-frequencies. (Frequencies for television are not a high priority in the Netherlands since almost 90% of the population is connected to cable television and cable distribution has been guaranteed by a "must-carry" rule in the *Media Act*.) Today, almost fifteen years later, most of these goals have been achieved. The *Media Act* gives a right to public funding and FM-frequencies are now available. Getting those frequencies took approximately ten years of political lobbying, and public funding was put into law last December but still awaits final approval by the Dutch Senate. How did we get there?

Here are some of the keys aspects to take into account:

1. Study the rules of the political game and learn the tricks. To some extent adopt a Machiavellian approach by creating alliances with those who might be your political enemies, but who might be helpful in achieving your legitimate goals. Meet members of parliament, lobby groups, etc. Write texts amending regulatory proposals. However, use publicity prudently as it could scare off those who might be most useful to you, such as civil servants who are sympathetic to your ideas.
2. Accept that it will take time. To change a law normally requires years or decades. Whether you like it or not, this is a fact of life. Fight it and you will most certainly fail.

3. Negotiate and try to find a solution that is acceptable for most of the parties involved. Getting fifty percent of what you want means that you are half way there. Flexibility should not be seen as equal to a compromise.
4. Learn to deal with disappointment. Being persistent is the only way to get results.
5. Buy a suit and wear a tie. If the rules of the political game demand that you respect certain conventions in order to be allowed to join the game, comply with those rules. It's not worth fighting them and you will be amazed by the results.

Should we as OLON be proud of our results? Yes and no. Getting there is just the first part of the game. Staying there, "je persiste et signe", is even more important. Parties involved are already claiming the local FM-frequencies for commercial broadcast and are challenging the not yet implemented rules on public financing. One of our new objectives involves extending the existing "must-carry" rules for community radio and television broadcasts on cable-net-



works to the electronic highway by creating a technology independent access right to the telecommunications infrastructure. Will we succeed? It might take another decade.... ●

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Founded in 1990, it brings together people from the world of independent and alternative video and television from every continent. Together, its members act to promote the democratic practice of communication. They aim to broaden the participation of communities and movements from the South and the North in sound and image production. The Coalition acts through the creation of fora for debate and exchange amongst the many diverse participants in this broad movement for alternative messaging.

## EDITORIAL

**T**hough the task is daunting, building a legal framework for democratic media is very much on the minds of many groups and individuals working in the field of communications today. As this issue of *Clips* illustrates, even though many of the solutions to this complex problem have yet to be found, the subject is generating enormous interest, discussion and debate. Communications have evolved so fast in the last two decades that an understanding of their power and potential has only now become common knowledge. And, since communications have been the almost exclusive domain of the State or of commercial interests around the world, the questioning and rethinking of what has always been imposed or taken for granted is really just beginning.

Several articles illustrate well the areas that need to be considered. K.S. Venkateswaran comments in his article that there is very little legal protection for freedom of expression as existing international standards are too vague to be enforceable. Since finding a universal solution is not likely, drawing up regional standards which incorporate region-specific factors may help to keep many governments on a shorter leash. In a similar vein and in order to help develop a more independent and pluralistic media, AMIC's work on Asian Media Laws and Regulations and the Commonwealth Media Laws Project are both trying to demystify the laws in many countries so that more information on the media and its legal framework is readily available to journalists and media practitioners.

As freedom of expression is one of the cornerstones of democracy, legislation to better protect it is an imperative. However, an equally important aspect is the access to the means of that expression. In his double article on the new US telecommunications law, Robert McChesney emphasises how one of the roots of the problem comes from the historically almost unquestioned assumptions that the public interest can be taken care of by the private sector and that commercial broadcasting is inherently democratic. In what is commonly considered to be the most democratic country in the world, this legislation was treated as a business decision having nothing to do with public policy and was passed without any public debate and includes no provisions for public participation.

Inside this issue, you will also find an international cross-section of ideas and concrete actions that together point the way towards a new global media system and its legal framework at the local, national and international levels. Marc Raboy comments that to remain truly responsive to public needs, the efforts have to be made simultaneously at all those levels because each has an important role to play. His article gives even more importance to the caution expressed by Hye Jung Park that it isn't enough to limit oneself to media activism as the global media forces at work can easily undermine years of local accomplishments.

A few other examples of what is being done include: the World Commission on Culture and Development's report which among many of its recommendations suggests that maybe the time has come to put a tax on the global commons to help finance a plural media system; there's a Declaration written at a conference in Kenya proposing a broad regional Action Plan in defence of community media; and, there's even an opening in the ITU for NGOs to attend to. Humberto Mancilla's article provides a refreshing look at how simple legislative changes can open up new horizons and bring about surprising results, and, as Nico van Eijk describes in detail, building a legal framework for democratic media is a battle that can be won. It just takes time...

*Sylvia Roy, Editor*

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## FREERING EXPRESSION

**F**ew areas of lawmaking have proved more intractable in liberal democracies than that relating to the mass media. The reasons are obvious. The task involves balancing two vital, but often conflicting, interests: the right, on the one hand, of individuals and groups to express themselves without hindrance and to receive information, and the legitimate expectation, on the other, of society that such a right shall not be misused or abused to the detriment of others.

Since the balancing act requires an evaluation of several factors, some of which may be peculiar to a country or region, no universal prescription can be laid down. Most international standards on the subject, e.g. the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are therefore usually couched in vague, general terms. Typically, they state that everyone shall have the right to freedom of expression, but that this right may be restricted in the interests of national security, public order, public health or morals, protection of the reputation of others, protection of state secrets and maintenance of the authority and dignity of the courts. Each country is left free to draw up more elaborate laws taking into account local factors.

Such an approach has, in recent years, been seen to be insufficiently protective of free speech because it allows authoritarian governments too much leeway to stifle dissent through an over-expansive interpretation of phrases such as "national security" or "public order". An alternative or complementary approach which has been mooted is to prescribe more tightly-drawn standards on a regional (or sub-regional) basis which, while meeting the genuine concerns about the need to take into account country or region specific factors, would put governments on a shorter leash. It would also, it is argued, make for easier enforcement, given the smaller geographic spread of the system. This philosophy has informed the creation of the European Convention on Human Rights (1950), the Inter-American Convention on Human Rights (1969) and the African Charter of Human and People's Rights (1981).

By a curious irony, Asia, the most populous region of the world, does not have any such mechanism for the protection of human rights — a lacuna which has often been noticed but about which precious little has been done so far. Asia has been of particular interest to free speech monitors who have expressed concern over the wide-ranging and increasingly stringent curbs imposed on freedom of expression by several regimes in the region. Recognising the need for some action to fill this gap, even

if only on a sub-regional basis, the South Asia Media Association, a non-governmental organisation, initiated a project in October 1994 which attempts to bring forth a draft law guaranteeing freedom of the press and other media in the seven countries of the region (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives). The aim of the project is rather modest. Its organisers attempt to do no more initially than to identify the basic liberal elements of existing national legislation on freedom of expression in those seven countries and to build the proposed draft law around those elements. They believe that this would serve as a possible check on governments in the region from introducing new legal measures that may be more restrictive of free speech than is currently the case.

The project is being supported by the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC) which is especially qualified to advise on the subject. For nearly a decade now, AMIC has been carrying out research into media laws and regulations in several Asian jurisdictions, and has either published or is in the process of publishing comprehensive studies on at least five of the seven South Asian countries covered by the project. AMIC's research paints a mixed picture. While the mass media, especially the press, has enjoyed considerable freedom from overt censorship in most South Asian countries, the region is not without its share of repressive laws. More worryingly, even where the laws themselves are couched in relatively harmless terms, their application by governments has been far from protective of free speech. This yawning chasm between precept and practice, coupled with an unacceptably high level of political control on the electronic media in almost all the countries surveyed, present a formidable challenge to reformers.

The success of any supra-national system of human rights protection is, by the nature of things, limited. It is dependent, crucially, on the degree of political will which individual governments within the system bring to bear on obeying what, at the end of the day, are unenforceable rules. It is to be hoped that the South Asian initiative on freedom of expression does not flounder on the rocks of political intransigence. ●

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## Explaining Asian Media Laws

**A**t a seminar organized by the Asian Mass Communication Research and Information Centre (AMIC) on Media Laws and Regulations in Asia, participants from 10 countries urged AMIC to take the initiative in publishing country-specific monographs on media laws. Making available the texts of existing legislation and increasing the understanding of those laws and regulations were considered to be the prerequisites for the development of independent and pluralistic media. At present, country compilations of mass media laws and related documents either do not yet exist, or if they do, they are too voluminous. They are also mostly comprehensible only to those with legal training. There is a great need, therefore, for books written in a less technical style and language to fill the needs of media practitioners, policy makers, planners, scholars, students and businessmen dealing with communication.

The long term objectives are to aid in the development of independent and pluralistic media by making freely available the laws and regulations governing the establishment and operation of media institutions, to foster media development by creating an awareness of regulations among media practitioners, and to strengthen media education by enabling institutions of mass communication to provide students with a sound knowledge of the legal parameters within which the country's media operate. This project is designed to fill this lacuna for the following 9 countries: Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. The project has been supported by The Asia Foundation and UNESCO's IPDC.

AMIC, established in 1971, has been at the forefront of publication and documentation activities in the region. Today, its programs cover such complementary activities as research, seminars, workshops and a press development program for small newspapers. AMIC has a diversified membership base, honorary representatives and committee members in most Asian countries and Australia. ●

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## South America

### BOLIVIA

## POPULAR PARTICIPATION

In Bolivia, State intervention having been reduced to a bare minimum, private enterprise has taken over many activities which were previously subject to regulation. Consequently, private television has undergone a tremendous boom since 1985, and strong feelings of regionalism and general boredom with State media have contributed to its success. Though legislation for private television exists in the 1971 Decree-Law 9740, no legal principles have been put forth to obstruct the increasing liberalisation of audiovisual communications. According to information from the former Department of Telecommunications, of the 127 television channels which have been identified, 13 are operating without a licence, 27 have undertaken procedures to obtain their licences, and 51 are clandestine. This chaotic situation is the direct result of the export-oriented New Economic Policy taken by the Bolivian State.

Passed in 1995, the new Telecommunications Law has been criticized because it violates communications privacy and promotes monopolies. This directly contradicts the principle of television as a means to serve public, democratic, trade-union, and community interests. This law even provides a new legal framework intended to attract monopolistic transnational companies, whose franchises can now be extended from 15 to 40 years. Ironically, in this era of media democratization, the supreme decrees from former de facto governments provide greater security than the retrograde laws passed by recent democratic and constitutional governments.

Despite this adverse situation, there is room for audiovisual creation. Law 1302, which regulates film, was passed in 1991. By 1995 cinema had come back to life and five Bolivian films appeared on the country's screens. This was in large part due to the institutional status granted to a new executive body, the Bolivian National Film Board (CONACINE).

The Popular Participation Law which covers 42% of the country's rural population enables municipal governments to broaden the scope of their work by using national economic resources

to democratize communication. Contrary to structural adjustment legislation, this legal tool has strengthened the productive capabilities of peasant organizations, allowing the latter to develop and recover their capacity to manage their own territories. Several rural municipalities have responded to audiovisual communication needs by setting up or even running community television channels. One such initiative has just begun in the Iluanuni mining centre. People are presently attempting to carry out social and political development in rural areas, and peasant communities are collectively taking part in the production of educational videos. The participation of the peasant community in the province of Tomina was vital to the production of an environmental video, as it was to the production of the videos made in the Guaraya and Izozog territories.

Another step toward consolidating our audiovisual rights was taken at the end of 1995, when the Executive Branch of the government presented the Convenio de Integración Cinematográfica Iberoamericana with the documents accrediting Bolivia as a full member. The Convention's goal is to bring together the audiovisual worlds of Latin America and Europe.

Finally, 1996 represents a turning point for Bolivia. Our country has been chosen to host the Fifth Inter-American Indigenous Peoples' Film and Video Festival which will provide an opportunity to reaffirm the specific identities of indigenous peoples and their right to communicate. It will also enable us to continue on our present path: that of popular participation in the democratization of audiovisual communication. ●

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## KENYA BUILDING COMMUNITY MEDIA

A workshop on Community Media in Eastern and Southern Africa, held in Nairobi, Kenya last November, brought together a wide range of media practitioners and development-oriented NGO workers from 18 different countries. In order to promote the opening up of the airwaves and to formulate strategies for raising awareness about community media as key agents for development and social change, workshop delegates identified what the needs were and agreed to a regional action plan. The Nairobi Declaration was also drawn up and a new organisation called the Kenya Community Media Network (KCOMNET) was formed.

For community media to develop, several requirements were singled out by the participants: a comprehensive and conducive legislative and policy environment to ensure community radio stations are licensed and allowed to operate unhindered; an awareness about and for media and development; media research using a participatory methodology; training to develop skills and resources for community media; funding from both traditional and alternatives sources; international support for community media in the region; and appropriate, adaptable and affordable equipment which draws on and strengthens African technological development.

The Action Plan addressed each of these requirements including training, fundraising, networking and raising awareness. The following two areas focused on the need for legislative change.

- Support for national lobbying initiatives:
  - as the broadcasting sector in some countries in the region is still monopolized by the state, the aim is to lobby for changes in any legislation either specifically or implicitly disallowing independent broadcasting, whether commercial or community in nature
  - as a variety of state policies on regulatory bodies for the broadcasting sector, on frequency allocation, on import taxes on relevant equipment, etc. can work to impede independent broadcasting, the aim is also to lobby for changes in these policies
  - as the lobbying processes will be non-confrontational, the starting point will be to convene national networks of stakeholders which will in-

clude media practitioners, those wishing to begin independent broadcasting initiatives, state representatives, opposition representatives, representatives of civil society, NGOs working in media for development, etc.

- the national networks will determine and present alternatives to the broadcasting sector models in their countries, identifying relevant legislation and policies which currently impede the growth of independent broadcasters
- the national networks will be present during any relevant discussions to ensure the continual promotion of independent broadcasting, and specifically, of community broadcasting
- the research and lobbying will be initiated and occur primarily but not exclusively at the national level. The national networks will be able to draw on the sub-regional network, continental and international organizations for support.

#### Research:

- into the specific legislative and policy environment of countries in the sub-region where independent broadcasting has yet to be developed so as to present alternative broadcasting sector models

- into potential sources and costs of necessary technology and equipment, including maintenance costs and means of cost-sharing at a sub-regional level, with the goal of promoting and utilizing local technologies whenever possible
- into participatory methodology for media which will draw on and utilize local and traditional knowledge systems
- into participatory audience research methods
- to document and disseminate sub-regional and continental experiences in community media.

The following organisations will share the responsibilities of implementing the Action Plan: EcoNews Africa (Kenya), PANOS Institute (Senegal), Inter Presse Service (Zimbabwe), Media Institute of Southern Africa (Namibia), National Community Radio Forum (South Africa), World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (East and Southern Africa and Europe), African Council for Communication Education (Continental Body and Kenya Chapter). ●

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# The 1996 Telecommunications Act

## A LOOK AT THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

**T**he new telecommunications legislation addresses the digital revolution in communications technology which has blurred the distinctions between old industries such as telephone and cable, and led to the creation of

entirely new industries like on-line computer services. Since this bill will shape what the New York Times calls "the \$700 billion data highway," it may well be the most important piece of communications legislation since the Federal Communications

Act of 1934, and it is probably one of the most important laws passed by Congress in decades. You might think, therefore, that this legislation would have been carefully debated during lengthy hearings in which public interest groups were represented. But the brief hearings on the bill were dominated by business lobbyists, who actually wrote whole sections of the Senate measure behind the scenes. Organized consumer groups who never challenged the corporate control of communications but merely wanted certain regulations retained were shut out of the process entirely. As Brad Stillman, a representative for the Consumer Federation of America, put it: "If you look at this legislation, there is something for absolutely everybody— except the consumer."

### On February 1, President Clinton signed the Telecommunications Act of 1996 into law.

**T**he law was passed overwhelmingly with bipartisan support by both the House and the Senate. According to the law's supporters, the law resulted from years of hard study and it will eliminate regulation, open markets, introduce competition, lower prices, expand options, spur economic growth, and create scads of big paying jobs. The Telecommunications Act is going to unlock the digital revolution and carry us on the information highway to Shangri-la. These claims are a combination of half-truths and outright lies. The 1996 Telecommunications Act is one of the most corrupt pieces of legislation in U.S. history, and it will have disastrous consequences for us for a very long time.

The biggest lie of all is that this law will create competitive markets. It is true that the law deregulates telephone and cable service to permit these firms to compete in each other's markets. It will also loosen most of the regulations concerning broadcasting. As a result of the new law, most of the big communication firms will get much larger and much more profitable. Expect to see new mergers between telecom, media and computer companies. We got our first taste of what is to come from the wave of 1995 mergers topped by the Disney-Capital Cities deal. And the firms that lose out will hardly go out of business; they simply become junior partners in another round of mergers and acquisitions. It is a no-lose situation. Sure, in the midst of a technological revolution, a few new firms will become giants by developing new products and services. And several other start-up firms will make vast fortunes, but almost always by establishing a niche and then selling out to one of the six to twelve mega-corporations that will soon come to dominate global communication.

But what about the public? Didn't the people want this legislation? Hardly. This bill was prepared in nearly complete secrecy. It was a bill written by big business, for big business. The only debate concerned whether the cable companies, or the Baby Bells, or the long-distance carriers would get the most breaks in the final version of the law. A few crumbs were tossed to "special interest" groups like schools and hospitals, but only when they didn't interfere with the pro-business thrust of the legislation. But isn't it only fair to let the private sector profit from communication? After all, aren't they the ones who take all the risks and pay the bills? Hardly. Most of the new communication technologies (satellites, the Internet) came directly out of taxpayer-subsidized military research. The public has effectively subsidized the creation of much of the communication revolution, yet all the profits will go to the private sector. It is a rip-off, pure and simple.

The alternative course for the creation of a new communication regime would have been to hold heavily publicized public hearings across the nation and to commission studies by people not on the payroll or under the influence of the huge communication firms. Then, after those hearings had set out what public goals society has for communication in the digital era, various alternative laws and communication systems could have been drafted that best achieve those goals. Congress and the public would have debated the alternatives and then Congress would have voted on the matter. That approach is called democracy. It has nothing to do with the travesty connected to the Telecommunication Act of 1996. ●

Communications policy making has been largely impervious to public influence since the passage of the 1934 Federal Communications Act, which ensured that private corporations would dominate American telecommunications. Supporters of the 1934 law insisted that the public interest could best be served by companies primarily interested in making a profit. But by relegating noncommercial broadcasters to the margins of the U.S. airwaves, the legislation of 1934 seriously distorted America's media and tragically affected the quality of our political culture. Today, however, spectacular new technologies hold the promise of revitalizing communications in the United States. Perhaps the most dramatic development has been the rise of the Internet and on-line computer services. The Internet has permitted mass interactive communication and has given millions of users relatively cheap access to information at lightning speed. Undoubtedly, much of the hype surrounding the information superhighway is just that—hype. Nevertheless, a democratically designed communications network, one that attempted to make a wide variety of information available to the largest number of citizens, could have an enormous and positive impact on politics, education and culture. A revitalized public debate concerning how best to establish a viable communications system in the public interest is long overdue. If this is an issue unworthy of public participation, then one must wonder what the purpose of democracy is. But the debate in Congress over the future of telecommunications policy has disregarded issues of democracy and fairness. Lawmakers have focused instead on gutting regulations that impede the profitability of companies seeking to develop new communications technologies. And so, the current legislative

BASED ON AN ARTICLE WRITTEN FOR THE PROGRESSIVE MEDIA PROJECT, FEBRUARY 4TH, 1996. WRITTEN BY ROBERT W. MCCHESENEY.



process has been guided by the same assumptions that led to the disastrous Communications Act of 1934: namely, that competition among corporations in the marketplace will provide the most efficient and democratic communications system. The tightening oligarchy of telecommunications companies that arose in the wake of the 1934 law shows how misguided that assumption was. And there is no reason to believe that a new law based on the same logic will be any more viable as a guide to opening up the digital frontier. Consider the history of the Communications Act of 1934, a case study in how the public interest can be sacrificed in badly managed debates over cynically conceived communications law.

The current communications revolution closely parallels that of the 1920's, when the emergence of radio broadcasting forced society to address the same political questions. Radio broadcasting was then radically new, and there was great confusion throughout the '20's concerning who should control this powerful new technology and for what purposes. Much of the impetus for radio broadcasting came first from early ham operators and then

the early advertisements on radio. The reformers maintained that if private interests controlled the medium, no amount of regulation or self-regulation could overcome the profit bias built into the system. Commercial broadcasting, the reformers argued, would downplay controversial and provocative public affairs programming and emphasize whatever fare would sell the most products for advertisers. They looked to Canada and Britain for workable models of public-service broadcasting.

But the reform movement disintegrated after the passage of the Communications Act of 1934, which established the FCC and remains the reigning statute for telecommunications in the United States. The radio lobby with a sophisticated public relations campaign and support from other news media won because it was able to keep most Americans ignorant or confused about communications policy. In addition commercial broadcasters became a force that few politicians wished to antagonize; almost all of the congressional leaders who pushed for broadcast reform in 1931-32 were defeated in the 1932 elections, a lesson not lost on those who replaced them. With the de-

the criticism of the broadcast reformers of the 1930s. Now, with the current communications revolution vastly expanding the number of channels, the scarcity argument has lost its power. Liberals thus find themselves unable to challenge the deregulatory juggernaut. Contemporary public-service advocates would be wise to study the 1930's reformers to find a critique of commercial communication based not on the lack of competition, but on the very workings of the market, regardless of the amount of competition or the number of channels that technology may provide. This is the only type of public-service criticism that can hold any water in the digital era.

Because our society takes it for granted that private corporations rightfully dominate American communication, there has been little discussion questioning whether the information highway should be turned over to for-profit companies. Consequently, the mainstream press, accepting the primacy of corporate control and the profit motive, considers only which firms will dominate the communications revolution, and which firms will fall by the wayside. Politicians may favor one sector over another in the battle to cash in on the information superhighway, but they cannot oppose the cashing-in process, except at the risk of their political careers. In the 1993-94 election cycle, political action committees linked to the telecommunications industry gave almost \$7 million to politicians from both parties, according to figures compiled by the Center for Responsive Politics. The only grounds for political courage in this case would be if there were an informed and mobilized citizenry ready to do battle for alternative policies. Of course, citizens get their information from the corporate news media, which stands to benefit from the pending legislation. That is why telecommunications reform has been covered as a business story, not as a public policy story, and that is why the critical congressional hearings have passed virtually without public notice. In short, this is a debate restricted to those with serious financial stakes in the outcome. ●

## A public debate concerning how best to establish a viable communications system in the public interest is long overdue.

from non-profit and noncommercial groups that immediately grasped the public service potential of the new technology. It was only in the late '20s that capitalists began to sense that, by selling advertising and building national chains of stations, commercial radio could generate substantial profits and they moved quickly. In the wake of a 1926 Supreme Court ruling that revoked all broadcast licenses, Congress hastily drafted a bill creating a new regulatory authority known as the Federal Radio Commission (the predecessor of today's Federal Communications Commission). Through their immense power in Washington, D.C., the commercial broadcasters were able to dominate the Commission so that the scarce number of channels were turned over to them with no public and little Congressional deliberation. As the commercial networks began growing rapidly in the late '20s, a diverse broadcast reform movement attempted to establish a dominant role for the nonprofit and noncommercial sector in U.S. broadcasting. These opponents of commercialism including religious groups, labor unions, educational organizations and women's groups appealed to the public by tapping into the widespread disgust with

feat of the reformers, the industry argument that commercial broadcasting was inherently democratic and American, went unchallenged. In the case of television, Congress and the FCC determined in the 1934 law and in later decisions that a few enormous corporations would control the medium for the purpose of maximizing profits. This decision put the development of television on a path far different from that followed in many European countries, where noncommercial broadcasters have been able to pursue interests beyond profit. The effects of this choice have been ruinous for public debate in America. Today, the idea that private, for-profit broadcasting is synonymous with democracy is an unexamined tenet of our political culture. Since 1934, the only politically acceptable criticism of U.S. broadcasting and, more broadly, American telecommunications has been to assert that it is uncompetitive and therefore needs more aggressive regulation. Liberals have argued that a scarce number of channels mandate aggressive regulation, not that capitalist basis of the industry is fundamentally flawed. This is a far cry from

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## THE COMMONWEALTH MEDIA LAWS PROJECT

Enhancing legal protection for free expression throughout the Commonwealth is the aim of a major project launched by the Commonwealth Association for Education in Journalism and Communication (C.A.E.J.C.). The Commonwealth Media Laws Project stems from the belief that the development of independent mass media is crucial to advancing the process of democratisation now underway in many Commonwealth countries. This

project will contribute to that process.

The first part will consist of a series of essays written by the members of the project's Editorial Committee. These essays will provide a variety of perspectives on the meaning and significance of freedom of expression. The Editorial Committee, which will also generally supervise the project, is a distinguished group of Commonwealth men and

women. It includes Professor Shirani Bandaranayake, Dean of the Faculty of Law, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka; Derek Ingram, Editor, Gemini News Service, London, U.K.; Mr. Justice Michael Kirby of the High Court of Australia; Professor Rex Nettleford, Pro Vice-Chancellor, The University of the West Indies, Jamaica; and George Verghese of the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi, India.

The second part of the project will consist of detailed studies of existing media laws of fourteen Commonwealth countries. The countries to be studied represent the diversity which is characteristic of the Commonwealth. They are: Cameroon, Canada, Ghana, India, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritius, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Sri Lanka, the United Kingdom and Zimbabwe. The country reports will look at issues such as state security and the mass media, reporting on courts and trials, the structure of ownership of the mass media, the law of defamation and questions of the public responsibilities and public accountability of the mass media.

The third part of the project will be its centrepiece. After reviewing all the country reports, the Editorial Committee will draft a model code of media law. It will be presented in such a way that it could be directly adopted as legislation, in whole or in part, by Commonwealth states.

The first meeting of the Editorial Committee will be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia between May 16th and 18th, 1996. The final meeting, for the preparation of the model code of media law, will take place at the Commonwealth Secretariat in London, U.K. in about the middle of 1997.

The C.A.E.J.C. is an organisation of 700 teachers of journalism and mass communication in 35 Commonwealth countries. Founded in 1985, its overall goal is to contribute to the enhancement of journalism training in all parts of the Commonwealth. The project is being funded by the Canadian International Development Agency and the Commonwealth Foundation. ●

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### The changing media map

CNN International is transmitted to more than 210 countries and territories worldwide via a network of twelve satellites. Available in Spanish, Japanese, Russian and Polish, the network has distribution agreements in over 143 countries, representing over 78 million households outside the United States, as well as 66 million households in the U.S. Since 1981, MTV has created over 113,000 hours of programming. MTV and its affiliates, MTV Europe, MTV Brazil, MTV Japan, MTV Asia and MTV Latino, reaches over 250 million homes, in 64 countries, over four continents. Each affiliate adheres to English language programs while drawing from local talent and programming to fit local tastes. With 185 offices in 65 countries, Backer Spielvogel Bates World, Inc. (BSB) is a mega worldwide advertising agency. BSB claims that the implications of globalization for advertising agencies are simple: globalize or die. BSB decided to change its name to Bates Worldwide in 1994 and its companies throughout the world adopted the Bates name followed by the name of the country in which it is located.

The promotion of cultural diversity undertaken by all three of these corporations is an attempt to appropriate the cultural forms that already exist, in order to sell something new. Two contradictory trends can be observed: on the one hand, there is a trend to market mono-culture through the single, homogenizing medium of global television networks and advertisers. On the other hand, there is a unity-in-diversity approach, which attempts to exploit particular and constantly changing regional niche-markets. The unifying drive behind these two global media trends, is the expansion of markets for the multinational corporations, which can afford the costs of buying global advertising time.

However, one of the consequences of these trends has been the creation of a new global image space, which has its own sovereignty, beyond national borders, with a single global time line. Many nations, ethnic or cultural groups have become concerned about losing their territorial, cultural, and economic independence. And, people generally feel confused as to who they are, where they belong because their sense of location in space and time is lost by the changing global media map.

A reaction to this has been the creation of many new speciality channels, made possible in part by new satellite technology. Though these emergent channels generally begin with innovative ideas which express and articulate their unique identities, because they often have to seek corporate sponsorship, they easily become niche-markets and their original goals are put into question. Global corporations are well aware that race, sexual-orientation, and ethnicities are big markets which can be appealed to with advertising.

Globalization is currently benefiting multinational corporations, more than it is increasing the power of individuals and communities to shape their own spaces and destinies. Even though new local, regional, independent channels and programs have been started with much excitement, if a critical look and analysis of world-dominant capitalist ideology is not taken, these audiovisual spaces will be subsumed by the same U.S. corporations. A system must be constructed which confronts the exploitation of multinational corporations. Ultimately, challenging multinational corporate power means participating in the creation of a people's movement beyond media activism. Public needs and technological development must go hand in hand to help create policies guaranteeing participatory communication space. ●

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Report from the World Commission  
on Culture and Development

## Riding the tide or swimming against the current?

*"As a first step, and within a market context, the Commission suggests that the time may have come for commercial regional or international satellite radio and television interests which now use the global commons free of charge to contribute to the financing of a more plural media system."*

So says UNESCO's World Commission on Culture and Development in its report entitled *Our Creative Diversity*. Among the several subjects in the Commission's report, one of the ten chapters and two of the ten points in the recommendations for an international action agenda are devoted to the media. The authors of the report hope that its recommendations about the media will, at the very least, spark discussion and debate. The recommendations regarding the media are controversial ones.

Presented to UNESCO last November, the report is the result of two years of work. In addition to its twelve regular members, the Commission included six honorary members, four of whom are Nobel Prize winners. The President of the Commission is former United Nations Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. Its conclusions about the media are certainly worthy of more attention and publicity than they seem to have received thus far. They are of particular interest to those who are working for greater public space in the media, for more voices to be heard both locally and internationally.

**Recognizing Community Media**—The report highlights the need for diversity and the reflection of the local context. It says, "This is where community radio and television come into the picture. Whenever a modicum of funding, political commitment and infrastructure is being made available, community media complement public and commercial broadcasting. They have become an important fora of expression in the last two decades." It goes on to say, "The public media space, as seen through the tradition of media regulation and public service radio and television broadcasting institutions or systems, is well-established in most countries. Alternative educational and community media, whether local newspapers in Malaysia or community broadcasting in Latin America, help fill out this public space." In its recommendations for an international agenda, the Commission takes an even stronger stand: "Independent, appropriately funded public service as well as community broadcasting institutions are essential to the functioning of the media in a democratic society." To those who are working towards legal recognition of a community broadcasting sector within their country's legislative framework, these words should be of some value, coming as they do from such an eminent international source. This moral support could be used within nations to help mobilize the modicum of funding, political commitment and infrastructure that is needed for the blossoming of community media in the many places where it is lacking. The report

clearly states the importance of what it calls public media space as distinguished from private media space, and clearly recognizes the place of community media within the public media space. These are strong words in favour of community media that should be taken advantage of by those working for the creation, maintenance and strengthening of community media.

**Encouraging Diversity**—The Commission's views and recommendations on the media involve a complex interplay between the virtues of competition, diversity, efficiency and equity. There is something here to offend everyone. Those who still believe in state control of the media will not like the emphasis placed on competition. Those who are the international corporate winners of the global media competition game will look with extreme displeasure on talk of equity and diversity. And those who are less endowed with economic resources will see the idea that competition encourages diversity as a cruel joke.

The Commission places a high value on diversity in the media, both within national borders and internationally. It prescribes competition as a way of encouraging diversity. Having done so, it then admits that the market model may not necessarily lead to the public good: The Commission argues that competition is desirable, but that the market model may not itself guarantee competition: "... there is nothing in the nature of laissez-faire that either establishes or maintains competition, but the virtue of markets depends on the existence of competition." Indeed, it recognizes that "... deregulation, or the relaxation of government controls of the operation of markets, which is one of the means used to promote competition, may also promote concentration of ownership." And concentration of ownership may not be compatible with diversity or with the public good. How to have your competition and your diversity too?

**Global Media Regulation?**—The Commission suggests an answer in the form of a question. What about some form of global regulation to promote competition? Taking as its model independent agencies within some nations that oversee telecommunications and broadcasting, the Commission asks "... whether the world should not consider a co-ordinated regulatory approach, a possible international competition policy." It goes on to suggest that, again borrowing from the national model in some countries which is based on a plural media system including private, public and community broadcasters, at the international level a more plural media system may also be desirable from a wide social and cultural perspective. It says, "Can the nationally-accepted role of public and alternative media as equalizers be applied internationally?" Some very specific measures are proposed by which international public and alternative media might be

financed. Just as some national governments have defined the frequency spectrum used for broadcasting within their national territory as public property and therefore have given themselves the right to regulate its use for the public good, the Commission describes the radio frequency spectrum of satellite orbital slots "...as part of the global commons, a collective asset that belongs to all humankind." Those who use the global media commons should be subject to a global obligation in return for the private benefit they obtain. The Commission suggests an international tax on private use of the global commons that could be used to support alternative regional and global services and programming, allowing the creation of a plural international media system based on both private and public media space.

The action recommendations for the international agenda, in addition to the above, call for the adoption of international policies to encourage the kind of competition that they believe will ensure that market activities are consistent with the public interest and to promote access and diversity of expression so that many voices will be heard. The Commission's recommendations reflect the growing interest in some quarters in the idea of global governance as a logical and necessary response to the increasing globalization of economic activity and power and the consequent erosion of effective national sovereignty. They are also likely to deeply annoy some very powerful interests who may be betting that this report will be silently shelved and forgotten, at least insofar as its recommendations about the media are concerned. And they may be right. No one who took part in it has forgotten the international uproar over a decade ago concerning the proposed New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) which arose out of another UNESCO commissioned report popularly known as the MacBride Report. The NWICO proposal claimed to redress imbalances in the international media landscape. The battle that raged over it was so fierce that the United States and the United Kingdom withdrew from UNESCO in opposition, taking a significant portion of UNESCO's funding with them. The NWICO proposal was buried and UNESCO survived the crisis. The world is a different place now. The recommendations of the World Commission on Culture and Development are not the same as those of the MacBride Report. It remains to be seen how they will fare. So far, there is surprisingly little being said about them. But there are also many people in today's world working for more democratic media both locally and internationally who, though they may not agree with everything in it, will find something in the report deserving of wider public debate. (For a copy of the report, contact UNESCO.) ●

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## TOWARDS A GLOBAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEMOCRATIC MEDIA

The worldwide development of an increasingly complex and interconnected media system has highlighted the need to begin thinking about a new global framework for media legislation and regulation. At the same time, by underscoring the importance of local media initiatives, it points to the need to maintain and enhance existing national policy frameworks.

How can these two, apparently contradictory, thrusts be brought together in the interest of pursuing democratic goals for media? The key is to recognize the importance of parallel intervention at a multiplicity of levels, in a wide range of fora. Daunting as this may seem, it is the only way to ensure that the orientation of media systems remains responsive to public needs.

**Locally** — Community-based institutions must continue to build independent production and distribution structures, to link up with like-minded organizations in regional and global networks, and maintain a presence in national policy debates. For the foreseeable future, media policy will continue to be made at the national level, and local groups will have to struggle to be heard in these debates. They cannot afford to remain on the sidelines. The stakes include, among others, access to public funding, the extent of contribution of private enterprise-based services to projects conceived and designed for the public good, and recognition of the place of local and community services in national media systems.

**Nationally** — Advocacy groups representing different segments of the population (various constellations of users, cultural communities, interest groups) will have to demand access - and, when they get it, occupy a responsible position - in the overall public policy design of national media systems. Institutional autonomy of media from state and market imperatives needs to be guaranteed constitutionally. Electronic media need to be recognized as a social resource, with consequent policy measures to ensure a public service role for all undertakings, including those of the commercial sector. Established conventional public broadcasting institutions, where they exist, need not only a reiteration of government commitment to financial support, but also to undergo democratization of structures of accountability and participation.

**Internationally** — We need worldwide recognition of the centrality of media for social and cultural development. The recent Report of UNESCO's World Commission on Culture and Development takes a step in this direction, and makes a number of specific proposals worth pursuing. In international fora, diplomatic initiatives should emphasize the importance of socialization and democratization of media in countries where these are subjected to various political and economic tyrannies. Debate on the emerging new global information infrastructure needs to be refocused to emphasize the necessity that the GII assume an unequivocally public character. Specifically, this means launching a debate on the need to create new global regulatory mechanisms for media. A substantial struggle is in the cards on this question, but it is one that will have to be waged.

The international democratic media community needs to lobby for a permanent forum for developing global policy with respect to the emerging new media technologies. Transnational free-enterprise media will need to be countered with global public service media. The structural basis of such institutions is not immediately evident, given that these have traditionally operated exclusively at the national level. Hence, all the more important that such questions be discussed in democratic, multilateral fora. The role of existing global bodies such as UNESCO and the ITU is crucial to this, but these will have to be opened up to include participation by a broader range of actors than the present assortment of member states. New, democratic, institutional forms will need to be developed in order for media to fulfil their potential as the central institutions of an emerging global public sphere.

New credence will have to be given to the idea that the global media environment, from the conventional airwaves to outer space, is a public resource, to be organized, managed and regulated in the global public interest. This implies winning recognition of the legitimacy of public intervention on a global scale. Use of the air is presently limited to those with the political and economic means to access it. Broadening access will require appropriate transnational regulatory mechanisms, as well as mechanisms for a more equitable distribution of

global commercial benefits. There is a need for the international appropriation of some air and space for the distribution outside the country of origin of viable creative products that currently have no access to the new global agora that figures so prominently in utopian discourse on the new information technologies.

The convergence of communication technologies requires a parallel convergence in programs and policies. This is going to require the invention of new models, new concepts and a general new way of thinking about communication. For example, the

notion of "access" has traditionally meant different things in broadcasting and in telecommunication. In the broadcasting model, emphasis is placed on the active receiver, on free choice, and access refers to the entire range of product on offer. In the telecommunication model, emphasis is on the sender, on the capacity to get one's messages out, and access refers to the means of communication. In order for the new media environment to play a meaningful role in democratization, public policy will need to promote a new hybrid model of communication, which combines the social and cultural objectives of both broadcasting and telecommunication, and provides new mechanisms - drawn from both traditional models - aimed at maximizing equitable access to services and the means of communication for both senders and receivers.

The central issue is still who will get to use the full range of local, national and global media to receive and disseminate messages, and on what basis. Resolution of this issue will depend on a different kind of access: to the processes and points of decision-making that will determine the framework in which media are going to develop, that is to say, access to the policy framework of the new global media system. ●

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# Notes



## SEEKING A VOICE FOR NGOS IN THE ITU

In the last issue of *Clips*, Seán Ó Siochráin reflected on the need for a greater voice within global political structures for NGOs working in the field of communications. The article was based on a report entitled, "International Telecommunications Union and Non-Governmental Organisations: The Case for Mutual Cooperation", which was written for Dr. Pekka Tarjanne, Secretary General of the ITU. The report argued that both the ITU and NGOs would benefit from increased mutual cooperation. For NGOs the benefits would include increased influence in the strategic area of telecommunications, ensuring that civil society has its word and that democratic policies and programs are promoted. For the ITU, the benefits would include enriched debate, a heightened profile and more credibility.

The issue of broader participation in the ITU is one that will be decided on by the Plenipotentiary Conference in 1998. However, to get NGO participation on that conference's agenda, it must first go to the ITU Council meeting which will meet in June 1996 to discuss the issue of ITU membership. To encourage the Council to consider the report and its recommendations, it is important for the NGO community, especially international NGOs, to express their support and to request that NGO participation be given serious consideration. To do so, NGOs should send faxes or letters as soon as possible to the following people:

- **Pekka Tarjanne**, Secretary General, Fax: (41 22) 730 5137
- **Don MacLean**, Head, Strategic Planning Unit, Fax: (41 22) 730 6503
- **Ahmed Laouyane**, Head, BDT, Fax: (41 22) 730 5485

Their postal address is:

**ITU, Place des nations, CH-1211, Geneva 20, Switzerland**

For more information contact: **Vidéazimut**.

For a copy of the report contact:

**Seán Ó Siochráin, NEXUS Research Cooperative, 14 Eaton Brae, Shankill Co. Dublin, Republic of Ireland**  
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## VIDÉAZIMUT IN EUROPE

### VIDÉAZIMUT'S EUROPEAN MEMBERS HELD A MEETING LAST JANUARY AND DECIDED TO FORM A GROUP

In order to better participate, strengthen and promote Vidéazimut's work in Europe, Members also agreed to set up a European database and to draft a position paper on the democratisation of audiovisual and multimedia communication. The next meeting will be held in Berlin in early 1997 where the final position paper will be drawn up and the different strategies for implementation will be worked out. For further information contact:

**Olivier Pasquet (See address on page 2) or Jürgen Linke, Director, Offener Kanal Berlin**  
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Tel.: (49 40) 464 0050  
Fax: (49 40) 464 00598



## VIDÉAZIMUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY

São Paulo, Brazil, July 1996.

**THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS OF VIDÉAZIMUT WILL BE HELD IN BRAZIL IN JULY.** Vidéazimut membership has grown substantially in the last two years so the general assembly of members will be an important opportunity for the new and old members to discuss and decide the future directions and activities of the coalition.

Among the topics on the agenda will be the establishment of new priorities for the coming years, regional plans and activities, and the election of the Board of Directors. The assembly is open to friends and allies of Vidéazimut as well as members. Non-members will have a voice but no vote. The assembly will be preceded by the seminar on **Media for Citizenship in the Electronic Age: Community Television and New Technologies**. The dates and location of this gathering have been changed from June in Rio de Janeiro to July near São Paulo. The premier screening the videos selected for the 1996 **VideOlympiads Celebrating Local TV and Video Creation** will take place at the same time. It's all happening at the adult education residential centre of Instituto Cajamar about 45 km. outside São Paulo right under the imaginary line on the global map known as the Tropic of Capricorn. The dates are July 3 to 6.

Please contact the Vidéazimut Secretariat if you would like further information about participating. If you would like to become a member prior to the assembly, the Secretariat will be pleased to assist you.

## ABOUT COMMUNITY RADIO

**INTERADIO IS A MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO COMMUNITY RADIO.** Published bi-annually in English, French and Spanish by the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC), *InterRadio* features news and analysis on issues of concern to those interested in community radio and access to communications. Subscribe to *InterRadio* for information on appropriate technologies, radio and human rights, women in community radio, and of course, news from and about AMARC. The May, 1996 issue will feature a special look at community radio legislation internationally. AMARC is an international, non-governmental organization. It provides a network for exchange and solidarity among community broadcasters and focuses on facilitating cooperation among community radio projects.

For information about AMARC or to subscribe to *InterRadio*, contact:

**AMARC Secretariat:**  
3575, boul. Saint-Laurent, Suite 611  
Montreal (Quebec) H2X 2T7 Canada  
Tel.: (1 514) 982 0351 Fax: (1 514) 849 7129 Internet: [amarc@web.apc.org](mailto:amarc@web.apc.org)  
WWW Home Page: <http://www.web.apc.org/amarc>

## THE NEXT 5 MINUTES

**THE NEXT 5 MINUTES CONFERENCE HELD IN AMSTERDAM AND ROTTERDAM ON JANUARY 21-24, 1996** brought together a mix of political activists, on the edge practitioners and just pure nutters from all over the planet for three days of debate, planning, exhibition and anarchy. In attempting to pitch at a point where art meets politics, access meets excess, activism meets academia and community media meets TV land madness, it managed to hit a nerve.

The structure of the conference took into account the speed of the media. There were two projection spaces which participants could book at very short notice to present papers, screenings or just rant. A videotape and media archive were available for individual research throughout the weekend and all contributed material was stored for posterity at the International Institute of Social History. Interestingly, the conference was aired on local cable TV and radio, so that the events and information were not simply confined to a privileged bunch of activists but were disseminated to the local community. Internet connections were booked all weekend and a twice daily news sheet kept everyone up to date with the latest developments. A good old fashioned bus ran between the venues in the two different cities so that physical as well as virtual presence could be accommodated.


**What was the point of the conference?** To create new ways of using the media, not just simply celebrating the old. To create common agendas and a shared strategy from a diverse range of communities. Subtle changes are taking place in the cultural democratization movement. Terms are shifting from public access to community access. The question is no longer access to whom but access to what. The threats are obvious. As communication infrastructures pass from public to private hands the universal state of TV seems to be the more you watch the less you know. The move from top down to bottom up communication is now further away than ever, despite the great leaps forward in technology. Many to many instead of few to many is the goal and the Internet is the darling of the decentralised community networks. Communication as opposed to broadcast. The N5M conference was the platform for the debate as to whether change can be effected through existing structures or whether new (and sometimes illegal) alternatives should be utilised. **So what was achieved?** The advantage of such gatherings is to energise the participants to tackle seemingly impossible tasks. It counters the isolation that activists feel as they battle away daily against insurmountable odds and dinosaur structures. A new network, PANET, has been set up on the internet ([www.mediafilter.org](http://www.mediafilter.org)) to continue work begun at the conference and disseminate information. The N5M's own web-site ([www.dds.nl/n5m](http://www.dds.nl/n5m)) is still open for feedback and research.

**Write Enda Murray at: 7/17 O'Brien Street, Bondi 2026, N S W, Australia**  
Tel/Fax: (61 2) 365 0571 Email: [enda@lyst.apana.org.au](mailto:enda@lyst.apana.org.au)



# Announcements

## PUBLICATIONS



### COMMUNICATION AND DEMOCRACY : ENSURING PLURALITY

Edited by Brij Tankha

The new communication technologies are rapidly changing the context in which audiovisual communication takes place. They present great challenges and opportunities to people working for democratic communication. Maintaining and widening the public communication space that has been gained so far will require media activists and progressive communicators to seize the initiative. In 1994 Vidéazimut and CENDIT brought together people from around the globe for a symposium in New Delhi on "New Communication Technologies and the Democratization of Audiovisual Communication". This book contains contributions from 19 internationally recognised authorities on the subject who participated in the symposium. Themes include defining the right to communicate, using the new communication technologies, and past experiences and future directions from the point of view of indigenous broadcasters, women's media groups, and people in the so-called developing world, among others. Available from Vidéazimut and CENDIT (see addresses on page 2) or the publisher. Price US\$ 25 (includes shipping and handling), 213 pages, 1996.

Southbound Publishers,  
9 College Square,  
10250 Penang, Malaysia  
Tel.: (60 4) 228 2169  
Fax: (60 4) 228 1758  
Email: chin@south.pc.my

### EDUCATIONAL & HOME-VIDEO MARKETS

Prepared by Leonard Henny and Marjolijn Droog  
This is the third edition of a guide for access to the audiovisual distribution market in Western Europe. The current publication has its focus on a new emerging market: educational and home-video distribution. In this guide the reader will find addresses of organisations which provide an outlet for programs made by video producers in developing countries and in Eastern Europe. The addresses include professional sales agents and video distributors as well as NGOs which hold a video archive or are engaged in active distribution to their constituency.

Price: Ecu 12 plus postage and handling, 160 pages, 1996.  
Third Horizon Foundation,  
Mijndensdijk 74,  
NL-3631 NS Nieuwerwsluis, Holland  
Tel.: (31 29) 43 34 59 Fax: (31 29) 43 18 77  
Email: cimr@antenna.nl

### THE DEMOCRATIZATION OF COMMUNICATION

Edited by Philip Lee - With the entry of the so-called information superhighway into the world of global communications and mass media, certain fundamental questions remain. What kind of information will be available? Who "owns" it or controls access to it? What are the hidden economic and cultural implications? What will happen to the poorest and most marginalized? This book debates these issues, at international and local levels, in theoretical and practical terms, against a background of religious pluralism, human rights abuse, and cultural, linguistic and gender differences. It explores how communications and the mass media might contribute to a more democratic world. 228 pages, 1995.

WACC, 357 Kennington Lane,  
London SE11 5QY, United Kingdom  
Tel: (44 71) 582 9139 Fax: (44 71) 735 0340

### REGARDE COMMENT TU ME REGARDES

Techniques  
d'animation sociale  
en vidéo

Author: Yves  
Langlois

This document answers the need voiced by social animators and video practitioners to define a methodology for using video in social animation. It contains step by step descriptions of approximately twenty video animation techniques. Similarly, it also explains how to produce a film or a video through a method borrowed from the research-action methodology. The experiments described belong to what has come to be known as "process video", a methodology in which the primary objective is not to create a document, but rather to use the video recorder within a group as a tool to enable it to move forward.

Price: 35 Francs, 132 pages, 1995.  
La librairie FPH, 38, rue Saint-Sabin  
75011 Paris, France Tel.: (33 1) 48 06 48 86

### L'ESPACE MÉDIATIQUE

Les communications à l'épreuve de la démocratie

Author: Michel Sénécal

This document recounts the history of the Canadian and Québécois media space (as opposed to the history of the media themselves) or, in other words, the relations between the principal actors who fashioned it: the state, private enterprise and social movements. In examining everything from the very first laws on radio broadcasting to today's deregulation and regulation processes while also taking time to look at such questions as the concentration of media organizations and sources of information, the americanization of the airwaves and defending national identity, this work demonstrates that the logic of the market has little by little dictated its rules to the media which have forgotten their own basic principles. Price: \$25 CDN, 258 pages, 1995.

Édition Liber, C.P. 1475, succursale B,  
Montréal (Québec) Canada H3B 3L2  
Tel.: (1 514) 522 3227 Fax: (1 514) 522 3227

## INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS

### VICEAZIMUT GENERAL ASSEMBLY & INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR

São Paulo, Brazil, July 1996.

See page 11.

### ASIAN COMMUNICATIONS: THE NEXT 25 YEARS

June 1st to 3rd,  
1996, Singapore.

In celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of its founding, AMIC has organised a three-day conference that will examine the convergence of the new

communication technologies and its business implications. The conference is designed to bring together a broad spectrum of professionals, researchers and scholars from various fields of mass communications such as telecommunications, print and broadcast media, advertising and public relations, academe, government and non-government organisations, to discuss trends and prospects in the changing communication environment.

Virgilio S. Labrador,  
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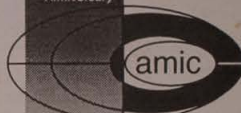
### 8<sup>th</sup> MacBRIDE ROUND TABLE COMMUNICATION AND CULTURE: IDENTITY, PLURALITY AND EQUALITY

August 24th to 27th, 1996, Seoul, South Korea

Communication and culture are two key words that span a broad area of work conducted in various fields of contemporary communications research. These notions often engender very specific issues for academic discourse such as questions of identity, equality, and sovereignty. Topics to be covered at the conference will include: communication and the globalisation of cultural identity; communication in the post-colonial and information society; developments in freedom of expression; World Trade Organisation and balanced international communication flows; etc. Representatives of NGOs active in communication are especially welcome. Ideas and proposals for workshops should be submitted, by May 30th, to:

Seán Ó Siochrá  
NEXUS Research Cooperative,  
14 Eaton Brae,  
Shankill, Co. Dublin,  
Republic of Ireland  
Tel.: (353 1) 282 1003  
Fax: (353 1) 473 0597  
Email: sean@nexus.ie

25<sup>th</sup>  
Anniversary



1971  
TO  
1996

# VIDEAZIMUT CLIPS SPECIAL



A CLIPS SPECIAL EDITION on the  
VIDEAZIMUT INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR and FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
held in Cajamar, Brazil, July 3 to 6, 1996.

Number 11 - October 1996



REGINA FESTA  
President of Videazimut

Regina Festa, a Brazilian, has a Ph. D. in communications and teaches in the Department of Film, Television, and Radio at the University of São Paulo. She was a founding member of Videazimut, of the TV dos Trabalhadores (Workers' TV), and of the Associação Brasileiro de Vídeo Popular (Brazilian Popular Video Association). Her participation in the Movimento Latinoamericano de Vídeo (Latin American Video Movement) began in the 1980s, and more recently she has been active in the Fórum Nacional pela Democratização de Comunicação (National Forum for the Democratization of Communications). She was the communications coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean in the Forum of the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women, and she drafted Chapter J (on communications) for the Conference's final document.

Ms. Festa is a member of the editorial committee of *Media Development*, a magazine published by the World Association for Christian Communication, and of other international communications institutions. She is also an international communications consultant for several European institutions. Moreover, she spent the last semester as a visiting professor in the Department of Communications of the University of California at San Diego.

## VIDEAZIMUT INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR and GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MEMBERS Cajamar, Brazil July 1996

United in their diversity by their vision of a more inclusive and democratic audiovisual landscape, linked by their work in creating media alternatives to challenge the homogenised images of the global media, media activists from Brazil and around the world journeyed to the fifth Videazimut international seminar *Media for Citizenship in the Electronic Age: Community Television and New Technologies*, hosted by Instituto Cajamar, near São Paulo.

Representatives of community TV, media centres, national associations of community video and television, community development organisations, independent producers, and communication analysts talked, listened, watched videos and learned from each other. The opening keynote speech was given by Beth Costa of the Brazilian **National Forum for the Democratization of Communications**. Many participants had a chance to formally present and explain their work, creating an encouraging panorama. Community television was defined broadly as any television alternatives outside of mainstream state and commercial broadcasting. The role of alternative and community television in the formation of a meaningful citizenship from the local to the global level was illustrated, and in some cases, criticised. Other sessions examined national legal and regulatory frameworks to identify the positive elements that could be adopted in other places; the changing regional and global contexts in which we work, the challenges and opportunities raised by new communication technologies, and how women use alternative media to strengthen citizenship. The gathering was a rare opportunity to meet and discuss with participants in the worldwide movement for audiovisual communication for development and democracy. With the formal seminar sessions, informal gatherings, numerous video screenings and even a traditional Brazilian winter bonfire, everyone had time to get to know each other and their work in the tranquillity of a beautiful hilly rural area just under the imaginary line on the map known as the Tropic of Capricorn. Videos collected by the **Third VideOlympiade Celebrating Local TV and Video Creation** were screened, as well as many others brought from around the world.

Some of the organisations present at the seminar were: the **Community Broadcasting Association of Australia**; the **Brazilian Association of Popular Video** and many member groups, the **National Forum for the Democratization of Communications**, the **UNESCO Chair in Communication** and the **Instituto da Mulher Negra** from Brazil; **Ryakuga, SUCO and Channel Zero** (Canada); **Videocombo** (Colombia); **Televisión Serrana** (Cuba); **Zebra Information Network** (Denmark); **Fondation Charles Leopold Mayer pour le progrès de l'homme** and **La Fédération nationale Les vidéos des pays et des quartiers** (France); **Offener Kanal Berlin** and **Evangelisches Missionswerk** (Germany); **Centre for the Development of**

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Photography: Olivier Pasquet

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**Instructional Technology (India); Community Video Network of Ireland; Centro Internazionale CROCEVIA (Italy); Labor News Production (Korea); Media Institute of Southern Africa (Namibia); Al Quds Television Production (Palestine); the Grand Rapids Community Media Center, Downtown Community TV Center and Deep Dish TV (USA); Open Window Network and Centre for Democratic Media (South Africa); Wayang (Thailand); World Association for Christian Communication; and the Group of Eight - Communication Networks of Latin America and the Caribbean.**

The seminar was followed by the first general assembly of Videazimut members. It was an historic and decisive moment for Videazimut as an international coalition. The rapid growth in the membership of the coalition during the last two years both made possible and required that a new generation take part in determining future directions and in actions to implement those directions. The general assembly reaffirmed the basic priorities of the coalition, and added new ones. Among them are the development of regional strategies, increased circulation of information among the members, the establishment of an emergency action solidarity network to support members experiencing repressive measures, and the development and deepening of alliances with other international organisations working for democratic communication. The promotion of the participation of women both within audiovisual communication and within the coalition was unanimously affirmed as a priority. A women's caucus elaborated the main orientations for a women's network to be formed (see next page for more information). A women's representative was elected to the Board of Directors along with regional representatives elected by the members of the regions present in Videazimut: Africa and the Middle East, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, and North America. Together with three members of the previous Board whose experience guarantees continuity, the new Board of Directors were given a strong mandate for taking the coalition forward according to the directions adopted at the assembly. Regina Festa (Brazil) was chosen as the President of Videazimut with Myoung Joon Kim (Korea) and Olivier Pasquet (France) as Vice-Presidents. During the assembly each region met, discussed and adopted specific regional priorities.

The general assembly endorsed the *Peoples Communication Charter*, an initiative of the **Third World Network** (Penang, Malaysia) and the **Centre for Communication & Human Rights** (Amsterdam, the Netherlands) with many collaborators. The Charter is intended to serve as an instrument towards the international recognition and appropriation of the right to communicate. It has also been endorsed by the **Cultural Environment Movement** in the USA, and **AMARC** (the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters). Also circulated at the assembly were the *Universal Communication Rights Charter* of the **Italian Forum for the Right to Communicate** and the **Platform for a Responsible and Interdependent World** originated by the Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour le progrès de l'homme.

Greetings to the assembly and seminar were sent by the **ITU** (International Telecommunication Union), the **Canadian International Development Agency**, the **FAO** (Food and Agriculture Organisation), and the **5th Latin American Festival of Indigenous Film and Video** as well as from Videazimut members and others who were not able to be at the gathering.

Thanks to the **Centro Internazionale CROCEVIA**, the **Canadian International Development Agency**, **Fondation Charles Léopold Mayer pour le progrès de l'homme** and **Green Valley Media**, who all helped in one way or the other to enable the gathering to take place.



# WELCOME TO THE NEW MEMBERS OF VIDEAZIMUT

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# DECLARATION OF CAJAMAR

**WE**, the participants, of the International Seminar "Media for Citizenship in the Electronic Age: Community Television and New Technologies"

- convened by Videazimut in Cajamar, Brazil from July 3-5, 1996;
- who have come from Asia, the Pacific, Europe, the Middle East, North America, Latin America and Africa;
- who work in all fields and aspects of communication for development and democracy at the local, regional and international levels;
- aiming to bring about permanent changes that would guarantee access for all to the means of communication;
- in the same spirit of the four symposia held by Videazimut in Montreal (1990), Maputo (1991), Lima (1992) and New Delhi (1994);
- and in solidarity with Videazimut's role as an international coalition for the democratisation of communication to promote active participation and development:

**REITERATE** our support for the principles stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Declaration on the Right to Development;

**AFFIRM** that, in the spirit of Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the recommendations in the MacBride Commission and Maitland Commission Reports, the right to expression—including the right to communicate—must be recognised and defended as inalienable for individuals and peoples and as indispensable to the democratisation of societies;

**RECOGNISE** and support the efforts and actions taken by multilateral organisations like UNESCO, the UNDP and the ITU for encouraging initiatives by civil society in the field of communication. In particular, we note the series of conferences organised by UNESCO since Windhoek (1991) to support independent media, and the recent UNESCO commissioned report, "Our Creative Diversity", which officially recognises the alternative sector and makes recommendations encouraging it to evolve along side the commercial and state sectors;

**SUPPORT** the decisions taken during the 4th World Conference on Women held in Beijing and, in particular, Chapter J of the Plan of Action dealing with the rights of women to communicate;

**RECOGNISE** that communications as the driving force behind today's globalization process, is also the focal point for the supporters of progressive change. The industrial and commercial logic that underlies this change is appropriating technology for the purpose of the commodification of information and communication. If access to information is determined by the ability to pay, the impact of this will be the exclusion of certain social actors, of certain peoples, of certain cultures in participating in the worldwide audiovisual and electronic networks;

**RECOGNISE** and bear witness by our actions to the unprecedented and widespread proliferation of initiatives for the free and democratic use of means of communication by alternative, community and popular media organisations. These actions illustrate the will, the capacity and the creativity deployed by civil society in the social appropriation of information and communication technologies, and they constitute an international social movement offering a democratic alternative to the market-dominated political arena.

## **BASED ON THE ABOVE, WE**

**AFFIRM** that the development of alternative communication practices based on democratic principles of liberty, equality and participation, which defend plurality and cultural diversity, is essential to the creation of fora which support citizens' participation in a democratic process;

**DEMAND** that governments, international organisations and private sector enterprises accept and act on the needs of civil society in the area of social communication. In a spirit of openness and equity, they must create an adequate legal and economic framework which will facilitate and reinforce universal access to alternative, participatory, democratic, independent media, and create a public space for debate and consultation in which representatives of civil society will participate in the determination of communication policies. In this way, the civil society can become a fully fledged actor in the development of communication systems at the national and international levels;

**INVITE** governmental, non-governmental and multilateral organisations working in international cooperation to support democratic and non-commercial initiatives that acknowledge the centrality of the right to communicate, and the strategic importance of communications for development;

**PROMOTE** the active and equitable participation of women in all decisions relating to information and communication systems, and support the portrayal of positive images of women in the media;

**SUPPORT** indigenous people in their struggle to reaffirm their identities and their right to communicate;

**ENCOURAGE** the forces of civil society to engage in collective and responsible actions to broaden and deepen the use of appropriate new information and communication technologies, as well as create and strengthen mechanisms of citizen consultation and participation. In this spirit, we participate actively in the growing international movement to unite networks and international coalitions working in different areas of alternative communication;

**ASK** the Government and the information and commercial enterprises of Brazil to include the participation of civil society, represented by the National Forum for the Democratisation of Communication.

**THEREFORE**, we encourage all individuals and organisations worldwide working in the field of communications for development and democracy to collaborate in solidarity and work together, at every opportunity, to achieve these goals.

Cajamar, Brazil  
July 5, 1996

Videazimut's

## WOMEN'S NETWORK

During the Videazimut's First General Assembly held in São Paulo last July, the Assembly decided to add a Women's Representative to the Board of Directors. Simin Farkhondeh was selected to take on this new responsibility. The mandate will include networking and outreach, information exchange, program development, participation in "Woman Watch", to name but a few. She will be supported by a women's representative from each region.

If you are interested in becoming a regional representative or for more information contact:

Simin Farkhondeh  
Labor at the Crossroads TV  
99 Hudson Street, 3rd Floor  
New York, N.Y. 10013 USA  
Tel: (1 212) 966 4248 ext. 216  
Fax: (1 212) 966 4589  
Email: sfarkhon@broadway.gc.cuny.edu



NILZA IRACI (Instituto da Mulher Negra- Brazil) & SIMIN FARKHONDEH (Deep Dish TV-USA)

Videazimut  
wishes to express its thanks to

# inca

Instituto Cajamar

&



TV DOS TRABALHADORES

for hosting the international seminar  
and general assembly of members.

# VIDEOLYMPIADE

The 3rd bi-annual VideOlympiade was held in conjunction with the Videazimut International Seminar and General Assembly last July in Brazil. The VideOlympiade is a gathering of local television and video activists and includes an international video contest. Entries were submitted in one of five categories. This year's winners were curated by the Videazimut delegates who selected the best of each category and the best overall.

... AND THE 1996 WINNERS ARE

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>COUNTRY</u>
People in the Streets	MINUESA	Spain
Lovely People	HOME	Denmark
People in the Villages	PLAYING AROUND WITH THE COMMONS	United Kingdom
People in Computerland	AL & VIRTUE	Denmark
People's Television	EVA'S TEMPTATION	Denmark
BEST OF SHOW	HOME	Denmark

Pending copyright clearance a video compilation of those selected will be available at cost from the: COMMUNITY MEDIA CENTER, 711 BRIDGE ST. NW, GRAND RAPIDS, MI 49503 USA  
Plans for a 1998 VideOlympiade are underway for either Australia or Southern Africa. To be put on the mailing list, contact:

JOHN CURTIS, PO BOX 1760, STRAWBERRY HILLS, 2012 AUSTRALIA

September 30, 1996.  
Mount Denson, Canada

Hello,

When a colleague last June asked me why Ryakuga was spending more than \$2,000 to send me to Brazil, rather than putting the money towards needed equipment or translation of resources, I had to think about it.

Now one could almost say the raison d'être of Ryakuga is to work at the grassroots level with ordinary people who have been denied a voice. We work in the streets, in kitchens and in community centres, not lecture theatres, production studios or board rooms. We support international declarations and lobbying of governments for communications rights and the democratisation of communication - but this is not where we work. So when I was asked if the money required to get to Cajamar was an investment in future work, I had to say no. I said that what I hoped was to meet people from around the world who shared similar values and who were working for the same goals. Working in grassroots communications in these times of the ascendancy of right-wing values and agenda is, at times, frustrating and exhausting. One needs to know to be able to make human contact that is reaffirming and supportive. That, for me, may be the most important aspect of Videazimut and the Cajamar seminar. That is why I spoke repeatedly in support of CLIPS and why, at the end of the seminar, I was the spokesperson for people who would like to see future seminars adopting a more popular methodology so more people can participate and express their voices during the official agenda.

But, of course, it is after and in-between the sessions that reaffirmation and support really happen. For me this happened during walks in São Paulo with Michel and Kim; drinking beer on the bridge with John and Tracey; harangues over dinner with Cullis; touring Rio with Kim and Chee; learning the true story of the Fogo Process from Rajive, and plotting with Christa about the continued prosperity of CLIPS. I also brought home video-letters to the community from Zulfah, Jesse and Antoinette.

But most importantly, I returned home with (aside from CDs) memories of Brazil - the spontaneous sharing of experiences with Adilson, Marcia and Rafaela after the Communication for Survival presentation; Rodrigo as the consummate host and workers' guide to São Paulo; and Alberto's hospitality in Rio. However, I will either have to learn Portuguese or de-subscribe from the Brazilian listserv, ger-tvcomunit.

All the best,  
Fred Campbell

"Who arrives when and at what time? SHE is not on my list! But you didn't bring any warm clothes! Sure, we'll see if the email is working. Photocopies? O.K. Well, more or less O.K. Now, let me see who shares rooms with whom. Sorry, I promise not to mix up the languages any more. The list: please complete the list of names and addresses. I'll be right back."

The aftermath of that hectic period is, as one person put it, "boring, now everyone speaks only Portuguese". We at the Cajamar Institute thank you all for coming and helping to make this gathering a memorable, pleasurable and above all important event. Our house is your house, come back anytime.

RODRIGO ORTIZ ASSUMPTÃO  
Cajamar Institute, Brazil



MYOUNG JOON KIM  
(Labor News Production - South Korea) &  
JÜRGEN LINK (Offener Kanal Berlin -Germany)

Life is full of surprises! Unexpected trip to Brazil, unexpected meetings with new faces, unexpected Board election. For me, my first experience of a Videazimut Conference was another platform to confirm my cultural and political identity as a cosmopolitan media activist. While corporate media moguls shout out "globalization", I was cheered from meeting other comrades from all different regions. Under Regina Festa's leadership, the importance of women's issues was an underlying theme throughout the whole conference. The herstorical thing, of course, was the assignment of one board seat for the women's caucus. Another striking thing was the fact that I, an immigrant woman, accepted the board nomination to represent the North American Region. The reason I accepted the nomination was to challenge the stereotypical face of North America and to be involved in building the global community media solidarity as a Korean, Korean-American, and woman of colour in the First World. The important task of Videazimut will be to coordinate a transnational networking space and time for alternative media across multiple layers of communities. We roamed around and ended up drinking and talking with many individuals, however, we could have had a much more productive time by organizing more caucuses and action plans based on those layers.

HYE JUNG PARK  
Downtown Community TV Center, USA



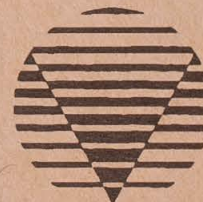
SHAREEF CULLIS  
(Centre for Democratic Communication - South Africa)  
& CAETANO SCANNAVINO (ABVP - Brazil)

One week at Cajamar and among the many presentations, discussions, declarations and texts ... powerful images, real images, taken from very good audiovisual programs seen during that week. *Palestine in History* by Alquds Television Productions (Palestine); *Rhythm and Rights* by the CDC (South Africa); *La Minuesa* (Spain); *Playing Around with The Commons* by Undercurrents (UK); *AJAYU*, the beautiful 16 mm Bolivian film; and *YAKWA* (the Banquet of the Spirits) by the Centro de Trabalho Indigenista (Brazil). Proving once again that social and political commitment, the defence of cultural identities and alternative production can generate good quality documentaries and fiction ... and that this quality is our strength. Why not, in a very serious and professional manner, start relying on this strength to change mainstream media?

OLIVIER PASQUET  
Fédération national Les vidéos des pays et des quartiers, France

The world is a very big place to live in. So how can I discuss community TV and other communication projects with the whole world, if I don't know to whom I am speaking. We watched videos, exchanged information about politics, video and TV languages, our work and even social projects. But seeing the world plan as one is a great challenge for us and a consistent world plan (concerning laws, policies, etc.) has to be made before that can happen so that we can get beyond the stated good intentions. So the seminar became like a fair which is not a bad thing at all!

ADILSON VAZ CABRAL FILHO  
ABVP, Brazil



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