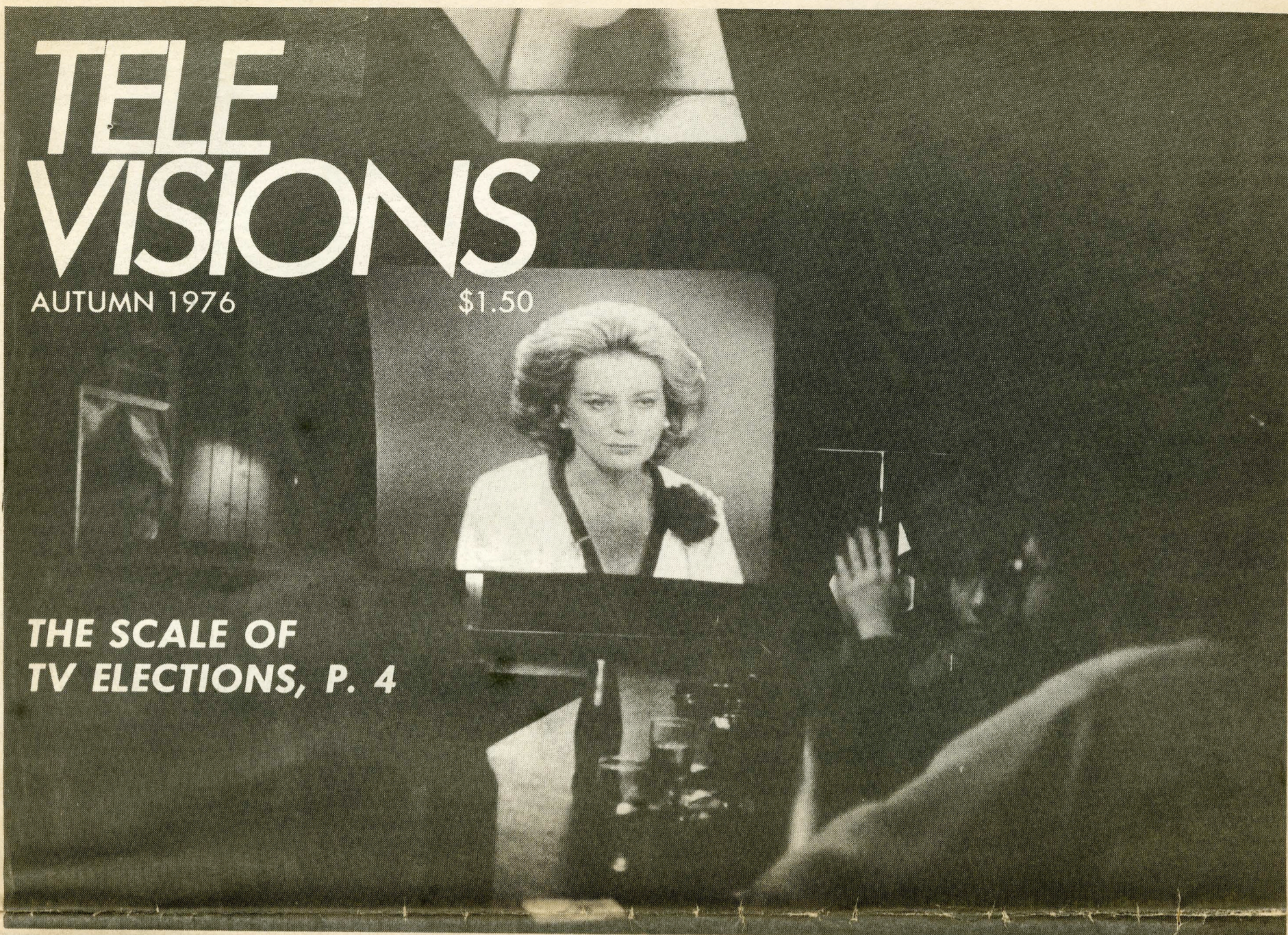


TELEVISIONS

AUTUMN 1976

\$1.50



**THE SCALE OF
TV ELECTIONS, P. 4**

PHOTO BY STEVE SCHOENLAUM



PHOTO BY SUSAN LAZARUS

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TELEVISIONS.
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THE 526TH LINE

Since the Carter election Washington is abuzz with rumors, including appointments to communications posts with activists like Everett Parker of the United Church of Christ as the head of the Office of Telecommunications Policy and former head of the Cable Television Information Center Bo Cutter as FCC Chairman (he's on the transition team right now). Half a dozen activists had been sending position papers to Carter campaign. Consensus: Carter will support a re-write of the 1934 Communications Act.

Look for a major suit against the network news operations by independents whose work has been excluded by "The Policy," i.e., the practice of total exclusion of independent productions in the news and public affairs field.

A major proposal from the first regional meeting of the new National Federation of Local Cable Programmers (see p. 11) is to establish a Washington-based lobbyist for community video and cable interests.

Complaining about philosophy and procedures at the National Endowment for the Humanities, more than a dozen large and small media producers have asked NEH program officer Tom Litzenburg for

a meeting to iron out problems. Topics in a letter sent the week of Nov. 8 include grant review process, use of academic consultants, scheduling budgets and cash payments. Leaders in the group include Mike Ambrosino, producer of *Nova* and other PBS shows, Rich Hauser of WGBH. The producers spent a weekend in mid-Oct. at the Stanton Project, Cambridge, working out their strategy.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting President Henry Loomis, with prodding by activists at the Public Interest Satellite Association (PISA), has committed CPB and PBS to convene a meeting of representatives of potential non-profit users of its proposed satellite interconnection, and to participate in a study of the potential usefulness to various non-profit users of the nearly \$50 million system (including radio).

The meeting would be open to a wide variety of non-profit groups that might eventually wish to make use of public TV's proposed satellite interconnection system. PISA tells *TELEVISIONS* that any group that wants an invitation should write directly to Loomis, CPB, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, and send them a copy at PISA, 55 W. 44th St., NY 10036.

The meeting also depends upon FCC

The tube scans only 525 lines. The extra scan line presents our Point Of View on the state of communication arts, business, and public action.

approval of the massive CPB application, which would establish the TV industry's most sophisticated system of satellite groundstations (150 receive only and five regional receive-transmit station). The system would use the WESTAR satellite for transmission of radio and TV signals, but could accommodate many more channels of information.

PISA held its first national conference of "experimenters"—public interest groups like the Farmworkers, community radio stations, community video groups, investigative reporters, and others—on Oct. 1-2. They discussed potential projects they might undertake on NASA's ATS-6 satellite, recently returned from India. (See p. 5).

3-M has released a survey of 502 chief engineers of broadcast stations indicating that about 60% of all commercials are distributed on videotape. The figure represents a continuing trend in the industry. Of the commercials distributed by film, some 41% were later transferred to tape.

A Boston-based radical foundation called the Haymarket Peoples Fund is exploring the possibilities of setting up "The Film Fund," to help finance political films and videotapes. A January meeting in New York will be the initial launching pad.

ACNO, The Advisory Council of National Organizations to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, has received resignation of the National Latino Media Coalition because of the group's dissatisfaction with public broadcasting in areas of employment, policy-making, programming and ascertainment.

TelePrompTer Cable Corporation has petitioned the New Jersey Public Utilities Commission for across-the-board rate increases in South Jersey. For the first time in the state, the PUC flatly rejected the increase after a municipality battling the hike proved the cable company was acting improperly.

While press attention was rightly given to the newly developing documentary funds (see pp. 6-7, PBS has frittered away all but an estimated \$40,000 of a million bucks it received in May from the Ford Foundation to spend on public affairs programming of its choice. Its choice included live coverage of Queen Elizabeth at the White House, PBS convention and election coverage. Yet, when the net is asked whether it has money to buy documentaries, they drag out the sackcloth and ashes.

Stamped on a piece of our incoming mail: "Technology is the answer . . . But what is the question?"

TELEVISIONS

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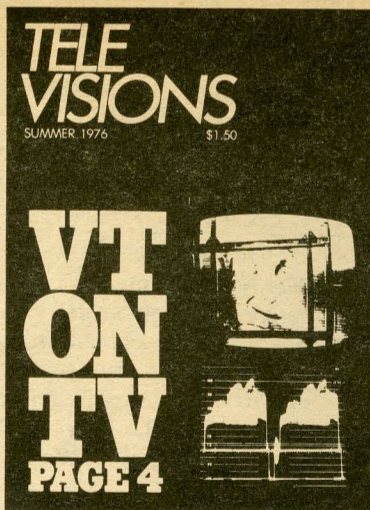
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NEWS FROM THE VIDEOSPHERE

VIDEO PRODUCTION

No Boring Spectacles: TV on a Human Scale *Independent Videomakers cover election '76*

Four years ago in Miami Beach the Nixon and McGovern conventions magnetized hundreds of counter-cultural and political activists, including a few with microphones and portapak. Remembered best were those whose work had been organized and edited by the newly formed video company, TVTV, into two landmark tapes—*World's Largest TV Studio* (Democrats) and *Four More Years* (GOP). Another experiment aimed at live transmission to cable systems around the U.S., but failed to get it together. Some cable systems' public access producers made local election-eve tapes.

A lot had changed by 1976, in the country as well as the video "movement." But the fact that the Democrats held their convention in New York City gave rise to fantasies by videopeople that weren't too different from those we had in 1972.

This *TELEVISIONS* special report is not a comparison with 1972 or an evaluation of the progress, technically, organizationally, aesthetically. Instead, we asked several tape-makers to tell us about their experiences while they were still hot.

All-women Crew

By HALI PAUL

I wanted an intimate sketch of several individuals who had traveled several thousand miles to New York City for that interesting mix of political business and pleasure unique to party conventions. I chose two Iowa delegates to magnify the individual experience at the Democratic National Convention. One was a 17 year old Black woman from Waterloo and the other, an Avoca farm woman in her 50's. The documentary, independently financed and produced, will be available by December for distribution.

The piece is tentatively titled, "PROCESS '76". It was shot with the Sony DXC1600 and the 3800 deck. The production crew consisted of Teri Mack, Mary Tolan and myself. Being an all-women crew was an experience in itself. Since all the straight press people were feverishly ferreting out so-called "human interest" stories because of the lack of "hard news", we became minor league media stars ourselves.

This shoot was by no means all glitter. It was probably the most arduous and taxing shoot any of us had ever been involved in. Aside from the numerous technical and equipment problems we encountered, we also had to deal with just the sheer weight of the gear. This equipment was not really appropriate to the kind of verite piece we were after. It was a tradeoff in terms of less maneuverability, greater weight and needing more foot candles, for a stronger signal and greater stability.

At the last minute, I was invited to partic-

ipate in shooting a documentary at the Republican Convention in Kansas City. This seven-person team was for University Community Video in Minneapolis. While this shoot had less direction in terms of thematic concept and less cohesiveness in terms of a shared vision amongst the crew than my New York experience, we still managed to shoot some amazing footage that highlighted personalities. The 24 hours of raw tape will be edited down to 30 minutes to be shown on *Changing Channels*, a small format show on KTCA, the Minneapolis PBS affiliate.

Technically there were hardly any problems with our three porta-paks, two of which were outfitted with newvicon tubes. We were far more mobile than with the color equipment I had used in New York.

As far as I could tell there was only one other small format group on the floor of the Kemper Arena. This was vastly different than the Democratic Convention, where small format people abounded.

It's interesting to note the difference in credibility between the two conventions. In New York where we were working with more sophisticated equipment, we were more readily accepted by other press people as serious documentarians. In Kansas City we were still placed in that category of "video freaks."

Image Union

By MAXI COHEN

Scene: 8 a.m. Bloomingdale's Red-White-and-Blue Room. Champagne breakfast for governors' and diplomats' wives. Lots of Southern accents and strawberry-filled crepes. "Hi. I'm Shirley Love and I'm a delegate from West Virginia. And I'd like to welcome you to The Five Day Bicycle Race." He did two takes. We used them both.

While the three look-alike networks fought for ratings during the Democratic National Convention, some 40 independent video producers from around the country came together as the IMAGE UNION (International Personhood of Image Workers) to provide a very different sort of program—*The Five Day Bicycle Race*. Going live-and-tape from Manhattan Cable Television into 400,000 New York City and Long Island cabled homes, the IMAGE UNION set about to cover and uncover the happenings in New York. For five nights of the convention, from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m., IMAGE UNION, using black and white 1/2" video portapaks (the model-T of video) covered everything from the Convention floor, to the media, to the streets. All this in documentary, docu-drama, political, poetic, personal, and avant garde videowork. The BIKE RACE has as its focus the convention—what appeared to be a boring event.

Trends and key stories in all fields of electronic media.

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Image union forecasts the election results. L. to r. — Tom Weinberg, Skip Blumberg, Maxi Cohen, Paul McIsaac.

Each night at 10 p.m. whoever was in the studio picked up a camera, got on the switcher, sat on the set, found something to do that had to be done and we were ON. And each night the show was different . . . because the tapes and the people on the live show were different. We took phone calls and used Votrak, which allowed us to ask viewers yes and no questions, immediately flashing the results on the screen. The studio itself, decorated with artwork flowed freely. A cameraperson having something to say would say it, the other cameraperson panning over to catch the remark. Control room, camera people, the on camera hosts chaotically and spontaneously connected. Exhausted and exhilarated tapemakers holding yet-unseen, fresh, hot tape in hand, rush in to pre-empt the moment.

CUT: *Mock Turtle Soup*. Election night, Nov. 2. The sequal media magnet of election night, brought IMAGE UNION together again (for live and tape, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. This time from Automation House, an upper east side color studio). It seemed that on election night people were involved with the networks. I guess they had the feeling that one of those numbers on the big board was their own—a sort of personal stake in the matter. With *Mock Turtle Soup* we tried to bring people closer to the election process. Unlike, *Bike Race*, where we had the opportunity of continuity for an entire week, a chance to make less mistakes each night, *Turtle Soup* was a one night stand.

Our experience made us pay more attention to the problems of live studio and how to integrate tape producers into the live segments. Tape seems always so much more exciting to look at than live; being *on live* is so exciting that a proper perspective is real hard to maintain . . . there is lots to pay attention to.

In the midst of an intelligible, hopefully not boring conversation on the phone in the studio live about why Carter (again?). Looking into camera 2, the guy says he wants to suck titties. How do you handle that?

What was most exciting and special was the opportunity of live television and creatively playing with the mix of live and tape and the multiple configurations of hot tape

being rushed in, phone calls, last minute guests; the way in which the production was structured and unstructured. The concept of the IMAGE UNION has been floating around for years—the notion of people working collectively and at times individually. The IMAGE UNION had no bosses, no chiefs, or rather all chiefs. Everyone had opportunity to do what he or she wanted.

What was amazing was that 30 to 40 really skilled people worked for no money and, at times, at their own personal expense. Together, without a hierarchy or bureaucracy, we're trying to change the process of making television, without depending on the conventional wisdom of the networks. That's why we were real, fresh, at times boring, boring, boring, tedious, brilliant, and funny. The *Bike Race* got better as we went. *Mock Turtle Soup* was unlike anything you've ever tasted. I think we are all in wonder of the great energy and skill that made the shows. The challenge now is to find a way to produce better television.

Going to L

By GORDON HYATT

Three weeks before the 1976 Democratic Convention was scheduled to begin I took a telephone call from Av Westin, the news and documentary executive and consultant, who asked "How would you like to make \$750.?"

"Not enough," I said, "but what's the job?"

"Producing four two-hour programs for cable television on the Convention. They have no money."

He went on to explain the advantages of the assignment: a newly-equipped studio in the cellar of Automation House on 68th Street near Park Avenue dedicated to Community Access production; that Clay Felker, the publisher of "New York Magazine" and "The Village Voice" was going to make the reporters and editors of both publications available for the programs; that there were two new color cameras, a new rug and a cyclorama which had been donated by ABC. All this, *plus* the magnet of a catered affair upstairs, hosted each

NASA Leaves Indira Gandhi A Propaganda Tool

Goals of satellite experiment are corrupted

By TED CONANT

MELBOURNE, en route to DELHI (October 18)—Last night in Tokyo's Foreign Correspondent's Club I had a chance to talk with one of India's senior overseas correspondents. I asked him about the rash of stories now appearing in the Indian Press on Indian space research, electronics development, and satellite broadcasting. "Many benefits of space science" . . . "Broadcasting from on high" . . . "Space research spin-off" these are the sort of headlines one can see in the *Times of India* (Bombay), and the *New Delhi Statesman*.

I asked my friend specifically about a September 18th story in the *Times of India*—"The SITE experiment has been hailed as an indication of the immense potentialities of the audio-visual media. Dr. Rao's (director) hope is that India will soon have a multipurpose national satellite, both for television broadcasts and communication."

What exactly was SITE, the Indian Satellite Instructional Television Experiment? Conceived in the late 60's by officials of NASA and the Indian atomic energy agency, it started on August 1st, 1975, and ended on July 31st, 1976. The space link was by NASA's ATS-6 satellite. The ground segment transmitting stations were at New Delhi, Ahmedabad and Bombay with a receive-only station at Srinagar.

Programs were primarily received in the six clusters of villages; about half the villages received relays from the ground stations, half received programs directly from the satellite by means of 7-10 foot 'chicken wire' antennas. The satellite systems project of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) was responsible for technical matters, Dr. U. R. Rao, director, with Professor Yash Paul, a physicist, Head of the Space Applications Centre. All India Radio (AIR) had overall responsibility for the programming, and continues, via microwave links.

One of the fascinations of the scheme is that India has so little television of any sort. What SITE did was to bring television to the hinterland before a full urban television service had been developed. India is probably the first country in the world to introduce television in this way. At present there are only 350,000 receiving sets in the whole of India, to serve over 600 million people, but the Indian Government is proposing to augment the present transmitters in Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras with additional transmitting centres in Jaipur, Hyderabad, Raipur and Cuttack by March, 1977, and with further centres at Muzaffarpur, Gulbarga, and Kanpur later that year.

"Well," Menon (not his real name) began, "The significant 'spin-off' the articles talk about is in hardware for Indira Gandhi's propaganda machine, as well as in electronic systems and sub-systems for the military." My friend paused, and went on to say that people like Professor Yash Paul, B. S. Rao and E. V. Chitniss of the Indian Space Research Organization are in a way the Indian equivalents of Dr. Werner Von Braun. They are in it, as he was, to develop large scale programs, or as the *Times of India* puts it, "an expanding program that will make heavy demands on (the country's) electronic requirements".

"Yes," Menon continued, "that part is true enough. And so is the item about re-

laying via satellite the half-hour AIR news. But what they don't say is that not only the so-called news but the big outside propaganda broadcasts, the National Day, the major speeches, stuff like that, all were fed by the satellite "live," not only to the village receivers, but to TV stations throughout the subcontinent. That's where the action's at. Don't put too much importance on the 2,000 TV sets in the villages giving practical instruction in family planning or agriculture, occupational skills, or all that. The educational programs produced were, and are, mostly made by urban types who know little, and couldn't care less about the villages."

"Did you read the piece in the *Delhi Statesman* by the well known critic Anita Malik, printed just before the emergency?" My friend Menon rummaged around his clip file and came up with a telling cutting entitled "*The Satellite: Doomed To Disaster*".

"India's much-heralded and self-publicized satellite, is causing acute worries and premonitions of the most gloomy kind all round. All sorts of terrifying stories are trickling through to this writer. One of them concerns an occasion when several Central ministers were invited to the TV studios to have a look at the masterpieces already produced for launching on satellite. They sat solidly, and, indeed, stolidly through it all. At the end there was an embarrassed and awesome silence. One knowledgeable person present later described the programs to this critic as "bloody awful and an amateurish and criminal waste of time, money and effort".

"It seems," the article continued, "that the satellite staff were more interested in starring themselves in the programs than in getting the few TV professionals in India to produce programs worthy of this internationally-watched educational experiment which also involves overcoming hurdles about our language problem.

"Indeed, the officials connected with the TV satellite have spent more time attending seminars on sundry subjects in distant parts of the country, flying from international conference to conference, writing adulatory articles about their largely imaginary achievements, and talking like long-term consultants than getting on with the job in hand.

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"Another premonition of disaster came in no uncertain terms from an American mass media specialist who will remain unnamed, for obvious reasons: "Thank the Lord", he said to this writer, "that American responsibility ceases once the satellite is launched. Because from what one can gather, AIR is totally unprepared with enough programs for the satellite and

those made appear to be of such sub-standard quality that they are hardly worth all the excitement behind the experiment".

"Indian TV is not lacking in either fresh young talent in the program line, nor in engineering skill. But the satellite organization has mostly by-passed them on grounds other than talent. Worst of all, the people at the top have failed to give proper direction to the operation because they lack both TV expertise and talent and are more busy spending time on public relations which, in the event, have misfired too."

"Well", my friend Menon chuckled, "that was written just before the emergency. Given our present censorship, one must, for current developments, read the foreign press."

I did, and reviews on the broadcasting experiment using the ATS-6 satellite, and the interim program now in effect, are mixed. Reports drafted by government officials tended to focus on its great promise as an educational tool, while working journalists appeared skeptical of the quality of programs, the high costs, and the daily dose of political propaganda.

Pictures from heaven

A BBC television documentary described the villages reaction to the telly as "pictures from heaven", and their footage showed the intense reactions of rural people exposed to television, who had never even seen a film. But the BBC documentary, made with Government co-operation, does not show subsequent scenes detailed by the working press: the boredom induced by straight talks and interviews, the occasions where observers found an entire village audience sound asleep in front of the receiver, the many urban-oriented programs that failed to hold the interest of a rural audience, to whom the concept of stainless steel utensils and pressure cookers, for example, were quite alien.

Some of the villages did find a real use for the receivers. At night, after ten o'clock sign-off, they switched on the televisions, at full brightness levels, and used them as fluorescent lights.

But Indian officials connected with the SITE scheme tend to feel that in terms of "nation building" it has begun to succeed. What mistakes have been made in programming can be corrected, they say in years to come, for most of the initial villages chosen for the broadcasting experiment, are in the region now linked by terrestrial microwave, and all will be eventually in reach of the new Soviet "Stationar T" television broadcasting satellite, now on order. For India is committed, like Japan, Brazil and Indonesia, to a full national satellite system. It will probably interconnect a series of sub-systems for police and military communications and surveillance, and above all it will provide Indira Gandhi immediate access to village audiences across the entire subcontinent.

All this indeed may, or may not in the end happen, as the subcontinent is still a land of surprises. In a short time I will know more, as I will have the chance in Delhi to assess the situation at first hand. I will particularly focus on the question as to whether the new role of television and satellite communications will aggravate the continuing crisis between an autocracy, enamoured of new technology, and flaunting it, and the majority's needs.

Ted Conant assesses communications technologies for Scroeder, a British banking firm, and helps many alternate media groups on his own time. He has worked for public broadcasting and the Ford Foundation.

night of the convention by Theodore H. Kheel, a New York labor lawyer and the guiding force behind Automation House, a non-profit foundation hitherto devoted to studying labor questions and experimenting with modern artists.

In the studio I met Arlene Krebs who was working for Automation House as a kind of studio manager. She was the kind of person who symbolized underground video for me. She had made tapes in prisons, she taught video, and she was well aware of the new generation who get all their news from TV. She asked me a question at one point that I cannot forget: "Do you find it different," she asked, "working in Cable?" For her it was different. Cable was where the networks weren't. For me it was television journalism.

In a meeting with Clay Felker and his staff and with Av Westin who was consultant to Automation House, we mapped out the themes of the four programs. We took lists of Felker's reporters who were to receive no fees and who had to be individually recruited. Ken Auletta, Tom Morgan, Gail Sheehy, Ed Diamond, Milton Glazer, Bob Grossman, Alexander Cockburn, Dorothy Seiberling, Ellen Stern, Molly Haskell, Fred McDarrah and Felker himself with a nightly newspaper critique began to appear on our newscasts.

We were to have no floor reporters, no remotes. Basically only live studio, with maybe a little pre-taping if the soldering was finished in time.

It is fair to note that the series backers were all highly motivated. Not from a profit point of view, but for the alternative, power. The publications were getting an exclusive play; the cable companies were stirring up some subscriber interest; Automation House was kicking off its studio — which was to continue to operate for future cable productions at a flat rate of \$100 per hour, plus tape.

How did we do? An extraordinary array of guests trekked to our location. The word came back to us that delegates, with Channel L in their hotel rooms, had discovered us. And when Bella Abzug, for example, heard that her three rivals for the N.Y. Democratic Senatorial nomination were all booked she dropped everything to make it to our studio — where she proceeded to share a series of stories of her personal encounters with Jimmy Carter. Producer Peggy Daniel managed to get "The Convention", an off-off-Broadway revue, into the studio to perform excerpts of their production.

Global in N.J.

By JOHN REILLY

Our premise was simple. We wanted to profile a state delegation to a national convention. This year was colored by the fact that Carter had won, there wasn't much wheeling and dealing. New Jersey was one of the few states that wasn't in the Carter camp; they had elected Humphrey-Brown delegates. So we tried to get a feeling of what they were really doing. We taped Carter talking to the delegation, caucuses, press conferences. Interviews with the state's major politicians. A subplot was Carter's consideration of Cong. Pete Rodino for vice president. Our tape wasn't anything newsy. We examined the process — nothing had not already been exhaustively covered by the media. The tape was shot in 3/4" color. We will edit it to a half-hour in Dec. Originally we hoped to work through WNET, but negotiations broke down. We were able to work out an arrangement with WNYC, although they really didn't provide a budget. WNYC will air it locally in NY, and we hope to show it in New Jersey.

PBS News Planners Reinvent the Wheel

Main innovation comes in documentaries

By NICK DeMARTINO

This year the public TV system has managed to reinvent the TV news wheel, launching a nightly newscast, more extensive special events coverage, documentary production units, a magazine show, and an interview series.

While the bulk of the public TV news effort is a low-budget imitation of old commercial network program formulas, some recent developments may make PBS more competitive with its bigger rivals, in reputation, if not in ratings.

Unless the network news operations wake up, PBS may have the field to itself as it struggles to bring a bit of substance to the news business, particularly since public TV's federal support will increase annually as a result of recent legislation.

As the *Dupont-Columbia Survey of Broadcast Journalism* noted earlier this spring: "In the immediate wake of Watergate there was no evidence of increased commitment to serious news and public affairs on any of the three commercial networks. The hours regularly allotted to journalism in the prime time schedule remained where they had been for the past several years—at zero."

Public TV is torn between two directions: blatant imitation of the commercial three, and a return to TV's "Golden Era" of innovation, when it pioneered the magazine format with *NET Journal* and *The Great American Dream Machine*. That kind of creativity and risk-taking all but stopped as a result of the Nixon Administration's successful campaign against public affairs on public TV.

PBS's coverage of the Senate Watergate hearings, however, impressed the country with its seriousness and capability. Meanwhile, a slowly building constituency was developing in the industry for something viewers could watch every night, and upon which stations could build their schedules: an alternative to Walter, John, Harry, and Barbara.

By the summer of 1975, which was peppered with industry meetings on the subject, it was clearly becoming a question of who and how, not whether the system was ready.

In public TV programming, however, the scheduling, planning, funding, and production are often performed by separate entities working at wasteful cross purposes.

The production is done at a station—or by independents who offer the program through a station. Money comes from many sources—Congress, via the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), corporations, foundations, or from the stations who participate in buying mechanisms like the Station Program Cooperative (SPC). Stations also finance shows from their own funds, usually solicited from the public.

PBS, as the station membership group, schedules, coordinates, and occasionally plans. But, they cannot fund or produce.

Thus, a seemingly straightforward matter like launching a national news show or a documentary series becomes a two-year campaign.

Such a campaign was undertaken by WNET, the New York mega-station on behalf of their entry for the nightly newscast.

The *Robert MacNeil Show* premiered in New York in October, 1975. The half-

hour interview program features the Canadian-born journalist with guests discussing a single issue each night immediately following the three network's nightly news strips.

WNET, by getting on the air fast, was able to offer the show free to the entire network by last January. In the process WNET outmaneuvered its principal competition, *Evening Edition*, a nightly show featuring Martin Agronsky, originating from WETA/Washington.

WETA offered Texas-born Jim Lehrer, a WETA man and PBS old-timer, as a Washington co-host for MacNeil. By winter the two stations were planning a co-production.

They conducted an aggressive sales pitch for the *MacNeil-Lehrer Report*, which succeeded.

The *M-L Report* became the centerpiece for the network's public affairs plan, unveiled in May.

If *MacNeil* can be counted a success—at least with critics and a measurable audience—another venture has been a distinct failure.

USA—People and Politics, magazine show begun in February, was aired the duration of the primary and election season. While focused on the elections, the program was designed to take a more creative view of the process. With slow timing, and a change in casts, it bit the dust. Public TV, enamored with the ratings and quality of *60 Minutes*, found just how hard and expensive a program like it really is to produce.

WETA/WNET which co-produced *USA*, were to have followed the November closing of *USA* with a proposal for a similar, year-round program for airing in the spring. At our deadline no proposal had been made. Sources at CPB and PBS were anxious to forget the whole *USA* episode.

The irony is that public TV was the first US news operation to try a magazine: mixing different elements within one news show.

Combining the collection of public affairs programs already on the PBS schedule and a few on the horizon, PBS President Larry Grossman unveiled in May 1976 what became known as "The Plan." This was the first attempt to program PBS as a network, even though its meager budgets made the schedule a bit skimpy.

Grossman, who came to PBS in January from commercial TV and advertising, took the position that PBS could get higher ratings by getting more show biz in its act. In public affairs, this amounted to copying the networks, when money and tradition permitted.

The key to his "Plan" is simple—"block" programming, something the networks routinely practice. Schedule shows that attract similar audiences back-to-back and you maximize "audience flow."

Friday night would become, he claimed, the time when hard-core news viewers could turn to PBS and stay there.

While the public TV system is developing other news programming, the biggest challenge is documentary production.

Documentary producers inside and outside public TV have long claimed that a single, hard-hitting documentary enhances the system's prestige more than any other kind of programming.

Yet documentaries are difficult for public television. They are costly. The more con-

troversial the subject and style, the tougher it is upon a spineless TV system. Local stations like *The Incredible Machine*—the highest single rated program in PTV history because of its heavy promotional budget—more than they go for a show like *Banks and the Poor*, a documentary which caused a furor on many conservative station Boards.

As a result, documentary packages have failed to attract buyers when offered to stations in the last three years. They don't want to risk large amounts of money on an unproduced product they haven't seen. And they don't trust many producers.

Those stations that continue to produce documentaries, notably Chicago's WTTW and WNET/New York, must find the money in their own budgets. Corporate underwriting for documentaries other than the National Geographic-style films is nil.

Both the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Rockefeller Foundation sponsored meetings in May, 1975 on the subject of public affairs. The Rockefeller session focused upon the relationship of independent documentarians to the four national networks.

A month later CPB held the first of eight seminars for program managers to discuss public affairs for 2½ days. The sessions

brought top management and a variety of "experts" and served to further illustrate that the system was beginning to make public affairs a top priority.

Present at those meetings were not only documentary producers from within stations, but independent video producers who had by then started working with station Boards.

In February, 1976, 15 of these groups banded into the Coalition for New Public Affairs Programming, presented a paper to the CPB Board, and began a campaign to convince PTV industry that it should commit itself to documentaries, particularly independently produced video shows.

By May, Grossman issued "The Plan", which highlighted the slot for weekly documentaries.

Two sources of funds became apparent: the foundations—particularly Ford, Rockefeller and the National Endowment—and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which administers U.S. tax dollars that get spent by the system for programming.

In June the Ford Foundation and the Arts Endowment hosted a meeting of some 30 "interested parties," which included not only the PTV web moguls, but prominent filmmakers, other foundation people, and a couple of videomakers (Larry Kirkman

The Friday Night PBS "Block" (Buster?)

While video producers and news-watchers may be interested in the behind-the-scenes maneuvering at PBS and CPB, the average viewer cares what's coming up on the tube each night.

Friday nights PBS will lump most public affairs shows together, save an occasional special and the nightly *MacNeil-Lehrer Report*.

Friday was chosen in the first place because *Washington Week in Review* and *Wall Street Week*, two of PBS's best-liked shows, have been on Fridays for years. *Agronsky-at-Large*, Martin Agronsky's new weekly interview program will air at 10 p.m.

Most of the PBS scheduling staff's headaches are being caused by the 9-10 p.m. slot, which should also garner the best reviews and ratings.

This hour, reserved for documentaries, has no budget—and until the two funding structures described above are functioning, the PBS schedulers must either find free programs, slot already-paid-for shows, or come up with money from other sources.

The premiere showing was Jerry

Bruck's great film, "I.F. Stone's Weekly" on Nov. 5, followed on Nov. 12 with his "Waiting for Fidel." "You Should See What You're Missing," a WTTW/Chicago doc about Hollywood TV writers is set for Nov. 19; "The Others," (Nov. 26) a show about mentally retarded, was produced by Iowa PTV.

The December line-up includes two long-awaited independently produced video documentaries offered by WNET Lab: "Chinatown" by Downtown Community Television on Dec. 10 and "Giving Birth" by John Reilly and Julie Gustafson of Global Village on Dec. 17. The Dec. 3 offering is "Carnivore," John Beyer's documentary for Iowa PTV about meat-eating. (Interestingly enough, Fred Wiseman's two-hour documentary which was aired on Nov. 13 was about the meat-producing industry. It's called "Meat.")

Other programs slated but not scheduled include "TVTV Looks at the Oscars," "Appalshop," "Men of Bronze" (an independent film about a black WWI infantry regiment), and three from the series "California Contemporary Issues" produced by KOCE-TV.

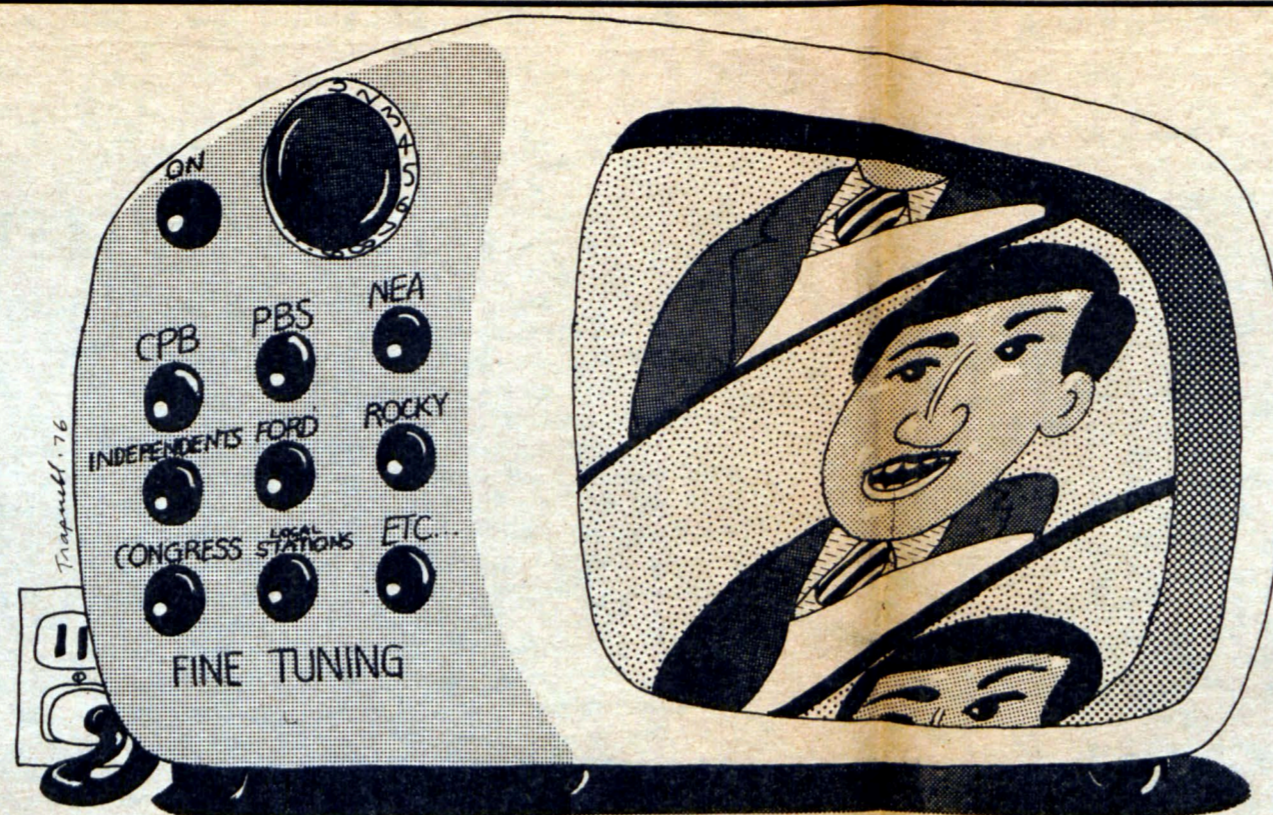


ILLUSTRATION BY TOM TRANWELL

well. The decision about proposals would have been shared jointly by CPB and PBS staff, presumably by CPB's Candyce Martin and PBS's Dick Ellison, both middle-management administrators specializing in public affairs.

The complete program would then be offered for sale to the stations. They would meet the purchase price if they liked the program, thus replenishing the fund for new productions.

The CPB Board, meeting in September, liked all the features of the plan—the self-perpetuating nature, the ability of stations to look at what they would buy, the potential for diversity. But they refused to concede a PBS staff veto on potential proposals.

As one Board member told *TELEVISIONS*: "We felt that an area as sensitive as public affairs should have its ultimate test by the licensees—whether they want to buy the program. We don't want PBS, which after all, represents all the licensees, to abide by the majority of their members and veto a program before it's even produced."

PBS indicates it intends to fight the decision. Said Ellison: "Their decision almost invariably will mean some reduction in the stuff that will get on the air."

PBS's implied threat is clear: If we don't have some say in programs, the stations might not run them.

The future of the fund is in limbo. Two CPB Board meetings have focused on the issue, with a very tentative resolution designating authority to one administrator—Calvin Watson, CPB's head of TV Activities. Even this decision is cloudy, with the recent addition of Peter Levathes as #2 man in Watson's department. Since Levathes is in charge of new productions, his role in the documentaries is unclear.

While CPB internal staffing problems are simmering, and the possibility of renewed conflict between PBS and CPB develops, producers are left with an all-too familiar sensation—confusion about the future of documentaries on public TV.

Six proposals were received by Ford/NEA and were reviewed by a panel October 5. *TELEVISIONS* learned that Media Study/Bufalo has been tentatively selected as the administrative/production agency, subject to negotiation between parties that began on Nov. 3.

Other applicants included Communications for Change, University of Indiana Foundation, Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, Bob Geller, a filmmaker who is producing a series of short stories under a grant from the Humanities Endowment, and, the CAPS program, a NY State creative artists funding structure.

Media Study/Bufalo, is a regional media center established by Gerald O'Grady. Fund Director will be filmmaker D.A. Pennebaker. John Reilly, of Global Village, will assist Pennebaker by producing and administering the projects shot in video.

While details are entirely preliminary at this point, the principals told *TELEVISIONS* they would hope to distribute a total of \$800,000 in production, research and development, and some step-up funds during the Fund's first year. No formula has been set, but Reilly assured us that video has been taken seriously in the project design.

The Ford/NEA fund has been established entirely for independent film and videomakers, which is one reason why the Corporation for Public Broadcasting preferred not to sink any of its money in the Fund.

Instead, CPB is in the process of allocating an additional \$1 million to documentary production, open to both stations and independents.

Some minority producers now feel the target should be increased minority and female employment in the upper levels of public TV. While nobody is writing off the shows it is felt they were only a token commitment to minorities.

As originally proposed, the \$1 million from CPB would be used to make grants to film and videomakers that submit proposals for new documentaries, although some completion money would be available as

Whither minority programs?

One quiet casualty of the new scheduling philosophy has been the public TV "target audience" shows—programs like *Woman Alive!*, *Realidades*, *Black Journal*, which are aimed at underserved segments of the population.

While all of these shows have been on the national schedule only a year or two, they represent five years in the development cycle. Political pressure by minority and women's groups upon CPB, and on Congress resulted in the programs.

Most of the minority programming has been consistent with most PBS' offerings: not terribly impressive. In addition, these programs, offered free to stations, often get shunted into bad slots on the schedule, guaranteeing an even smaller audience.

In every case these shows have been transformed from full series status to a string of "specials." Most will air in the Friday night documentary slot.

With its long-term funding assured by Congress, CPB's sensitivity to these political constituencies is bound to fall off.

Some minority producers now feel the target should be increased minority and female employment in the upper levels of public TV. While nobody is writing off the shows it is felt they were only a token commitment to minorities.

House Hearings Become Battleground Over Cable TV

Year-long study ends without legislation

By REBECCA MOORE

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Broadcasters and cable TV representatives are through slugging out their differences in the House Subcommittee on Communications, at least for this year. A week before Congress' Oct. 2 adjournment, the subcommittee concluded its year-long study of the nation's cable policy with an eye towards amending the 1934 Communications Act, originally written to regulate only radio.

No cable legislation was written or introduced this year, although the Congress did succeed in creating a bit of momentum for the byzantine subject of cable television.

The 15th and final hearing starred all seven members of the FCC. A combative FCC Chairman Wiley defended the FCC's record on cable regulation, claiming the Commission was "not protecting broadcasters, but protecting the public interest associated with broadcasting."

Wiley's, and the others', defensiveness stemmed from a Communications Subcommittee Staff Report on cable that criticized the FCC's handling of cable TV over the years. "Cable Television: Promise Versus Regulatory Performance" charged the Commission with protecting broadcasters' interests by limiting cable development.

The report traces FCC policy back to 1952, when the Commission created its TV frequency allocation plan: 2000 TV stations to serve 1300 communities. That plan has not been re-examined by the FCC or significantly questioned by Congress since.

The only high-level evaluation of the policy was a 1974 Cabinet Committee report, which made several of the same recommendations that the later House Committee report outlined. The Cabinet legislation was a casualty of Watergate, especially after its author and principle proponent, Clay T. Whitehead, left the government for a post at MIT.

Two flaws were created by the 1952 plan, says the House report, caused much of the current trouble. First, the cost of broadcasting denies rural areas stations. Second, the plan mixes VHF and UHF, "thereby depriving major markets more stations which they could easily support."

Cable TV jumped into the FCC-created vacuum. By providing a "community antenna" it carried programs into rural areas. And into the major markets it took independent signals. "This threatened the large profits of the television broadcasters in these markets," the report says, "since it would undermine the artificial scarcity upon which those profits are based... The broadcasters reacted with all-out opposition to this new form of cable."

Some, namely the broadcasters, feel the staff report is a little too pro-cable. Said one observer, "It was almost written by the cable industry."

Cable TV has the broadcasters running scared. They fear cable will kill UHF and independents. They worry it will cut into audiences and consequently reduce ad revenue. They want cable to pay for the broadcast programs it carries — a new copyright law will provide that. And they don't want to compete, as a highly regulated industry, with an unregulated, favored cable industry.

The FCC has not favored cable. It is gen-

erally protectionist, and pro-broadcasting. One example: the Commission froze all cable development in the major markets from 1966 to 1972, while the broadcasting, cable, and program production industries came to a consensus agreement. The freeze set cable back six years.

Said National Cable Television Association President Richard Schmidt, "There is absolutely no evidence that any station has ever gone dark because of the presence of cable." A Rand study said cable could in fact help independents and UHF. Cable brings these stations into the major markets and thereby increases the broadcasters' audience. Despite the evidence, FCC Chairman Wiley testified that "cable's impact falls most heavily on independents and UHF."

The Communications Subcommittee staff report makes several recommendations for cable's future. It outlines a set of principles that favors a laissez-faire federal regulatory approach. The report recommends amending the 1934 Communications Act to include cable; enacting a Rural Telecommunications Act to promote cable service; and federal monitoring to prevent siphoning — stealing — programs off the air.

The staff report proposes a unique solution to the problem of monopoly inherent in broadband communications systems, like cable or the phone company. Divorce control of cable systems from control of programming. One entity would own the hardware, another would lease the channels. The so-called separations policy would structure cable as a common carrier, rather than as a multichannel monopoly broadcaster.

What exactly is the public interest in cable TV development? Access to free TV, say the broadcasters. Localism, and access to an abundance of channels, says the cable industry. Free World Series games, argue the Members of Congress. Let the FCC decide, suggests the FCC.

The Commission's record in protecting the public's interest does not inspire confidence. Its rules up to now have short-changed cable TV. Additionally, it too often represents the communications industries — cable, broadcast TV and radio, common carrier phone lines — it is supposed to regulate.

Whether or not the Communications Subcommittee, chaired by Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin (D-Cal), can do any better is another question. Congress hasn't enacted any communications legislation since the 1962 Communications Satellite Act. Both broadcasters and small cable TV operators wield enormous power in congressional districts.

The Subcommittee hearings barely scratched the surface of some of the social implications of pay TV, although representatives from PUSH, the United Church of Christ, the National Citizens Committee for Broadcasting, and the National Black Media Coalition testified.

FCC Commissioner Benjamin Hooks may well have fingered the main problem Congress will have to deal with: "You used to hear Joe Lewis fights over the radio. Now you get fights on closed circuit TV for \$20 or \$30 a seat... We've got the concept of protecting not the broadcaster, but broadcasting. Over-the-air TV came first, and the people's right to it was established."

Blue Sky Blues: Monopolies, Sponsorship and New Technologies

An interview with Erik Barnouw

By GAYLE GIBBONS and LARRY KIRKMAN

We talked with TV historian Erik Barnouw at his Washington office in the Smithsonian Institution's castle where he is working as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow on a book about broadcast sponsorship. In July '76 *Smithsonian Magazine* and later *Cable Lines* ran his article surveying new communications technologies. We were anxious to follow up some of the tentative and somewhat ironic speculations advanced in that article.

His words follow.

When each of the new communication technologies came along there were visions of it doing something spectacular for enlightenment/democratization. You find these astonishing predictions.

For example, when the phonograph record appeared in 1878, Edison said it will be a tremendous thing for education. Well, pretty soon it wasn't as much for education as for other things.

Then, when motion pictures came along, it's fascinating to read magazine articles from 1905, '06, '07. They foresaw it solving all the problems of education/democratization and citizenship.

When radio came along in the 1920's, the articles that were appearing in 1921, '22, '23 said the same thing. When FM came along there was a book called *Radio's Second Chance*. FM was going to be different, and for a while it did seem to be different. But as its audience expanded it became very much the same.

So when cable comes along, and you hear the same blue sky predictions, you feel a little cautious about it.

Recently, I read a story about CB. FCC members were in favor of expanded channel ruling. They thought it was an access medium. I'm a little skeptical about it. The FCC-created cable access channel has not amounted to much. To talk about CB in terms of access means even less. Mostly one-to-one conversation over a very small area. CB was used to organize the independent trucker strike and also for prostitution. But to what extent is this an answer to the kind of power exercised by commercial TV over millions of homes simultaneously?

The video medium suggests the possibility it will become almost as cheap to do something on tape as to use a pencil. Then you've got a medium that is accessible to everyone. You'll still have a distribution problem, though. The multiplicity of channels made possible by fibre optics will also provide a distribution channel. But even with more channels—FM acquired extra channels—all seem to be doing more or less the same thing. So where are we?

Take alternative FM. The question is if it can get beyond being a Hyde Park corner or a 14th St. soap box and take off to become a medium that has an impact on ideas.

There is an illusion of wide participation by people in TV but it is easily controlled: you just throw away what you don't want, keep what you want. All the little speeches about how marvelously the soap washed the thing. All those things precipitated in the same sort of way Jean Rouch got people to talk on the street. Apparently, you

can get people to talk about soap.

The best actors have learned to talk like real people. Acting is completely different. You look at acting of 15 years ago, and it is a completely different style. We learn from tape how people talk.

I remember that audio tape had an enormous impact after the War. When the first recorders came out, it was very exciting to record somebody and then listen to them. Just extraordinary. It was a revelation, because voices coming from recording machines had never sounded like that.

There is much more improvisation in all feature films than there used to be and in commercials too. So many commercials are very cinema verite-type commercials nowadays. Both political commercials and many other commercials as well.

Most of them are not the direct cinema that Leacock and others did: waiting for something to happen. They're more on the order of the kind of thing Rouch was doing: of getting something to happen and filming it as it happens. I'd say it has had an enormous effect on production methods in general & it sort of diffuses out into the industry.

But as ABC became more successful they dropped those documentary filmmakers. I think that they were not getting the ratings that ABC had hoped they would get. Sponsors were not especially enthusiastic about commissioning any projects of that sort, because they could never know what would come out of it. They created a certain amount of nervousness and didn't build up a large enough audience.

There is an enormous issue in the fact the more we get into cable, the more we create new control points, new gatekeepers. That's why in the *Smithsonian* magazine article I went into the whole history of communication by wire and the various times when there was a very strong monopoly of communication exercised by Western Union. It was actually much stronger than was suggested in the article because there really wasn't room for going into it. That was a period when newspapers relied completely on Western Union for news from other places.

This monopoly was controlled by Jay Gould, who also controlled railroads. It was so powerful that, annually, for 15 years bills were introduced in Congress to create an alternative system linking the nation's post offices with telegraph wires. The bills were defeated year after year, but any newspaper who editorialized in favor of it or had anything kind to say about it was assumed to be in danger of having its news cut off by Western Union. That was one of these sacred subjects that you avoided. It became a kind of crusade.

When the Western Union monopoly finally was broken by the telephone... then a new telegraph company came up calling itself Postal Telegraph. It had nothing to do with the postal system. By that time, however, the term postal had become a kind of rallying cry, so they adopted that term. Ironically enough that is what became part of ITT.

We have this optical fibre thing, and again the possibility that technology allows

everything to be done through a mere strand of wire. It creates a possibly dangerous situation. If the same wired system can carry cable TV, telephone calls, and handle all the computer networks, etc., then you have the very good possibility of the whole system becoming one system. When such things are technically possible they tend to happen. The issue of control is tremendous and very difficult to come to grips with.

I remember when radio came along. Anyone who thought the phonorecord would survive was considered crazy. It practically died out in the early 1930's, and actually began dying even earlier than that.

But there are all kinds of ironies. Phonograph records were saved by "race" records in the early 1920's. Blacks who really were under-represented on radio began to be excited about records. They stood in line to buy Bessie Smith records. This pulled Columbia records through what looked like disaster.

Early in the 1930's new companies sprang up, and the phonograph record became powerful. Decca began in 1934. No one would have thought it would become

breakdown. More and more the sponsor is in a position where he doesn't need to watch programs. He just gets from Nielsen the demographic breakdown of programs: what sex, age, etc., or economic status is the audience of this or this program. He can then match those to the same demographic breakdown of the people who buy his product.

Then he can say to the producer: I don't want to pay for men and children. I am just interested in women between the ages of 18-24, and that's all I'm going to pay for. What assurance can you give me?

Actually, the larger advertisers are getting an assurance that they will not have paid more than so much per 1000 women in the category they're interested in. If, after the period of 3 months according to the Nielsen statistics, they have paid more than that they get some bonus spots to make up the difference. That means the sponsor is constantly turning thumbs down on some programs, and up on others. You find some programs with pretty good ratings going down the drain because they're not reaching the right audience.

That happened with *Gunsmoke*. It was



Erik Barnouw author of *Tube of Plenty* in his Smithsonian office.

PHOTO BY STEVE SCHOENBAUM

so powerful that it would buy Universal Pictures. Then both were bought by MCA. These ups and downs are quite fantastic. I find it very hard to speculate about it.

I can't talk about my book too much. It's in first draft. In general, there are three parts. The first is the role of the sponsor in the broadcasting field historically, beginning with the invention of the idea by ATT in 1922 to the present. That goes through quite a few changes, first in radio, then in TV.

So I'll trace that difference historically, then go into the different kinds of programming and the relation of the sponsor/underwriter to it. In the 3rd section of the book I'll assess the meaning to society. Not quite sure yet what I'll say.

Historically the sponsor and the advertising agency own the programs. They produce/conceive, very often for a specific merchandising purpose.

Now, however, the relation of the sponsor to the program is much more indirect. He's buying just minutes and the network execs say he has no influence whatsoever over programming. That I doubt because he isn't buying minutes the way he buys them in England or Italy. He's always buying a specific minute in a program. The value of the minute or half minute he buys is subject to continuous negotiation so that there is a constant auction going on.

It is more or less like the stock market. The value of a spot on a certain program goes up or down from week to week. If the series is a success, the price immediately goes up. If it is slipping, the price goes down. So on any one program—let's say there are 5 spots on a program—they may all have been bought at different prices.

More and more Nielsen has reported not only households listening to a program, but has given the sponsor a demographic

found that the audience that had listened to it for years and years was getting older and older. It wasn't reaching young audience, it wasn't reaching many women, and it was just reaching an old audience which was good for laxatives or some tonics. But they could be reached by news programs which stations felt they had to carry. There are lots of laxatives on news programs.

The networks actually provide the agencies with the demographic statistics on who buys what product in exactly the same categories as Nielsen breaks down the program audiences. They suggest to the sponsors to match this up with the Nielsen demographics. Then they can say: We have just the programs to serve your needs.

Well, when it becomes as scientific as that, a sponsor no longer dares to go by hunch. He no longer dares to say "That's a great program we watched last night, let's get behind that." Why would anyone stick his neck out that way? Instead he looks at Nielsen reports/demographics. He looks at a retail marketing index and demographic statistics on who buys what product. They match these up, and as long as you're going on this scientific basis no one can blame you if something goes wrong. You have ample scientific reasons for doing what you're doing. This becomes a kind of expertise which no longer has to do with whether you like a program.

You get into a situation where sponsor decisions do make programs rise in value to the network or make them less valuable to the network. That's where the sponsor can't but help having a hand in the programming decisions: to what extent is a program going to serve the needs of the sponsors?

That is quite different from the situation you have in television systems in other

countries. You do buy time for a spot, but you do not specify where that spot will be. It has no relation to any program. It is a subtle difference but I think it is an all important difference.

The point of that is that the strongest control is exercised over the spot itself. Control is exercised over entertainment by the fact that you can choose where your spot is going to be.

But there is also some control over things like PSA's as a result of the Ad Council—which I'm going to trace historically to some extent. Then of course you have the underwriting situation. So you have different kinds of control, different degrees of influence, let's say, over different aspects of programming.

Almost all the companies that have gone in for heavy underwriting, have had some kind of image problem. Underwriting goes way back to Alcoa sponsoring Edward R. Murrow because they'd had an anti-trust problem which had given them a black eye. Almost every time a sponsor decides to sponsor something like that there has been something in the background.

Dupont sponsored the *Calvacade of America* because of the "Merchants of Death" phrase that came up in the mid-30's when there was a congressional investigation that brought out how much Dupont had made out of World War I. The statistics were quite horrifying. Before they even reached print Dupont had decided, through their ad firm, to go on the air with a history series, *Calvacade of America*, which went on for 10 years. They had very strict rules: no war stories; no shot was ever to be fired on that series. The slogan that went with the advertising was BETTER THINGS FOR BETTER LIVING THROUGH CHEMISTRY. They had feminist stories once a month, things having to do with civil rights.

What happened in the case of radio and TV? There was a freeze period: the 4-year period in which TV was in full operation in selected cities so that a sponsor could test here and there and see what would happen.

But none gave up their radio spots because you couldn't cover the country with TV. They didn't have wire connections. Lots of cities—Austin, Texas, Portland, Maine, Portland, Oregon—quite a few didn't have a TV station at all. Lots had only one TV station.

Then the freeze was lifted. The FCC began handing out licenses thick and fast. They had fantastic success stories during the freeze period. Advertisers just abandoned radio and plunged into TV. They had an enormous boom.

It was a situation that allowed TV to be tested pretty carefully. The tests were almost bizarre in their results. Hazel Bishop lipsticks increased something like 3000 percent. Castro Convertible, one little store did a commercial. A little Castro girl opened a couch herself. That was the foundation of an empire.

Advertisers will plunge into cable. A lot of stuff on cable will be sponsored stuff. Some of it will be pay TV stuff. What the proportion will be, I have no idea at all.

One of the things feared is that the audience will become fragmented because of the multiplicity of channels. Now I've seen some comments by advertisers who would actually welcome that because they say it will create great opportunity for the kinds of communications you control... like in radio before we went to scatter. You're right, it may encourage a reversion to the kind of sponsorship we did have, in which the sponsor produced the program. But I'm not making any predictions.

Keeping it in Perspective: Educators Use Video Modeling for Environmental Design

Aid in visualization developed in Ann Arbor, Berkeley

By ERIC CARLSON

For hundreds of years architects have relied on drawings to illustrate the buildings and cities they envisioned for the future. Since the 16th century, when Albrecht Durer perfected the technique for creating the perspective drawing, one of the more show-stopping tricks in the architect's bag has been the perspective rendering of a beautifully landscaped building, situated in a vibrant city.

Attractive as such utopias, drawn by generations of artists and architects, have been, they have in fact conveyed only a limited amount of information to their target audiences, and have become very costly exercises. The perspective drawing now more often serves as part of a ritual in architectural design than as a tool to make better informed decisions about the future.

In response to this problem designers and researchers at the University of Michigan and the University of California at Berkeley are capitalizing on developments in video and have begun to develop tools which will more comprehensively, and quickly convey design concepts. The intention of these researchers is not to make drawings obsolete but rather to enhance the process of visualization which is vital to the design and planning of our environment, by using video.

Professor Les Fader, of the Architecture Department at the University of Michigan, describes himself as an architect, photographer and inventor. His primary interest has been in developing ways for his students to become better designers.

A major problem for young designers has been visualization. Designers must learn to "see" the three dimensional consequences of their drawings and, visualizing a three dimensional building or landscape from a set of two dimensional drawings is difficult for beginning designers to learn. While the perspective drawing has traditionally been an important tool to aid such visualization, it is a time consuming practice, and is often frustrating for beginning students when they find they have spent hours on a drawing which has not provided them the information they desired. The use of scale models helps students to visualize design concepts but models, by themselves, can be misleading because of their small size.

Les Fader believes that the use of video equipment, coupled with scale models, can alleviate some of these problems for students, as well as for more experienced designers. With videotape, the visual experience of full scale environments can be simulated using models. Not only students and professional designers will benefit but the public can become more involved in the design and planning process as well.

Fader has his students build simple, rapidly constructed cardboard models of their designs, which may be rooms, houses, neighborhoods or city projects. Using small, specially adapted video equipment (Sony AVC 1400 cameras, fitted with lenses of Fader's invention) students can maneuver cameras around their models as if they were walking or driving, and can see images on the video monitor from the perspective of a person the same scale as the model.

The visual effect is one of experiencing a full-sized environment. With this technique, students can quickly see what their designs will look like without constructing perspective drawings or full sized mock ups. They can discover what will be seen when moving around or through a particular project. With the rapid feedback available from video, students can quickly change their designs, using scissors and cardboard, and evaluate the results, eliminating the need to go back to the drawing board. Fader calls this process of rapid feedback an exercise in peaking perceptual powers, and he feels that such perceptual peaking is important for beginning students in design because it develops their powers of visualization.

The Simulation Lab at Ann Arbor is equipped with extensive lighting, and audio equipment, and a variety of photographic processes are readily available so that simulations under a variety of environmental conditions can be executed, recorded and quickly reproduced. Rapidly developed photo transparencies and prints may even end up as aids for making traditional, perspective sketches.

Several videotapes, simulating proposed projects in the Ann Arbor community have been produced in Fader's lab. These tapes have been used to discuss new projects with citizens and Fader has found that people respond favorably to such tapes because they provide more information than drawings alone. Fader also surmises that the ready acceptance of video-transmitted design concepts has to do with most people's familiarity with the video image. People have spent thousands of hours looking at TV and know how to "read" it.

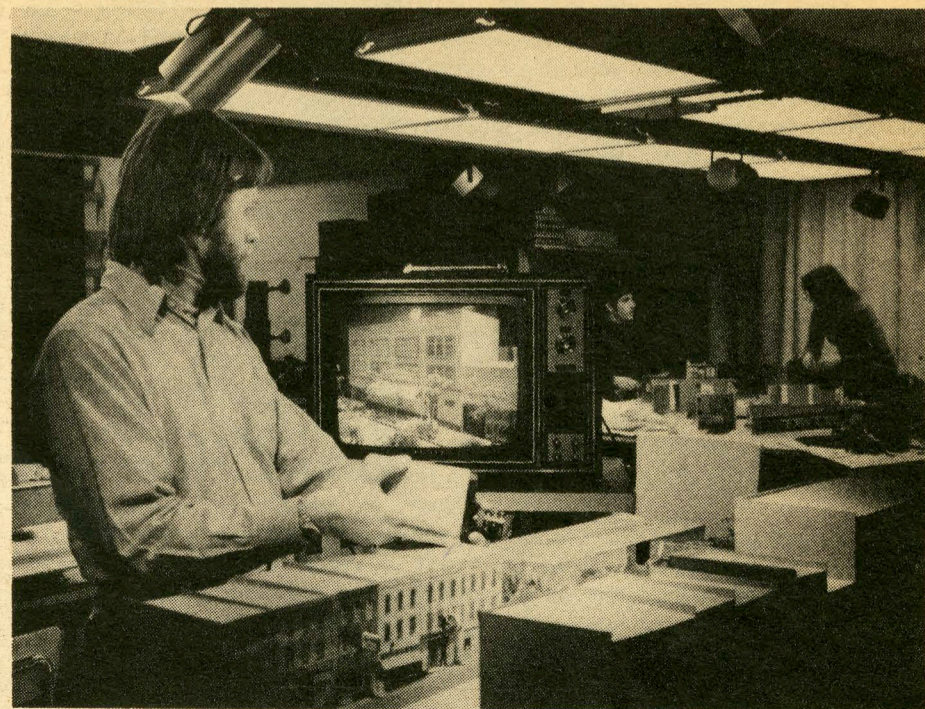
equipment, whose optical design creates the impression through the camera of seeing a life-sized environment.

Pre-programmed routes or "joy stick" controlled trips can be taken through model neighborhoods or districts and viewers can realistically see what such proposed projects will look like. The concept here is essentially the same as the work done at Michigan but the Berkeley Lab has been more highly automated.

In a recent project at the Simulation Lab, members of the Berkeley community participated in a city planning "game" to decide how an undeveloped area on the city's waterfront might be utilized. When a plan had been developed, architecture students built a scale model of the area in question, along the guidelines for development which had been agreed upon. After the model was completed videotapes and films were made of routes through this model. This fall citizens will be able to see these tapes and films and can review the visual implications of their planning decisions.

Appleyard and his colleagues are currently working on another project, commissioned by the Federal Energy Commission, to study the visual impact of wind generation facilities on residential neighborhoods. Scale model windmills of various types will be installed in a model of a typical residential neighborhood and videotapes and films will be made of the models to determine what types of windmills are most compatible with neighborhood housing.

The objectives of Appleyard's work involve the achievement of high quality color simulations, and the costly, miniaturized optics of the periscope apparatus have



BY LES FADER

Univ. of Michigan students using video with scale models in architecture design class.

While Fader's concern was helping his students, the Environmental Simulation Laboratory at the University of California at Berkeley has been more explicitly concerned with citizen participation in design and planning. There, Professor Donald Appleyard and his associates have developed a computer-directed periscope apparatus which can be directed through model environments. Movies, photographic stills or videotapes can be made with this

imposed certain limitations. Because of relatively high light demand levels for color video cameras, the periscope apparatus is more suited to 16mm and Super 8 film for color work. However, where rapid feedback is necessary, video will still be employed.

Eric Carlson, a founder of Videia, a Seattle-based video architectural consulting firm.

RESOURCES

PRINT

Spies in the Sky, Conference Reports, Policy in Australia, Sweden *Our bibliographic read-out*

Satellite Spies—*The Frightening Impact of a New Technology* (Bobbs-Merrill) is the first book written on the dangers of the communications toys launched regularly for the last 20 years. The book is a chatty and easy-to-read "investigation" by Sandra Hochman (with Sybil Wong) that weaves an appealing tone of discovery with solid facts and interviews with the satellite high priests and technologists, as well as critics like Ted Conant, Andy Horowitz, and Bert Cowlan of the Public Interest Satellite Association (PISA), who wrote in *TELEVISIONS* (Vol. 4, no. 1) about the need for greater control of satellites.

The subcommittee staff report, *Cable Television: Promise vs. Regulatory Performance* is available, at the cost of \$3.00 per copy, from: The Community Access Television Workshop of Greater Hartford, 275 Windsor Street, Hartford, CT 06120.

The complete transcripts of the cable television hearings before the House Communications Subcommittee will be available the first week in November. Contact the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, 2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515.

For Librarians: *Video and Cable Communications: Guidelines for Librarians*, by Brigitte Kenny and Roberto Esteves, has been prepared by the American Library Association's Ad Hoc Video/Cable Study Committee. It's available from ISAD, ALA, 50 E. Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611.

Another library resource: the National Information Center for Educational Media (NICEM) has new editions of nine nonprint media indexes, including videotapes, available in book or microfiche form. (NICEM, University of Southern California, University Park, LA, CA 90007.)

A conference on "Public Interest Communications Law—Where Should We Be Going? How Should We Get There?" resulted in a number of public interest lawyers agreeing on a major goal—new license renewal legislation. The Ottinger bill now in the House would totally revamp Section III of the Communications Act.

Details of the sessions will be published in a summary paper written by Frank Lloyd of Citizens Communications Center for the sponsoring group, Aspen Institute Program on Communications and Society. Write for info: 1785 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC, 20036. (202) 462-2011.

Members of the Committee on Film and Television Resources—better known as the Mohonk group, named so for the conference center where 30 filmmakers, archivists, educators and administrators met

in Feb. 1973—tell *TELEVISIONS* that their final report is due in December.

As reported last issue, the interim report has been issued. The focus was almost exclusively film, concentrating on different areas like distribution, preservation, education, production, etc.

What impact the report will have on the film establishment remains to be seen. The Committee numbers among the heaviest names in the independent film world. The tone is blue-sky, calling for an organization that will do everything that isn't currently done and is implicitly an indictment of the Hollywood-oriented American Film Institute.

Final copies available from: Jonas Mekas, 80 Wooster St., NYC 10012.

The print-out of "Open Circuits", a widely reported conference on video, art and television at the Museum of Modern Art in 1974, has been assembled by Douglas Davis and Allison Simmons. *The New Television: A Public/Private Art* includes not only articles and materials from the conference, but also up-dates and evaluation, and a survey to date. (January 1977: MIT Press, 256 pp, \$14.95). As the title indicates, the book attempts to explore the intersection of TV's public spectacle with the private process of making video and the private experience of watching it in the home. From the intro: "Both art and television have been straining in recent decades against their respective pasts—art to find a larger, public medium in which to act, television to find a smaller, personalized role, akin to print rather than spectacle. It remains to be seen whether either side, by embracing the other, can find itself." (*TELEVISIONS* review next issue.)

Telecom 2000 is the name of a major study of telecommunications developments in industrialized countries during the next 25 years. Issued by the Australian government, the report explores most of the major new technologies and their social effects, including satellites, fiber optics, facsimile, mobile radio, telex and data services, videophone, computers, micro miniaturization, etc.

For a copy write: Telecom Australia, 199 William St., Melbourne, Victoria 3000, Australia.

Swedish studies: A number of interesting reports on experiments with television in Sweden are available from the Commission for Radio and Television in Education (TRU). *Whither video?, Commercial Commodity or Common Property?* is a controversial book by Margareta Ingelstam, of the TRU, which recommends, among other things, that the government should

Damming the information flow. A catalog of people, meetings, books, survival techniques, and directions on how to find what we left out.

block commercial development of the videodisc.

Kabelvision Kiruna tells of a CATV experiment in a neighborhood *Programme for Sound and Pictures in Education* is an overview report of the unit's research and experiments. All are available from TRU, Stockholmsvagen 30, S-182 74 Stockholm, Sweden.

An Ohio-wide conference on the use of media in patient and consumer health education brought together over 100 health professionals in Ohio. In addition to the viewing of materials and personal exchange, participants received a very useful packet of information, including bibliographies, program materials, article excerpts and papers. Copies of the resource director are available from the Corporation for Health Education in Appalachia Ohio, Inc., PO Drawer 825, Athens, Ohio 45701 (614) 593-5526. Cost: \$2.50.

The Impact of Foundation Support on Creativity in the Performing Arts, prepared under a research grant from the Management in the Arts Program of UCLA's Graduate School of Management, is particularly interesting because it probes the subject from both foundation and recipient viewpoints... sometimes providing information from both ends of the same grant. Some of the data developed has implication for art groups who seek foundation grants. The report may be ordered from GSM Publication Services, Graduate School of Management, UCLA, Los Angeles, Ca. 90024. The price is \$1.50 per copy prepaid.

New Media Media: *VideoNews* is a new \$75/year factsheet on cable and pay-TV that merges Broadband Communications Report, Video Publisher and several other random publications. New publisher: Philips Publishing, 8401 Connecticut Ave, NW, Washington 20015. ... *Videoscope*, a much-hyped quarterly from Gordon & Breach, who distributed *Radical Software* in its waning hours, has gotten some new editorial blood from staff of Global Village, NY. Three issues are reportedly in the can—one is left-overs from *RS*, the second is on New York State, another on electronic journalism. None has yet been distributed. The summer issue of *Jump/Cut*, review of contemporary cinema, has a particularly interesting lead story on "Emile de Antonio and the New Documentary of the Seventies" that includes an analysis of his use of television. (Write: PO Box 865, Berkeley 94701). ... *Communications Tomorrow* is the World Future Society's New (April, 1976 was Vol. 1 #1) newsletter about media. It's heavy on technology, with quotes from futurists of all ilks. Editor is Wes Thomas, who formerly produced *Synergy Access*, (606 5th Ave., E. Northport, NY 11731).

Telephone in Education Newsletter is a quarterly about the use of the telephone system as an educational tool. Cost: \$30/yr. Write: Lorne A. Parker, Instructional Communications Systems, University of Wisconsin/Extension, 975 Observatory Drive, Madison, WI 53706, for inaugural sub. ... A new international journal, *Telecommunications Policy* will appear in December (\$52 for four issues until Oct. 31. Thereafter: \$78/four issues). It will feature

research on policy and technical developments. Editor: Larry Day of Bell/Canada. Write: IPC Business Press, 205 E. 42nd St., NY 10017 (212) 889-0700. ... *Vidicon* is the newsletter of the Alternate Media Center's cable TV interns & friends. For a copy write: 422 S. Park, Madison WI 53715.

More than 75 special interest periodicals that deal with film and video are now published on a regular basis. (This does not include the dozens of trade magazines and newsletters). For a listing of the periodicals, send a legal-sized, self-addressed stamped envelope to American Film Institute, Kennedy Center, Washington, D.C. 20566.

The Action for Children's Television Library in Newton, Mass., contains materials on all aspects of children and television. The collection includes books, unpublished manuscripts, research reports, newspaper clipping files, as well as files on children and TV in specific categories. For example advertising, violence and children's programs that TV stations produce locally. Bibliographies and reading lists are available for a nominal charge.

SOFTWARE

The Videomaker Review

*Tapes done, to come,
sought, and described*

Visions series of original TV dramas, which premiered on PBS in October, has 21 segments in the can. With three more to complete, a dozen short of its original goal, the "Visions" unit will fold in February. One Reason: CPB, which promised "to help raise" over \$5 million in the beginning of the project, contributed \$2.2 million and didn't try too hard for the rest. Critical reaction has been mixed thus far, dimming prospects of an 11th-hour save for the unit which was founded to bring innovative American drama to TV.

Black American journalists, including videomakers Vernard Gray from CAFAM III in Washington, D.C., and Bill Robinson from People's Communication Network in NYC, have been invited by Ugandan premiere Idi Amin to visit the African nation and produce reports for the Afro-American audience. Gray and Robinson left in October taking two Sony cassette rigs, tape, and lots of batteries.

Ed Emshwiller is working on a new tape at the TV Lab, WNET: *Sir Faces*. ... WGBH-TV's New Television Workshop is producing a \$100,000+ project with money from NEA, Rockefeller and others called *Collisions*. Under the artistic direction of Jane Wagner, co-writer and producer for Lily Tomlin, the project will feature the visions of a variety of artists, including videomakers Peter Campus, Willie Wegman, Louis Falco, Ed Emshwiller, Ron Hays, Nam June Paik, Stan Vanderbeek.

Off-Air: Australia is a half-hour edit of broadcast appearances down-under by San Francisco based art and architecture group *Ant Farm*. Sorry to say that the artist-ambassadors came up with a zero on their principle mission—to document the sacred green ants on Aboriginal tribal lands. Two weeks in the back-country, waiting for a telegram from the natives which never came.

Fortunately, they were able to perform an opera with 22 automobiles and a kangaroo (CAR-MEN), which is part of the "off-air" edit.

Next project for *Ant Farm*: Dolphin Embassy, a "floating interspecies communications station dedicated to long-term human/dolphin interaction in the open sea environment." Construction is due to begin in early 1977.

Further evidence that videodisc home marketing remains in distant future (as reported in *TELEVISIONS* last issue): The international videocommunications market—VIDCOM—which ran in Cannes in Oct., has tentatively decided to skip 1977 for lack of interest. Only one disc manufacturer—German-based Magnetic Disc Recording—displayed at this year's VIDCOM. MDR is the only system which features record as well as playback.

Rape tapes: The National Center for the Prevention and Control of Rape is seeking printed and audiovisual materials for a clearinghouse on the subject of rape and sexual assault. Audiovisuals should be sent to Women's Crisis Center, Catherine McClary or Jan BenDor, 325 E. Summit St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104. The Center will pay

postage and dupe costs up to \$5; amounts over that should be cleared in advance. In addition, you will receive a copy of the directory in exchange. (From *Media Report to Women*.)

Bill Moyers, who acted like a fifth wheel on CBS's convention coverage, has finished four docs for CBS Reports, which will air starting in December.

Producers of Midnight Blue public-access erotic series have slapped a quarter-million buck damage suit onto Time-Life, Inc. and its Manhattan Cable subsidiary. The show was cancelled in May because it allegedly flouted FCC obscenity regulations.

Videotape Illustrations of mental illness are videotapes for teaching medical students and other interested groups how to recognize and deal with various forms of mental illness. They have been produced by University of Southern California School of Medicine.

The six tapes use actors to portray a woman with manic-depressive illness, a man with depression that might lead to suicide, a woman with a personality disorder that makes it difficult for her to make small decisions, a man with an organic brain disorder caused by alcohol and drug abuse and a woman with schizophrenia.

Creators feel the tapes might be useful for helping various groups recognize mental disorders. They express hope that parents, teachers, school nurses, pharmacists, and others in the community will view

the tapes and see that treatment is started early for persons showing signs of mental illness. For further information, write: The News Bureau; University of Southern California; Los Angeles, Ca. 90007.

Look for new comedy shows off the success of *MHMH* and *Monty Python*: "Glitters", from Norman Lear, is a serial about sex roles. "Mother's Little Network" is WGBH's American version of *Python* now being piloted.

"Making It In Hollywood" is an hour tape produced by Frank and Laura Cavestani and Tom Weinberg, just completed and on the market for broadcast airing. The documentary, shot in 3/4" cassette, focuses on unknown and known actors in Tinseltown with scenes in Schwab's Drugstore, at parties, with agents, and at casting sessions (including the new Mae West movie). While there are no "star" roles, some better-known Hollywoodies like Tab Hunter, Sally Kirkland and Shelley Winters make appearances.

"Bionic Beaver, Calling Bionic Beaver. Move over Haywire—Tell Cameraman and Bay City Muff Diver to meet at the 66 . . ." So it went as *Optic Nerve*, the SF video-collective, hit the highways in October to shoot their documentary on independent owner-operators—i.e., truckers. *O. Nerve* has a CB-equipped Winnebago-like camper rented for two months, during which they have traveled cross-country with major characters and several minor ones in an exploration of the great "myth of independence." Shooting ends in December, with a rough-cut by Christmas, they hope.

By and For Media Makers Progress reports

A series of regional workshops for cable programmers has been launched by the newly organized National Federation of Local Cable Programmers. Started by a group of cable activists who got their start in Alternate Media Center internships at cable stations, the NFLCP aims to develop strong regional grassroots voices for cable producers and community video centers. To date no effective organization has developed, though several failed efforts have been made.

Some regions have already met. Others are in mid-process. To find out who's working in your area and to get on the mailing list, write: NFLCP, 122 North Duke St., York, PA 17401.

World's most extensive test of fiber optics for two-way video services will begin in November near Osaka, Japan. Called HI-OVIS, the \$17 million government funded project will reach 300 subscribers in the initial field test, offering request TV programs, request data in still-picture, facsimile copies, including a home "newspaper", computer-assisted instruction, cashless bank transactions, TV shopping and reservations, burglar and fire alarm, automatic meter readings.

Now available for the first time— a comprehensive anthology of



Seventy-three artists, including NAM JUNE PAIK, LYNDIA BENGGLIS, PETER CAMPUS, TERRY FOX, HERMINE FREED, JOAN JONAS, MICHAEL SNOW, and BILL WEGMAN, have contributed two-page spreads expressing, evoking, or explaining some aspect of their work, many with photographs from their tapes.

Artists, curators, reviewers, and video participants have written articles reviewing some of the major tapes as well as examining:

- VIDEO ART INSTALLATIONS: THE TELENVIRONMENT
- THE SCOPE OF MULTI-CHANNEL VIDEO WORK
- VIDEOPERFORMANCE
- THE EUROPEAN SCENE
- THE SURREALITY OF VIDEOTAPE
- IMAGE PROCESSING AND VIDEO SYNTHESIS
- VIDEO/TELEVISION SPACE
- VIDEO IN THE MID-70's

Edited by Ira Schneider and Beryl Korot, videotape artists and co-founders of *Radical Software*, this anthology is essential for everyone practicing or studying video.

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich
General Books Dept.
757 Third Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017

CET

Please send me _____ copies of *Video Art*
@ \$19.95 in hardcover or _____ copies
@ \$9.95 in paperback. I enclose // check //
money order for \$ _____ total. (Please add
sales tax where applicable.)

Your name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

The Gerontological Society, a professional association for researchers and academics in the field of aging, has received an \$85,000 grant from HEW to conduct a series of workshops on the use of television and other media to inform older Americans about available services. Among the consultants is Gwyn Donchin who has organized a major TV series at KQED on services for senior citizens. For further information about the location and perspective of these workshops, write: Dr. Alexander Comfort, Gerontological Society, One Dupont Circle, Suite 520, DC 20036.

The Conference on Culture and Communications, held alternate years as the Conference on Visual Anthropology, is scheduled for March 9, 10, 11, 1977 at Temple University. Focus of the conference is the processes whereby social and cultural ideologies are formed, transmitted and expressed in behavior, including ideological messages, structures, codes. Write: Dept. of Anthropology, Temple University, Philadelphia PA 19122. (215) 787-7601.

Site selections for ten workshops about videocassette technology at public TV stations were made on October 25 by a panel consisting of representatives from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Public Broadcasting Service and the group which is running the workshops—Global Village, in cooperation with the Coalition for New Public Affairs Programming.

The workshops, which are scheduled monthly starting in November, will be held in the following cities: Rochester, NY; Trenton, NJ; Pittsburgh; Chapel Hill, N.C.; Miami; Houston; Wichita, KS; Seattle or Tacoma, WA; Minneapolis; and San Francisco.

Approximately half the 20 participants at each workshop will be area artists and producers working in film and video. The emphasis will be hands-on use of cassette technology. A full SONY 2800/DCX-1600 production unit and 2850 editing system will be left at each station for a month following the workshop.

For further information, write John Reilly, Global Village, 454 Broome, NYC. 10013.

The Apprenticeship Program at cable TV systems sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts and local cable systems is being offered by the Alternate Media Center at New York University for the fourth year. Deadline for applicants is December 13. The salary is \$8,580.

Apprentices must make a joint application with a cable system, with details on the kind of programs intended for production, experience and capabilities, etc. Guidelines are available from AMC, 144 Bleeker St., New York 10012. (212) 598-3338.

Independent Film and Video Preview Network is a newly organized cooperative for screening new independent work at 13 sites around the U.S. Monthly application to enter work in the four-month preview "cycle" is initiated by the producer and is free. Acceptance is on a first-come, first-served basis. Works are bicycled to the 13 host sites for screening to programmers (museums, media centers, film societies, schools, etc.), purchasers (distributors, libraries, etc.) and writers, not the general public.

Screening cycle began Oct. 6. Cities include Pittsburgh (where the project originated), Washington, D.C., Greenville, S.C., Kentucky, Houston, Boulder, LA, Berkeley, Portland, Minneapolis, Chicago, Buffalo, New York.

Details for tape application or participa-

tion are available from Pittsburgh Filmmakers, PO Box 7200, Pittsburgh, PA 15213 (412) 681-5449.

"Video October" was a San Francisco experiment in showing videoart in a theater environment. For five weeks two programs per week were shown on alternating afternoons and evenings. Dozens of programs were featured. The operation was organized by Cyril Roseman and sponsored by Public Eye, which hopes to raise money for an ongoing theater space in the city.

Public Eye also again sponsored the "Moebius Video Show," part of the San Francisco Art Fest. 70 entries yielded a stimulating show. Top honors went to Max Almy for her *The "I Love You Tapes"*. Second prize: Chonk Moonhunter Productions for *Go Gong Go*, a piece about Chinatown.

Exceptional Individual Film Festival: the University of Southern California University-Affiliated Program at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles and the Southern California Region of the American Association on Mental Deficiency are sponsoring their Seventh Annual Film Festival on March 11, 1977 in USC's Hancock Auditorium. Outstanding professional independent, and commercial films and videotapes portraying handicapped children and adults produced during the preceding 18 months will be presented. The films selected may be those that were prepared with a special professional group in mind, e.g., physicians or educators, or may be of general interest.

For information contact: Neil Goldstein, Assistant Director of Instructional Materials, University Affiliated Program, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles; P.O. Box 54700; Los Angeles, Ca. 90054.

Hospitals and Clinics Training Office at the University of California Medical Center (San Francisco, CA 94143) seeks both health and non-health alternative programming for a closed-circuit patient channel in Moffitt Hospital. If you would like to have your cassette shown, contact Sherry Stern, care of CCTV Patient Education Project. Phone: (415) 666-3247.

For four days at the annual meeting of the Gerontological Society in New York, Oct. 14-17, a conference room was available to view and discuss videotape and film presentations to its "Media and Aging" forum. Audiences of students and professionals working with senior citizens saw videotapes ranging from large-budget programming for national PBS distribution, to mini-budget programs produced on 1/2" equipment for cable or closed-circuit audiences. Watching a segment of "Maude," followed by a tape of senior citizens working their community 2-way telecommunications system in Reading, Pa., indicates the variety of ways video is being used to relate to a largely neglected segment of the population.

Individuals and groups interested in making their local media more responsive to community needs should be aware that the FCC has initiated a rulemaking proposing to make more station materials available to the public. Comments are officially due by Dec. 8 (but if you miss that deadline, the FCC will still read your comments).

The FCC asks for public comments on four issues:

- Whether the FCC should require local radio stations to machine reproduce their public file materials upon request at reasonable cost, as it now requires television stations to do.

- Whether the program logs of radio stations should be maintained, made available to and duplicated for the public, as television stations must now do.

- Whether the FCC should continue to require that radio stations maintain for three years all listener correspondence relating to the radio stations operation; and

- Whether, as a new requirement, the FCC should require both radio and television stations to retain and provide to the public, transcripts or tapes of programming other than sports or entertainment. (Public broadcasting stations are already required to do this for public affairs programs.)

Comments can be in the form of a simple letter. They need not be long or legalistic. Sending several copies to the FCC is a good idea, so that copies will get to all FCC Commissioners (technically you are supposed to file 12 copies, but even one is accepted). Remember to give the Docket number (#19667) of the rulemaking and address the comments to Vincent J. Mullins, Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, Washington, D.C. 20554.

HARDWARE

NYC Trade Shows Spotlight ENG Equipment

By JOHN TRAYNA

Video Expo opened with a great deal of fanfare and advance publicity on October 12. For three days Madison Square Garden became the industry's slickest equipment showroom. More than a thousand interested spectators had an opportunity to see, play with, and compare a variety of equipment, technologies and theories.

Time base correctors and automatic editors seemed to be in the main spotlight, with a dearth of new models and entrants into the field. The Microtime 2020 time base corrector raised quite a few eyebrows with fairly early, but nonetheless impressive, field test reports to accompany their on-site demonstrations. CVS, one of the early leaders with time base correctors, had three new models display. In both cases, the cost is close to \$20,000 when ordering all the options, which on the 2020 at least, includes a built-in image enhancer.

TRI and Convergence Systems automated editors have become the overwhelming choice in the past year but there seems to be a lot of competition in this area. In both cases the newer models are generally smaller, easier to operate, more accurate, and more expensive! Most of the automated systems manufacturers have more or less abandoned 1/2" as a viable medium to work in, and have concentrated their energies on the 3/4" market.

Sony went all out as usual, but their own broadcast version time base corrector was conspicuously absent especially considering the rumors that have persisted about it ever since the NAB convention earlier this year. Their \$30,000 broadcast color camera was the primary focus of their exhibit along with the rest of their broadcast series equipment. 2850 cassette editors and their other second generation cassette equipment was the accepted standard of the majority of the exhibitors, but I can't remember seeing a single 1/2" machine in Sony's exhibit.

Speaking of color cameras, you saw them everywhere you looked. Most of them five-figure range. Hitachi is now promising east coast delivery of their CCU-less, 7 lbs., 3030 portable color camera with a new and improved single gun system, and more sensitive tube. Along with

its detachable, short shotgun microphone, it comes equipped with a detachable, side-mounted, viewfinder. At a cost of approximately \$5,000, it bears looking into.

JVC showed their new portable color cassette unit which was received with mild surprise. Their latest effort provides vertical interval assembly editing with the camera, a practically non-existent CCU, and no AC color unit required for color playback.

At the SMPTE Conference held in the plus Americana Hotel, Sony showed their own time base corrector, excusing its performance as a prototype model. Otherwise, the video portion of the SMPTE exhibits was largely a carbon copy of Video Expo.

Sound was a subject of major concern, and there were a number of alternatives offered, including stereo Nagras, Uhers, and the like. The Dolby Corporation of America had a major exhibit booth with three separate automated systems to offer. Audio Services Corporation announced their entry into the equipment rental business and published a list of incredibly low rates for audio equipment rental which should be of major interest to New York area independent film and video producers. They also had a parabolic dish for attachment to any omni-directional microphone to make it outperform, they claim, any shotgun microphone on the market.

Neither show was an earthshattering advance glimpse into video's future, but both clearly demonstrated, the current meaning of "state of the art."

John Trayna, Technical Director of Electronic Arts Intermix in New York City, answers reader inquiries about hardware in his column "Dear John." If you have a problem, write John directly at EAI, 84 Fifth Ave., NYC, or at TELEVISIONS. He will answer all questions, whether or not they're published.

TV/Media Grantees

\$20,000 from the SF Foundation to the Committee on Children's Television in San Francisco to improve the quality of local programming, 5/6/76.

\$490,000 from the Sloan Foundation to MIT, a two year grant for second phase of development of cable television system and for relating work in video and computer programming, 4/13/76.

\$10,000 from the Ford Foundation to Mills College, Oakland, Ca. to document ideas and work of 8 American composers on videotape, 5/76.

\$18,000 from the Arca Foundation to the National Association for the Southern Poor, Petersburg, Va. for purchase of video equipment to expand activities of Virginia Assemblies, '75.

\$100,000 from the Ford Foundation to EBC, NYC for production of pilot public TV series aimed at working class audience, 5/76.

\$23,317 from the Markle Foundation to Pomona College, Dept. of Sociology in Claremont, Ca. to produce pilot TV program of entertainment and information for the elderly.

\$186,000 from the Markle Foundation to the Harvard Graduate School of Education to secure basic knowledge about how children encounter and then come to understand the TV medium and to trace steps whereby children learn to make distinctions between fantasy and reality in TV presentations.

Note to subscribers

As many subscribers have noted in letters, this issue is late. We have concentrated on securing adequate funding to guarantee a regular quarterly publication during 1977. Next year our prices will change to reflect new costs. However, all current subscribers who paid for 10 issues will receive that many, regardless of future subscription offers. Thanks for your support during this difficult period of fund-raising.

FOR SALE: (2) Color Sony AV 8400 1/2" EIAJ VTR modified for broadcast use. (2) Color Concord PCC-49 camera. Extra batteries, cable, backpack, etc.
Contact: Richard Ward, PO Box 7, Carrboro, N.C. 27510, or call 919-933-8191.