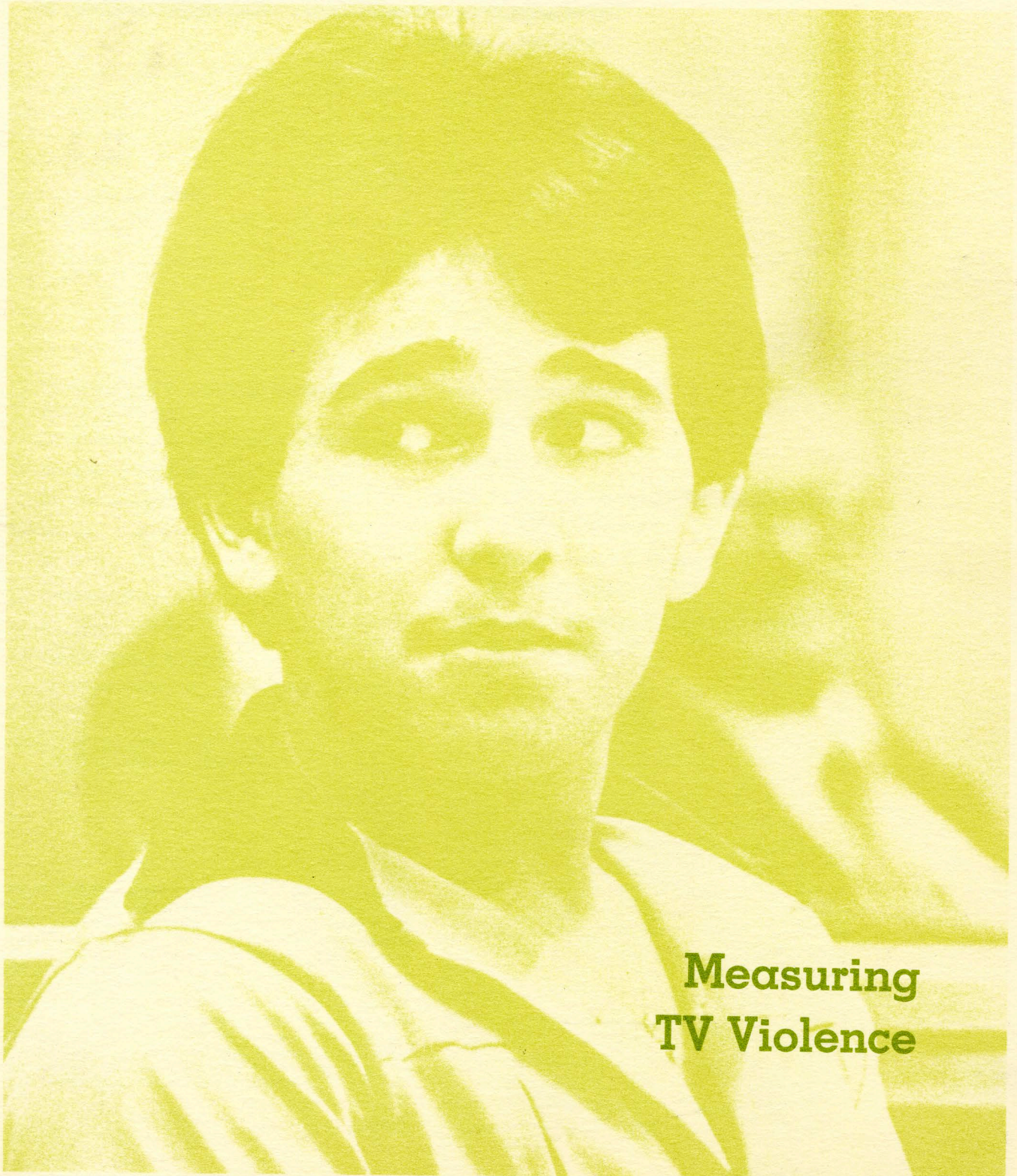


TELEVISIONS



Measuring TV Violence

Volume 7, Number 1

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cover—Ronney Zamora from *TV on Trial*
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Measuring TV Violence: Research Methodologies

By Alan Balkema
and Monica Dignam

Public outcry against the amount of violence on television is not new. It has existed since the beginning of network television. The National Association for Better Radio and Television, formed in 1949, was one of the first to examine media content, in particular the amount of violence on television.

Associations including the American Council for Better Broadcasting, Foundation to Improve Television, National Citizens Committee for Better Broadcasting, Network Project and Action for Children's Television have lobbied against media violence, particularly as it affects children. These groups have been successful in focusing public attention, initiating congressional inquiry, and loosening funds for scientific research, but they have had little effect on the amount of violence broadcast.

The Surgeon General's report

The question of violence and its effects upon viewers is the most studied aspect of media today. Much of this research is funded by the Federal government in hopes that a final, definitive consensus can be reached. In 1969 the Surgeon General's Advisory Committee on Television and Social Behavior was established to reach such a consensus. But, their five-volume report *Television and Social Behavior*, published in 1972, failed to clear the air. Boiled down, their conclusion was that while television is the most pervasive influence upon American society today, it is one of many, and therefore causal links between viewing and violence cannot be absolutely established among the mass of society.

Those who had counted upon the Surgeon General's report to supply the impetus necessary for reform were seriously disappointed. Not only were causal links not established, television's influential status was clearly identified to the foolhardy few who may have contemplated a quest. Pleas to Congress or the regulatory agencies for television reform are futile without clear support from the scientific community or overwhelming public outcry. Neither appear to be forthcoming.

Caught in their own trap of having to establish causal links statistically, social scientists de-

sign their research projects to isolate a single variable acting upon behavior. Exhibited behavior must then be scored upon a numerical scale to yield a measure of correlation. This design, when applied to real life, is inadequate.

Methodology

It is an impossible task to design a situation in which a single variable is responsible for behavior. The mind is too complex an organism. But, jaded by years of experience teaching rats to run mazes and pigeons to whirl, social scientists continue to try.

A method used by Berkowitz (1965), Feshbach (1960), Zillman (1973), and others was to arouse "volunteers", expose them to mediated violence or erotica, and attempt to measure subsequent aggressive feelings. The initial arousal normally came in the form of insult or a mild electric shock. Post-exposure aggression was measured by giving the volunteer an opportunity to retaliate with electric shock, by questionnaires asking them to rate their feelings, or through word association tests.

One of the problems with this methodology centers upon the exclusively male, undergraduate "volunteers." Subtle violence (the withholding of course credit for non-participation in experiments) or reward (in the form of extra course credit) has normally been exercised over them to insure their participation.

At the experiment site the volunteers are told that behavior other than what is actually being measured is the target of the experiment. The set-up varies according to methodology, but an integral assumption of the researchers is that the subject at the experiment site is a *tabula rasa*. Behavior exhibited and measured during the experiment has been elicited by the experimenters during the course of the experiment. Preoccupations, stresses, or established patterns of behavior which enter the site along with the body of the subject are discounted as a causal influence.

Although not discussed as a relevant part of scientific research, the existence of such independent variables is tacitly admitted by the experimenters in their exclusion of women as subjects. This exclusion suggests that experimenters have enough trouble reaping significant correla-

tions from among male subjects to risk including females. Other explanations are that women, as the "weaker sex," couldn't "take" the electric shock, or might cry if subjected to verbal abuse. If nothing else, this reveals that research into the question of mediated violence is top heavy with male researchers.

Measuring effects of TV violence

In experiments where the measure of aggression is electric shock, the number and intensity of shocks indicates the intensity of aggressive feelings. The assumption is that electric shock is so uncomfortable that only a subject in a very aggressive state would administer it to another person. There is a contradiction between this assumption and the methodology of the researchers.

In an experiment by Berkowitz and Geen (1965) subjects were placed in either an "angered" or "nonangered" category at the beginning of the experiment. The "angered" group each received seven shocks, but the "nonangered" group each received one shock. If electric shock is regarded by the experimenters as such a reliable indicator of aggression due to its undesirability, this use of gratuitous shock at the beginning of the experiment seems inconsistent. Its inclusion for both the "angered" and "nonangered" subjects gives them a clue on what the experimenters expect from them. The number of shocks received by the subject serves as a guide to how many he is expected to deliver. These expectations are especially apparent to undergraduates attuned to the subtle wants of professors and their graduate assistants.

Research conducted by Bandura (1963), Appell (1963), and Baran (1974) used children as subjects. Observation of children at play after exposure to mediated violence replaces the manipulation of research volunteers. The results are suggested by common sense. Children with established patterns of aggression are more likely to copy violent actions seen on television.

In a research study by Lefkowitz, et al, *Television Violence and Child Aggression: A Follow-up Study*, children monitored five-and ten-years after initial testing continued this tendency. In addition, aggressive children watched more television than their less aggressive peers. Does the increase time spent watching television raise the level of aggression? Intuitively yes, but to construct an experiment whereby such an increase could be satisfactorily isolated remains the impossible dream.

Critics from the commercial networks complain that studies conducted in laboratories, homes or schools create an atmosphere of artificiality that invalidate the findings. They note that a few minutes observing children in any situation

will reveal that some are more aggressive than others. Nonetheless, when findings appear in their favor, these same critics do not question the methodology.

Counting violent episodes: Gerbner

Media researchers conducting content analysis provide value-free data to critics and network executives alike. One of the most well-published of these is the ongoing project headed by George Gerbner at the Annenberg School of Communications. Since the 1967 season, his group recorded the number of violent episodes occurring during sample weeks of prime time and Saturday morning programs. Programs are divided into categories and the number and role of characters involved in violent activities tabulated.

This set of comprehensive data is a valuable resource in charting the trends of televised violence. Gerbner and his associates are studying violence by using videotapes of programs, not trying to isolate an instance of human behavior as it relates to and is affected by television. Though his methods are not without critics, users of his research have an accurate measure of the phenomenon.

This research has identified trends in the amount of violence on television. Violent episodes declined steadily until 1973, reversed and rose until 1976 before dropping dramatically in the 1977 season. A finding repeated yearly since 1967 is that of all programming, children's cartoons are the most violent. In spite of the fact that there has been increasing opposition from children's advocates during the past decade, the commercial television industry has continued to air the most violent programs to this audience. Of course, cartoons are intended to be humorous. Judging from the continued high ratings of cartoons the humor must be conveyed. How much of the violence is also communicated? Is there a danger that humor and violence will become synonymous? Violent episodes in cartoons, especially through repeated exposure, could establish a concept that one follows the other.

In response to public outcry against violent programming the consequences of violent acts are no longer shown. Viewers may still hear the gun fire, but are spared watching the body fall. Television executives consider this a reform. Actually it is a dangerous form of sanitized violence. To graphically portray the expressive act and remain silent on the serious consequences is hardly performing a service.

Formative/evaluative research

The new field of formative/evaluative research is potentially one of the most valuable methods for research within the broadcast industry. At present it is used almost exclusively by educational televi-

sion to evaluate a program's effectiveness. Producers of programs designed to teach learning skills to pre-schoolers can receive sample data from the target audience following completion of a pilot. Ineffective learning tools, methods and formats can be identified before entire budgets are squandered on unworkable ideas.

Conceivably a researcher could develop a readily available spectrum of target audiences. Participating daycare centers and schools already provide target audiences for educational broadcast research. Adult audiences could be reached via CATV. Ideas batted around between creative personnel could be taped and aired to a target audience to test their effectiveness before actual program production begins. Ongoing research could be conducted on a series to determine if the producer's ideas of the program message are those perceived by the viewers. Viewer feedback could indicate new approaches to producers.

Applications of this research need not be limited to educational television. The lack of originality and reliance upon sex and violence demonstrated by the commercial television networks

indicates a dramatic lack of innovative thought. Producers could work closely with researchers to develop new program formats. Advertisers could become more involved in the production process, using research data to reach target audiences. Network executives could be provided with criteria to base programming decisions instead of having to rely on gut feeling or market shares. Rather than know whether or not viewers are watching a program, they could receive the whys of viewer selection. Programs could be built from scenes into series, rather than making pilots which may or may not return their investment.

Formative/evaluative research is still developing. Problems such as target audiences not being readily available for testing, and program producers being unreceptive to researchers' findings are being solved as the discipline gains acceptance. Its attraction is that it could become the basis for improving the quality and substance of commercial television by revealing its shortcomings and demonstrating new approaches to executives.

Annotated Bibliography

The references cited below review the academic research available in a "real world" perspective. They are divided into four categories roughly corresponding to the categories discussed in the article. Only references to television and violence are included here, i.e. no research on film or the effects of television in general are included.

Experimental research designed to measure effects of media violence on adults and children

Baran, S.J. Prosocial and antisocial television content and modeling by high and low self-esteem children. *Journal of Broadcasting*, 1974, 18(4), 481-495.

In general, low self-esteem children modeled television behaviors (both pro-and antisocial) more than high self-esteem children. But high self-esteem boys imitated antisocial behavior more than any other group.

Berkowitz, L. & R.L. Geen. Film violence and the cue properties of available targets. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 1966, 3, 525-530.

After provocation, male undergraduates were more likely to "shock" their tormentor (with what they were told was electric shock) if his "name" was Kirk ... after seeing a violent fight scene in a Kirk Douglas movie.

Greenberg, B.S. & C.E. Wotring. Television violence and its potential for aggressive driving behavior. *Journal of Broadcasting*. 1974, 18(4), 473-480.

After exposure to a violent videotape, high school drivers were no more likely to behave aggressively behind the wheel than those viewing a non-violent videotape.

Hartnagel, T.F.; J.L. Teevan & J.J. McIntyre. Television violence and social behavior. *Social Forces*. 1975, 54(2), 241-251.

Television violence was insignificant in comparison to other variables (like sex and grade) in predicting violent behavior in 7th to 12th grade students.

Kniveton, B.H. The very young and television violence. *Journal of Psychosomatic Research*. 1974, 18(4), 233-237.

More "lower class" children imitated the violent actions of television programs than "middle" or "upper" class children did.

Liebert, R.M. & R.A. Baron. Some immediate effects of televised violence on children's behavior. In F. Rebelsky & L. Dorman (Eds) *Child Development and Behavior*. (2d ed) New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1973, 470p.

After exposure to aggressive programs, children engaged in longer attacks against victims (their peers) and higher levels of aggressive play.

Noble, G. Discrimination between different forms of televised aggression by delinquent and non-delinquent boys. *British Journal of Criminology*. 1971, 11(3), 230-244.

This researcher found no difference in behavior between delinquent or non-delinquent boys after exposure to televised violence.

Thomas, M. H. & R. S. Drabman. Tolerant of real life aggression as a function of exposure to televised violence and age of subject. *Merrill-Palmer Quarterly*. July 1975, 21(3), 227-232.

After watching either a violent program or

baseball game, first through third graders were slower to report violent behavior in their playmates when they saw the violent show.

Worchel, S., T. W. Hardy & R. Hurley. The effects of commercial interruption of violent and non-violent films on viewers' subsequent aggression. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*. 1976, 12(2), 220-232.

Undergraduates were more aggressive after viewing a violent film uninterrupted by commercials.

Research designed to "count" violent episodes in programs.

Coffin, T. E. & S. Tuchman. Rating programs for violence: A comparison of five surveys. *Journal of Broadcasting*. 1972-1973, 17(1), 3-20.

The validity and merits of five indices are criticized by the authors (also NBC employees).

Dominick, J. R. Crime and law enforcement on prime-time television. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 1973, 37(2), 241-250.

A content analysis of one week of prime-time television. Researcher concludes that an analysis of television crime indicates that it's presented so as to minimize the threat to society. (i.e. the bad guy always loses.)

Gernber, G. & L. Gross. Living with television: The violence profile. *Journal of Communication*. 1976, 26(2), 173-199.

The method employed by his group is described here. Findings suggest that a general sense of danger and mistrust is being cultivated via television. Fear is exploited through symbolic violence. (See also the Surgeon General's reports below. Gerbner was one of the primary consultants.)

Greenberg, B. S. & T. F. Gordon. Critics and public perceptions of violence in television programs. *Journal of Broadcasting*. 1970-1971, 15(1) 29-43.

Comparison of the violence rating of 66 prime-time entertainment programs by a sample of critics and the general public showed that both groups rated the programs similarly.

Zusne, L. Measuring violence in children's cartoons. *Perceptual & Motor Skills*. 1968, 27(3 Pt. 1) 901-902.

Measured violent episodes on two networks. Found a significant difference in amount of violence between networks and that dramatic (straight) cartoons were usually more violent than slapstick cartoons.

The Surgeon General's Report... and Response

Atkin, C. K., J. P. Murray & O. B. Nayma. The Surgeon General's research program on television and social behavior: A review of empirical findings. *Journal of Broadcasting*. 1971-1972, 16(1), 21-35.

For those who don't want to wade through the five-volume report, this paper reviews each report including a brief overview of the history and basic conclusions.

Bogart, L. Warning: the Surgeon General has determined that television violence is moderately dangerous to your child's mental health. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. 1972-1973, 36(4), 491-521.

Another review of the five-volume report.

Cater, D. & S. Strickland. *Television violence and the child: The evolution and fate of the Surgeon General's report*. New York: Russel Sage Foundation, 1975, 167pp.

Assesses the method, credibility and impact of the 1972 report. Also provides a retrospective analysis of response by various groups and individuals.

Murray, J. P. Television and violence: Implications of the Surgeon General's research program. *American Psychologist*. 1973, 28(6), 472-478.

Describes the impact of the report on three research questions. 1. program content; 2. the audience; and 3. the impact of violence on the viewer. Concludes a causal relationship between tv violence and violent behavior.

National Institute of Mental Health. *Television and Social Behavior: A technical report to the Surgeon General's Advisory Committee*, 1972., (DHEW Publication No. HSM 72-9059).

The report in five volumes: I. Media Content and Control, 546 pp.; II. Television and Social Learning, 371 pp.; III. Television and Adolescent Aggressiveness, 435 pp.; IV. Television in Day-to-Day Life: Patterns of Use, 603 pp.; V. Television's Effects: Further Explorations, 375 pp.; Each is a collection of papers and technical reports.

National Institute of Mental Health. *Television and Growing Up: The Impact of Televised Violence*, 1972. (DHEW Publication No. HSM 72-9090).

A companion report to those listed above. This one isolates violence from other aspects of television and social behavior.

A Sample of Theories

Appell, C. T. Television viewing and the pre-school child. *Marriage, Family Living*. 25(3), 311-318 (undated).

Among other conclusions, the author notes excessive violence and aggression on television may blunt the child's sensitivity to cruelty and aggravate problems of the more impressionable child.

Goldsen, R. K. Assembly-line violence, picture tube guns. *The Cornell Journal of Social Relations*. 1976, 11(1) 39-45.

Cites studies to support his view that television violence incites delinquency and crime and that it causes mental disorder on the scale of a public health menace.

Liebert, R. M. Television and children's aggressive behavior: Another look. *American Journal of Psychoanalysis*. 1974, 34(2), 99-107.

Review of 50 reports since 1950. Supports the conclusion that there's "a reliable and socially significant" relationship between violence and aggressive behavior.

Martin, J. D. & L. N. Gray. The real effect of media violence. *American Sociological Abstracts*. 1971, 19(F3091) P. 1717.

As vicarious learning television teaches that violence is punished. What is unambiguously reinforced is watching and passive, inactive behavior.

Stephens, D. The electronic whipping boy. *Mental Health*. 1967, 25(4), 12-14.

Refutes criticism of television violence in programming and its effects on children.

Bandura, Albert, Ross, Dorothea, and Ross, Sheila A. Vicarious reinforcement and imitative learning. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. 67(6): 601-607, 1963.

Three versions of a film showing children playing with toys were shown to 80 nursery school children. In one version a child who aggressively takes toys from other children is rewarded. In another, similar actions are punished. Children given the opportunity to play in an environment similar to that depicted in the film tended to copy the actions demonstrated in the film.

Feshbach, Seymour. The stimulating versus cathartic effects of a vicarious aggressive activity. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. 1961, 63(2): 381-385.

One of the earliest studies to find a cathartic effect. Male undergraduates were shown a fight or neutral film after being provoked through insult. Those seeing the fight film were less likely to retaliate in kind.

Lefkowitz, Monroe M., Eron, Leonard D., Walder, Leopold O., and Huesmann, L. Rowell, Television Violence and Child Aggression: A Follow-up Study. *Television and Social Behavior: Reports and Papers*. Vol. III, U.S. Surgeon General's Scientific Advisory Committee on TV and Social Behavior.

Children in the third, eighth, and "thirteenth" grades were asked to rate television programs for violence, for their own preferences, and were rated for aggressive behavior by peers. Parents of children also rated their children's viewing habits and program preferences.

A positive correlation established between preference for violent programming and aggressive behavior, and between early aggression and later aggression. Less correlation among girls than boys.

Zillman, D. and Johnson, R. C., Motivated aggressiveness perpetuated by exposure to aggressive films and reduced by exposure to non-aggressive films, *Journal of Research in Psychology*, 7, 261-276, 1973.

Male undergraduates who had been insulted and shocked, then shown a neutral film, had a significant decrease in aggressiveness compared to similarly aroused subjects who viewed a violent film.

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Monica Dignam is a media evaluator and president of Audience Profile Services in Washington, D. C.

Media Grantees

\$150,000 to Action for Children's Television (ACT) from the Ford Foundation to assist in formulating effective guidelines for children's television. Funds will support efforts to increase the public's knowledge about children's television, build a coalition among the medical and educational professions to support improved programming and to promote genuine self-regulation by advertisers and broadcasters.

\$20,000 to Laybourne, Lemle & Kahn Inc. from the Ford Foundation for partial support of the development of "Media Probes" a public television series whose aim is to educate college and high school students about the media.

\$25,882 to the National Alliance for Optional Parenthood, Baltimore from the Educational Foundation of America for television spots to encourage teenagers to opt for non-parenthood.

\$50,000 to WETA, Channel 26, Washington, D. C. from the National Home Library Foundation for nationally distributed TV program based on Adventures in Art.

\$200,000 to WGBH Educational Foundation, Boston, from the Ford Foundation for two additional seasons of World, a public television documentary series on international affairs.

\$20,000 to Children's Television Workshop from the Ittleson Foundation for research and development with respect to TV programming in the arts for children.

\$50,000 to Action for Children's Television (ACT) from the Revson Foundation to organize testimony on behalf of children before federal regulatory agencies dealing with television to improve programming and eliminate commercial abuse during children's viewing hours.

\$48,500 to Educational Broadcasting Corporation,

WNET, New York from the Revson Foundation for feasibility study for a public television series on Civilization and the Jews with curricula for schools and home viewers.

\$16,000 to Alabama Citizens for Responsive Public Television from the Babcock Foundation for acquisition of two educational television stations in Alabama and formation of a National Black Production Center.

\$8,800 to the Gorilla Foundation, Menlo Park, CA, from the Penn Foundation toward purchase of videotape equipment for documentation and testing involving communication with gorillas.

\$25,000 to Vanderbilt University, Nashville from the Ford Foundation for recording equipment for Television News Archive.

\$300,000 to Community Television of Southern California, Los Angeles from Irvine Foundation toward capital campaign to complete facilities.

\$7,000 to Prime Time School Television Chicago from the Bush Foundation to help test economics curriculum in ten Minnesota high schools.

\$15,000 to El Paso Public Television Foundation, El Paso from the Gannett Newspaper Foundation to launch El Paso Public Television.

\$370,762 to WHYY Television, Philadelphia from the Penn Foundation to fund a weeknight program, Ask the Experts, that will provide on-the-air call-in service to experts in various fields.

\$750,000 to Education Broadcasting Corporation, NYC from the Mellon Foundation toward production costs of public television series entitled The Meanings of Modern Art.



from *The Originals* sculptor Louise Nevelson

Programs on the Visual Arts

By Alison Abelson

It takes courage to stand in front of a static painting waiting for it to move you. An art film or television program can bolster confidence in reaching an independent judgement by providing the viewer with information about the artists' intentions and the contexts within which they worked. Historians and filmmakers agree that there is no substitute for a direct experience of the art object, but a program can lead the eye into the work, juxtapose paintings housed in different places, stimulate intellectual curiosity and show the human process that makes art.

Although museums have sponsored programs on their exhibitions, independent filmmakers have produced films of varying quality and the National Endowments for the Arts

and Humanities has sponsored the occasional series, so far there has been no consistent and concerted effort to develop regular national visual arts programming. The success of recent series, such as *Civilisation*, *Live from Lincoln Center*, *Dance in America* and *Nova* has focused attention on interdisciplinary cultural programming for television. The popularity of blockbuster exhibitions such as the *Treasures of Tutankhamin* has suggested that a mass audience is receptive to the fine arts. Efforts on several fronts are under way to fill this gap. What should the aims be in producing visual arts programs? What have been the pitfalls of the past? Who is the audience and how should it be addressed? Who's going to pay for it?

We can start with the truism that bad visual

arts programs are boring. In focusing on past masters, art movements or museum exhibitions, they rely heavily on narration to link a series of visuals. The narration may develop a concept, or leap associatively from one point to the next to justify each edit. The revealing tale, personality quirk or contradiction are like the sweeping pan, closeup or rack focus of narration; they animate the static object. More advanced desperation results in frenetic cinematography: zooming and panning pointlessly to keep it 'moving.' Appreciative visual arts cinematography is a skill that few have the chance to develop since program funding is sporadic. Michael Blackwood, whose lucid films on art and artists are highly appreciated by museum audiences, distinguished between films which "soup up the art, or dazzle with filmmaking technique," and films in which the creation of the artist, not the filmmaker, has first place. Charles Guggenheim, producer of *Faces of Freedom* for the National Portrait Gallery, is also a model filmmaker, who practices elegant restraint in editing rhythm, camera motion and narrative transition. Neither Guggenheim nor Blackwood concentrates exclusively on arts subjects.

Stephen Rabin, the National Endowment for the Humanities' assistant director of Public Programs, believes many visual arts programs fail because they lack a clearly focused central concept. Merely *presenting* an artist and his work does not fulfill the NEH's funding criteria. The NEH's purview is not "the act of creation, per se," but the interrelation of artists, their era and endeavors in other intellectual disciplines which reflect common concerns. Scholarly research and digestion of issues take time and rarely occur in an artist's lifetime. The NEH seeks and funds prototypes, like *Nova*, not the rash of imitations that follow up the success of such a series. Rabin says that the NEH receives few proposals that achieve their criteria, but that most that do are funded. He stressed that they are unimpressed by the rubber stamped scholar who 'validates' a proposal, but are open to any individual or team proposal which presents a cross-section of humanities disciplines tackling a theme, with the final outcome "a keener mind" for the audience.

The Originals

The artist in action makes art. The more famous he is, the more compelling the spectacle and the more protective the cocoon, part filmmaker's awe, part subject's veneer, which obstructs spontaneous revelation. High production costs often prohibit the documentation of an artist until he is so venerable that a hive of producers vie with each other and the grim reaper for access to the sacred studio. *The Originals: Women in Art*, a PBS and NEA series on outstanding women artists produced by Perry Miller Adato, suffered from

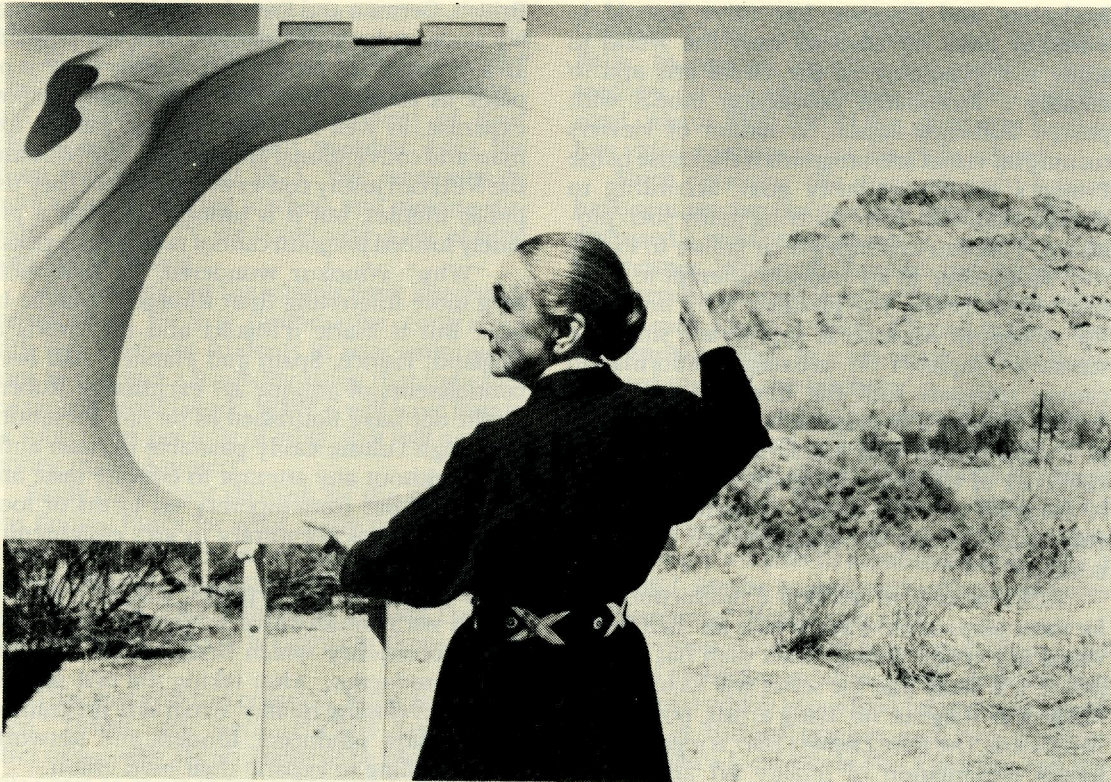
the fame of its subjects. One is grateful that O'Keeffe, Nevelson, Neel were recorded in the medium but glimpses of a younger, middle aged Nevelson in photographs make one regret that no film was done of her when she was more hungry for recognition, more at the height of her energies, less a personality with a ready mask.

The O'Keeffe film shows remarkable correspondence between the paintings and the New Mexico landscape and records her delightfully wry observations, but the dripping idolatry of O'Keeffe contradicts her own independence and rejection of models, which we are asked to respect. Here again, the most fascinating footage is early film of a younger O'Keeffe in her studio. Though the film romanticizes and makes ample use of the Steiglitz portraits of her, it glosses over what some regard as her desertion of the dying Steiglitz. Obviously, this chapter of her life O'Keeffe wants firmly shut. Her 'discretion' is seconded by a dogma, common among art historians, that the art should 'speak for itself.' In a program that is at least partly biographical, that is a questionable assumption.

Curiously, the program on Mary Cassatt more freely explores its subject's life though we are bereft of live footage of Mary in Paris, naturally. The film frankly raises the question of whether or not there was an affair with Degas. Voiceover readings of Mary's diary excerpts, social reports from Cassatt's native Philadelphia newspaper on her doings, reminiscences by a niece, interviews with Cassatt scholar Adelyn Breeskin are well integrated with lovely cinematography of her art work. There is a beautiful series of dissolves of later prints in which we see color after color added to an original line etching.

The National Endowment for the Arts was a major supporter of the *Originals*. As an agency which supports both media production and the fine arts, it should be a primary funding source for visual arts programs. Ongoing exchange between their panels of experts, all practitioners within the various art disciplines, makes the NEA the ideal ground soil for a cross fertilization between the visual and media arts.

Currently, grants can be sought under three categories in the Media Arts Division. *Production Grants to Individuals* and *Production Aid* to non-profit groups are two separate areas which will shortly be combined. Visual arts programs compete with documentaries, experimental cinema and video, animation and shorts in this grab bag category. Subject matter, though important, is a secondary consideration to outstanding and proven cinematographic talent — so if you got Pollock and Picasso back from the beyond but don't have a name yourself or a stupendous sample reel, forget it.



from *The Originals* Georgia O'Keeffe

Programming in the Arts is the special category for development and production of arts series for television; series only, no single programs. The popular *Dance in America* is the most recent example of a series the NEA formulated, partially funded and found additional private support to produce. According to *Programming in the Arts* director Julia Moore, a similar boost will soon be given to the visual arts. Following the development pattern that worked for the *Dance in America* series, at the conference, media professionals, and art subject specialists and artists will be brought together by the NEA to develop a basic concept for a visual arts series. Later, Media Arts will invite proposals for a pilot program from independent producers backed by local educational television stations. Based upon the success of the pilot, a series will be produced. It is too soon to predict the aims and content of the programming, although the basic goal, according to Moore, is to make the arts available to more people.

Both Moore and Rabin identify a wide audience for visual arts programs; Rabin's definition: "an untrained, undifferentiated audience." As government agencies, they are of course responsible to a wide audience. Charles Guggenheim seconds the notion that visual art programs are entertainment. "The film may have nothing to do with people who are interested in art," he says, "If it's a good film, everyone, including a specialized audience will enjoy it. If it's just for a

specialized audience, write a book." Barbara Colson, who runs the Hirshhorn Museum's excellent screening program, says her audience runs a gamut of age, profession and education, but "they all want to know a little more about art."

The most ambitious program currently under way to provide that 'little more about art' is KCET's Visual Art Project. The recipient of a five year grant from the Annenberg Fund and the M. L. Annenberg Foundation, KCET is Los Angeles' public broadcasting station. Walter Annenberg is the man who did not give New York the Fine Arts Center of the Annenberg School of Communications at the Metropolitan Museum of Art — not that he didn't try. The Center, if realized, would have "disseminated information about art to the widest possible audience," according to an article in the May 1977 *Art News*. Annenberg's offer of \$40 million gift to construct and administer the Center for ten years was withdrawn following a controversy centering on conflict of interest of the Met's then director Thomas Hoving, the right to use public land, i.e., Central Park, and the threat to the sacrosanct Met. After negotiation with the University of Pennsylvania, the Annenberg commitment to visual arts programming has found a (five year) home at KCET. It is ironic that programs which might have been developed in a museum or academic context will instead be produced in the seat of the entertainment industry.

KCET Director of National Programming Jean

Mulcahey and Program Executive Ronald L. Winokur have travelled all over the world to study past programs on the visual arts and to identify a formulated production model with proven audience appeal. A nation of viewers turning off visual arts programs is the cause of the Project's mass popularity goal, according to Ronald Winokur. After studying many such programs, Winokur attributes their failure to excessive 'footnoting' in an arrogant attempt to 'educate' the audience. The producer must be free to use or discard research as appropriate since the scholarly emphasis on exhaustive information cannot translate into the film and television media. Striking a balance between the demands of entertainment and scholarship is the major challenge of visual arts program production, but is using art as a decorative element in a mass entertainment any less arrogant than using it to educate?

KCET intends to develop a production plan for three pilots to serve as the base for their future visual arts series. Though their plan has not yet gelled, it is likely that the series will focus on Old Masters as subjects, no living artists, possibly no Americans. *Live From Lincoln Center* is regarded as a model presentation of quality art and artists; however, there is no intention to focus on contemporary American artists. Also: a majority of the producers invited to participate are from

British, German and French television. Presumably, since we have not invested in developing this area of visual arts production, already there is no point in starting now. We will simply import expertise, as well as subject matter, proven formats and conventional approaches. The NEA and the NEH can justify conservatism since they use public monies, but it is unfortunate that a privately funded program cannot take greater risks.

"Why," Winokur wondered, "Is Rauschenberg more interesting than Rubens?" Maybe he isn't. But if Marie d'Medici and the courts of England, France, Spain and Flanders had been connoisseurs of antique art exclusively, Rubens might not have flourished as he did. Presenting only high culture easily palatable to mass audiences without any attempt to educate taste and nurture either contemporary art forms or local media expertise is contrary to art's enlightening function.

A project which replaces scholarly conservatism with conservative subject choice typifies the inconsistency which besets visual arts programs production. After taking the first step towards developing quality visual arts programming, perhaps producers, funders and networks will be willing to expand their own vision.

Alison Abelson is a media specialist at the National Collection of Fine Arts, Washington, D. C.

Rural Cable TV Cooperative

by **Donna Sanders**

Despite what often seemed like insurmountable obstacles, the nation's first community owned and operated rural communications cooperative was dedicated in January 1979 after a five year struggle to bring cable TV to the residents of Wisconsin's Trempealeau County. Project planners feel that the Western Wisconsin Communications Cooperative (WWCC) will provide a model for other rural communities to copy.

While commercial television reception isn't the best in the rugged coulee section of west-central Wisconsin, everyone concerned with the project agreed that if improving commercial television reception had been the co-op's only goal, there would have been very little local support.

After being told by commercial CATV operators that no one could afford to put in a rural cable television system, the organizers turned to a solution that seemed obvious to them in a county

with 23 active cooperatives. Like the electric and telephone cooperatives before it WWCC will provide a service to rural people that commercial companies said was not economically feasible.

Co-op members own and manage WWCC. "A co-op in its simplest terms is democracy in action," said Rodney Moen, WWCC manager. "It is owned and operated by the people who use it. Members elect a seven man board of directors who meet monthly to decide whatever issues are their responsibility. The entire membership meets annually."

Work on WWCC started several years ago when Gordon Meistad, then manager of the Trempealeau Electric Cooperative, suggested the possibility of cable television to the superintendents of the five school co-op, itself an innovative approach to rural education. (These five schools, Blair, Taylor, Whitehall, Independence, and Arcadia, were later joined by three other area schools, Osseo-Fairchild, Elewa-Strum and

Galesville-Ettrick-Trempealeau.)

"To us the possibility of linking the five schools with cable television was quite exciting," said William Urban, superintendent of Blair schools and WWCC board member since the co-op was founded in 1973. "We were already quite active in sharing teachers and moving students. By using TV we could save a lot of time now lost in busing."

After finding out the schools were interested, Trempealeau Electric Cooperative contracted with two graduate students in telecommunications to conduct a feasibility study that indicated the project would work. WWCC will have four to six subscribers per mile of cable, so it will not be a money making project.

Easily the biggest problem for the new co-op was finding funds for what many saw as an impossible task. Yet it took less than a year for the Farmers Home Administration (FmHA) to grant them a \$1,328,000 Community Facility Loan to be repaid in 15 years at five percent simple interest.

"That was a joyous occasion, but it was short-lived," Urban said, "because a few days later a letter came with 21 conditions to be met." It took four years to meet these conditions.

They included selling memberships to 40 percent of the estimated first phase hookups (1,008), obtaining easements from property owners when the cable crossed their land, and signing the eight schools to a 15 year agreement with the co-op.

Finally in November 1978 all 21 conditions were met or waived and construction started immediately. First phase of the project will be ready for school use by fall 1979 with commercial television reception available to some individual subscribers even sooner.

"At first our 30 channel system will carry the three networks and one independent station, the Minnesota and Wisconsin educational stations and each of the eight schools will have a channel," Moen said.

In 1976 to further the educational aspects of this project the W.K. Kellogg Foundation of Battle Creek, Mich., provided a four year, \$510,170 grant to be used to develop community programming and educational closed-circuit television.

Gary King, Kellogg Foundation program director, explained, "Since the foundation was established in 1930, we've had a great interest in the education of rural people. This project had a high priority." He emphasized that the foundation selected WWCC because it could "serve as a model for other parts of the country to learn from."

This grant is being administered through the West Central Wisconsin Consortium which consists of the University of Wisconsin-Stout,

UW-Eau Claire, UW-La Crosse and UW-River Falls. In-service training for public school teachers on use of television has been emphasized. About \$100,000 of the grant was used to buy video equipment for the eight schools.

Since obtaining the grant all eight schools have sent teachers to monthly meetings. "We've discussed a wide range of topics," said Mrs. Dale Hangartner, Whitehall librarian and member of the interschool committee for the last three years. "Since each school is doing different things, they all contribute ideas to a newsletter which is distributed to all of the teachers."

Although an important part of the project, the two-way system will be slowly integrated in the school's regular classes. "Everybody is already scheduled for this fall, so regular classes won't have two-way broadcasts. As far as the two-way programs go, we plan to begin small and make it successful. Maybe we will start with minicourses and seminars," Hangartner said.

Television equipment has already been used by social problems and mass media classes to film a mock trial which was edited for presentation to parents. A history teacher and two students interviewed a local World War I veteran and the tape was presented to the rest of the class; while the physics instructor required a tape presentation from students instead of the more conventional written paper or class presentation.

Funds from the FmHA loan will only pay for the first phase hookup which includes the eight schools and their communities except for Whitehall and Arcadia which are already served by commercial cable television. Second phase includes the smaller communities in the county and third phase will reach any farm home wanting to have the benefits of cable television.

Even now farm homes within 450 feet of the cable trunkline can hookup for a \$20 installation fee plus co-op membership.

Beyond providing commercial and educational television, the cable has potential for providing an emergency alert system for dangerous weather announcements or other emergencies, transmission of school-originated programs to subscribers' homes, a fire alarm system that would work continuously and should result in cheaper fire insurance, and satellite beamed programming. The system's empty channels could be used for market reports, coverage of local sporting events, local programs featuring interviews on topics of area interest, in-service training of teachers and bringing the university to the community through continuing education programs.

In spite of all these possibilities for the Western Wisconsin Communications Cooperative, Urban said, "The main criticism we received from a government study headed by Senator Talmadge was that we haven't dreamed enough."

Chroma Key

By Jerold Gruebel

Visual information supporting television news presentation may have been more effectively projected to the viewer during the infancy of television than it is today. It used to be that when a newscaster delivered the key noun in each story, there was a cut to a visual image of that person, place or thing. The visual image was projected full-screen! The viewer saw what he wanted to see.

Today, the concept of full-screen visual images is obsolete. Television news presentation now employs less cutting and more special effects switching using chroma key and digital circuitry. The purpose seems to be to show the viewer what the *station* wants him to see. And what the station wants the viewer to see is not so much the news as the personalities who present the news and the hardware used to gather the news.

When asked why his television station recently "moved" into its new newscenter, Darrell Blue, production manager for WCIA-TV in Champaign, Illinois, answered quite matter of factly, "It shows off our hardware. . . . And showing hardware on screen is beneficial." Blue seems to be of the same opinion as the consultants with whom his station conferred before the move.

Technological advancement has enabled broadcasters to contrive visual images beyond original purpose. In the late 1960's, chroma keying became the "in" thing to do in television news presentation. The anchorman remained on-camera, except for news-feature *film* reports. Other visual information supporting news stories, sports, and weather was "keyed" behind the newscaster, sometimes over his left shoulder, sometimes over his right shoulder, sometimes center-screen. The concept of full-screen became obsolete.

Depending on the newscast you watch, visual images supporting television news presentation are "keyed left" (the images appear in the top left corner of the screen) or "keyed right" (the images appear in the top right corner of the screen). Some visual images are "keyed center-screen", or directly behind the newscaster. Set designs of a newscast often require visual images to be keyed both left and right: visual images may be keyed left over the newscaster and others keyed right over the sportcaster and weatherman. Regardless, the newscaster remains on-camera.

Television stations purchase slide packages from national agencies (AP, UPI, Metro-Media)

which now provide full-screen images framed right, left, or center. If a TV news operation should decide to change its set, this may require keying right visual images supporting news presentation, when keying left may have been used previously, or vice-versa. Such a change could be costly since slides framed for keying one side of the screen cannot be used for the other. A television station would have to reorder all slides on file. "Once a decision is made," explained Jane Bigelow, news producer for WAND-TV in Decatur, Illinois, referring to sets designed for keying left or right, "that's it!"

But according to Leo Stocker, New York City-based director of UPI's color unislide service, that's not an irreversible decision. Of UPI's present 235 clients (television stations), 100 order full-screen images framed right (for keying right), 60 left, and 75 centered. According to Stocker, there has been a recent shift back to centered slides and already there are more television stations ordering centered slides than full-screen images framed left. Presently, UPI handles a nearly 2:1, right to left, ratio of slide service requests, and in the past, this has been subject to change. So, if broadcast operations personnel think they're locked in, the figures don't support that notion.

The reasons for a television station to shift from keying right are largely unknown. Often, the change occurs with the hiring of a news directors, or the new anchorman. The station attempts to project a new image, and hopefully, one which represents the news team as more professional than it had been presented previously. Ron Davis, news director at WICD-TV in Champaign, Illinois, said that he and the program operations director at the station designed the new set when he was hired two years ago to anchor the news. According to Davis, "The set was designed to make it (the news) more visually interesting." But when asked whether consideration was given to the placement of visuals being more effective left, right, or centered, Davis replied simply, "It never came up."

Stocker agreed that shifts in the placement of visual images, right or left, are not known other than that shifting "seem to be generated by the area in which a television station is located. . . . It's a trend."

It's doubtful that those in television news responsible for such decisions rely on the academician. Nokos Metallinos, assistant professor of radio and Television at Temple University, and

Robert K. Tiemens, professor of communications at the University of Utah, cited neurological studies which provide convincing evidence that visual information is processed in the right hemisphere of the brain and that our perception of an object may be affected by its placement within a visual field. Since psychological studies have demonstrated that visual stimuli presented in the left field are transmitted to the right hemisphere of the brain, whereas stimuli presented in the right visual field are transmitted to the left hemisphere, this suggests placement of visual images in the left side of the screen area.

Metallinos and Tiemens themselves conducted a visual retention test and found that the retention of visual information in a newscast is enhanced when visual elements are placed on the left side of the television screen. However, no final conclusions can be made on the basis of mere placement of the visual elements. Such factors as size, color, and shape must also be considered.

The findings clearly favor placement of visual images to the left — at least when choosing between right and left, not full-screen. But, if the network “biggies” have kept up with the research, they haven’t passed it along to their counterparts at affiliated stations. Comparing the networks’ capsulated news with affiliated stations’ newscasts in East Central Illinois, CBS *Newsbreak* uses visual images keyed right, whereas WCIA-TV (CBS-affiliated) places images right or left of newscaster and keys visual images to the left of the sportscaster and weatherman. NBC *Update* uses visual images keyed right and its logo keyed left, whereas WICD-TV (NBC-affiliated) keys visual images to the right of the newscaster and the left of the sportscaster and weatherman. ABC *Newsbrief* uses visual images keyed right and so does WAND-TV (ABC-affiliated), the only “match.”

But, the fad to contrive visual images is now

in a new phase. Digital video effects are now “able to freeze the picture, pan it, tilt it, zoom in or out, squeeze flip and wrap around, as well as compute size and position of a chroma key area and automatically fit a compressed picture into it . . .”, quoting *Broadcasting*.

Chief engineers, asked by *Television/Radio Age* when they felt digital (circuitry) will be an important factor in station equipment, 45.7 percent said it already is. An additional 31 percent said it will be by 1980. Areas where digital is expected to be important include video switching equipment, special effects, signal processing and distribution, editing, and still-frame storage equipment.

What does this new phase mean to the viewer? If you prefer the full-screen images of the early years in television news presentation because you don’t like the small visual images keyed right or left on your already small home receiver, you’re not going to be very happy with the new digital equipment. Now visual images can be placed right and left and not necessarily in the same position on the television screen.

Why contrive ways to show a picture? Why not let visual images stand on their own? If effective communication is more than a haphazard phenomenon (and indeed it is!), then some more systematic ways of designing newscast sets and presenting the news need to be developed.

Blue affirmed the trend: “It seems as if chroma keying is slowly losing favor . . . It’s losing its impact . . . Chroma keying doesn’t display hardware.” And that seems to be the name of the game these days. Decisions behind the placement of visual information supporting television news presentation is now a reflection of broadcasters’ concerns for station image and ratings rather than effectively communicating the news.

Jerold Gruebel is a professor of Communication at the University of Illinois/Urbana.

Media Grantees

\$39,175 to Genesee Intermediate School District, Flint, MI. from the Mott Foundation to supervise and coordinate pilot classroom project using tapes of programs broadcast on *The Advocates* public television program.

\$6,000 to Genesee Intermediate School District, Flint, MI. from the Mott Foundation to hold two meetings of teachers, representatives of WGBH Boston and representatives of intermediate school district to evaluate pilot project on school and college classroom use of material based on *The Advocates*.

\$300,000 to WGBH Education Foundation, Boston, from the Mott Foundation toward season’s costs of *The Advocates*.

\$67,438 to WGBH Educational Foundation, Boston

from the Mott Foundation to develop materials based on *The Advocates* for classroom use, along with tapes of the programs in pilot project in schools and colleges in Genesee and Lapeer counties in Michigan.

\$236,235 to WGBH, Boston from the Office of Education, DHEW for media presentations on mainstreaming the handicapped.

\$22,500 to American Dance Festival, NYC from the Mellon Foundation toward support of 1978 Dance Television Workshop.

\$75,000 to Teachers College, NYC from the Spencer Foundation for study of the mediation of television by the family.

Community Media: Lessons from Summer '78

By Lloyd Trufelman

Last summer, the National Federation of Community Broadcasters (NFCB) held its annual conference in Cincinnati from August 9-13. Over 175 people attended the conference, representing small and large community radio stations, video groups, universities, collectives, representatives from CPB, NPR, the FCC and the Carnegie Commission On The Future Of Public Broadcasting.

The most interesting thing to observe at the conference was a feeling of energy. There was spirit in the meeting rooms, seemingly as if the participants shared certain feelings and attitudes about media and life. It seemed as if the participants were very "radical" (as defined by *Broadcasting* magazine) but the atmosphere was not one of a 60's throwback. The participants were very well-informed on most current media and political issues and cared about what they were doing, media-from-the-heart, rather than the media-for-the money attitude prevalent at most "industry" gatherings.

Although there seemed to be a general consensus in a more cosmic attitude, individual interests and ideas offered a smorgasbord of opinions on the future of media and more specifically, community broadcasting—both radio and TV.

Betsy Dirnberger, CPB radio projects manager, had some observations on the growth of community broadcasting.

"I see community radio as being the strength of the (radio) system in five years," she said. Dirnberger feels that community stations will become leaders in public radio, and that there will probably be a decline in university-held broadcast licenses, due to nationwide drops in enrollment and funding cutbacks caused by tax-cut initiatives passing throughout the nation.

"As more university stations ask for citizen input, the community will want the station to be more responsive," she said.

Bruce Theriault, NFCB Steering Committee chairperson and station manager of KTOO, Juneau, Alaska, saw the conference as an "interaction between people, a connection between the people and the stations."

"What we're looking for is a second public radio system," he said. Theriault is hoping that community broadcasters can interconnect —

hopefully via satellite — for purposes of distribution, policy-making, and general communication on a more efficient level. "I see us evolving; interconnecting; coming into our own," he said.

The conference was held in a rather standard style with workshops and discussions that covered topics such as CPB, the FCC, programming, distribution, development (grant-getting, CETA, subscriptions, and volunteerism) and financial and staff management.

There was also a general membership meeting, and the election of a new steering committee, the NFCB's governing body.

On the topic of distribution, Betsy Rubenstein of the NFCB Program Service, was pleased with the improvements in community distribution. She noted that the program service has grown from an informal, exchange-by-mail system (in which tapes would get lost) to a "Possible Tape Exchange" (which was a bit better) to the current setup.

"The NFCB Program Service handles about 300-400 reels of tape outgoing each month, with about 40-50 reels coming in. There are about 25 programs a month that the NFCB works with," she said.

In addition to the NFCB Program Service, another source for programming for the stations is the Pacifica Program Service, which serves about 70 stations. Some of the NFCB stations will also take programming from NPR, but usually in a lesser quantity than other "public" stations. Rubenstein is hoping that NFCB and Pacifica can "start moving together," to cut costs.

"NFCB can't get programs from Pacifica," she said. "The Pacifica producers distribute only within Pacifica, but the Pacifica stations are NFCB members." Rubenstein also saw the possibility of distributing video, "but way in the future. It's a question of money," she said.

The conference was pretty much geared for radio, due to the fact that there are no community broadcast TV stations in the country. However, television is looming on the community broadcast horizon.

"We want to play around with free-form TV," said John Mondello of the Double Helix Corporation. Double Helix is seeking the license for UHF-40 in St. Louis. They're currently being

blocked from doing so by the local St. Louis PBS outlet.

Mondello finds that most potential viewers of a free-form, community TV station are "confused." "They refer to PBS; they don't understand," he said.

Double Helix is aware of the tremendous difficulties involved with setting up a community broadcast TV outlet.

"Broadcast TV is so monstrous an entity to try to fund that you've got to find a way to conceive of it on a lesser scale," said Mondello.

"TV production is expensive, and there's just no way you 'wing it' technologically," he continued. "You can decentralize programming within a community; do live programming, or perhaps have a TV jockey with a bank of cassettes and a deck."

There was some other TV activity at the conference, including the beginnings of a community station in Columbia, Missouri, and a group called the Front Range Educational Media Corp. which has received a VHF license in Boulder, CO.

Looking to the future, Phyllis Joffe of the National Federation Of Local Cable Programmers warns it is "important for (community broadcasters) not to become something that already exists." "We have to find new ways of using media, in all ways. Decentralize—it's dangerous to think big. If there's no grass roots strength, the concept may fall apart," she said.

1979 is a significant year for community broadcasting. The rewrite of the Communications Act of 1934, the White House public broadcasting bill, new faces on the CPB board, and the Carnegie Commission report will happen during the next 12 months. It also marks the 30th anniversary of the Pacifica Foundation, the entity of five stations and a program service that has evolved from the visions of Lewis Hill when he originated the concept of, and constructed the first noncommercial, listener sponsored radio station in the world, KPFA, in 1949.

Although the NFCB is growing, the Pacifica stations are in trouble. Unlike the NFCB, they have been around for a long time and broadcast in some of the largest markets (New York, Los Angeles, Houston, Washington, and San Francisco) in the country. Many of the small NFCB stations are on the upswing but the high powered, big potential audience Pacifica stations are beset with tremendous financial problems and staff turnover. Part of the problems stem from being big and established, but not entirely.

"Pacifica has to be a failed dream," said Larry Josephson, former Pacifica-WBAI morning man and general manager, now working as a consultant to CPB.

"Pacifica wastes a lot of energy," he said. "The political craziness has died down somewhat, but now they should concentrate on building the

stations, increasing the monies that they should be getting and building a better audience."

At this point, help for Pacifica does not seem to be coming quickly. A Pacifica station staff member noted that Pacifica is rather fragmented and disorganized on the national level, with poor leadership and misplaced priorities on the part of the national office.

Like Pacifica, all of community media's future is cloudy. True the NFCB is growing. On the other hand, there is the outcome of the Communications Act rewrite, the increase in so-called "tax revolts", the transformation of cable TV from its early "blue-sky" dream into a corporate-controlled, multi-channel kitsch mill, and a generally bleak world economic and political outlook.

Remember though, the NFBC conference motto was "Keeping It Going." Hopefully, with the type of energy now going into community media and continued decadence of commercial broadcasting, "It" will keep going for quite some time.

For more information:

The National Federation Of Community Broadcasters
1216 Massachusetts Ave. N.W.
Washington, D.C.20005

"Healing the Earth: Independent Media — Channels for a New Culture"
By Michael Haldeman
New Age magazine
October 1978

Sex & Broadcasting — A Handbook on Starting a Radio Station for the Community
by Lorenzo Milam
Dildo Press
2516 Maple Avenue
Dallas, Texas 75201

By Sallie E. Fischer

It's been almost a year since *Televisions* explored the current status of public access to cable television and concluded that the concept of community television was alive and fairly well but still years away from being an accurate reflection of those communities in which it exists (Vol. 5 No. 4). Since that time, two national conferences on public access have taken place, and the proposed rewrite of the Communications Act was presented. 1978 has been an important year for the access movement.

The first conference of the year was sponsored by the National Federation of Local Cable Programmers, a group whose general

purpose is to act as a support and information network for people and groups involved in community television. Held in July in Madison, Wisconsin, the conference was designed to gather public access people together for four days in which they could acquire new ideas, information, and perspectives which would be useful in their work in their communities. With support from the National Endowment for the Arts, the conference offered workshops in the areas of organizational development, programming, satellites, media advocacy, fundraising, and video technology. The workshops were successful in accomplishing their goals, and provided an opportunity for access facilitators to meet, share their experiences, and strengthen the national network of individuals working in access for the first time.

More than 240 people came to Madison. There were 50 workshop sessions in all, and "Hometown, U.S.A.", a video and film festival described as a "celebration of the state of access and independent programming" by its coordinator Larry Staab.

The conference served another purpose for the NFLCP however. It was the first time the organization had attempted to bring all its members together for the purpose of "organizing the organization" on a national level. Founded in the summer of 1976, the NFLCP has been operating under the leadership of a national steering committee which tried to build a broad-based foundation until the time when it would be possible for members to vote on by-laws, elect a Board of Directors, and determine the direction of the organization. Throughout the convention, delegates from each of the NFLCP's regions met as a group and in smaller committees working out details of the by-laws, an advocacy platform, a community education platform, and other matters. Those who were delegates spent long hours trying to develop a structure for the organization that would continue and strengthen the power of the regions while making sure the new Board would be able to oversee and carry out the Federation's national agenda and goals.

Because the backgrounds and attitudes conference participants brought to Madison were so varied, it became necessary in many instances to work out compromises on key issues. Some participants were fearful of an overly-powerful Board; others tried to figure out ways to lessen the power of the organization's Northeast Region, the first of the regions to develop and the strongest; still others worried about affirmative action and the lack of blacks, hispanics, and other minority representation in the organization.

Scheduling delegate sessions and committee meetings became a real problem. Delegates

needed more time than had originally been planned; many of them did not have the opportunity to view "Hometown, U.S.A.", which was shown twice. More than a few conference participants complained of feeling separated from the delegate activity.

In spite of the problems, however, most people felt the conference was a success, including Gary Knowles and Margie Nicholson of Madison, the co-coordinators of the event. Knowles described it saying "We came from across the country as long-lost relatives, but now the family is together." He and other members of the organization believe the conference demonstrated the need for the Federation as well as the desire of access facilitators to continue to build the concept of community television across the country.

The feeling at the National Conference on Public Access Cable Television in San Diego, California in August was in many ways different from the Madison event. The Community Video Center in San Diego sponsored the conference, and saw it as a way to educate those who had little or no experience with public access, to provide a forum for discussion of public policy questions affecting cable, and to assess access in terms of economics and viability.

The sessions, designed more for potential access users than current facilitators, were general in scope. They included such workshops as fundraising, policy, educational and municipal access, the arts, and public broadcasting. Also included were five plenary sessions which took place during meals when all participants were together, and during which the "stars" of the public media movement were featured.

Some of the featured speakers at the plenary sessions were Ralph Lee Smith, Kathy Bonk of N.O.W., Gene Youngblood, Charles Firestone, Nicholas Johnson, and Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin. During the question and answer session with Rep. Lionel Van Deerlin, those who had questions to ask lined up at two microphones on the floor and waited patiently for their turn to speak. Many of them were not able to do so because of time limitations, but weren't bothered as much by that as by the feeling they had that the Congressman was treating them rather poorly, that his attitude was in many ways condescending and demeaning. A number of those in the audience, primarily people who were working in access, felt he was insulting them.

Highlights of the conference included a Video Fair displaying new equipment, and the opportunity for some individuals to produce videotapes during the event with equipment which local dealers had loaned for the confer-

ence. The conference coordinators had also been able to secure several hours of time on the Home Box Office satellite, and videotapes which had been sent from around the country were shown via HBO on the last morning of the conference. Interviews with various conference guests were also programmed on HBO, and a phone number was given so that viewers might call in. People from all parts of the country phoned to express interest in what was happening and to say they enjoyed the programming.

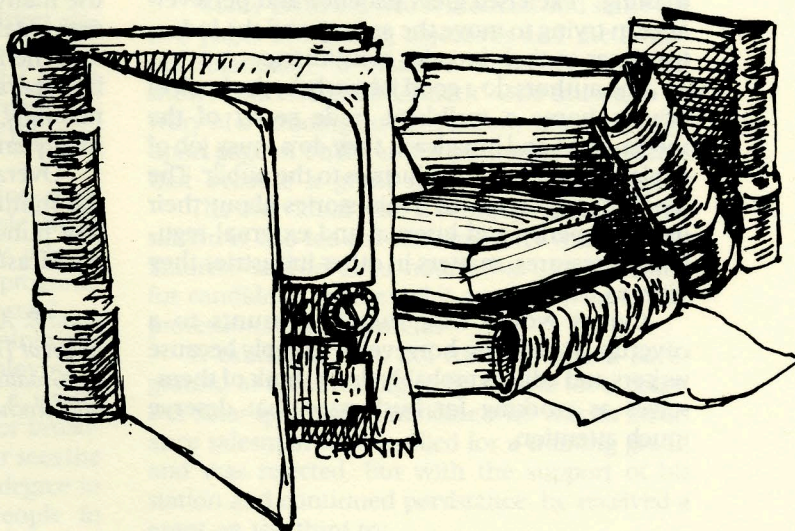
The conference drew several hundred participants. Coordinator Tom Borrup felt it was successful and received praise from many who felt the conference had been well-planned. It wasn't easy to gauge the feeling of participants as they left San Diego, primarily because they had brought so many different expectations with them and were involved in very many kinds of work. Some of the participants who work in access felt they hadn't gotten much new information, but agreed the conference

had at least given people in other fields some idea of what access was about.

Because the purpose of each of the conferences was different, it is difficult to compare them to one another, and there probably isn't much point in doing so anyway. What they both pointed out, however, is that access continues to be alive and well, that it is growing stronger with time. One session at the San Diego conference was devoted to the topic "The Second Generation of Access", and pointed out that new people are continually becoming involved in community television, and that while "blue sky" dreams of yesterday may not have become reality, the slow but steady growth of public access indicates that perhaps they still may do so. One participant of the San Diego conference, responding to the fact that access programming was being shown on Home Box Office, commented, "That blue sky stuff wasn't so far off. People just expected too much too soon."

Reluctant Regulators: A Review

*RELUCTANT REGULATORS:
The FCC and the Broadcast Audience,*
by Barry Cole and Mal Oettinger,
Addison-Wesley. \$10.95



By Laird Anderson

Barry Cole and Mal Oettinger's opinion of job performance by the Federal Communications Commission is best summed up in the title of their book. It's easy to imagine the good time they had in writing it. As an FCC consultant from 1970 to 1975, Cole was free to move at will throughout the agency, poking into offices, talking with commissioners and staff members and taking lots of notes which have found their way into print. He is now a visiting professor at the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg School of Communication. Oettinger was a reporter for *Broadcasting* magazine and later, as a freelance writer, wrote a column for *Television/Radio Age* called "Inside the

FCC." He now works as a writer/editor for the United States Information Agency.

Newcomers to the workings of the FCC will discover what old-timers have known for a long time: the commissioners are a mixed bag when it comes to competency. Some lack interest, refuse to grapple with difficult decisions, seek to avoid hassles and defer to their huge staff. The staff set the tone of decision-making and often in the absence of leadership must uncertainly move to fill the vacuum—and thus set policy themselves. Decisions on license renewals are often made haphazardly on whims and vague hunches relating to "good faith" efforts and promises by broadcasters rather than on actual performance—something the authors call regulation by a "nod

and wink." And, the economically powerful broadcast industry and its lawyers and lobbyists dominate the whole regulatory process and the odds are stacked against the general public.

It's well-established that government regulators all too often seem reluctant to work with the public and meet with citizen groups for an airing of views. It's refreshing to learn details of the FCC's adventures and misadventures in trying to establish a true public relationship.

To its credit, the FCC, although it came late, under former Chairman Richard Wiley, started a series of regional meetings in 1974 to listen to public views as well as those of broadcasters.

This radical move was made despite unenthusiastic support by staff members who grumbled about the "simplistic attitude of most speakers." Additionally, *Broadcasting* magazine, the powerful industry trade journal, warned darkly of possible "antibroadcasting publicity in the local press."

We learn that while the public was contentious, scrappy, and frequently complained about arrangements and discussion formats, "the intensity of the give-and-take within the meetings was impressive." Wiley, "who knew he was in for a roasting," exercised great patience and perseverance in trying to move the agency and the industry closer to their broader constituency.

The authors do a good job early in the book of driving home a well-kept trade secret of the media, print and broadcast: they do a lousy job of explaining their own industries to the public. The media simply seem to avoid stories about their own prosperity and internal and external regulatory pressures, matters in other industries they view as news.

Cynics would sniff that it amounts to a coverup. Most likely, however, it's simply because writers and editors probably don't think of themselves as working for businesses that deserve much attention.

At one time, as the authors remind us, television critics extensively covered regulation of radio and television. Now they devote most of their space to programming. In any event, they point out, the unfortunate absence of general media attention to the FCC has created a void now largely filled by one trade journal — *Broadcasting*.

The arrival each week of the magazine "turns FCC offices into Sardi's (restaurant) where producers, anels and stars anxiously await the critics' verdict on their latest extravaganza," the authors say. But all isn't show biz. At least one former commissioner, Nicholas Johnson, saw a more sinister side of trade press power, "accusing the publishers, editors, and reporters of belonging to a 'subgovernment' which influenced the Commission to act favorably toward the broadcasting industry to the detriment of the general public." Johnson's view may have been a bit strong, but there's no doubt the magazine is enormously influential among the regulators and broadcasters.

While *Reluctant Regulators* rewards the general reader with a lot of good inside information, the authors don't always make it easy to follow. They use many long-winded excerpts from FCC decisions, staff studies and the like that tend to rupture the flow of their writing. Much could have been paraphrased without losing effect. And surprisingly, there's no index, something that's mildly annoying.

Overall, however, the pluses far outnumber the minuses in this welcome work which pulls few punches and is a valuable contribution to broadcasting literature.

Laird B. Anderson is an associate professor of communication at The American University where he is director of the Graduate Program in Journalism and Public Affairs and teaches a course in media economics.

RESOURCES

Public TV Minority Training Grants

By Lloyd Trufelman

The Minority Training Grant program was started by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) in 1973 as an attempt to open up the public broadcasting industry to minorities (and later women, through Women's Training Grants) by providing employment for qualified candidates at CPB-qualified radio and television stations.

A recent discussion with Daniel del Solar, CPB's director of training and development, offers information on the current state of the program.

Del Solar explained that the training grant program was established "to place people inside the public stations, so that once they receive training through this hands-on, inside program, they can survive and thrive in the industry."

The program is an entry point for minorities and women who want to find employment within the industry but do not have a strong enough background, or funds to pay for broadcast training. As a matter of fact, del Solar sees the program as a superior alternative to a degree in communications or broadcasting. "People in schools have a 1-in-200 chance of finding a job in public broadcasting," he said. "Communication schools train people in isolation from the entities that they will be working with later on. Right now, there is an oversupply of pre-trained individuals," he added.

A training grant cannot be used towards the completion of an academic degree or for graduate work. Basically, it serves "only as a door to the industry," says del Solar. He notes that "once you're in, tact, political sensibilities, attitudes and quality of work get you through."

The application and granting process is fairly uncomplicated.

Candidates for a training grant are sponsored by the individual stations. This is, in effect, a "sweetener" to the station. When a grant is

awarded, CPB pays only half of a salary. The station pays the other half.

The station, not the individual sends in the application to CPB. According to del Solar, the key items on an application are the specific position for which a person is being trained and the quality of the training plan.

"Some plans are two sentences, and some are two pages of learning objectives and methods," del Solar said. "It makes a difference if a plan shows concern and attention." One must also be wary of overdoing an application, attaching page upon page of bulky and superfluous documents that become a grant reviewer's nightmare.

The individual who is being sponsored by the station is also looked at. "You don't want to find failures," said del Solar, noting that CPB is looking for candidates who exhibit a capacity for future professional development.

A candidate does not have to have a background in broadcasting to be eligible for a grant. Del Solar spoke of a candidate who was an insurance salesman who applied for a training grant, and was rejected, but with the support of his station and continued persistence, he received a grant on the third try.

The judgement of the sponsoring station is also looked at. Stations have been known to stick with the same candidate after a rejection or two, and the wait can bear fruit. Del Solar himself was rejected twice by CPB and KQED sponsored him for a training grant several years ago before he came to Washington. However, he eventually did get the position at KQED.

The final judgement of applicants is made by a panel composed of people from NPR, PBS, and CPB. The program is administered in "rounds" that take place every six months.

Positions are funded for a period of one to two years and grants can range from \$9,000 to \$25,000 per year depending on the position funded. Grants cover salaries, benefits, & training

costs. According to del Solar, relatively few, as compared to radio, of the television training grants go towards management (and higher paid) positions.

This year, 50-60% of the applications that came in from the stations were funded, with two-thirds of the grants going to television stations, and a third of them going to radio.

When the program started in 1973, a total of 25 minority grants were awarded. As of January 1979, a total of 214 minority grants have been awarded to 135 out of 190 stations that had sent in a total of 606 applications in the program's history. Monies disbursed since 1973 total \$2,459,364. The Women's Training grant program, since 1976, has dispensed \$1,629,631 in the form of 131 grants to 81 out of 137 stations that have sent in a total of 395 applications.

Once a person receives a training grant, how does he or she continue? According to a program evaluation study conducted by del Solar's office in 1978, 68% of the individual grantee survey

respondents are currently working in broadcasting or broadcast related full time jobs. Fifty-five per cent of respondents are working directly in broadcasting. Forty-three per cent of all trainees are still in public broadcasting with eighty per cent of those employed in broadcasting in public broadcasting. Eighty per cent of those trainees working in public broadcasting are working at the station at which they were trained.

And of those trainees who have finished their program in a positive manner, "two out of five individuals have gone on to different, more responsible positions within public or commercial broadcasting." Sixty-eight per cent of survey respondent were happy with the program, and generally speaking, the training program opened more jobs in management and mid-management position according to the report.

For program information and deadline dates, contact the Office of Training and Development at CPB, 1111 16th St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. Application forms are sent only to stations.

For almost two years, Cable TV station CATV in Ephrata, Pennsylvania has carried a talk show every Wednesday night with Ernest and Irene Bechtel. This is not unusual except that the show is conducted entirely in Pennsylvania-German dialect (also called Pennsylvania-Dutch). About 150,000 people speak the dialect which was spoken by the German and Swiss immigrants and originates from the Palatine area of Germany. Of the 150,000 who still speak the dialect 90% live in Pennsylvania.

The Bechtel's show features each of them assuming a television personality. Mrs. Bechtel is Minnie Schnauss (schnauss means nosy) and Mr. Bechtel is Buchgnibble (a clodhopper). Together they interview local townspeople, tell stories, do skits, ad lib and do whatever comes to mind. Their interview recently with a local cattleman discussed whether bulls could be bowlegged and if it was possible to predict the severity of a winter by the thickness of a cow's hide.

The Bechtels are concerned with preserving the Pennsylvania-German dialect and fear that if it isn't spoken and taught it will die out. It was with this preservation in mind that they began their talk show. The program is watched regularly by the 10,000 local cable subscribers and it is syndicated to other cable systems in Lebanon, Reading and Palmerton, Pennsylvania. Bob Miller, programming director at station CATV estimates that the program is regularly seen by at least 115,000 Pennsylvanians.

Both Business Week and the Wall Street Journal have featured articles on Fotomat Corpo-

ration's entry into the videotape business. In July, Fotomat began selling videotape along with their film and processing service. The advertising pitch urged consumers to bring in their home movies and slides and have them transferred to videotape. In the fall they began selling blank tapes at their 3400 yellow kiosks. This spring Fotomat begins test marketing prerecorded tapes of movies, golf and tennis lessons. In addition to being able to purchase the movies (for about \$30 to \$50) consumers will also be able to rent a movie for 5 days (for \$15-to-\$20).

Fotomat has suffered from declining profits in recent years and has tried numerous marketing strategies including selling pantyhose, cutting keys and instant printing — all in the yellow kiosk. Fotomat executives are confident about the video venture, and the big stakes for Fotomat. Currently there are 450,000 home recorders in use in the country and marketing experts predict another 700,000 machines will be sold this year. With machine owners spending an average of \$100 a year or more on tapes, by the end of 1979 there will be a \$115 million tape market. Fotomat plans to "capture" 20% of the market. Their long range plan calls for videotape to provide one third to one half of their total revenues.

The Supreme Court upheld the Midwest Video decision this April. That decision invalidated the FCC's cable access requirements.

This means that cable systems do not have to provide access channels to the public, unless state and local franchise regulations so require. City and state governments may now, in fact, have

incentives to fill the void left by the court's decision.

Allied Artists is selling *The Wild Geese* through its video cassette distribution company at the same time the picture is in initial theatrical release, a first for the company.

AA believes it can capitalize on the advertising and publicity accompanying first-run movies to reach the home video market. This means that the movie is available for home TV viewing before network TV can air it.

AA is selling such titles as *Papillon*, *The Betsy*, *The Man Who Would Be King*, and *The Story of O*, via video cassettes.

The Walnut Street Theatre in Philadelphia invites independent video artists to submit ¾-inch cassettes for consideration. The theatre operates the Video Lounge, the only free screenings of video in Philadelphia.

For more information, write Video Center, Walnut Street Theatre, 825 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA. 19107.

KBDI-TV in Broomfield, Colorado is seeking film and video software to air on VHF Channel 12, in the Denver area.

KBDI-TV is licensed to an independent non-profit corporation, and is a new noncommercial television station. This year it hired an acquisitions staff to locate "high-quality" programs to air.

KBDI is interested in the following types of programming:

"1. American-made independent works, in-

cluding features and documentaries . . . KBDI is particularly interested in film and video by or about Westerners, although it will accept quality material from any region.

"2. Foreign features and documentaries. Except for films or videotapes in Spanish, non-English material must be subtitled or dubbed in English. Subtitling is preferred for Spanish-language works, although not universally required.

"3. Vintage films and television."

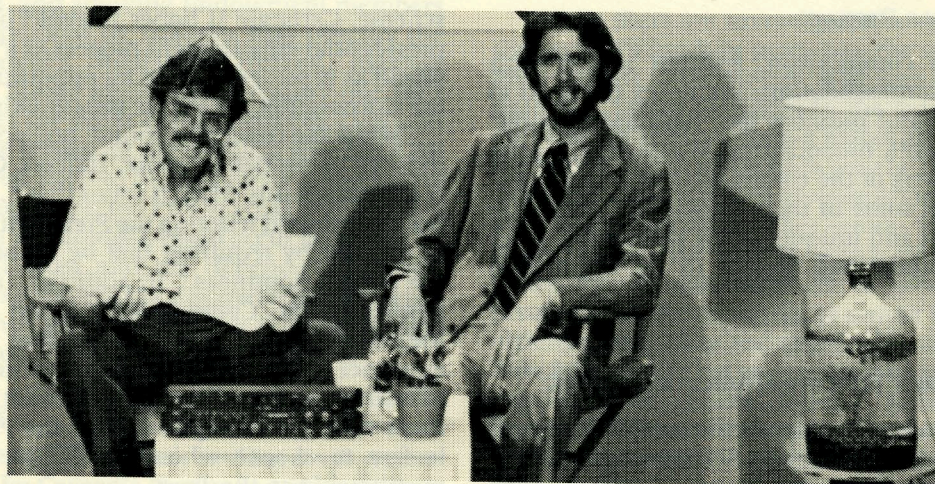
KBDI will broadcast "a modest amount" of avant-garde or personal film and video work, but this will be a minor portion of the schedule. The station is most interested in video synthesis.

For more information, write John Schwartz, Front Range Educational Media Corporation, P.O. Box 4262, Boulder, Colorado 80306, 303/665-9012.

Video as a tool for social intervention was explored in two workshops offered this spring at The Chicago Editing Center, an NEA-funded regional media center. A third intervention workshop will begin June 22 (see Calendar).

The workshops are geared for a variety of social service professionals, including mental health workers, and people working in not-for-profit social change groups. Classwork focuses on using television as a dynamic element within groups, and single camera portable video techniques are taught.

For more information, write Communications for Change, 11 E. Hubbard St., 5th Floor, Chicago, Illinois 60611, (312) 565-1785.



TV Coverage of Santa Barbara's Fiesta Parade this summer won't be as interesting as it was last July.

Last year Cable 2 hired comedians Mark Ward and Richard Procter to cover the parade in a satirical live news broadcast. The pair's float-by-float commentary outraged the community, and prompted a special screening of the broadcast by the Santa Barbara City Council.

"We're down here on State Street watching all these white people dressed up like Mexicans," one comic began as the parade started.

Cable TV offered the "spoof" as a counter-program since straight coverage of the parade was sewn-up by other TV stations. Sponsors grabbed time on the program, which was billed a satire in its promotion.

We were happy to learn that the arts had finally received official recognition when we read the following memo from NEA Chairman Livingston Biddle:

"I am pleased to announce to the cultural community that the Bell System Yellow Pages directories will include a new heading of 'Arts Organizations & Information.' This will bring all organizations in a locality together under one listing and make them easier to find..."

Two recent studies by Hope Reports reveal that 16mm films are available from 3,000 film libraries in the U.S. An additional 6,000 films can be borrowed from the other sources, including owners.

There are 640 rental film libraries, plus another 2,320 free-film library/distributors. Half the free-film distributors are businesses, 17 percent are associations.

The reports conclude that sponsored films are more cost-effective than most other advertising media. Shell Oil Company, for example, is the leading free-film sponsor, in the \$182.5 million sponsored film distribution business.

The two reports—"Nontheatrical Film Distribution, Part I, Film Rental" and "Part II, Sponsored Free-Loan Films," are available from Hope Reports, 919 S. Winton Road, Rochester, New York 14618. Cost \$15.

A fifth of the nation is wired for cable, according to the National Cable Television Association's 1978-1979 cable survey. The 4,000 cable systems in the U.S. are reaching some 43 million viewers. Satellite transmission is the major factor in cable's growth, with 1200 earth stations operating—or in development—by January, 1979.

For the complete survey results, write for the "1978-79 Cable Services Report," NCTA, 918-16th St, NW, Washington, DC 20006.

Point of View

Lessons from Carnegie I

By James Roman

Another commission, another report with more recommendations rekindles the need to enhance and promote the "national treasure" that is public broadcasting. While the sincerity of members of the commission is above question, and some of their recommendations are profound and unique, at the same time, other recommendations appear to be vague and naive.

The Public Telecommunications Trust

Carnegie II recommends the establishment of a nine-member Public Telecommunications Trust. The Trust would be a private, non-governmental, non-profit corporation which would serve as a conduit for federal funds to the stations. The commissioners hope to insulate the membership of the Trust from the executive branch by strongly recommending that the nine presidential appointees be chosen from a pool of nominees derived from a distinguished seven member panel under the leadership of the Librarian of Congress. Via this

scheme, Carnegie II hopes to avoid using the presidential appointment process as a political payoff as is presently used for appointments to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

While the concept is sound, political reality dictates its probable failure. Indeed, Carnegie II recognizes this when it states that "...we do not recommend fettering the President's power to appoint by requiring that he be bound by the panel's nominees." In addition, in an appendix of the Commission's report entitled Memorandum of Law, it states that the "...existence of this panel would serve in no way to restrict the President's appointment power." Even with the strongest urging, the President is free to choose whomever he pleases for membership to the Trust.

In 1967, Carnegie I also wrestled with the concept of insulating CPB membership from the executive branch. Their recommendation was never adopted; however, in light of the present suggestion, their procedure deserves closer scrutiny. Carnegie I suggested that the Corporation for Public Television (later changed to Corporation for Public Broadcasting) be composed of 12 distinguished and pub-

lic spirited citizens, six appointed by the President — the remaining six elected by those previously appointed. Thus the President would appoint two members every 2 years for six year terms and the entire board would elect two members every two years for six year terms. While this procedure is not perfect, it certainly provides more insulation from the executive branch than the one mentioned previously.

Program Services Endowment

Carnegie II recommends the establishment of a Program Services Endowment which would be funded by the Trust with an automatic grant equal to one half the federal grants to stations. This would yield approximately \$190 million annually. The Endowment's purpose will be to nurture creative risk-taking in programming. It will provide access for novice artists to the public television system, and allow for treatment of controversial issues. The Endowment will be housed within the Trust and have its own 15 member board appointed by members of the Trust from nominations by Endowment board members. Members of the Endowment will not be required to report to Congress on their activities.

The concept of the Endowment is the most significant element of the Commission's report. Endowment funds would be guaranteed no matter how controversial the programs funded by Endowment money may be.

However, housing the Endowment within the Trust, and allowing Endowment members to be appointed by Trustees, may obscure the Endowment's insulation. Indeed, looking back on public broadcasting history one cannot forget the bitter battles between CPB and PBS. One reason for the conflicts was that CPB considered itself to be the parent organization of PBS, and expected PBS to act as a subsidiary. A similar relationship could occur between the powerful Trust and the dependent Endowment. An independent Endowment unfettered to the Trust would better suit the new recommendation.

Funding

The \$1.2 billion annual funding level recommended by Carnegie II must be applauded as a reasonable dollar assessment for the needs of the public broadcasting system. However, the commission rejected the use of any special or set aside taxes to support the system. Instead, they recommend that the \$905 million needed to supplement the \$570 million of income from diverse sources be generated via general revenues from the federal government. The federal funds would match non-federal funds at a rate

of \$1.00 (federal) to \$1.50 (non-federal) raised by the system. To insure insulation from the government the commission recommends a second succeeding year appropriation formula, similar to one already in effect. Thus, \$1.50 of non-federal support in fiscal year 1980 would yield \$1.00 of federal funds in 1982. The commission suggests a five year funding authorization administered by the Trust. The federal funds would be distributed by the Trust directly to the stations. Each station's share would be based upon the level of non-federal income generated by the station during the year matching funds are to be designated.

This station matching formula is superior to the one currently in operation. Under the original 1975 formula which provided for a match of \$1.00 federal for every \$2.50 non-federal income, every dollar raised by the system earned forty cents from the federal government. The forty cents was then divided in half, 20 cents going to CPB and 20 cents going to the stations in the form of Community Service Grants. CSG's are presently distributed via two procedures; a base grant and a variable grant. The base grant is a fixed amount received by all stations while the variable grant is determined by the amount of non-federal income raised by the station. The Trust would distribute the federal funds directly to each station. Unlike the CPB which presently takes half of the federal appropriation, the Trust would have an independent automatic grant of \$20 million a year for its national activities.

While there are several positive aspects of Carnegie II's funding procedure the specter of government interference still lurks in the shadows. Under the formula, the federal government contributes almost half of all funds to the public broadcasters from general revenues. Carnegie I was particularly suspicious of this kind of appropriation. They wrote: "For these funds, within the area in which public programming is most sensitive to government involvement, the commission cannot favor the ordinary budgeting and appropriations procedure followed by the government in providing support from general funds." Accordingly, Carnegie I recommended that the federal funds be generated via a manufacturer's excise tax on television sets, and that the funds be made available to the CPB through a trust fund. Carnegie II addresses itself to the excise tax and dismisses it because of the uncertain revenue produced and because it would be passed along to consumers. They also dismiss a tax on broadcast advertising, a tax on broadcast profits and a tax on the transfer of radio and television stations. However, they do endorse a spectrum fee which they estimate will

generate between \$150 million to \$200 million a year.

While the idea of a spectrum use fee is sound, perhaps it could be coupled with a tax to greatly reduce or entirely eliminate funding via general revenues from the federal government. For example, since 1964 the Independent Broadcasting Authority in England has levied a 13.9% tax on station advertising income and, since 1974, against the profits of the stations. Over the ten year period from 1964 to 1974 the tax produced approximately \$500 million for the Authority. In addition, a tax on the net income of the three television networks whose profits exceed \$1 billion annually, could be instituted. Such a combination would greatly reduce the government's role in funding public broadcasting.

Corporate Underwriting

As part of the funding picture, Carnegie II recommends that support from business to public broadcasting increase from the present \$40 million to \$70 million annually. However, the Commission notes that corporate underwriting has had a profound effect on programming. They cite concern about a funder's interference in programming and choice of audience. Carnegie II fears the loss of a station's editorial freedom and programming autonomy because of underwriter influence. However, they do maintain that the business community has a right to support public broadcasting if they desire to. To this end they suggest that the following guidelines be applied to underwriter participation:

- No promotion of particular products or services
- No close connection between the interests of a program funder and the subject of a program
- No involvement by the funder in the production of programs, script review, choice of topics or selection of talent for a series
- No domination of any class of programming by a single industry or company

Carnegie II suggests that if the level of funding they recommend is accepted, the system can refuse any inappropriate outside funder. In addition, they urge that a large portion of the corporate funds be generated as unrestricted grants to be used by the stations in any way they please.

Considering the increased level of corporate underwriting and the domination of prime time by several oil companies Carnegie II's recommendations are terribly naive. Corporate support for PBS programming has

grown 339.3% from 1973-1977. Of the \$14.5 million corporate dollars contributed to PBS programming in 1977, \$8.2 million or 57.5% was contributed by oil companies. In prime time, 44% of original PBS broadcast hours were either wholly or partially underwritten by corporations. Oil companies accounted for the bulk of prime time PBS distributed hours underwriting 72.5% of all such programming. Clearly, Carnegie II's treatment of corporate underwriting fails to recognize the seriousness of the problem.

The guidelines proposed to govern corporate underwriting already exist in one form or another. Corporate interference in programming can be so subtle as to thwart any guidelines suggested. Urging corporate underwriters to make unrestricted program grants is like clinging to a rope of sand. Again we turn to Carnegie I for elucidation of this issue. They recommend that corporate support for educational television take the form of general grants rather than the underwriting of specific programs involving on-air acknowledgements. Carnegie I hoped to avoid the present underwriting dilemma which allows corporate benefactors to choose the program or series they wish to be associated with.

Congressman Van Deerlin addressed a section of his Communications Act Rewrite to this problem. Under his plan a public station would receive federal funds for facilities and operations only if the licensee accepted no donations or contributions which are offered for the purpose of supporting any particular program or series of programs. In addition, a non-commercial broadcasting service can accept no announcements of sponsorship or underwriting associated with a particular program or any particular series of programs. Clearly Van Deerlin's recommendation comes a lot closer to relieving some of the problems inherent in corporate underwriting. It would eliminate corporate identification announcements adjacent to specific programs or series and would effectively designate all grants as unrestricted in nature.

Carnegie II deserves credit for wrestling with several of the most critical issues in public broadcasting today. However, some of their recommendations are naive and simplistic. Although the recommendations of Carnegie I are dated, quite a bit can still be learned from their concerns and their observations. No single commission can solve the myriad of problems plaguing public broadcasting. At best they can recommend, the rest is up to the public and its leadership.

James Roman is a professor of Communication at Hunter College, New York City.

Medical Media Marketing

The legislative committee of NAVA (the National Audio Visual Association) has several new SLAM UPDATES available (Sales Leads and Markets). "HMO's: The New A-V Users in the Health Field" is the title of SLAM 8. The Booklet sells for \$15 and its main purpose is to help you sell your audio visual products to health maintenance organizations (HMOs).

The publication is arranged to provide media salespeople with an overview of what an HMO is, define some of the terms and prepare you to market to them. The editors have wisely included several profiles of successful uses of media (particularly videotape) by HMO's around the country. The publication also lists 274 developing and operational HMOs — with one or two hopefully falling into your sales territory. Each of the 274 HMOs listed is described by a code which enables the reader to determine the following information about each of the HMOs: 1) if the HMO is federally qualified (If it is, the HMO is required to provide ongoing patient education and staff train-

ing; 2) if the HMO is receiving federal grants; this money can be used for purchase of audio-visual materials and equipment; 3) whether the HMO is operational or just developing; 4) what kind of HMO it is—group practice or individual practice association.

The second new SLAM/UPDATE is entitled "Selling A-V to Private Industry: How Federal Laws Can Help You." They focus on three federal laws: a) The Occupational Safety and Health Act; b) Federal Mine Safety and Health Act; and c) Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. All of these laws require some kind of training for implementation and NAVA urges that audio-visuals are the way to do it, "A-V for Affirmative Action," "A-V for Job Safety." Their message is clear and it reflects the multifold increase by industry and the health field to use media, particularly videotape, as a major component of their training and education programs. For more information, contact: NAVA, 3150 Spring Street, Fairfax, Virginia 22031.

"**Craoladh agus anti-oideachas leanunach**" was the title of a recent article in the Irish Broadcasting Review. (Translated from the Irish—"The Broadcasting Service and Adult Education").

The Review is published three times a year by RTE, the government-owned television system for Ireland. The magazine is a thoughtful mix of subjects relevant to television but seldom found in any U. S. television trade magazines. The audience for the magazine seems broad—it does not focus only on the technical side of television nor does it seem only for communication academics or educational TV types. Articles in two recent issues included an editorial on the cultural challenge to the broadcaster; the Swedish experience of two-channel TV; Irish Broadcasters and WARC and engineering developments in the Television Centre when RTE2 begins operation. Most of the articles are written by people who work for RTE, and are in English. Irish articles include a translated summary.

Subscription is \$20 per year. Write to: Irish Broadcasting Review, Radio Telefis Eireann, Donnybrook, Dublin, 4. Ireland.

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Humor Contributions Solicited



DCTV'S HEALTH CARE: Misery, Profit and Politics

by Gayle Gibbons

Health Care: Your Money or Your Life begins with a montage of U.S. presidents telling us that health care is a right in this country. Repeating the same message gives these famous faces an eerie, disturbing quality. When we see them again at the tape's conclusion the eeriness becomes sinister. The tape is a strong political statement that forces an active judgement out of the viewer. There's no dispassionate point of view available in the area of basic health care. Though the tape approaches all the people concerned as caught up in the static system, it also defines who suffers and who benefits. The tape shows the victims: the disenfranchised, the poor, blacks, old people and the

lower middle class who are overwhelmed at trying to meet impossible health care debts.

Health care in the U.S. has always been a political issue. The American Medical Association leads all other interest groups in the money it gives elected national representatives. Thus, the AMA was able to defeat the Hospital Cost Containment bill in the summer of 1978. Proponents of the bill estimated it would have saved consumers \$27 billion over the next five years.

This videotape produced by Downtown Community Television and WNET profiles two Brooklyn hospitals, Kings County (a public hospital) and the Downstate Medical Center (a private

facility). Using these two hospitals as examples, the tape touches on most of the major health issues in this country. The health insurance industry, the pharmaceutical industry, the hospital lobby, and the various tertiary health industries are shown as well as the treatment patients in the U.S. receive for cancer, mental health problems, and how the elderly are cared for when they have money or insurance and when they do not.

The tape refutes many of the self-care arguments. Self-Care proponents argue that the individual is personally responsible for his or her health; that is, if you ate a balanced diet, didn't smoke or drink so much, you wouldn't be sick. Your lifestyle causes your illness. It presumes that people have control of their lives and the decisions which affect them. This argument has been used to justify cutbacks in services for the poor. In the videotape, the patients themselves tell their stories, and you have a sense of their frustration: being sick and the expense of that illness worse than the illness itself.

The differences between the two hospitals visually is startling. At Kings County, you have an overwhelming sense of too many people in too small a facility — all needing attention. Downstate on the other hand is a "Marcus-Welby" hospital. One scene has two patients in a room (compared to 60 in some of the wards at Kings County) talking about how good the food is there and how you have to be recommended by a doctor at the hospital to be admitted. Kings County is the American curative model gone awry—the busiest emergency room in the world. The U.S. is one of the few industrialized countries where a large proportion of the population receive their primary medical care in hospital emergency rooms.

Throughout the tape you have a sense of the competency of the hospital staff but how impossible it is to provide quality care in a public hospital that repeatedly receives staff and budget cuts. Nurses tell the narrator how they devised a way to make laundry bags out of sheets, since they don't have laundry bags anymore. Doctors trying to hook up an EKG machine and not having the right cable connectors. High technology medical care needs lots of money to support it. We watch as the physicians perform surgery to insert a pacemaker in a patient, and their frustration with faulty equipment and the eventual death of the patient. The tape does not mystify the medical profession.

Kings County has the only free cancer treatment clinic in the city. The narrator talks to patients. They are waiting to receive treatment from a machine that is so obsolete and destroys so much healthy body tissue that it is called the "the Killer." Next we are at the cancer treatment unit at Downstate. We see the radiation machine there — it is one of the most advanced, modern

machines that money can buy.

At the Downstate facility, you get a sense of the doctor as star. A hospital administrator proudly tells us that they have wooed away from California a particularly outstanding heart surgeon, and are presently building him a \$1.5 million wing in the hospital. The heart surgery he performs averages \$20,000 per operation. This segment of the tape is similar to a series called *Lifeline*, which was on NBC briefly last year. In that series, each week a different doctor superstar was profiled. His story was told, *Dragnet* style, with a narrator and music that reached a crescendo as the "suspense" built. This scientized view of illness and the doctor's intervention contrasts with the care at Kings County where you take what you can get, and often wait 5 months for an appointment in the outpatient clinic where staff had been cut 50%.

Narration is an important part of the tape. The issues discussed in the tape are complicated and the narration serves to explain, clarify and focus the viewer's attention. It forces you to pay attention to the program, concentrate, and does not allow you to distance yourself from it — which I think occurs in some of Fred Wiseman's documentaries, and diminishes their impact. The program is very strong and not pleasant to watch. College students viewing this program in a non-broadcast video class were very upset and disturbed by the program . . . some were angry they had to see it. People in the tape talk a lot as well. They tell us about waiting 8 hours in line for a prescription at the Kings County pharmacy — and then finding out the pharmacy doesn't stock the drug. We also hear the pharmacist talk about the drug companies raising prices 40%, hospital pharmacists laid off, and the pharmacy being unable to purchase drugs.

The only weakness in the tape was more a matter of degree. I didn't think the profit motive and health care delivery in this country was explained fully. You do get a sense of the cost of illness but not a complete understanding of why, and what the relationships are between the insurance companies, hospitals, medical supply companies. The health insurance industry is tied to the hospitals — the medical supply firms depend on hospital purchases and so on. All of them depend on the perpetuation of the existing health care delivery model in this country — curative rather than preventive — and quality of care directly related to how much you can pay. You do not have a sense from the tape of the organized effort by hospitals and medical administration to block unionization efforts in these facilities. If health care workers were organized it would be more difficult to institute cutbacks to increase hospital profits. The U.S. alternatives to traditional health delivery were not discussed. The federal government is funding the development of more Health Maintenance Organizations and

Representative Dellums has introduced a bill to establish a National Health Service in the United States.

Health Care: Your Money or Your Life is an important first tape in exposing the health care industry in the country, and after viewing it you have a sense that many more videotapes need to be made. First broadcast over the PBS network, its major distribution however has been the non-

broadcast market. It has been widely used by community groups and schools. As this non-broadcast market expands, video producers can begin to develop programming that is targeted specifically for an audience... for example, public health departments, day care centers and pediatric clinics. The tape is available from Downtown Community Television, 87 Lafayette Street, New York, New York.

Media Grantees

\$13,800 to University of Pennsylvania, University Hospital, Cancer Center, Philadelphia from the Ripel Foundation to provide six audiovisual receivers for use in educational videotape project for cancer patients and their families and for evaluation of the project.

\$5,000 to Communications for Change, Chicago, from the Wieboldt Foundation for Video News Project to develop neighborhood-based news for broadcast television.

\$25,000 to Action for Children's Television from the Carnegie Corporation of New York for direct-mail public membership campaign.

\$10,000 to Action for Children's Television from the Ford Foundation for national symposium on television role models and young adolescents.

\$13,000 to London Graduate School of Business Studies from the Markle Foundation for research on television viewing.

\$77,503 to University of Chicago, Graduate School of Business from the Markle Foundation to develop new directions for analysis and writing about television by integrating methods of the social sciences and humanities.

\$5,000 to University of Pennsylvania from the Markle Foundation to support Franco-American symposium on artistic dimensions of television.

\$47,502 to Emory University Department of English, Atlanta from the Markle Foundation to continue work on cultural history of television.

\$14,900 to D.E.A.F. Media, Oakland from the Mott Foundation to assure continued production and widest possible distribution to *Rainbow's End*, a television series for deaf children and their families.

\$15,000 to WNET, NYC from the Culpeper Foundation for preparation of documentary about the Pine Barrens of New Jersey to be made available to Public Broadcasting System for national distribution.

\$100,000 to Educational Broadcasting Corporation, WNET, NYC from the Gund Foundation for television series, *The Meanings of Modern Art*.

\$165,000 to Metropolitan Opera Association, NYC from the Culpeper Foundation to underwrite features of four operas to be telecast.

\$40,000 to Emory University, Atlanta from the Markle Foundation to write a cultural history of video communications.

\$1,800,000 to the Educational Broadcasting Corporation, WNET, NYC from the Ford Foundation for partial support for the first two seasons of *Bill Moyers Journal*.

\$500,000 to WETA, Washington, D.C. from the Ford Foundation for continued support of the Federal City Station Plan.

\$30,576 to the Film Fund from the Ford Foundation for a study to determine the cost and effectiveness of systems to improve distribution of independent films in the U. S.

\$10,000 to the University of Southern California from the Ford Foundation for a workshop-conference on film and video for faculty of major American film schools.

\$27,490 to Yale University from the Ford Foundation for an audiovisual history of the life and work of Frederick Law Olmsted.

\$10,000 to the Bay Area Video Coalition from the Gerbode Foundation to help underwrite operating and personnel costs.

\$25,000 to Community Television of Southern California, KCET, from the Ford Foundation to videotape *Conversations About The Dance*, a dance theater piece by Agnes de Mille dealing with roots of American dance and its roots in American culture.

\$25,000 to American National Theater and Academy, NYC from the Ford Foundation to videotape new plays by American playwrights.

\$10,000 to WETA from the Public Welfare Foundation to encourage inner city children to view educational TV.

\$40,000 to Associates for Human Resources, Concord, MA. from the Markle Foundation to study and assess use of simulation games in public affairs programming.

\$14,995 to Boston Foundation, Boston from the Markle Foundation in support of research and development for television project, *How to be Effective*.

\$10,000 to Center for Action Research, Princeton from the Markle Foundation to study feasibility of a national endowment for children's television programming and to develop a model for such an endowment.

\$15,000 to Greater Cleveland Hospital Association from the Kaiser Family Foundation for development of televised health education system for hospitalized patients.

\$200,000 to Greater Washington Telecommunications Association, WETA/Washington D.C. from the Ford Foundation to develop special public affairs programming.

photo by Jack Jorgens



photo by Cathie Flynn



Washington, DC: May 6, 1979

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