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The potential use of television for education in the south african context

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and most of it was what he termed "negative".[25] The foundation of media imperialism criticism was the functionalists ahistorical view of development - the belief that the "underdeveloped" nations had 'arrived' in the 20th century with none of the prerequisites for development (least of all the ability to create or successfully operate electronic technology) - and, it was assumed that these had never been present.

The broadcast media (and particularly television) in the Third World countries were found to be purveying a "homogenized brand"[26] of popular culture since the legacy of colonialism encouraged and endorsed this. This uniformity helped to advance the 1960s concept of modernization insofar as it encouraged the national and international sharing of images. Katz and Wedell's survey also proves that it induced "a standardised range of economic demands that encourage(d) mass-production techniques, but at the same time (was) certainly destructive of indigenous-political and cultural self expression."[27] Of the eleven Third World countries investigated by these researchers, all had introduced television by the mid-1970s, but very little effort and money had been invested in formulating explicit indigenous media policies. The results of this, they prove, are three anomolies

(1) The acceptance of broadcasting has "marched hand in hand with other concomitants of development, such as geographical mobility."[28] Whilst encouraging the adoption of a moneyed middle-class lifestyle, the media (whether inadvertently or deliberately) promoted the desirability of urbanisation.

(2) The acceptance of broadcasting also marches with the

acceptance of apparently "modern", Western education and promotes the desire for gaining diplomas and certificates.

(3) The acceptance of broadcasting, lastly, marched with the transfer of political structure.[29]

A Marxist criticism which considers 1960s development broadcasting simply as an extension of Western Capitalism, fits neatly into this framework.

Another critic of the media in the 1960s is McAnany. Dealing with a mainly rural audience, his research revealed that information distributed in the media in the 60s and early 70s might not even have reached the audience, secondly would probably not have been understood by them, or that even if the information were used, it would not "necessarily lead to increased productivity."[30] In other words, development broadcasting via the media was not automatically beneficial. Writing mostly about radio broadcasting, McAnany doubted "whether anyone knew anything about" the comprehensive information environment of the rural poor and suggested that imported media had a limited effect on "local cultural restraints". While radio might indeed be the most significant mass medium of communication in rural areas, it bore little relationship to other indices of development - transport, educational and health services, cash income, change agents or even the 'traditional' oral communication network."[31]

Writing in the late 1970s, Katz and Wedell summed up this criticism succinctly:

> "Broadcasting has thus been one of a collection of transferred attitudes and institutions that in the countries of the West have been the effects of development, but that in the developing world have been regarded as among its causes. The causal process, however, has only rarely been elaborated, and the media have been introduced with only general statements of their hoped-for effects. In some countries these statements are extremely vague; in others they are somewhat more explicit. The more explicit statements can be heard in those countries in which the broadcast media are unitary in structure and directly controlled by the government...."[32]

By the late 1960s the rural poor were becoming increasingly suspicious of "top-down" development.[33] Thus, development efforts which were so readily and unquestioningly accepted at the beginning of the decade, were further undermined by rural resistance to government information for fear of exploitation. Likewise, governments feared "any widespread mobilization of the poor."[34] At this stage, critics began to realize the liability of the Third World for its inability to develop. Although the blame carried was a minute fraction of that carried by the West, there was no doubt by the late 1960s that the post-colonial state-controlled enterprises would benefit from, and thus retain a biased set of media.

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This state of affairs was, perhaps, an offshoot of one of the major problems of education in the 1960s. As Kallaway[35] shows - the people themselves began forcing unrealistic demands for education and media (and by implication development) on reluctant politicians and administrators. These popular demands were often the manifestation of the growing aspirations toward Western values[36] and were inappropriate and irrelevant to current conditions and contexts thus serving as an obstacle to possible constructive educational innovation.

3.4.1 Major Responses to the Criticism

Arguably the most significant response to the criticism of the media in development in the 1960s, was that of Everett Rogers, the leader of what Switzer calls the "functional revisionist school"[37] An analysis and summary of his argument is essential since it includes the most significant aspects of the criticism of the old paradigm, the redefinition of the causes of underdevelopment, and the major elements of the new paradigm.

From the 1976 issue of *Communication Research* it is evident that Rogers foresaw the need to emphasise "endogenous" development in favour of the unilateral, economically based 1960s model which was characterised by an almost complete disregard for the social and human aspects of communication. In place of this, he favoured such things as the equal distribution of development benefits with the aim of improving the quality of life. This, he believed could be achieved by utilizing local resources and labour-intensive,

lower or intermediate-level technology rather than high level, capital-intensive technology. Underlying all of this was his belief that the major causes of "underdevelopment" were external and therefore, the need to redefine development and underdevelopment was essential.

3.4.2 Roger's Analysis[38]

Briefly, Roger's criticism of the old paradigm was typical of all the media imperialism critics. It included a description of the negative aspects of industrialisation and economic growth as the key to development, capital-intensive technology as an *automatic developer, and the quantification of aims and results.* Values such as justice, dignity and freedom which he believed to be vitally important did not fit on a "dollars-and-cents yard-stick."[39] He believed that the old paradigm "implied that poverty was equivalent to underdevelopment."[40]

In redefining the causes of underdevelopment, he quoted A G frank's theory that world and national capitalism "produced underdevelopment in the past and still generates underdevelopment in the present."[41] His "elements" in the new development included:

(1) The equality of distribution of information and economic benefits.

(2) Decentralization - popular local participation in self-development planning.

(3) Self-reliance, *emphasising the potential of local re-sources.*

(4) The integration of the "modern" and the traditional ie. Modernization as a syncretization of the old and the new.

Roger's new definition saw development as:

> "a widely participatory process of social change in a society, intended to bring about both socialand material advancement (including greater equality, freedom and other valued qualities) for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment."[42]

3.5 Communication in Development

Roger's analysis of the use of media/communication in development is very similar to other criticisms of the time.

During the previous decade, he believed, communication had been regarded as a very powerful and direct development force. The dominant paradigm advocated a one way flow of information from the West, and from government and development agencies to the people. The mass media were ideally suited to this role since they could reach a large audience, rapidly with "informative and persuasive messages about details of development."[43]

During this period, one of the most frequent types of communications research focused on the "diffusion of innovations" - that is, tracking innovations as they were transmitted through networks. Switzer points out that critics of this "suggested that it was biased in favour of technological innovations, which, in turn,

widened the socio-economic gulf between the elites and the masses - especially in rural areas."[44]

The gradual realization that the role of the media in development was contributary rather than direct led to suggestions of alternative types of communication in development:

(1) Self-development - de-emphasising the "top-down" aspect of the process of communication. The key elements of self-development are (according to Rogers) participation, mass mobilization, group efficacy, and local responsibility.

(2) The use of mass media to bring information to local groups. For example the use of radio for "listening groups" in Tanzania (1974/75) to provide the public with information about public health, food and agriculture.

(3) The main role of mass communication within the new development included:

> "...(1) Providing technical information about development problems and possibilities, and about appropriate innovations, in answer to local requests, and (2) circulatory information about the self-development accomplishments of local groups so that such groups may profit from others experience and perhaps be challenged to achieve a similar performance."[45]

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While not denying the value and genuine advances made by Rogers, the major criticism of his work was that he did not specify exactly what practical forms the suggested alternatives would take. He did, however, concede that 'radical' centres were possibly correct in suggesting that the so-called functional media research was supportive of existing norms, structures and institutions. But, as Switzer points out, he missed the point. "The critique embraced a much more fundamental assumption - functional media and its researchers were embodied in a social structure that was essentially the antithesis of development. His suggestion that low-cost experimental research designs to investigate how development communication might be rather than just describing.....communication activities did not really respond to the criticisms."[47]

It was the Third World itself that suggested more practical responses to the challenge of development.[48]

In terms of the media, the formation of a "non-aligned" news agency was a step taken, possibly, to wrest coverage of the Third World from Western newsmakers and interpreters of events. The "news pool" was located in Yugoslavia and "operated" by its national news agency, TANJUG. Another practical response mentioned by Switzer (1980) was the attempt to gain more significant access to the radio frequency spectrum and ownership of communications satellites in order to get a larger portion of the communications technology seemed most appropriate for Third World needs.

These efforts, according to Switzer, from part of UNESCO's New Information Order (NIO) "which in terms of development, is concerned with injecting 'multiple Third World perspectives' into the international news flow and redefining western constructs of the nature of news so as to allow for a greater concentration on the "development process".[49] From Masmoudi's analysis it can be seen that the NIO prescribes responsibilities for media in Third and First World countries as well as the international news agencies.

The New International Economic Order (NIEO), also emanating from the United Nations is a much more generalised programme that is important to discuss since it has had a significant effect upon development theory, including media in development. The NIEO is a movement, whose primary aim is the promotion of all aspects of the development of contemporary world society with particular emphasis on promoting Third World countries by attempting to put an end to their economic "underdevelopment". It is stated, in addition, that the NIEO should be based in particular, on "the community of interests and the cooperation of all states, independently of their socio-economic systems."[50]

As a programme for the future, the NIEO documents list the following major themes:

> "The complete and permanent sovereignty of every state over its natural resources. In accordance with this principle, every state has the right to exercise effective control over its resources and their exploitation, using

the means appropriate to its situation, including the right to nationalise property or to transfer property to its citizens and the right to control the activities of transitional firms.

Diversification of production in the developing countries.

Industrialization of the developing countries - so that these countries will have at least 25 per cent of world industrial capacity by the year 2000

Promotion of agricultural development

Free access for the products of developing countries to markets in industrialised countries.

Stabilization of commodity prices in international trade.

Improvement of the competitive position of national products in relation to that of synthetic products.

Putting a stop to the waste of natural resources, including food.

Easier access to industrial technology, its transfer and its adaptation.

Closer cooperation between the developing countries.

Reform of the international monetary system.

Management of the common heritage of mankind (for example, the minerals contained in the seabed)."[51]

These components cannot all be analysed here but in this context, the NIO is defined as the

"international exchange of information in which nations, which develop their cultural system in an autonomous way and with complete sovereign control of resources, fully and effectively participate as independent members of the international community."[52]

Exactly how the developing world (and, on a domestic scale, developing areas) will physically gain control of its share of international information flow and how this information will actually be adapted to promote development has not really been dealt with. The world's major informational sources remain concentrated in the industrialised world, and it is clear that the Third World is having difficulty in gaining equal access to data basis and resources.

Likewise, there is no evidence that the post-colonial predilection for state-controlled media in the Third World will produce truly relevant development information. As research[53] has shown, in most cases, state control over the media is hardly the correct recipe for development since it reinforces the information desired

by the elites rather than that needed by the "masses". The likelihood that the elite will exercise internal media imperialism (as a result of internal colonialism) is very high. Switzer quotes Boyd's analysis of media in Egypt under Nasser to illustrate the degree to which developing countries are capable of initiating forms of media imperialism that are similar to those promoted by the *"developed" world.*

> "By 1956 when the Voice of the Arabs (Cairo)....began to have an impact on other countries in the area.....Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan and Saudi Arabia (were) unable to use this same medium to refute what Egypt was saying about them....in the rush to defend themselves, (they) acquired the means to provide their own citizens with an alternative to Egypt's services, thereby laying a basis for fostering indigenous economic and political development after the radio wars ended."[54]

In spite of the fact that Egypt's domestic and international radio services were regarded as "the most extensive system of any developing country in Africa and in the Middle East, perhaps in the world," Boyd reported that "there has not been a firm commitment on the part of the government to tackle literacy and population problems in that medium."[55]

The pessimistic view of Elliott and Golding applies to the latter *case and to the South African broadcast media - that is, that these* media are "not so much catalysts for social change, as cultural mechanisms for maintaining social order."[56] The highly defensive

reaction of the SABC to the fact that Boputhatswana Television can be received in certain White areas was, significantly taken up by the government, revealing its attitude to the broadcasting media in general and to television in particular. This reaction can be interpreted as a manifestation of the government's apparent fear that the use of airwaves might not be under its exclusive control. The total lack of private broadcasting institutions and the limitations imposed upon those wishing to establish such organizations reinforces the validity of this supposition.

Van Zyl (1980) contends that any such attempt must examine the assumptions that media experts make about the way in which people react to information:

> "Whether people accept or reject information, whether they act upon it or simply absorb it passively. The fundamental principle involved here is that of the information model one chooses to work with."[57]

CHAPTER 3 - REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Note: Here the word 'change' is substituted for 'development' since it has a broader meaning in terms of human behaviour and its use may avoid some of the confusion arising from the contradictory notions of what development is.

2. DIAZ BORDENAVE, J.E. (1977). *Communication and Rural Development*, UNESCO, P.11

3. WHITING, G.C. "How does communication interface with change" in ROGERS, E.M. (ed) *Communications Research* vol. 3, no. 2, 1976, p. 197.

4. *cf* TOMASELLI and TOMASELLI (1981), VAN ZYL, J.A.F. (1980) and KALLAWAY, P. (ed) (1984) *Apartheid and Education : The Education of Black South Africans*, Rowan Press

5. PYE, L. (ed) (1963), *Communication and Political Development*, Princeton University Press, p.7.

6. SWITZER, L. (1980), p.1.
Note: Functionalists regarded the communications media as essentially neutral channels for "carrying" desired innovations.

7. SWITZER, L. (1980), p.1.

8. IBID.,

9. ALECHIN[illegible]he Contribution of the United Nations system to formulating development concepts." in UNESCO (1982) *Different Theories and Practices of Development*. Unesco, Paris 1982, pp.26-7.

10. Note: The role of media in development was codified by UNESCO as per capita indices for development: "10 copies of a daily newspaper, five radio receivers, two cinema seats and two television receivers for every 100 inhabitants were recommended as the "minimum standard" for media in the developing world", in TUNSTALL (1977), p.221.

11. *cf* SWITZER (1980)

12. IBID., p.2
NOTE: see also ROGERS (1976).

13. KALLAWAY, P. "Radical Education" in *Reality*, 1977, p.16.

14. *cf* Analysis by ELLIOTT and GOLDING (1974) p.232 in Switzerland.

15. KALLAWAY (1977), p.16.

16. KATZ and WEDELL (1978), p.3.

17. SWITZER (1980), p.2.

18. *cf* PYE (1963) for a discussion of the notion of political consensus.

19. SWITZER (1980), p.3.

20. KALLAWAY (1977), pp. 16-17.

21. KATZ and WEDELL (1978), p.6.

22. VAN ZYL (1980), p.4.

23. SWITZER (1980), pp.5-6.

24. VAN ZYL (1980), p.4

25. SWITZER (1980), p.4.

26. KATZ and WEDELL (1978), p. vii.

27. IBID.

28 IBID., p.5.

29. IBID. pp 5-6.

30. SWITZER (1980), p.7.

31. IBID.

32. KATZ and WEDELL (1978), p.6.

33. ROGER'S (1976) phrase.

34. SWITZER (1980), p.7.

35. KALLAWAY (1977), p.16.

36 NOTE: It is shown in the chapter on development that the consistent negative reinformcement of the apparent "backwardness" of developing nations, leads directly to aspirations toward the lifestyle, ideologies and institutions of the supposedly "developed" nations

37. SWITZER (1980), p.8.

38. NOTE: What follows is, largely, a summary on Roger's (1976) analysis. See also: ROGERS, E. and ROY, P. (1969): *Impact of communication on rural development*. UNESCO and National Institute of Community Development.

39. ROGERS (1976), p.216.

40. IBID.

41. FRANK, A.G. (1971): *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America*, London, Penguin Books, p.1.

42. ROGERS (1976), p. 225.

43. IBID.

44. SWITZER (1980), p.8

45. ROGERS (1970), p.233.

46. *cf* ROGERS (1976), pp.228-9, 233-4 and 237 in SWITZER (1980), p.8

47. SWITZER (1980), p.9.

48 NOTE: It must be noted, however, that some of these were as Switzer suggests more "surface" charges than anything else.

49. SWITZER (1980), p.10.

50. UNITED NATIONS: General Assembly Resolution 320(vi) in ALECHINA (1982), p.36.

51. ALECHINA (1982), p.36.

52. HAMELINC(1979), p.146 in Switzerland.

53. *cf* Switzerland (1980).

54. VAN ZYL (1980), p.5.

CHAPTER 4

THE APPLICATION OF THEORIES OF COMMUNICATION TO MEDIA AND DEVELOPMENT

Bearing in mind what has already been said about the use of the broadcasting media in development, it is vital to provide a theoretical starting point for the new applications of broadcasting media in development. By analysing the major models of communication, it is possible to assess the usefulness of media in different developmental contexts.

Van Zyl (1980) contends that any such attempt must examine the assumptions that media experts make about the way in which people react to information:

> "Whether people accept or reject information, whether they act upon it or simply absorb it passively. The fundamental principle involved here is that of the information model one chooses to work with."[1]

4.1 The Value of Communication/Information Models

Throughout the dissertation it is implied that a balance between theory and practice is essential. In dealing with the necessity for models of communication and information account has been taken of the fact that many theorists have claimed for their models, a comprehensiveness which cannot be achieved in practice. However, modelling is both necessary and useful particularly as a foundation for structuring new applications for communication systems, and as a basis for formulating research programmes. In explaining the

value of models, Fiske singles out the following advantages:

> "(a) (a model) highlights systematically selected features of its territory, (b) it points to selected interrelationships between these features, and (c) the system behind the selection in (a) and (b) provides a definition and delineation of the territory being modelled."[2]

In this review of communication theories and models, cognizance will be taken for the four basic theoretical approaches identified by Diaz Bordenave (1977):

> "(a) communication as persuasion; (b) communication as transmission of information; (c) communication as personal expression, social interaction and relationship and (d) political change associated with authentic rural development."[3]

It must be noted at the outset that account has been taken of the fact that the models that will be used to illustrate and explain the theories, can be applied in more than one of the theoretical categories provided.

4.2 Review of Communications Theory and Relevant Models.

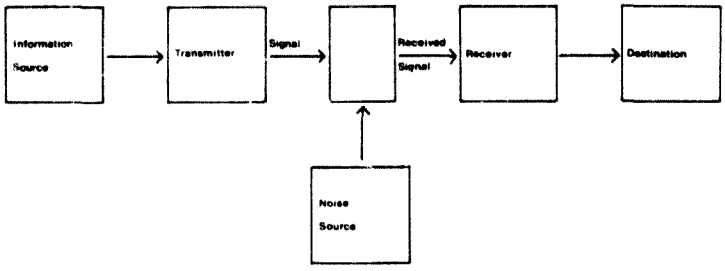
4.2.1 Communication as Transmission and Persuasion

Communication became an object of scientific study with the invention of the electronic media. One of the first information theory models, and certainly the most well known, is the *Shannon and Weaver* model (1949). It was originally produced as a mathematical model to explain

technical problems in the study of communication, concentrating upon how accurately the symbols of communication could be transmitted. This rested upon the assumption that improving the encoding would increase semantic accuracy, that is, meanings of words and images etc. This approach completely ignored cultural factors - the fact that meaning resides as much in the culture as in the message. This lack of concern with the "human" aspects of communication resulted in adherents of this model basing their research and thinking on a simplistic, mechanistic view of communication as a process of message transmission.

Later, these theorists introduced into their model the key concept of "noise (i.e. additional stimuli which can disrupt or interfere with the accuracy of the message being transmitted). Their concern with "effectiveness" criteria laid these theorists open to the propaganda criticism. According to this model the sender has only communicated effectively with the receiver once the receiver has responded in the way desired by the sender. The actual nature and characteristics of the model remained linear, simplisitic and process-centred.

Figure 4.1. *Shannon and Weaver's model of Communication*[4]



The Laswell Model (1948) has the same basic "shape" as the *Shannon and Weaver model*, but it applies to the mass media. As a social scientist, Laswell analysed communication in terms of the functions it performs in society. Groups of "specialists" carried out the three communications functions and these were identified as:

SURVEILLANCE - political leaders, diplomats, etc.

CORRELATION - educators, journalists, etc.

TRANSMISSION - family members, school teachers, etc.

Like Shannon and Weaver, Laswells' model is linear, and transmission-based, but it raises the issue of effect[5] rather than meaning. In his analysis of the model, Burgoon (1974) concludes that Laswell's final insistance is that "it is essential for our organized society to discover and control any factors which may interfere with efficient communcation. He suggested that a simple way to describe the communication process is to answer the following questions:

WHO

SAYS WHAT

IN WHICH CHANNEL

TO WHOM

WITH WHAT EFFECT?"[6]

Most communication research, Fiske observes, has implicitly followed Laswell's model. Likewise it has been followed in practice. His analysis shows that

> "The work on institutions and their processes, on the producers of communication, on the audience and how it is affected clearly derives from a process-based linear model."[7]

Although the *Lasswell model* represents, essentially, a purely mechanistic approach, it did make a departure from the Shannon and Weaver approach in one vital aspect. Since it was concerned with effects it became associated with the "hypodermic needle" theory of communication which depended on the concept of stimulus and response with the purpose of propaganda. The World War II experience of communication for "psychological warfare" and propaganda was applied in fields like advertising which has acquired considerable importance. It was naively assumed, as Burgoon observes, that a stimulus caused a direct and immediate response in a person. Likewise communication theorists believed that the medium evoked a direct and immediate response from each receiver.

> "This they attributed to the media's extensive powers to change and mobilize mass opinions, attitudes and values. This "one-step" theory of communication envisioned a society in which individuals were psychologically disconnected and isolated and therefore unlikely to communicate face-to-face on important matters."[8]

This essentially linear model, as well as the *Shannon and Weaver model* also implies that communication always begins with the so-called "sender", "that it is the intentions of the communicator which defines the meaning of a communication event."[9] The theories also suggest "an underlying rationality and purposefulness about communication, an intention of achieving certain ends and hence the relevance of a criterion of communication efficiency."[10] In addition to this, the apparent linearality is inconsistent with

what often happens in practice. Just like early development theory and practice, most linear models of communication which stressed the function of communication as transmission of information and communication as persuasion, resulted in inappropriate information, the relevance and accuracy of which was compromised by the lack of concern for "human" and social aspects of communication.

4.2.2 Communication Theory and the Social/Behavioural Sciences

Two early and well known "social systems" models are those of Newcombe (1953)and Berlo (1960). The social system model of communication is defined by McQuail as one which

> "can be applied to any situation where there is some persistent relationship between the constituent elements - senders, receivers and environments."[11]

The concept of "process" was, hereafter, gradually associated with the communicatin process. Eventually, theorists began to seek an increasingly sophisticated knowledge and application to their theories of the influence, effect and the role played by variables in the communication act. What was considered vital was:

> "..the image the sender has of the receiver, and vice versa; the personal experiences, values and expectations of both the source and the receivers; the subtle variations of meaning that symbols and situations can have; the many and varying aspects of the cultural context and so on."[12]

It appears that opinion of what constitutes outside variables were social systems - defined by Diaz Bordenave as:

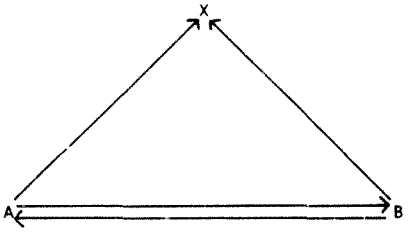
> "any interactive social structure (a family, church congre-

gation, a rural community and so on) having ends and objectives, norms, status roles, power, social rank, sanctions, facilities and territoriality."[13]

Since communication was now finally considered to be one of the processes through which social systems were seen to exist, the media began to be located in the context of the total web of communication.

The simplest known model which illustrates the system approach was formulated by Newcomb.[14]

Figure 4.2. A Schematic illustration of the minimal A-B-X system.[15]



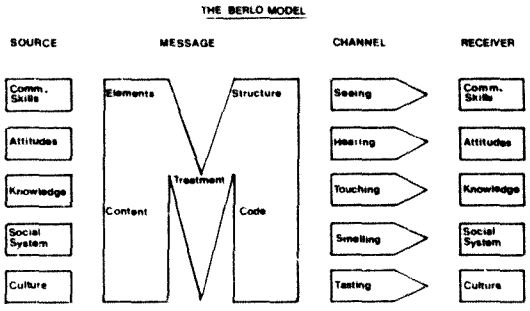
It is widely regarded as the earliest model to recognise the role of communication in society. For Newcomb the role was simple - he saw it as one which would maintain equilibrium within the social system. This is based upon the "initial assumption that communication among human beings performs the essential function of enabling two or more individuals to maintain simultaneous orientions to each other and towards objects of an external environment."[16]

At either end of this triangular model are the "communicator" and "receiver", A and B. The apex of the triangle is occupied by X, an object in their common environment. As a system A, B and X are interdependent or oriented to each other and communication is the process whereby this structure is supported. Thus as Fiske states:

> "...if A changes, B and X will change as well or if A changes his relationship to X, B will have to change either his relationship with X or with A"[17]

By transmitting information about changes, and allowing adjustment to take place the symmetry of the relationship will be maintained. - "The model assumes that at any given moment the ABX system is 'at rest' or balanced."[18]

The *Berlo*[19] or *SMCR model* (1960) specifies the need for encoders and decoders in the communication process. In one example cited by Burgoon (1974) a presidential press secretary is a good example of an encoder, while at the other extreme decoders were seen by Berlo to be the set of sensory skills of the receiver. The model also includes personal factors that may have an effect on the communication process: communication skills, attitudes, knowledge, social system, and the cutural environment of the source and the receiver.

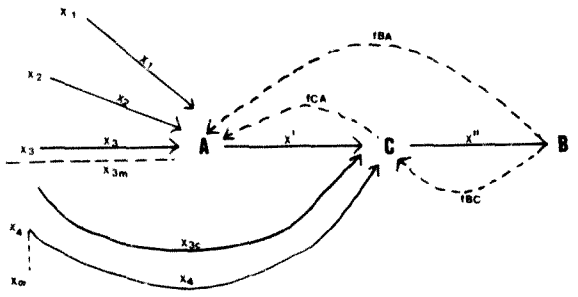


In introducing his analysis of models of "larger systems", McQuail makes the following important point about the process of selection:

> "A further modification of the Shannon and Weaver model has been required to take account of the fact that communication, especially in large systems, has to be looked at as a flow of 'information' on messages along a network, a chain or set of channels. From this perspective, what is of primary interest is not the efficiency of the encoding and transmitting facilities in overcoming 'noise' or the integration and articulation of the whole system, but the discontinuities in the flow of information and the process of selection which occur at various points. Selection occurs at the source, at the point of transmission, at the different stages in the 'journey' of the message, where intermediaries are involved, and at the point of reception."[20]

Although there appeares to be no single model which revolves exclusively around this function, there are various theorists who have drawn attention to it, Lewin[21] whose work produced a notion of the concept of "gatekeepers", De Fleur and Larsen[22] who studied the diffusion of information.

The social need for information implied by both Newcomb and Berlo, is also then reference point for the *Westley and MacLean model* (1957).[23]



A: the would be communicator or 'advocate.'

B: the audience member.

C: the mass communication organisation and its agents who control the channel.

X: any event or object in the environment of A, B or C which is a subject of communication.

f: feedback

This model illustrates how the messages C transmits to B (X") represent his selections from both messages to him from A's (X') and C's selections and abstractions from Xs in his own sensory field (X_3, X_4), which may or may not be Xs in A's field. Feedback not only moves from B to A (fBA) and from B to C (fBC) but also from C to A (fCA). Clearly, in the mass communication situation, a large number of Cs receive from a very large number of As and transmit to a vastly large number of Bs, who simultaneously receive from other Cs.[24]

The *Westley and MacLean model* is, clearly, an extension of Newcomb's model (but a return to the linear slope of Shannon and Weaver). It was formulated with the mass specifically in mind and, therefore, Westley and MacLean added a new element, C, which is the "editorial-communicating"[25] function - that is, the process of deciding what and how to communicate. As a channel, C acts as an agent of th the communicator and the audience. According to McQuail, the effect of C's presence in the system of communication is to

> "...extend the environment of X,s to which the audience member can be oriented, and to bring A's into touch with B's which would be otherwise out of reach. The C role also accomplishes the task of selecting among the A's, or would be communicatiors, those whose messages are believed most relevant to the needs of B or which meet some other criteria of selection."[26]

The balance of Newcomb's model was, thus, significantly shifted. The receiver, B is very much at the mercy of the now dominant A and C's intermediary position, referred to by White[27] as the "gate-keeper" position has a dual character described by Westley and MacLean as either 'purposive' or 'non-purposive', "the former when it involves carrying messages from an 'advocate' with a particular audience or public in mind, the latter when it is a matter of conveying the unplanned events of the world to an audience."[28]

While Westley and MacLean clearly suggest the essential neutrality of the intermediary channel, its obvious selecting and editing function suggests interpolation which is often highly subjective.

Fiske's major criticism of this "dependency"[29] model is that it

> "...fails to take account of the relationship between the mass media and the other means we have of orientating ourselves to our social environment: these include the family, work mates, friends, school, the church, trade unions and all other formal and informal networks of relationships through which we fit into our society. We are not as dependent upon the media as this model implies."[30]

One of the major advantages of the turning towards social systems awareness was the fact that a new definition of communication was formulated. It was regarded as:

> "the process by which information, decisions and directives pass through a social system and the ways in which knowledge, opinions and attitudes are formed or modified."[31]

There was a new awareness of an organic interrelationship between communication and societal processes. With technological change seen as a key element in development, the diffusion process and the role played by opinion leaders[32] as channels of information and influence became important. In this instance, opionion leaders could be considered (in certain contexts) as the "C" components of the Westley and MacLean model.

The diffusion model, which stressed the gradual spreading of information through various channels (human, social and technical) was criticised since it took little or no account of constraints

imposed by social structures - particularly in the broadcasting media themselves (rather that the effectiveness of the information carried by them) was, likewise, granted to the process of diffusion. Still later, it was realised that the successful spreading or diffusion of an idea through a society does not guarantee its acceptance and that mere diffusion does not necessarily mean acceptance of a message or a change in attitude.

The social systems-based communications models themselves were criticised since they all explained social conflict and change in terms of a search for equilibrium - which is obviously not characteristic of many developing regions. (The social systems concept, was, eventually replaced by the "systems" model, discussed below).

Even though the social systems approach resulted in significant and positive changes in the application of communication in development, the so-called "knowledge-gap" (resulting mainly from information distribution) was no less apparent than it had been before the massive "injection" of education. As with education in the 1960s, it was assumed that as infusion of mass media information into a social system increases, the elite section of the population with higher economic and socio-educational status, will have greater access to the media and will acquire this knowledge more efficiently and quickly than will the poorer/disadvantaged segments - the knowledge gap will tend to increase rather than decrease. According to van Zyl, the knowledge gap exists for four major reasons.

> "(i) the differential levels of communication skills between different segments of the total population,

(ii) the amounts of stored information and pre-existing levels of knowledge resulting from prior exposure to the topic

(iii) the appropirate climate for the reception of information due to social skills, travel experience, 'empathy',

(iv) selective exposure to, acceptance of, and retention of information, information-rich individuals and communities have the capacity to absorb relatively more."[33]

He concludes by stating that community television and radio that is accessible to, and motivated by, and supported by a community that is a low-literacy, low-income and low-achieving one, becomes a major undertaking not solved simply by more technology[34]

Once communication theorists have accepted the existence and initial importance of social structure it becomes apparent that each community is not necessarily a homogenious unit. Most social 'structures' are, in fact, hierachical networks of roles and statuses in which certain individuals occupy more privileged positions of control and power than others. For a person with lower status one of the major functions of communication will tend to be "facilitating his adjustments to this existential situation."[35] The ideology of the dominant elites will be absorbed along with entertainment and news. Communication channels in this type of system are used to establish and maintain the status quo. Ideas which are sharply at odds with those of the media controller, and which might threaten their interests are simply ignored by the media. Other ideas, usually

(ii) the amounts of stored information and pre-existing levels of knowledge resulting from prior exposure to the topic

(iii) the appropirate climate for the reception of information due to social skills, travel experience, 'empathy',

(iv) selectiv exposure to, acceptance of, and retention of information, information-rich individuals and communities have the capacity to absorb *relatively more.*"[33]

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those beneficial to the exisitng order are processed by media controllers and returned to the audience in a distorted form.[36]

4.2.3 *Communication and the Receiver's Role - Reassessing Receiver Needs*

A renewed interest in the receiver's role focussed attention upon communication functions and social structure. The receiver was seen as a communications consumer - a person or group who "uses" communication because it accomplishes certain ends or satisfies certain needs. According to this theory, communication is seen as either instrumental (utilitarian) or consumatory. The consumatory ("entertainment") function has always commanded a greater proportion of the time segment allotted to broadcasting. The broadcast media controllers, particularly in South Africa have devoted most of their resources to entertainment rather than education.

The new awareness of the role of the receiver led to a reassessment of Lerner's concept of "empathy". Empathy, according to Lerner[37]

> "refers to a person's ability to put himself in the place of another, to see the world as the other person does. According to Lerner, this ability is essential for development since it is only by assuming the viewpoint of *more 'modern' persons* that a peasant can desire to change his present life."[38]

Dealing specifically with communication for "modernisation" in developing countries, Lerner saw the so-called problem (i.e. "the limits

which are set by culture and social structure to communication"[39]) in terms of a dichotomy between traditional values and "modern" values which stressed achievement, success, equality etc. According to Lerner's theory, the moderniser has to "create" empathy by penetrating the traditional system of (mostly) interpersonal communication and introducing new communication systems which carry "modern" messages. An interesting manifestation of this was the concept of 'co-orientation' or relationship. According to Diaz Bordenave the idea behind this is that two people can have "similar perceptions and interpretations of the same object, and the greater the similarity ('co-orientation') the more efficient will be the flow of communication between the persons. Conversely, an intense flow of communication may increase co-orientation."[40] As an extension of the "empathy" concept, co-orientation was seen as an aid to improve the relationship between communications change agents and the audience/receivers.

Applying the concept of empathy to the South African situation, van Zyl makes the observation that in the highly complex situation of South African society "one man's empathy is another's dislike"[41] In the urban areas empathy exists to a marked degree since the so-called "black" television service, controlled and structured by whites, is aimed at accelerating the growth of the middle-class black elite. The vast majority of blacks who are rural have no access to television. As van Zyl points out - the further a viewer is situated from the urban areas, the less the chance of empathy occurring. The lack of common interests between rural and urban

communities divides them and this is further escalated by unidirectional information flow from the centres.

The major criticism of the "reassessment of the receiver" period in communications history is that greater knowledge of the receiver often led to easier manipulation - the so-called "persuasion-for-effect" mentality apparent among development agents. The realisation that an innovation is more readily accepted if it is first discussed by a group and then adopted by the group as a whole, was used to justify using group dynamics in conjunction with persuasive effects. Similarly, the discovery of the potential influence of opinion-leaders to persuade was used when planning strategies for persuasion.

However, positive repercussions of the receiver-oriented approach were not entirely absent. The realization that change did not necessarily have to be imposed from without but that communities possessed the potential to resolve their own problems by collective diagnosis, articulation of ideas through communication channels, showed that a close relationship should be fostered between community decision-making, communication channels (including television) and messages. In its most idealistic manifesation this would involve the communications media involvement in:

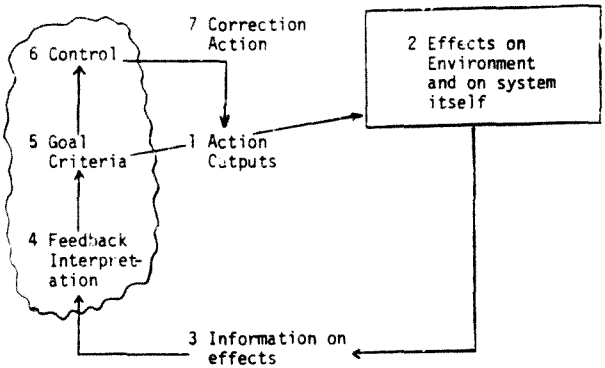
> (a) encouraging diagnosis by the community of its own situation and problems; (b) providing access to all relevant information on alternatives; (c) organising the people; (d) aiding the community to obtain means and resources - that is, power; (e) creating suitable institutions for community decision-making and collective action.

4.2.4 Communication and the Systems Approach

A more recent and formalistic approach is one that deals with communication and the media as systems within systems.

> "A system is any set of interacting parts that maintains its boundaries while exchanging influences with its environment. Inputs are the influences received from the environment, through various processes the system transforms these into outputs. Outputs are the products, services and influences delivered by the system with the aim of transforming its environment."[42]

A Model which epitomises the SYSTEMS approach[43]



According to this approach many systems exist. A communication programme, for example is a goal-establishing system. Objectives which are set according to what an analysis of a particular system reveals can be changed as the programme proceeds due to the fact that feedback is considered as an integral component needed as a corrective mechanism and not only to report audience-reaction or message effects.

Since the advocates of the systems approach regard communication as the essence of human systems, the media are indispensable carriers of information which they spread through social systems thereby influencing that system and brings back through fieldwork, the vital information necessary to assess changing needs.

The theoretical study of the relationship between the systems approach and development communication has had several positive consequences:[44]

(1) The systematic viewing of events and social processes and structures reveals the interrelatedness of many aspects of society and development. For example - low productivity can be seen in dynamic association with other factors usually associated with completely separate aspects of social development. The workforce may not simply be "lazy" but depressed by inadequate health, welfare and educational institutions. This method of viewing events leads to a broader, more "inclusive" approach to problems.

(2) Inherent in the systems approach is the awareness of the importance of the degree of attention to objectives. The approach insists upon careful analysis of problems at the planning stage of development communications programmes - that is - more attention to matching media to programmes and to the means available.

(3) In addition, the concept of systems leads to awareness of the fact that development programmes and institutions are but subsystems within larger systems and, therefore, their goals must be consistent with and support the goals of the larger system."[45]

The systems approach is characterised by an overwhelming awareness of the importance of context The formulation of media policies depends on what social norms govern assumptions about communication and its role in a specific society. Like any other planning, communication planning does not simply involve one discipline, but a whole "sector of activity, rising above structural and administrative distinction (for example, the fact that several separate governmental ministries as well as non-governmental bodies may be involved in providing or regulating communication."[46])

It is appropriate here to introduce our final communication model.

4.2.5 Communication as a Whole - Gerbner's "General-Purpose" "Model of Communication"[47]

Any research into the applicability and potential of a broadcasting medium to education cannot exclude this particular model since it is known for its comprehensive treatment of questions arising from the application of a model to a particular communication situation.

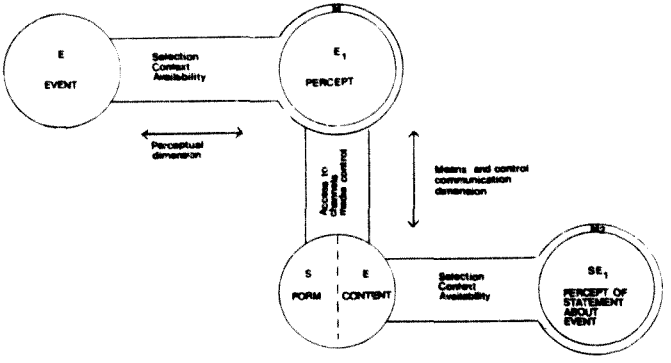
Like the *Shannon and Weaver model*, Gerbner's model is a linear, process model without apparent universal applicability to any communication situation. What sets it apart from this and other models is the fact that its theoretical foundation is far more complex and in dealing with the components of the communication process, Gerbner has been more comprehensive that other theorists. McQuail[48] has rightly, pointed out that in the way of description little has been added to earlier models. In its verbal form, the model is expressed as follows:

"Someone perceives an event and reacts in a situation through some means to make available materials in some form and context conveying content of some consequence."[49]

The model exhibits two main advances over others:

"it relates the message to the 'reality' that is 'about' and thus enables us to approach questions of perception *and meaning*, and it sees the communication process as consisting of two alternating dimensions - the perceptual or receptive, and the communicating or means and control dimensions."[50]

The main elements of Gerbner's model[51] are shown below:



4.2.5.1 Horizontal Dimension[52]

The process begins with an event E which is perceived by M (a human or a machine) and is labelled E_1. Since M cannot possibly perceive the whole of E the relationship between E and E_1 involves varying degrees of selection. Human selection (as opposed to mechanical selection which is determined largely by its physical capacity or technical sophistication) is highly complex and subject to a range

of variables. As such, it is not a simple reception of stimuli "but is a process of interaction or negotiation."[53] External stimuli are understood in direct-relationship with concepts that have already been internalised. It is only once this process has occurred that meaning is derived. This matching process is further controlled by cultural background and experience.

4.2.5.2 Vertical Dimension

According to Gerbner's model, the second stage of communication occurs when the percept E_1 is converted into the message. He uses the designation SE to refer to it since it is the signal "about" E. Furthermore, S as the signal or form that it takes, interacts in dynamic relationship with the content, E. Clearly, in Gerbner's terms, SE is a unified concept since the chosen form will influence the presentation of the content.

As in the horizontal dimension, selection is important. According to Fiske:

> "...there is the selection of the 'means' - the medium and channel of communication. Then there is selection from within the percept, E_1. Just as E_1 can never be a complete and comprehensive response to E, so too a signal about E_1 can never in turn attain completeness or comprehensiveness. Selection and distortion must occur."[54]

The importance of this observation cannot be underestimated since Gerbner clearly took cognizance of the fact that selection and distortion occur at all major stages of communication.

The vertical dimension includes the concept of access to the media and channels of communication. With respect to the relationship between television and society particularly, the question of who has access to the media is relevant. The horizontal dimensions of the model reveals that television's E_1 must be a selection of E, therefore

> "...who makes the selection and whose picture of the world is transmitted as SE is obviously of prime importance."[55]

This factor is relevant to broadcasting in South Africa since in the handling of news the SABC, with its National Party allegiance, has been proven to be biased - not only in its obvious favouring of the party line and its politicians, but in the degree of selectivity borne out by news bulletins which reflect favourably on the government. The fear that educational television will not cater to those[56] who are most sorely in need of education is justified since the urban, centralised SABC has, until now, catered to the population sector of which the majority of its employees are part. There appears to be no move toward extending an educational television service to the rural areas. The selection of E, in this case, is obviously in accordance with the aspirations of the SABC and the ideology that it represents.

In addition to this, as Fiske and others[57] have indicated, the media are a means of exerting power and social control. This widely held belief is supported by many examples of the relationship between authoritarian governments, the press and broadcasting. One of the many examples in South Africa is the restriction placed upon anything but the "official" version of news items on radio and television.

The third stage of Gerbner's model involves the horizontal dimension - the receiver M_2, perceives a statement about the event (not the event itself). The resulting meaning (SE) is derived from the interaction between the receiver and the messages. Since M_2's perception is influenced by his cultural background and immediate environment, the message itself should be regarded as possessing the potential for many "meanings" since each M_2 will bring to SE different needs and concepts. As Fiske states:

> "..This potential is never completely realised and the form it takes is not determined until interaction or negotiation occurs between M_2 and SE...."[58]

The concept of 'availability' in the horizontal dimension is equivalent to that of 'access' in the vertical dimension. Selection in this case is performed by the sender who chooses how, and therefore to whom, messages are made available. An example of this is the South African government's restriction of the availablity of Bophuthatswana Television programmes to all but a limited number of South African locations.

Broadcasting has increased access to information since before radio, access to information was confined to a large degree to the literate. The control of information flow thus originated with the literate educated minority and has been passed on to the more educated upper classes. Information control is, and always has been a source of power. So, even though broadcasting is an ideal means for making information available to the non-or semi-literate, its democratising

potential is entirely dependent upon the access allowed to it.

To illustrate this point Fiske states that:

> "...Third World governments who control access to their mass media often argue that their politically unsophisticated people cannot handle the flow of frequently contradictory information that results from the freer access to the media in western democracies. Access and availability are two sides of the same coin."[59]

In stating that Gerbner's model is perhaps the most comprehensive attempt yet to specify all the component stages and activities of communication, McQuail (1975) sums up the approach by listing the following major points with respect to Gerbner's model and theories:

> "1. The great variability in the perception of an event by a communicating agent and also in the perception of a message about an event by a receiver. In general terms, the variability can range from an extreme 'transactionist' position which 'stresses the structuring effects of (the communicator's) assumptions, point of view, experiential background, and other related factors upon the perception' to such an extent that the event is 'almost "created" in the act of perceiving' to a nearly opposite or 'psychological' view which sees the 'world of material events, sounds, shapes, forms as "in control."' Gerbner's model does not assume either extreme view, but does attempt to take account of 'the creative, interactional nature of the perceptual process, avoiding any implications of either solipsism or mechanism.'

2. The importance of the situation and context in which the stimulus to communication and the actual process occurs, in the sense both of physical as well as social circumstances.

3. In discussion, Gerbner contrasts the open nature of human communication with the closed sequence of mechanical or automatic communication systems. Human communication is open in that events and objects in the environment do not automatically generate signals or communicative reactions and the whole process of communication is open at many points to variable and unpredictable effects of perception and human choice. The analogy with a programmed device like a thermostat in a heat control system is misleading: human communication systems are not thermostatic and 'feedback' has a different connotation.

4. Content is always 'meaningful' and the meaning of content cannot be derived solely from either the intentions of the transmitter of the perceptions of the receiver alone but is a 'relational pattern' to be interpreted in the light of the whole sequence of events in a particular case of communication. While the model is essentially descriptive and too economic it does something more than provide a framework for comparative study and it opens the way to more focussed theoretical approaches and to a discussion of communication in nomative terms."[60]

4.3 Conclusion

Both Diaz Bordenave (1977) and van Zyl (1980) have indicated that the changes that have occurred within communication theory have

not significantly altered the essentially vertical, manipulative view of the role of communication in education and development. The various theories and models of communication summarised above did little to change the traditional view that information, particularly broadcast information, was essentially a means of persuasion. Two of the most well known proponents of this view are Paulo Freire and Ivan Illich. In his explanation of the so-called "pedogogy of the oppressed" and "banking education", Freire is widely credited for his explanation of the weaknesses in traditional theory and practice.

Diaz Bordenave optimistically points out that:

> "under the influence of Freire, Ivan Illich and others, many communicators have come to think of communication as a process that is inseparable from the other social and political processes necessary for national development and independence. The numerous failures and frustrations met by modernisation efforts have shown with such processes as conscientization, organisation, politisation and technification."[61]

To be effectively linked to these processes both van Zyl and Diaz Bordenave insist that it is neccessary for the media and development programmes to be accessible to the rural population - that is, organisation and participation at grass-roots level. In terms of the media specifically this means that people should "have more access to the communication media, not as receivers only but as sources and actors."[62]

In South Africa in particular little research has been conducted into this type of communication structure - the idea of "horizontal" or "participative" communicating structures (as Diaz Bordenave refers to them) is not evident in practise in this country. The history of broadcasting in South Africa, and its present use appears to be completely contrary to this. At present, the approach to broadcasting is related directly to the Nationalist model of development. The model, if it can be called that, reflects government policy of separating certain population groups at all times and in every respect. Since educational policies are replicas of this overall idea the question that must be asked is: How much more will SABC ETV be like this?

CHAPTER 4 - REFERENCES AND NOTES

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5. NOTE: In this context "effect" means the observable/measurable change in the receiver caused by identifiable elements in the communications process.

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28. McQUAIL (1975), p. 169.

29. FISKE (1982), p.36.

30. IBID.

31. DIAZ BORDENAVE (1977), p.15.

32. NOTE: Individuals who mediate between the mass media and the public.

33. VAN ZYL (1980), p.8.

34. IBID.

35. DIAZ BORDENAVE (1977), p.19.

36. NOTE: For example - the exposure granted to the Nationalist Party during the 1983 referendum which the *Rand Daily Mail* highlighted in its headlines in September 1983.

37. *cf* LERNER, D. (1958). *The Passing of Traditional Society*. Glencoe, Ill: The Free Press.

38. DIAZ BORDENAVE (1977), p.16.

39. McQUAIL (1975), p.136.

40. DIAZ BORDENAVE (1977), p. 17.

41. VAN ZYL (1980), p.8.

42. DIAZ BORDENAVE (1977), p.15.

43. IBID.

44. DIAZ BORDENAVE (1977), p.19-20.

45. IBID.

46. IBID., p.20.

47. GERBNER, G. "Toward a general model of communication" in *Audio Visual Communication Review*, Vol. IV, no. 3, 1956, pp.171-199.

48. McQUAIL (1975), p.24

49. IBID.

50. FISKE (1982), pp. 25-6.

51. IBID., p.26.

52. NOTE: The following description is based on Fiske's (1982) analysis of the model.

53. IBID., p.26.

54. IBID., p.28.

55. IBID.

56. NOTE: The rural low-literacy population, mostly black

57. NOTE: Notably Arnove (1976)

58. FISKE (1982), p.29.

59. IBID., p.30.

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61. DIAZ BORDENAVE (1977), p.22.

62. IBID., p.62.

CHAPTER 5

BROADCASTING IN SOUTH AFRICA

Introduction

A contextual analysis of broadcasting in South Africa is important since its history, which has always been highly controversial and politicised, is characterized by a single consistent feature - that of the acceptance by the SABC since 1948 of apartheid ideology as the basis for its organisational structure and programming. Since (as it will be indicated in this chapter) SABC is and always has been a monopoly, the potential of television for education within the present structure is circumscribed by and subject to past and present media policy. Even before SABC ETV (educational television) has reached the nation's screens its effectiveness has been subject to, and it will be argued, limited by the policy-maker's adherence to government ideology and educational policy and by the fact that, despite an apparent ideological "softening" and the emergence of pockets of dissent within the organisation, apartheid ideology is accepted as both good and necessary.

5.2 Broadcasting and Apartheid

Broadcasting in South Africa, like education, mirrors apartheid. As indicated by Orlik (1970,1974), Hachten (1979,1984), Tomaselli and Tomaselli (1980,1981) in particular, the most basic justification for this statement is the existence of

> "separate broadcasting services for different ethnic and linguistic groups - English and Afrikaans services for the whites, "Radio Bantu" with programming in the varied

> African languages and separate television services for whites and blacks. Critics consider this a reflection of the Nationalist policy of "divide and rule"[1].

Although SABC openly and vociferously rejects the wholesale importation and use of foreign programmes (particularly educational television programmes), its organisational structure and programme content is clearly in line with the orthodox and traditional functionalist view of education, development and broadcasting. This view, which normally takes a particular socio-political context as "given", advocates the introduction of more teachers, more schools, increased broadcasting time, more channels and wider coverage. Particularly relevant in the local context where Christian National Education (CNE) is officially practised is the fundamental adherence to the efficacy of "top-down" education and development whereby skilled workers are produced by "better" state education to "feed" big business. This, according to Heyman (1981), is

> "all in the name of growth towards an urban industrial state, supposedly with the same standard of living and productivity as the big western industrial nations."[2]

An even more radical view which will be discussed is that of the Tomaselli (1980,1981) who maintain that broadcasting in South Africa functions directly to articulate apartheid ideology with the specific purpose of fostering the conditions "for the most efficient reproduction of capital in South Africa."[3] If this is true, the potential of ETV will be significantly influenced and affected.

The apartheid view, which has been central to education and broadcasting since 1948 clearly advocates the functionalist view. Accordingly, these two disciplines complement each other by generating an unquestioning attitude to official information and instruction. That this information may not be truly beneficial to the audience concerned is not considered - at least not publicly. Thus, any sense of discrimination or criticism that broadcasting might encourage is "permissible" in the sense that it is learned from teachers who are very much part of (or at least not outspoken against) the system of apartheid education.

Taking this point further Masterman[4] stresses the relevance of "social understanding" to education and television. Reviewing Masterman's book, Heyman discusses his preoccupation with the necessity to educate pupils to

> "... 'see through social phenomena to their structural determinants' (such as television and its representation of the world). This would be a social education that is usually denied, repressed or ignored in orthodox formal education, and which would enable pupils to get an understanding of their place in the social group within which they experience the world."[5]

In institutions which effectively 'impose' instruction in the top-down fashion mentioned earlier, social understanding is subservient to passive learning. Accordingly,

> "The hierarchical, top-down transmission of knowledge that operates in both television and education systems

> alienates the pupil's regard for the relevance of his own experience, and ignores the necessity of 'learning by doing' that primary school educational methodology is currently stressing. The hierarchy operates as follows;
>
> (i) a few people are highly educated into a conception of 'what's best' in programmes, textbooks, subject matter and how to transmit it
>
> (ii) a few people (educational planners and inspectors; television programme planners, executives) plan for the reproduction and transmission of 'what's best'
>
> (iii) a few people (teachers, television producers and presenters) talk to the many (pupils, students, audience) about 'what's best'"[6]

The manner in which this hierarchy opeates is particularly relevant to the ensuing discussion of SABC and will be analysed in this chapter. The two most obvious and blatant examples of this phenomenon are the SABC's presentation of and policies regarding news and the black oriented *Schools Radio Service*. As Hunt explains (in a book which concentrates largely upon the British context), the history of the development of the education system and television rests upon deep rooted attitudes of the upperclasses toward 'the masses'. In an analysis of television news, Hunt reveals the hidden curriculum of biases, attitudes and values that are internalised by the audience together with the supposedly factual, objective and reliable content of news. As this chapter will show, SABC's pretentions toward neutrality are negated by just such a hidden curriculum. Furthermore,

SABCTV as the only source of television for most of the population, is highly centralised and it is this centralisation of facilities, personnel and ideology which lies at the root of the hierarchy. The obvious lack of dissent within the organisation itself and the rapid dismissal of those who dare to challenge it (like Kevin Harris and Donna Wurzel) is evidence enough of the fact that a position in the hierachy can only be gained through acceptance of the orthodox conception of 'what's best.'

The aim of this chapter is:

- To examine the history of broadcasting in South Africa thereby adding the last 'thread' to the broad contextual analysis found in the first half of this dissertation, in order to show that the dominant ideology which is located in the SABC is the result of "a complex, structural determination drawing on many sources both past and present within (this) society."[7] The dominant ideology is, and has been so pervasive that the potential of ETV in South Africa whether within the system or outside it, will be influenced.
- To clarify and test the validity of the widely held opinion that SABC is a state-run monopoly which "imposes the nattor Calvanistic moral and religious values of the minority Afrikaners upon the programming for a pluralistic and diverse population."[8] In this way the question of whose values are reflected by the television service and the curriculum, will be addressed and the nature of the corporation's bias will be examined.
- To show, in terms of the education and development debate,

that broadcasting in South Africa has rarely, if ever, been associated with development agencies that are NOT constrained by the institutions[9] through which (or via whose policies) they work, and the social system in which they operate. This is particularly relevant to educational broadcasting - the *Schools Radio Service* and ETV.

5.3. The History of Broadcasting in South Africa[10]

It must be noted that research into the history of broadcasting in South Africa and of the SABC is scarce. This analysis will therefore be based largely upon the *Annual Reports* of the SABC since 1936, and the work of Orlik, van Zyl, Hachten, Fuchs, the Tomasellis, and various newspapers and periodicals.

The purpose of the following historical overview is to examine how present media policies emerged, to show how consistent they have been and how this consistency is likely to influence the potential of television for education in South Africa.

Broadcasting, as recognised by Charles de Gaulle and others,[11] is a powerful tool with which to perpetuate government policy, and perhaps aid in ruling a nation. In his examination of the so-called "Afrikaner take-over" of the SABC, Peter Orlik (1970) pointed out that broadcasting (which was a key piece in the Briton/Boer chessboard) began, against the background of colonial rule, as a symbol of Western superiority and English cultural dominance. When the highly conservative Afrikaner government came into power, it was

natural that it should seize control of an already well-ordered and established medium in order to establish and maintain its credibility and to publically promote its major political bias, that is, the ideology of separate development.

In retrospect it is ironic that the early history of broadcasting in South Africa was dominated by English-language broadcasting. In 1927 I.W. Schlesinger obtained a ten year government-approved licence for his predominantly English *African Broadcasting Corporation* (ABC). However, in 1936 as a direct result of the report of BBC director general, Sir John Reith the first Broadcasting Act was passed by Parliament. This act resulted in the simultaneous demise of the ABC (due, it is claimed, to an over-emphasis of entertainment and its "studied avoidance of Afrikaans-language broadcasting") and the establishment of the *South African Broadcasting Corporation* (SABC) as the monopoly it has been ever since. It was originally run by a board of governors whose immediate task it was to upgrade and increase the volume of Afrikaans programmes. Even though the practical application of this intention remained in limbo until as late as World War II, the apparent antagonism between the English and Afrikaans factions within the SABC provided early grounds for the later Afrikaner take over in broadcasting. According to Orlik (1974):

> "Afrikaner opposition to fighting a war alongside the British prevented the passage of a conscription act. It also brought a subtle but continuous transformation in SABC personnel as more and more English-stock employees

> volunteered for military service and their places were taken by Afrikaners set on rectifying the imbalance between the English and Afrikaans services."[12]

Ill feeling on the part of English speaking staff (especially those with relatives in the military) was possibly due to a resentment of the lack of Afrikaner support for the Allies.

The Nationalist Party victory in the 1948 general elections resulted in a definite and significant shift in the SABC. With the Nationalists in power the already influential board of governors became further dominated by Afrikaners sympathetic to their cause. One of the major results of the shift was the more active attention devoted to Afrikaans programming. Thus, the significant socio-political shift in 1948 thoroughly prepared the SABC for the drastic changes which were to occur in the 1950's and early 1960's. The most important occurrences in the organisation during this period were as follows:

1950's - The practice of broadcasting BBC news bulletins ended with the introduction and establishment of SABC's own news-gathering service.

- The establishment of the first commercial radio service, the predominantly English Springbok Radio which was criticised in *Die Transvaler* newspaper for exposing Afrikaners to "foreign" influences.[13]

1951 - In 1952 the development of a rediffusion system for blacks in Orlando Township by a British firm, whereby a single-channel wired loudspeaker system reached

subscribers. The system was extended in 1957 when the SABC started providing 16 hours per day from this distribution system. The lack of opportunity at this stage of extending this so-called "Bantu" service to the rest of the country, added impetus

1959 to the consideration of establishing FM. By 1959 the realization by the SABC that the development of the transistor radio would render broadcasting feasible economically and technically in non-electrified areas led directly to the establishment in

1964 1964 of "Radio Bantu". This service provided (significantly in terms of the purpose of this discussion), seven separate services for the black population.[14] Hachten and Giffard (1984)are of the opinion that the political implications of this FM service did not go unnoticed by the Nationalist government and suggest that the realization that a black person with a cheap FM transistor would be unable to receive the unsavoury "foreign"influenced BBC, Voice of America etc.

Until 1976, in spite of severe criticism (particularly by the English language press and certain academics) the SABC radio services enjoyed a wide listenership and highly credible technical sophistication. It has been noted that over 9,5 million South Africans listen to the radio daily.

> "With its sixteen radio services and three television channels broadcasting a total of 2,269 hours per week

> in seventeen languages, the SABC clearly has a large, loyal audience among Whites, Africans, Coloureds and Asiars."[15]

This apparent popularity of the SABC is, however, ironic in the light of the high degree of controversy which has surrounded the organisation.

In 1961 the Director-General of the SABC, Roos, whose position had gradually been undermined by the powerful board of governors, resigned on the eve of South Africa's official recognition as a Republic. Roos, who had held office for twelve years had consistently resisted attempts to turn the SABC into a tool of Nationalist propagandists.[16] The man to whom Roos lost his position was Dr P J Meyer, who was then appointed to the powerful position of Board Chairman. Meyer, who was apparently originally appointed to the board for his outspoken Nationalist tendencies[17], was a former secretary of the FAK,[18] a Broederbond affiliate, and Chairman of the Broederbond from 1960 to 1972.[19] It was Meyer who appointed J.J. Kruger to his "cultural advisors" post at the SABC and, significantly, Kruger's record shows an equally blatant connection with the ruling party. As an ex-editor of *Die Transvaler* newspaper (owned by the then current Prime Minister, Dr H F Verwoerd), he was also a member of the Broederbond.[20]

The degree of Broederbond influence within the SABC was researched and thereafter succinctly stated by Wilkins and Strydom (1978). Noting that the Broederbond infiltration into the SABC undoubtedly accelerated the process of National Party influence over the orga-

nisation, and that P W Botha and his four predecessors were members of the Broederbond, Hachten and Giffard submit the following:

> "The SABC, as one of the strongest opinion-forming and cultural institutions outh Africa, has been under Broederbond influence fo y years. In their book *The Super Afrikaners*, Wilkins and Strydom sketch in that influence beginning with Dr Piet Meyer, who was chairman of the Broederbond from 1960 to 1972. During most of that time, Meyer was also chairman of the SABC. At least three SABC board members. W A Maree, S J Terreblanche, and H O Manning, were also Broeders. Other top corporation executives at the time were: Jan Swanepoel, director-general; Steve de Villiers, director for English and Afrikaans radio; T van Heerden, director of Bantu and external services, and a dozen or so others - all Broeders.....Wilkens and Strydom have found at least forty-nine Broeders in influential SABC positions."[21]

Wilkens and Strydom are adamant that the SABC is an important tool in the so-called "Broederbond-National Party alliance" and to prove the validity of this submission they mention two secret Broederbond documents. The first, entitled *Masterplan for a White Country* stressed the importance of having Broeders in charge of Black broadcasting. As explained by Hachten and Giffard (1984), the document explained the "masterplan" and called for

> "...the use of organisations, including the SABC and its Bantu services and the planned black television services

(now in operation) to "compel" compliance with the plan whose main purpose was to see that overwhelming numbers of blacks live and work in their homelands as soon as possible."[22]

The second document dealt with the planned introduction of television. Significantly, Meyer headed the government Commission of Inquiry into television together with twelve other people, seven of whom were Broeders. Thus early televison policy was influenced by Broederbond thinking.

The continued influence of the Broederbond,[23] whose ideology epitomises right-wing Afrikaner thought is strong and, it has been said, goes a long way in explaining the controversy surrounding, and resentment of the SABC. The early hope that, if left alone, the SABC would revert to its early pretentions toward neutrality was firmly dismissed when the following policy statement appeared in the 1965 SABC Annual Report:

"To a neutrality urge which could jeopardise the security and well-considered interest of the country and the people, the Board of Governors conceded nothing more than might be expected from a South African institution occupying the strategic position of the SABC. It is firmly convinced that the Corporation is obliged to serve this country and its population groups in spite of limited but vociferous movements serving aims that undermine and ultimately destroy the happiness, prosperity, and future of our country."[24]

With the 1966 General Election the SABC established what was to become a highly contentious future issue - that of unequal political representation (analysed in detail by Rhodes University Students)[25] on SABC-TV. While the Nationalist Party leaders secured air time (approved at will), the opposition United Party had to be satisfied with summarizations of Party leader, Sir de Villiers Graaf's speeches, which were broadcast as news items. The impact of a speech by de Villiers Graaf during a Parliamentary debate, like all other protests, was negligible. As Orlik put it:

> "The changing of the guard which had begun during World War II was now complete and it was the Afrikaner who could afford the luxury of condescension. As an Afrikaner official of the SABC told a visiting American author
>
> > The SABC performs its function. It serves the interests of the Republic which we conceive to be its duty, while at the same time furnishing entertainment and instruction for all its peoples. It is only a few English speaking critics who complain....and the English, well, the English! We just have to be patient, for we know they will not change."[26]

5.3.1 The Introduction of Televison

> "South Africa entered the 1970s with the distinction of being the world's only country among those of comparable economic development without a broadcast television service."[27]

The advent of broadcast television in 1976 (after what is considered by many to be an unreasonably long delay) saw no change in government or SABC policy regarding the broadcasting media. The reluc of the Nationalist government to permit the introductin of tele was based upon the assumption that television would introduce foreign, decadent thought and, perhaps communist ideologies into the South African community. Since those in authority believed in the power of television (due to the medium's apparent credibility) it was regarded as less amenable than other broadcast media to the censor's control. The 25 year delay can, therefore be attributed in part to the fear of the adverse influence of television on society and partly to the fact that considerable time was needed to mould SABC TV into a service "accetable"to those in power.

It should be noted in passing that early attempts to introduce television had been either ignored or rejected. The history of official opposition to television can be traced back as far as 1936. Although the 1936 Empire Exhibition featured television. broadcast television was prohibited. In 1953 an attempt by the American J Arthur Rank organisation to introduce television into South Africa was blocked by the government in spite of the fact that public demand for the medium was significant.[28] The government, in fact, made it quite clear that the introduction of television was not even a consideration. The argument against it came, in fact, from two sources - the government and, significantly, the Broederbond.

A Broederbond official said that:

"Although the struggle against anglicization from without

> had been won, the battle against the enemy within had just started and must succeed in stopping the non-Afrikaner influences based on English and American ways of life which were infiltrating the Union through the radio, cinemas and popular press."[29]

It is interesting to note (as Hachten and Giffard do) that the arguments against the cultural pollution were strikingly similar to those voiced much later by the Third World advocates of the New World Information Order of the 1980s.

The Nationalists, on the other hand, expressed the fear that the potential political influence of television was unknown and that

> "the psychological impact of the medium on the urbanized Bantu might be dangerous in a country where Caucasians alone possess the vote but constitute only one-fifth of the population.[30]

It was therefore rationalized by the Nationalists that television should be delayed for as long as possible.

The key figure in this delaying action was Albert Hertzog (then Minister of Posts and Telegraphs). Arguing (in 1959)that it was virtually impossible for the state to control the influence of television, Hertzog stated that it should be prohibited if cultural suicide were to be prevented and denounced it as "that evil black box." At the same time Dr Verwoerd (who later became Prime Minister) supported this argument but went further by stressing economic reasons for not introducing TV. He rationalized his argument by questioning

why it was necessary to spend a prohibitive amount of money on a non-essential service before other countries had endured the costs of experiment and development. He added that it should be withheld until investigation of its possible "evil" effects had been carried out. These objectives were culminated in 1962 when Hertzog informed parliament that television would definitely not be introduced (and hinted that it would never be introduced) - this in spite of the fact that public opinion polls clearly indicated that the public wanted television.[31] Hachten and Giffard note that:

> "By 1964, a group of firms under the leadership of Harry F Oppenheimer, head of the giant Anglo American group, was making plans to establish a television system and to market sets. Dr Hertzog again blocked the way saying to an Afrikaans press group: "The overseas money power has used television as such a deadly weapon to undermine the morale of the white man and even to destroying great empires within 15 years that Mr Oppenheimer and his friends will do anything to use it here. They are certain that with this mighty weapon South African television largely dependent on British and American films, they will also succeed in a short time in encompassing the destruction of white South Africa."[32]

1968 was a significant year for the history of televison in South Africa. It was in this year that B J Vorster "relieved" Hertzog of his ministerial post, appointing Basie van Rensburg as the new Minister of Post and Telecommunications. Van Rensburg, obviously

realizing the potential of closed circuit television (CCTV) for various education-related uses, endorsed its wider use in this field while "broadcast television's alleged 'damaging influences' on young people and its high cost were analysed."[33] The 1968 Rand Show featured a CCTV exhibition which emphasised its use for the classroom, bank security, traffic control, and medicine.[34] In the same month *The Star*[35] newspaper reported that plans for television studios had been drawn up by the SABC for its new Auckland Park complex.[36]

It appears that government was finally forced to give way on the television issue due to public pressure rather than because it had chosen a particular time which it thought to be expedient, to introduce the medium. The events leading up to the government announcement in 1971 that television would be introduced within four years verify this submission.

With the first "moon walk" in 1969 the public was forced into an awareness that South Africa was the only "developed"[37]/industrialised country which could not watch this historic event while it was happening simply because it did not have television. In fact both Orlik (1974) and Hachten and Giffard (1984) note that a screening of this event at the Colisseum Theatre in Johannesburg almost caused a riot and crowds had to be controlled by the police. In the same year, the opposition United Party calls for a national referendum on television and in December of that year the government appointed a twelve-man commission to investigate the possibility of introducing television into South Africa.

The Commission, headed by Dr Piet Meyer delivered its 56-page report to parliament in March 1971 and in April the Minister of National Education informed parliament of the government's acceptance of the introduction of television in no less than four years.

The Report of the Meyer Commission (as examined by Hachten and Giffard (1984) recommended the following:

- the statutory control of television (vested in the Ministry of Education)
- its introduction to be entrusted to the SABC
- all transmissions should be in colour with two separate services envisaged - one for Whites, Coloureds and Indians and one for Blacks.[38]

The Commission itself recommended:

"This television service should form a supplementary and an integral part of the country's pattern of education and should be founded on such principles as will ensure the Christian system of values of the country, the national security, and the social structure of the various communities will be respected, strengthened and enriched -

a) by providing wholesome and edifying entertainment;

b) by supplying reliable, objective and balanced information;

c) by reflecting and projecting the cultural assets of each community;

d) by stimulating indigenous creative talent; and above all,

e) by constantly striving to foster good relations between all people of the country."[39]

Interestingly, the SABC also investigated the possibility of using cable television (CATV) which might have had a significant effect on educational programming. The *Rand Daily Mail* noted the possibility of CATV

> "to serve outlying areas as well as to provide a less expensive alternative for citizens unable to purchase their own colour sets. Through this scheme, a subscriber would probably rent a black-and-white set as part of his monthly cable-service fee (*Rand Daily Mail* [Johannesburg], 2 November, 1971, p.3). Last it was envisioned that the already prevalent use of closed-circuit television would become even more widespread."[40]

Thus, after outgrowing Hertzog's idea of television as an "evil black box" that would pervert morals and undermine family life it appears that the government recognized the medium's potential for consolidating and extending its basic ideological principals[41].....and early in 1976 the "Pandora's Box" of Nationalist thought was opened.

However, shortly before this occurred, the *Financial Mail*, as precursor to the subsequent sustained objection by the English language press to certain aspects of SABC TV[42], published an article entitled "*Your mind in their Hands - Just how indpendent can SABC TV be?...After all, government holds the purse strings*." Among the questions

asked was:

> "....will news and views become a platform for government (National Party) propaganda - a criticism often levelled at some the SABC's radio programmes, particularly 'Current Affairs?'"[43]

Although this question will be dealt with in greater detail later, it should be mentioned in passing just what the SABC's policy regarding "Current Affairs" was. An extract from the *1980 SABC Annual Report* demonstrates the policymaker's attitude (headed "Current Affairs"):

> "It is generally accepted that a news organisation does not adequately fulfil its function if concrete facts are not accompanied by critical analyses: it is not sufficient to truthfully reflect facts - the truth about the facts and behind the facts must also be spotlighted. Media throughout the world, including radio and television, have accepted this responsibility. The SABC has introduced *a variety of programmes* to clarify the news of the day."[44]

In 1979 the following statement appeared in the *Annual Report*:

> "Maximum effort is made to ensure that the format of these talks conforms to principles to which the SABC as a public utility corporation is committed. From time to time the field of actuality events of public interest are discussed at conferences chaired by the Director-General and attended by programme heads. In addition to this there are daily meetings of senior personnel during which themes for talks are identified and techniques for tackling the subject

> are discussed. In order to ensure adequate control, regular reports are submitted to the Board on themes to which attention was given and the approach adopted by the writers. Adaptions to approach are naturally made in terms of guidelines stipulated by the Board."[45]

Examination of this policy statement reveals the organisations's preoccupation with uniformity - particularly with respect to news commentary. The political bias of the board (previously discussed) is also significant.

In the article previously mentioned the *Financial Mail* pointed to an actual incident (with respect to the issue of SABC policy) which fanned the fires of negative public opinion in 1975. When a memorandum (from a producer of children's and magazime programmes) "leaked" to the press, which contained a note that "programmes should follow government policy" the statement was hastily disavowed by his superiors. The *Financial Mail* observed that

> "the outcry it evoked served to illustrate just how touchy and suspicious a large segment of the public is to the longstanding belief, mistaken or otherwise, that the SABC follows the party line. It is an issue constantly hammered by the English-language newspapers, by intellectuals of all races, the Opposition, by artists and writers...."[46]

However, in spite of this South Africans took to televison with alactrity. Hachten and Giffard note that the number of television sets has increased steadily since 1976. They note that at the end of 1979, 1 244 500 televison licenses had been issued and that by

the end of 1982 there were 1 600 000 licenced television sets. According to their research:

> "SABC estimates that at least three million people watch television at least once a week. Studies showed that 78 percent of the adult white population in 1983 viewed television from Monday to Friday, and despite the "European" orientation of the programming, 48 percent of the Coloureds and 71 percent of adult Asians also viewed during the week. The great African majority was conspicuous by its nonviewing, and only 11 percent of adult Africans viewed daily."[47]

5.3.2 The Introduction of "Black" Television

TV2 came into operation in January 1982, its basis stated by SABC as the following:

> "The primary aim of TV2 is to act as a window on the national as well as the international scene, to entertain the black viewer to the best of its ability, to inform, enlighten and educate. This policy forms the basis of all programming and production."[48]

This service (and the subsequent additional service TV3) is controlled and organised by an exclusively white upper management and is aimed exclusively at the urban black audience (as indicated to the author by a senior SABCTV official). Hachten observed that the same policies and mentality that shaped "Radio Bantu" were involved in the planning and implementation of the black television services.[49] It should also be noted that all programming and advertisements are in one of the black languages thereby discouraging whites from using these

channels for alternative viewing (since the vast majority of whites have no understanding whatsoever of black languages.)

Initially, little attention was given to specifically educational programming which could be recognised as such. Under the heading "Children's Nursery and Youth Programmes", the following appeared:

> "Various imported animation films such as THE INCREDIBLE HULK, SPIDERMAN, THE FLUMPS and REDDING INTERNATIONAL are being dubbed or have already been dubbed. The production of youth and children's serials as well as puppet shows also commenced during the year, aimed at covering all the needs for entertainment, information and education of the younger viewer."[50]

There is no evidence that exclusively educative programmes for the educationally disadvantaged black population were ever considered.[51] Neither was the rural black considered which is still the case.

Before TV2 and TV3 came into being, Jan de Koning made an observation as to their potential impact:

> "The greatest effect on the blacks will be raising of their cultural aspirations. They will see other Blacks, with cars, houses and so on and ask 'Why can't I have that?' In a real sense there will be an 'westernization' of Blacks, because of television."[52]

Since its inception the black television service has been urban oriented - no literacy programmes are broadcast since programmers believe that urban black illiteracy is negligible. (This was

indicated to the author in an interview with an SABC official). The recent introduction of educational television for black viewers is also significant and will be discussed below.

5.3.3 The Nature of SABC bias

The origin of so-called bias of the SABC appears to be the State-Media interrelationship resulting from the apartheid context of South African society.

According to the Tomasellis apartheid ideology is based upon an ethnic rationale which regards separation on the basis of race as moral, natural, and inevitable. Accordingly, each group has a divine right to self-determination and cultural advancement in its 'historically assigned' geographical area. This is justified by the Calvanistic view of Christianity (adopted by the Dutch Reformed Church) which grants the Afrikaner the "task" of civilizing and Christianizing the blacks. This contention is, according to the Tomasellis,

> "amply illustrated in P W Botha's response to the charge that the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) is un-Christian. He bases his refutation on 'human' Nationalist Party policies, for example, the provision of housing and education for blacks. Botha clearly uses the DRC and the National Party as being interchangeable, both in terms of policy and practices." (*Rand Daily Mail*, 14 October, 1981).[54]

A major function of the SABC according to this, is to mediate apartheid ideology and present it as a "fundamental, objective and coherent reality."[55] by reinforcing and justifying it. There are a number

of incidents and statements supporting this. Fuchs (1969), for example, states that the SABC's programme policy

> "is linked to national policy, based on recognition of the diversity of population groups."[56]

and further, with respect to Radio Bantu, that it was introduced

> "to serve the seven Bantu peoples of the country, according to the nature, needs and character of each, and by encouraging language consciousness among each of the Bantu people, to strengthen national consciousness."[57]

In 1976 Giffard stated

> "The SABC justifies its pro-government stance on the grounds that since very few English speakers read Afrikaans newspapers, it has a duty to preserve the balance in the national debate and give English listeners views they don't get in their newspapers."[58]

5.3.4 News, News Commentary and Overt Political Use of Broadcasting

In 1976 (post-Soweto) the SABC laid down specific guidelines for the handling of sensational and emotional news events

> "Throughout, every effort was made to provide factual, complete and balanced reporting both for internal as well as for external consumption, and with this in mind the guidelines adopted were:
>
> (a) that the dramatic potential of isolated incidents should not be exploited in a manner that would lead to a distorted presentation of the picture as a whole;
>
> (b) that editorial judgement would be applied in any event

to ensure that the material presented was representative of what actually occurred.

(c) that the opinion of the silent majority should be solicited in areas affected by disturbances and that the voice of reason should be made audible;

(d) that inciting utterances should be related to one another in any presentation of conflict situation.

(e) that rumours should be ignored and controllable facts only should be presented, and

(f) that reporting should be sober at all times to help avert the inducement of panic and emotional tensions."[59]

Further it was stated that

"The television news service chose, as its point of departure, to reflect matters of policy and to avoid purely party po' arguments; to balance its reports on debates, o and principle whenever possible; and wherever news considerations permitted, to give preference to the official spokesmen of the various parties on the issues being reflected."[60]

The 1979 *Annual Report* emphasised

"the importance of getting the facts correct. This demands that all events are evaluated on news value alone and are reflected factually without prejudice and in context, with the single basic reservation that news must be handled soberly, so that SABC transmissions do not contribute to the.....stirring up of strong emotions, or threaten the good order or security of the State."[61]

In addition to this the same *Annual Report* recommends a "sober approach"[62] as a criterion for reflecting internal party political news. The principle applied here was one which regarded the function of a news medium such as the SABC, as one which should "cast light"[63] on controversial situations without "generating heat." Similarly, news commentaries for the black broadcasting services were seen to proceed from "...the overall view that self-determination was fundamental."[64] With this as a point of reference, particular emphasis was placed upon

> "race relations in South Africa, the material well-being of the Black man, the necessity for consultation and cooperation and a need to create a fair dispensation for all our people."[65]

From these few examples it can be seen that the gatekeeping function of the SABC is overt. As already indicated SABC policy, particularly news policy, is determined by gatekeepers who are deliberately appointed for this purpose and who see to it that policy serves the current ideology. Even if this were not the case it should be noted that it is widely accepted that the whole concept of newsworthiness is an ideological one "which functions to reproduce the criteria of what constitutes news and what does not.."[66] The result of this gatekeeping function is summed up by John van Zyl:

> "SABC radio's approac to the news is characterized by selection, omission and placement, and these combine to give a weird pict re of the world - a self-centred view of South Africa as a bastion of Christian democracy.

> Broadcast news doesn't begin to give a rounded picture of the news either here or abroad.....the SABC has a real fear of the informal, the unpredictable, and the random. The broadcasters always want to be in control of things..... ...."[67]

The terms "truth" "objectivity" and "neutrality" are often used by SABC in their policy statements concerning news and political broadcasting. Likewise the SABC's use and application of these concepts is often the point of departure of its critics. In testimony before the *Steyn Commission* Dr Jan Schutte (a former SABC Director General) stated that:

> "The SABC is neutral towards party politics but committed to the general national interest. We are not neutral concerning South Africa and seek to serve the community in its diversification."[68]

Earlier SABC's idea of what constitutes "truth" was summed up by Fuchs:

> "During the first 24 years of its existence the radio in this country was purely a reflecting medium. It reflected what was going on in our country and in the world, but it had no point of view of its own. After Sharpeville in 1960, overseas pressure and internal tension built up to dangerous proportions. In these circumstances South Africa's national broadcasting service had a clear duty to take an unequivocal stand. It could not possibly reflect trends of world thought which were frequently at variance with the experience."[69]

The implication of this was that the SABC felt it had a duty to point out what it believed to be bias to South Africans, and it is out of this that the controversial news commentaries grew. It is these programmes together with news broadcasts, certain aspects of "Radio Bantu" and the degree of Nationalist Party political representation that are singled out by the major critics of SABC and which have definite implications for future educational broadcasting.

The 1967 *SABC Annual Report* included the following statement under "Current Affairs": (Note: "Current Affairs", "Editorial Comment", "Comment", "SABC Comment", "News Focus" - the same programme which has experienced several name changes in recent years is, perhaps the most consistently blatant example of SABC bias.)

> "The talks are offered as an SABC editorial in which, from a South African point of view, positive comment is made on the affairs of the day. The broad objectives are (1) to project a true picture of South African motives, politics, problems, achievements and goals; (2) to give constructive guidance to listeners on the innumerable situations which are continually developing at home and abroad and which affect the fate of the nation; and (3) to counteract influences which are hostile to South Africa and which seek to undermine the South African pattern of society."[70]

Since then little has changed and in 1981 the "Current Affairs" department and programmes (now called "News Commentary") were still being justified by the organisation:

> "This department which has the task of placing the news of the day in perspective, provides a daily editorial and a commentary in the English and Afrikaans services.....The talks and programmes are designed to examine and promote understanding of national and international news events through the provision of relevant and supplementary facts and giving perspective to complex situations."[71]

Known for its pro-Nationalist bias this programme has seldom if ever broadcast information detrimental to the Nationalist government. It has also been criticized for its frequent attacks on the dissenting English language press.[72] The most recent example of this was reported by the *Rand Daily Mail* (18 March 1985, p 2). Reacting to the announcement of this newspapers demise:

> "SABC commentator Cliff Saunders attacked the *Rand Daily Mail* and the Opposition MP, Mr David Dalling on his Springbok Radio programme last night. Saunders said that the death of the Mail had been predictable and that "because of its political leaning it would have eventually written itself to death." He quoted a colleague as remarking on the day the fate of the Mail was announced: "At last the Mail has led on a good story."

Perhaps equally significant is the fact that the closure of the Mail (which has frequently been acknowledged as the leading "opposition"newspaper in South Africa) was not mentioned in the prime-time television news bulletin on the day of the announcement (Saturday

16 March 1985). A certain irony should, however, be mentioned. In spite of vehement and consistent criticism of the SABC by the English section of the white population, a 1974 survey found that "a majority of English-speaking whites thought that SABC radio was the most reliable and unbiased source for news on South African policies. Presumably this same credibility carries over to television."[73]

Apart from news broadcasts and so-called commentaries by the SABC-Nationalist Party ties becomes particularly evident during elections and referendums. During the 1977 general election, for example, almost every newcast "featured" a Nationalist Party politician. Opposition views, a journalist alleged, received only token reports and black viewpoints none at all.[74] A survey by a group of honours students from Rhodes University in the same year reinforced this view. In their study they undertook to examine the way in which they believe SABC abuses its functioning as a public utility by favouring one section of the political system by not allowing different political points of view equal access to the airwaves. Taking account of previous surveys (see Appendix 1) they undertook to confirm or contradict the findings which were based upon the assumption that political representation was unfair.

Over a period of one month the students monitored SABC TV newscasts at 8.10 pm and at 10.40 pm. Their findings, based on the actual amount of time allocated to the differing political viewpoints revealed that 81 percent of the political news was centred on government

or National Party officials. They concluded:

> "It is clear that the amount of political time on SABC TV broadcasts, during the period of time (September/October 1977) was overwhelmingly weighted with news from or about representatives of the government or National Party officials."[75] NOTE: Strikingly similar conclusions were reached by Garden in the *Rand Daily Mail* in 1983 during the Government Referendum on the proposed new constitution.

In 1981 the SABC's bias was still apparent and an official Opposition call to the SABC to hold political debates proved fruitless.[76] (In the same year a request for political advertising was also refused.) Consequently, as in 1977

> "the Nationalists dominated the election news on radio and television. A survey taken during the first two weeks of the campaign showed that the Nationalist party had received 1,200 percent more coverage than the opposition Progressive Federal Party..."[77]

5.3.5 Radio Bantu

> "Radio Bantu was introduced to serve the seven Bantu peoples of the country, according to the nature, needs and character of each, and by encouraging language consciousness among each of the Bantu peoples, to strengthen national consciousness."[78]

There are various opinions as to why "Radio Bantu" was set up and a common feature of many of them is that the service is part of the overall apartheid structure of South African society. In their

investigation of the ideological function of the South African mass media, the Tomasellis show that

> "Most of the content of Radio Bantu is aimed at the maintenance and, in fact, the rennaissance of traditional tribal values and social institutions and their implementation in the Homelands. As such, the SABC's efforts may be equated with the formal and informal exercise of political control over subordinate black communities."[79]

This is based upon the contention that the media, as "ideological apparatuses, function to reconcile subordinate individuals to their given social positions."[80] Supporting this view, Herbert Adam describes Radio Bantu as "one of the most powerful tools of social control over the urban African.[81] Earlier, Drury described it as

> "one of the most repressive features of apartheid. It does an undeniable amount of good and, in the minds of its critics, an undeniable amount of bad, in that it of course gives the Government an ideal medium for political propaganda and persuasion."[82]

The fact that radio and television for blacks broadcasts in the many vernaculars emphasises the tribal/traditional differences among Blacks, reinforcing apartheid and at the same time discouraging black integration. However, the views of the acceptability of this situation are, predictably, diametrically opposed. In the *New York Times* a black is quoted as saying that

> "They [the SABC] are just being consistent. They believe there is no such thing as a black South African. We can only be Zulus, Xhosas, or Tswanas."[83]

On the other hand a black programme supervisor at the SABC states that:

> "Every nation needs its own mouthpiece - a mouthpiece to inform, to inspire and to educate him (sic). Our black people use these mouthpieces (channels) with pride, as a driving power in building up their own community. The radio does more: it serves as a vehicle for self-determination and encourages service towards their own community."[84]

5.3.6 *Radio Bantu Schools Radio Service*

Until 1984, when TV2 and TV3 introduced a number of educational programmes[85] into the channels, the only direct use of broadcasting for education was the Black Schools Radio Service. The focus of this service (which still exists) is the black school child in the formal educational situation. (The pre-school child, children with no access to formal education and the illiterate or poorly educated adult remained almost entirely unconsidered). The stated intentions of the SABC in introducing the service in 1965 were to satisfy an urgent educational need (which, it must be noted, was not defined), and to act as an aid to formative education. The service has always been closely associated with the Department of Bantu Education[86] and its broadcasts are supported by supplementary printed information approved of by this department.

The Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), using information supplied by the SABC and the Bantu Education Department[87] compiled a report

on the Black Schools Radio Service and summed up its nature, purpose and function as follows:

> "....the Black child, like the white child, is generally very eager to learn. With this in mind, it is obvious that the judicious presentation of radio lessons compiled by experts and presented in a colourful manner, should also succeed with the Bantu child.
>
> The Bantu child has for years been in the throes of acculturation. He must orient himself to modern Western civilization and this constituted a difficult task for him. In the process of acculturation he adopts certain customs and life patterns more readily than others. For example, most Bantu, particularly in the cities have already "approved" and accepted Western attire, but many of them have not accepted the Christian Religion which originally arrived with Western Civilization although a large number have embraced it in a variety of forms."[88]

The traditionally paternalistic notion of modernisation as equivalent to "civilized" Western dress, behaviour and religion and the parallels with the ideals of Christian National Education (CNE) are blatant and need not be discussed further. From their standpoint, the Tomasellis (1981) note that out of the stated aims of this extension of Radio Bantu is to socialise black school children into accepting their roles as labour units in the South African economy. This service, they state:

> "aims to equip the black pupil with a 'theoretical knowledge' which should be applied 'in the practical situation' and to 'understand how this theory was formed in everyday life.' Further labourers are ideologically conditioned to take their place within the South African social formation as 'economically dynamic' persons who must learn to 'earn their daily bread by performing labour.'"[89]

It should also be noted that in a similar HSRC investigation in 1973, 8277 questionnaires were sent to schools to assess the success of the Service - 314 were returned. This was regarded by the HSRC as a representative sample and according to the answers, the Service was pronounced successful and the SABC continued to base its programming and lesson format on the original principles and policies.

In addition to this, the potential of "Radio Bantu" as a propagandist medium is enhanced by the fact that it has particular social significance in the rural areas. For many people in the outlying non-electrified area it is the only mass medium to which they are exposed - particularly the illiterate since it is often their only source of news and information about their environment. The implications of this are serious since it is widely acknowledged that people with a meagre education tend to attribute a high credibility to sophisticated technologies and tend to accept their messages at face value.

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"as an ideological apparatus (which) fulfils a number of basic functions: first, it mediates a coherent apartheid based reality which underlines the importance of ethnic values linked to a linguisitic system rooted in tribal imagery; second, although listenership in rural areas does not meet the intensity of urban exposure, country dwellers are rarely exposed to competing media such as newspapers etc. The communication of alternative viewpoints, even those falling within the confines of apartheid, are thereby restricted and largely inaccessible. Third, and most important, Radio Bantu is sensitive to the needs of the economy and has, since South Africa's invasion of Angola in 1975, stressed more strongly the benefits of capitalism over alternative politico-economic systems."[90]

5.4. Educational Television in South Africa - A Brief Overview

5.4.1 Context

The Educational Programmes Department of the SABC came into existence on 1 January 1984. In the establishment of this department, special emphasis was placed on the following:

"· the development of systems for the planning and production of educational programmes

· the planning and production of educational television programmes aimed at informal and non-formal education taking cognizance of the most important learning needs

· the extension of contacts with the potential users of educational television programmes; and

· the establishment of its own research section whose function is, in particular, the assessment of educational programmes."[91]

In a broader perspective ETV was established as a means of providing so-called "compensatory education"[92] for "milieu-deprived"[93] people. Four principles in line with the provision of education in South Africa (and in line with the government's White paper on the *Provision of Education in the RSA*)[94] serve as a point of departure:

"1. Equal opportunities for education, including equal standards in education for every inhabitant, irrespective of race, colour, creed or sex, should be the purposeful endeavour of the State.
2. Education should give positive recognition to what is common as well as what is diverse in the religious and cultural way of life and the languages of the inhabitants.
3. The provision of education should be directed in an educationally responsible manner to meet the needs of the individual as well as those of society and economic development, and should also take into consideration the manpower needs of the country.
4. Education should endeavour to bring about a positive relation between the formal, non-formal and informal aspects of education in the school, society and family."[95]

In the broad political context, ETV in South Africa came into being at a time of disruption and continuing overt dissatisfaction with

the "new" political order, the educational system and all of the institutions directly or indirectly connected with them. In a narrower context, the service itself was established with certain of the recommendations of the government appointed *De Lange Commission* in mind.[96] The separation of ETV for blacks and whites is an important feature of the service and it consistently reflects the policy of separation characteristic of both apartheid and South African education in particular. In the context of media and educational broadcasting, the Educational Programmes Department in general, and ETV in particular, has the legacy of the Schools Radio Service to contend with - in particular - its credibility or lack thereof. In this regard, it must be noted that none but the most astute in the audience would be in a position to make a critical comparison between ETV and educational radio, since formal teaching via radio has a largely rural audience while ETV (for blacks particularly) has to date been urban in its bias. The major justification for this urban orientation has been stated as follows:

> "Smit (1984) stated that, as in the rest of the world, the future of South Africa will to a high degree be determined within the urban areas. This is well illustrated by the statistics of the 1980 census. According to those statistics the total Black population of South Africa numbered 16 923 670 people. Of this total population, 4 940 699 people were living in the urban areas of "White" South Africa. The proportion living in these urban areas has also increased from 31,76% in 1960 to 37,8% in 1980 (Smit and Booysen, 1981) and is still increasing at a

rate of over 1% a year.

> It is also evident that the Pretoria-Witwatersrand-Vereeniging areas have to absorb the highest number of persons in the process of urbanization. It can therefore be said that the future of South Africa will most probably be determined within the urban areas and that therefore the problems encountered in urban areas are entirely relevant to educational broadcasting."[97]

Another aspect of the context of ETV is the SABC's attitude to so-called "modernization" of black South Africans. Taking into account South Africa's combination of Third and First World characteristics and the deprived economic and educational status of blacks the SABC endorses the view that "(t)he groups which are at lower levels of modernization have to modernize in order to survive in the twentieth century"[98] and further that

> "Cultural environment in Black society does not always prepare them adequately for the demands made upon them by the Western-oriented school system."[99]

Even though the Corporation appears concerned about the potentially *negative effects and consequences of the modernization process*, its statements continually imply that "Western" education is superior to traditional didactic forms and that rapid urbanisation is both inevitable and necessary. This of course, also takes account of the government's belief in its responsibility for those blacks "in" South Africa and its lack of responsibility for the (largely rural)

"homeland citizens".

Cognizance should also be taken of the fact that those involved in the provision of ETV in South Africa have noted that poverty is an important contextual feature of the society, and could, in part, be alleviated with the assistance of ETV. However, statements about this feature continue to have the negative connotations of "underdevelopment" associated with them and appear to be applied to urban areas in particular with no provision for specifically rural ETV. The following statement exemplifies this:

> "Simkins (1984:181) states that in 1980 more than 60% of all Black households lived in poverty. Poverty also creates a self-perpetuating problem, since those who live in poverty pass their values on to the new generation (Cressey and Coleman 1980). These values, however, are not those of Western-oriented technological society; moreover, they are not the same as the traditional norms and values; what we are dealing with is not merely a transitional culture but a poverty subculture.
>
> In parts of this subculture there is hardly any educational support; there is limited communication; a high degree of illiteracy; hardly any leisure activities; a total lack of planning and a high degree of malnutrition. Social pathologies such as abuse of drugs and liquor, child abuse, victimization and criminal behaviour, and a total lack of community involvement, are therefore common. Against

this background it is easy to see why acts of irrational escapism from reality should emerge. In the well-known words of Vilakazi (1962:121), they are the driftwood of African society: "They are the people who have not had the advantage of a Christian education but who have had contact with Western civilization through secular agencies.....t y find that they have been cut loose from their bonds and obligations but have not found a new centre for the organisation of their lives.....they adhere to neither the old tribal values nor the new Christian ones."[100]

Educational broadcasting is also seen as a necessary component of the shift towards a more technologically sophisticated society. Once again, recognizing that certain sectors of South African society need assistance in adapting to technological change, a patronising attitude is still apparent. Again this is exemplified by Niewenhuis (1985) whose comments show the same curious mixture of accurate observation and "fitting" the truth into the ideology:

"The African dilemma lies in the fact that people from traditional backgrounds are deprived of contact with technology in action. Africa was much less affected by agricultural and industrial innovation than the rest of the world. In South Africa, however, the past fifty years have seen a shift from an agricultural to a highly technology-oriented society. This has led to a situation in which the Black man has had to catch up and adapt himself

to the rapidly changing circumstances being brought about by the "knowledge industry". As Garbers (1984) puts it: ".... having got out of step with change in the rest of the world, (they) are now faced with the challenge of how best to take advantage of scientific and technological development in order to catch up as quickly as possible with a minimum of cultural disruption." This problem is intensified by the fact that, as President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia puts it "...the Westerner has a problem-solving mind while the African has a situation-experiencing mind." To solve this difficulty will inevitably lead to a situation in which traditional man will simultaneously experience both culture shock and future shock. It is, however, the firm conviction of this writer that to improve the standard of living, and to accelerate development, towards an RSA 2000, this "trauma" is necessary. Educational broadcasting should therefore play its part in weathering this very situation by providing the necessary skills to cope adequately with the realities of the New World."[101]

5.4.2 The Type of Educational Programmes Broadcast

Until the 1980's SABC's educational function was limited to "incidental and uncoordinated education"[102] which was informal in nature.[103] However with the establishment of the aforementioned Department of Educational Programmes RTV2/3 the educational functions and intentions of the SABC were more clearly defined although

they remained focussed largely on informal education.

The original educational television service was instituted for the previously mentioned needs (i.e. urbanization, poverty, etc) and also for economic and development reasons mainly associated with the potential black audience:

> "It was realized that, as Hanson and Brembeck (1966:148) puts it, "education becomes a relevant factor in economic growth only when it is properly integrated with all the other factors in development. Moreover, it must be education of the right kind, in the proper balance, and suited to the stage of development. "It is therefore necessary that cognizance should be taken of national development strategies and policies, and that these goals and objectives should be integrated with the real learning needs of the target audience."[104]

What this reveals is not only a concern for economic and social upliftment, but a firm government connection and a tacit adherence to a 1960s modernization/development approach. This was reinforced by the announcement on 1 October 1984 by the Minister of National Education that the SABC would be requested, in close co-operation with the education departments, to begin broadcasting radio and television programmes for formal education[105] (mainly, as it subsequently transpired, for the white audience).

From its inception ETV in South Africa was mainly devoted to two priority areas:

- the education of pre-school children and their parents. This involves, mainly, entertaining school- and learning-readiness programmes which encourage a gradual accumulation of basic knowledge. In order to encourage parents to actively lead and encourage their children to utilize these programmes, TV2 and 3 broadcast programmes to prepare them for the coming week's childrens' programmes.
- the education of adults in general. Based on the findings of the HSRC's 1980 Research into Education Report[106], the following sub-categories were identified.
  (a) community development - e.g. programmes on road safety, child and baby care, crime prevention, why education is necessary, etc.
  (b) social literacy - e.g. programmes on computerisation, basic law, etc.
  (c) industrial development - e.g. programmes on the subject of the free market and how it works in South Africa.
  (d) manpower utilization - e.g. programmes which look at different features of the work situation.

Within the SABC itself, there exists a research department for educational television and for school radio which reflects the Corporation's attitude that educational radio and television should complement each other. The attitude to research, which is regarded as essential is, in theory at least, exemplified by the following quotation:

"The entire process, however, is not a one-man show in

> which the researcher calls the tune and everybody else dances to it. The operation is an orchestral team effort in which the researcher, specialist, practical expert, programme manager, author and producer all play their necessary parts.
>
> Within this team effort, it is the duty of the researcher to produce input relating to the following important elements:
>
> (a) identifcation of the learning needs;
>
> (b) programme planning;
>
> (c) formative evaluation
>
> (d) optimizing the effect on the learning process;
>
> (e) the final evaluation of programmes."[107]

It must be noted that, even though extensive time and money is devoted to research, lengthy pilot studies of the *Children's Television Workshop* type, were never undertaken. It is suggested that, if specifically rural ETV were ever to become a reality, at least one year's worth of purely pilot study should precede it, particularly if expensive satellites are used.[108]

In conclusion, cognizance should be taken of the fact that ETV for whites, coloureds and indians is planned and administered separately from TV2 and 3 and came into being after this service in June 1984.[109]

5.5 A Summary of the Major Implications of Present Media Policies which will Significantly Influence Television's Educative Potential

(1) Policies as they exist are biased as they are characterized by a pro-Nationalist stance which promotes an illusion of respect for ethnicity, but which also endorses Western materialist values.

(2) Everything broadcast by the SABC is mediated by strict censorship laws which prohibit overt, political expression (which can take on a very necessary and positive function - to express the *experiences and aspirations of an oppressed community*.[110] and perpetuates the existing paralysis of criticism and creativity.

(3) All of the most senior positions at SABC are occupied by White (mostly Afrikaans speaking) personnel.

(4) Taking past experience into consideration, as long as the present system of Government continues, SABC will remain a state-controlled monopoly reflecting the political, social and economic concerns of the Nationalist Party and the establishment of truly independent broadcasting is only a remote possibility.

(5) The highly centralized and urban location of the broadcast media will continue to aid in channelling the white-controlled black television programmes at urban audiences thereby accelerating the growth of a black elite while neglecting the educational development of the low-literacy group comprising the majority.

(6) A radical change in media policy (for example, going against CNF in the establishment of educational television) would be dangerous to the Nationalist government since the broadcasting media, particularly television, are more pervasive than most and if given free rein, less amenable to the censor's control.

NOTE It is important to note that the existence of dissent is apparent and cannot be denied. According to Tomaselli:

> "While it is clear that the various legal constraints and pressures to which the South African media is subject does limit its degree of independence from state dictation and control, it cannot be said to nullify it. In South Africa the opposition English press, and to some extent the Nationalist supporting Afrikaans press, do express views which are offensive to the various establishments - be they in the field of politics, culture, crime, religion or morals. Whilst such controversial views have resulted in the banning of a number of newspapers, and the harassment of even more, there remains, nevertheless, a substantial degree of tolerance and latitude within the media. Even the directly state-controlled broadcasting media have islands of critical expression - such as Radio Today, some of the earlier broadcasts of Spectrum in television and more recently, on Midweek and even Verslag.

The importance of dissent should not be minimized, nor should it mislead anyone into an uncritical acceptance of the mythology that 'the freedom of the press' and the 'opportunity of expression' provides a channel for the articulation of alternative view points which have the potential of seriously challenging the existing social and political system - which in the South African context is based on apartheid."[111]

CHAPTER 5 : REFERENCES AND NOTES

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5. HEYMAN (1980), p.101.

6. IBID.

7. TOMASELLI and TOMASELLI (1981), p.19.

8. HACHTEN and GIFFARD (1984), pp.225-6.

9. NOTE: Like the departments of education

10. NOTE: It must be noted that comprehensive research into the history of broadcasting in South Africa is scarce. This analysis will, therefore, draw heavily upon information from the Annual Reports of the SABC since 1936 and the works of Orlik (1974), van Zyl, (1980), Hachten and Giffard (1984), Fuchs, (1969), the Tomasellis (1981) and various newspapers and journal articles.

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13. Quoted in PATTERSON, S. (1957) *The Last Trek.* London: Routledge and Regan Paul, p.256.

14. NOTE: i.e. Xhosa, South Sotho, Tswana, North Sotho, Zulu, Tsanga, and Venda services.

15. HACHTEN and GIFFARD (1984), p.200.

16. *The Times*, London, 13 April 1961, p.9.

17. *cf* VAN RENSBURG, P.V. (1965) *Guilty Land : The History of Apartheid.* New York, Frederick A Praeger.

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23. As late as 1978 Steve de Villiers, a Broederbond member was appointed as Director-General.

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NOTE: This point is also noted by HACHTEN and GIFFARD (1964), p.207.

31. HACHTEN and GIFFARD (1984), p.208.

32. ORLIK (1976) in HACHTEN and GIFFARD (1984), p.208.

33. *News/Check*, Johannesburg, 8th March 1968, p.3. from ORLIK in HEAD (1974), pp.148-9.

34. *of South African Financial Gazette*, Johannesburg, 5 April, 1968, p.9.

35. *The Star*, Johannesburg 4th April, 1968.

36. ORLIK in HEAD (1974), p.149.

37. NOTE: This term is used strictly in the sense that it was the only country with a technical sophistication capable of operating a television network.

38. *of Financial Mail*, Johannesburg, 3 September 1971.

39. *of Report of the Commission of Enquiry into Matters Relating to Television*. Pretoria, Government Printer, 1971, pp.46ff.

40. ORLIK in HEAD (1974), p.150.

41. NOTE: The following analysis, and a careful examination of the *Meyer Commission* is evidence of this - particularly its stress on the principles of Christian National Education (CNE).

42. NOTE: Particularly its apparent National Party bias.

43. *Financial Mail*, Special Supplement, 14 March, 1975, p.17.

44. *SABC Annual Report 1980*, p.69.

45. *SABC Annual Report 1979*, p.67.

46. *Financial Mail* (1975).

47. HACHTEN and GIFFARD (1984), p.211.

48. *SABC Annual Report 1980*, p.13.

49. HACHTEN and GIFFARD (1984), p.222.

50. *SABC Annual Report 1980*, p.63.

51. NOTE: ETV programmes for black viewers now exist, but the exclusively rural population remains unconsidered.

52. DE KONING, J. (Head of Communications Department of the Rand Afrikaans University) in *Financial Mail*, March 1975.

53. TOMASELLI and TOMASELLI (1980), p.8.

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59. *SABC Annual Report 1979*, p.15

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64. IBID.

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NOTE: For an explanation of the relationship between this attitude and orthodox development theory see appendix 1.

85. NOTE: i.e. Programmes which are *intentionally* educational.

86. NOTE: This department has undergone many name changes over the years e.g. Department of Native Affairs, the Department of Plural Affairs, The Department of Co-ooperation and Development etc.

87. NOTE: It appears that no independent, neutral information sources were used.

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89. STRYDOM, G.S. (1976) *The Establishment and Expansion of the School Radio Service of Radio Bantu.* HSRC, Report No. 0-53 in TOMASELLI (1981), pp.17-18.

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93. IBID
NOTE: Pretorius explains milieu-deprivation as follows: "The milieu-deprived child finds himself in a situation characterized by a low cognitive and cultural-educational level, deprivation, neglect, poverty, etc. As a result he is at a disadvantage in the dominant culture. In addition he is vulnerable when he enters school, which hampers and limits his self-actualization and opportunities in life. Compensatory education is the collective name for various educational and social programmes, projects, procedures and practices for milieu-deprived children, adolescents and adults. Compensatory education is designed to compensate for the milieu and psycho-social deficiencies which hamper and limit the individual's self-actualization and opportunities in life." (PRETORIUS (1985), p.9.

94. *White Paper on the Provision of Education in the RSA* (1983). Pretoria: Government Printer.

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100. NIEUWENHUIS (1985), p.2.

101. IBID.

102. IBID., p.3.

103. NOTE: The only excention to this was the School Radio Service for black students.

104. NIEUWENHUIS (1985), p.3.

105. *SABC Annual Report 1984*, p.112.

106. RSA (1981) *Provision of Education in the RSA*. Human Sciences Research Council.

107. NIEUWENHUIS (1985), p.3.

108. NOTE: According to Mr C.M. du Plessis of the Urban Foundation, a communications satellite to beam educational programmes to the whole of South Africa, would cost R400-million. Accordingly:

> "South Africa's satellite could be placed in a stationary orbit above the Limpopo. 'In effect we would then have a TV tower some 36 000 km high from which programmes could be received over the entire sub-continent,' Mr du Plessis said"
> (*The Star*, Johannesburg, 8 June 1985)

109. *cf SABC Annual Report 1984*, p.112.

THE POTENTIAL USE OF TELEVISION FOR EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

Sally Ann Benn

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PART II

CHAPTER 6

THE POTENTIAL OF TELEVISION FOR EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN CONTEXT

6.1 Summary of the Major Features of Part I

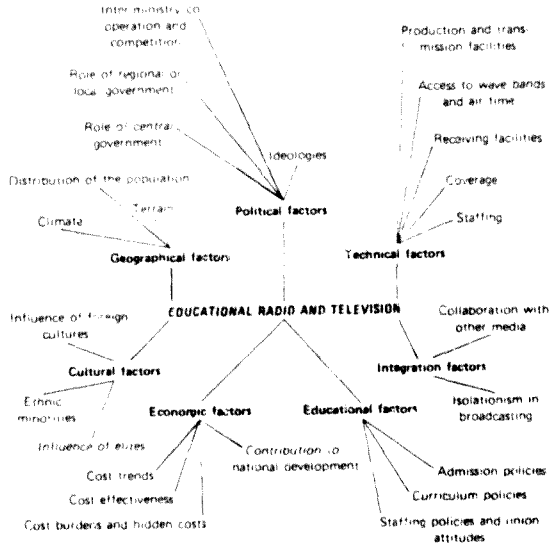
The primary aim of this dissertation is to examine, very broadly, the potential of television as a successful educational aid in terms of its capacity to assist in education as well as its limitations which must be recognised if its potential is to be realized.

The South African context and the major structural features of that context are analysed in the first half of this dissertation. It is shown that certain contextual features, particularly the apartheid system, effect all aspects of society in such a radical way, that their "all-pervasiveness" will significantly circumscribe and probably adversely influence the progress of any innovation (such as an independent ETV organisation) which might venture beyond certain acceptable limits which are defined by or inherent in apartheid ideology. ETV as it exists now (in its early stages of development) directly endorses[1] and is tacitly supported by the official educational system which has been shown to be a vital component of the overall apartheid context.

The major contextual constraints upon the use of television in education have been examined and are summarised below using the categories defined by Hawkridge and Robinson (1982) in their analysis

of the organization and success of educational broadcasting in general. The major factors that influence planning and implementation can be summarised under six headings: political, cultural, educational, economic, geographical and technical.[2] The figure below[3] shows the main components of each factor which, together, constitute the context of educational television (and radio).

A Map of the Context of Educational Radio and Television



These features and their components which are particularly relevant in the South African context are summarised below.

6.1.1 Political Factors

"National ideologies have a powerful influence over broadcasting, particular educational broadcasting."[4]

The decision to install or not to install educational channels within a broadcasting system is invariably a political one which stems from ideology. In South Africa the decision to introduce television and educational television respectively have been shown to have occurred due to public pressure, and the long delay for the introduction of television was due to the government's fear of the possible "adverse" consequences of its installation.

The authors point out that "A government committed to increasing educational opportunities cannot ignore the potential of educational broadcasting."[5] However, once this has been recognised, research shows that educational broadcasting can be used either to reinforce and perpetuate existing educational inequalities or to foster decentralization and the relative independence of educational broadcasting. In Yugoslavia, for instance, the government used regional educational broadcasting to foster decentralization. On the other hand, strict government control of educational broadcasting, including direct control of its organizational structure, censorship and funding, is often a sign of educational broadcasting being used as an ideological tool of control. This control of production and transmission facilities takes many forms and, Hawkridge and Robinson assert, "is often exercised in an exclusive fashion that deprives possible users of access."[6] The urban bias of TV2 and TV3 in particular is witness to this fact.

6.1.2 Cultural Factors

> "Ideology also affects government attitudes towards two sets of important cultural factors: the influence of elites and of foreign cultures."[7]

The influence of elites is strong on both national and international levels. The gap that exists between the elites and the rest of the population is probably widening since (as Rogers pointed out in 1974,[8]) the elites continue to use communication networks, education and a combination of the two to their own advantage in order to enhance their own position more than to the advantage of others. Self interest ultimately reigns supreme. "Thus educational broadcasting may be widening the cultural gap, as elites tend to benefit more than others do."[9]

Although most educational broadcasting systems differ from each other, traces of so-called "foreign culture" are to be found in most of them on a national or international level. In terms of the latter this foreign cultural influence is usually derived from the former colonial power - such as the overriding French influence on the Ivory Coast educational television project. On the other hand, the influence of foreign culture could take the form of the influence of Western, urban culture.

6.1.3 Educational Factors

> "It hardly seems necessary to stress educational factors. Government policies in education have great impact upon educational broadcasting, both television and radio."[10]

The analysis implies that the most revealing aspects of educational broadcasting policy are: national admission policies and their relationship with educational broadcasting. The issue of who should be taught is significant since it is ideological. Likewise, curriculum policy or the question of what is to be learned is also influenced by political and cultural factors. As is the case in South Africa, the more centrally controlled the curriculum, the more likely it is to be controlled by the government, for good or ill. In the formal sector centrally controlled curricula are most common - for example, educational television curricula in Japan and The Ivory Coast. In the non-formal sector, however "the curriculum for educational broadcasting is usually the result of deliberation among interested parties, including the students in some instances."[11] In these instances it appears to be common practice to base curricula on in-depth, original research of the target audience (as opposed to evaluative research based upon the set, national curriculum). Significant examples illustrating this are the SITE experiment, the *Children's Television Workshop* and the BBC's programming for adults. A variety of methods for determining curricula were used but significantly all were based on actual as opposed to assumed needs of the target audience.

Staffing policies are equally important and it is important to note that "where the power of broadcasting has come into conflict with the power of teachers in the classroom, the teachers have won, with few exceptions."[12] The presence of ex-teachers in broadcasting (and this is significantly borne out at SABC) is still significant and the presence of specialist "broadcast educators" is rare.

A final important feature of this category is the question of who will judge the effectiveness of educational broadcasting and again broadcasting organizations give preference to the opinion of school teachers even though their qualifications to judge the didactic effectiveness of broadcasting are probably dubious.

> "Usually the judges are not broadcasters but educators, at least for the formal sector. Broadcasters set their own standards, and judge their own programmes and those of others by these standards, but the ultimate criterion is student achievement....."

Results of evaluation, the authors note, can be used powerfully to influence the future of educational planning.[13]

6.1.4 Economic Factors

> If educational broadcasting contributes to national development through improving education then this benefit may be set against its costs..."[14]

In the optimistic climate of the 1950's and 1960's the relationship between economic growth and education was approved of and assumed to be strong. Likewise, a relationship was assumed to exist between lifetime earnings of individuals and their level of educational attainment. So, in addition to the older social and moral justification, education received economic justification. Therefore, if education in any form appeared to foster economic growth it was encouraged.

Unfortunately for educational television, doubt has arisen about the relationship between education and economic growth. "With exceptions developing countries that have devoted large portions of their national budgets to education have not been rewarded by economic expansion."[15] Also, doubt has arisen that educational broadcasting can be justified on grounds of cost-effectiveness except under certain conditions and costs are, increasingly, a constraint upon educational broadcasting.

6.1.5 Geographical factors

The distribution of population, terrain and climate are neglected features of educational broadcasting planning and the point has been made that even in densely populated countries relatively sophisticated technologies, terrain and distance are important and they often act to deprive potential students of ETV broadcasts. As is the case in South Africa, the urban population is well served "but the cost of transmitting to far flung rural areas is too high and rural populations are frequently placed at a disadvantage."[16]

6.1.6 Technical Factors

> "Educational broadcasting cannot be effective if it has extremely limited access to wave bands and/or air-time."[17]

Entertainment television, whose establishment invariably precedes educational television has preference of air-time and naturally chooses peak hours, relegating ETV to inconvenient times. Potential audiences (particularly of non-formal educational programmes) are lost to commercial stations and channels.

The choice of the transmission systems is an economic and a technical decision:

> "Each system has advantages and disadvantages from the point of view of educational broadcasting. Direct broadcast satellites can provide immense geographical coverage....They can also provide additional channels at relatively low cost compared with terrestial network in sparsely populated countries. On the other hand, every receiver requires an aerial that is more expensive than the conventional, or it must be linked to a cable system that has a community aerial feeding signals from the satellite. The extra cost of the special aerial is small when spread across a number of students, of course, but to bring them together when they are widely scattered is to defeat the purpose of direct broadcasting satellites, which is to broadcast direct to homes."[18]

6.1.7 Integration with Other Media

> It is vital that planners should take a holistic view if they wish educational broadcasting to have maximum impact."[19]

In recent years with the more realistic view of educational television and the realisation that it alone cannot cure educational ills, the tendency is to integrate it with other media in both formal and non-formal education - the British *Open University* is the most sophisticated and successful example of this integrative approach.

CHAPTER 6 - REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. Like the official education system, educational television exists as two separate services - one for Whites and one for Blacks - with little official contact between the two and no overlap in content at all.

2. These headings are based upon those in HAWKRIDGE and ROBINSON(1982), pp 30-45.

3. IBID., p.31

4. IBID., p.32

5. IBID.

6. IBID., p.33.

7. IBID.

8. ROGERS, E.M. "Social Structure and Communications Strategy in Rural Development: the Communications Effects Gap and the Second Dimension of Development" in CRAWFORD, R.H. and WARD, W.B. (1984) (eds), *Communication Strategies for Rural Development*, Cornell University, Ithaca.

9. HAWKRIDGE and ROBINSON, *op cit.*, p.33.

10. IBID, pp34-5.

11. IBID., p.35.

12. IBID., p.36.

13. IBID., p.37

14. IBID.

15. IBID.

16. IBID., p.32.

17. IBID., pp.40.

18. IBID.,pp.41-2.

19. IBID., p.42.

CHAPTER 7

THE PROMISE AND PERFORMANCE OF EDUCATIONAL TELEVISION

Having summarised the major contextual restraints upon the potential of educational broadcasting in general and educational television in particular, it is necessary to assess its potential in terms of its history, and its past and present performance. The relevant areas of investigation in this regard have been summed up by various authors:

> "What has technology done for education?...what can we say about its impact on learners' learning or on teachers' teaching? To what extent have early hopes for technology in education been fulfilled? Where is technology now most useful? And is it going to be vastly more useful in the near future? Are there danger signals we should heed in seeking new applications of technology in education?.....The answers vary according to context."[1]

The current meanings derived from the expression "the potential of television for education," and the general expectations of the medium as an educational tool must be seen in the light of the short history of ETV which is strikingly similar to that of education itself (particularly its development in the last three decades).

The detailed history of educational television has been dealt with extensively elsewhere (see Schramm *et al.* (1963); Blakey,R.J. (1977); Waniewicz, I (1972); Paulu, B. (1974); Koenig, A.E. & Hill, R.B. (1967); Briggs, A. (1961-79); Powell, J.W. (1962)). Suffice it to say that ETV became prominent in the years after World War *II* as

a potential instrument of mass education. It had its root, not surprisingly, in the USA and Western Europe:

> In the United States "over sixty educational television stations were in operation by 1961, according to Powell (1962), built largely out of capital provided by charitable foundations. Schramm, Lyle and de Sola (1963) suggest that non-commercial educational television had its birth in the United States as late as 1954, but that about seven stations a year were added over the next nine years. Across the Atlantic, Western European countries followed a similar sequence of technical development, except that instead of educational stations springing up as in the United States, educational programmes took their place in the context of general broadcasting using the same studios and transmitters."[2]

A major characteristic of the introduction of ETV in the West (and one that significantly effects its potential) was that it invariably followed the provision of entertainment/commercial television. ETV, in this sense, has always been secondary to (and often subordinate in that it was and often still is, given inferior times for broadcasting, fewer hours and fewer channels. Just as in the developing countries, its introduction was often due to public pressure - not so much to "mass-educate" but because it was considered to be the next rung on the broadcasting ladder. ETV "tended to be a sideline, assigned air-tine because the networks were public-spirited or anxious to redeem their purely commercial image."[3] So, as in the developing areas ETV was often introduced without taking the

context into account. This is relevant to the potential of ETV in the South African context since, as Arnove (~) suggests ETV must be introduced as an integral part of the whole.

> "basic changes within the educational sect· should not only aim at improved pedagogical quality on quantitative expansion but should be accompanied by supportive changes in non-school sectors of the society - for example by policies aimed at agrarian reform and generation of jobs."[4]

Also significant to the potential of ETV in South Africa is the consideration of the success (in historical terms) of the types of ETV systems popular in North America and Britain. In the USA, television developed almost entirely out of resources of private industry for commercial profit whereas in the UK it developed under the BBC monopoly, deriving its finances mainly from licencing fees.

> "In the USA it was concluded that commercial services could not fully explore the educational possibilities and it was recommended that non-commercial education be added to assure that television meets the cultural and educational demands of the community as a whole."[5]

In 1952 the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) defined the purpose of these stations:

> "Non-commercial educational broadcast stations will be licenced only to non-profit educational organisations upon a showing that the proposed stations will be used primarily to serve the educational needs of the community; for the advancement of educational programmes; and to furnish a non-profit and non-commercial television broad-

> cast service. Non-commercial television broadcast stations may transmit educational, cultural and entertainment programmes and programmes designed for use by schools and school systems in connection with regular school courses, as well as routine and administrative material pertaining thereto."[6]

In the USA, educational television became highly localized since educational authority exist on a state rather than a national level. In spite of the advantages of this approach and the undoubted success of programmes like *Sesame Street*, ETV in America still operates "in the shadow of commercial television"[7] which is primarily concerned with entertainment (and profit).

The situation in Britain contrasts sharply with this. By 1955 British broadcasters and educators had reached the conclusion that provision should be made to permit some element of competition through establishment of commercial stations.[8] The Independent Television Authority (ITA) came into existence and its basic function was, like the BBC, to inform, educate and entertain. It has been noted that unlike the situation in the USA, educational television in the UK is an independent educational aid which is not threatened by commercial interests.[9]

The BBC's approach to ETV is summed up by Nokaneng:

> "Where possible the BBC has avoided the practice of telecasting isolated lessons, and as such concentrated on

the presentation of a well planned series in particular subjects, always bearing in mind that the function of television is to supplement and enrich the learning experience presented by the classroom teacher. Accompanying material is sent in advance to all participating schools, giving data and precise times of telecasts and their repeats, as well as the content and suggested activity for each lesson."

As noted earlier the BBC regards, as its main responsibilities, the education, enterntainment and informing of its audience. However, unlike many countries including South Africa until recently, the educational function is regarded not only as part of broadcasting as a whole, but as an entity in itself. Programmes for defined educational purposes have been broadcast since 1922. This provision has been revised and developed over the years and there are now five main sectors of educational broadcasting in Britain of which ETV is an integral part.

"(1) Broadcasts and publications for schools sponsored by the School Broadcasting Council for the United Kingdor, for Scotland, for Wales and for Northern Ireland;

(2) continuing education (CE) broadcasts and publications both for individual use and for class use by adults and adolescents, prepared in consultation with the BBC's Continuing Education Advisory Council;

(3) Open University broadcasts, produced by the BBC in close collaboration with Open University staff;

(4) educational programmes produced by the BBC's local radio stations, advised by a Local Radio Educational Panel for each station;

(5) English by Radio and Television courses produced by the BBC's External Services, broadcast direct in the case of radio and provided in recorded form for broadcasting services in other countries."[10]

In its day to day operation the BBC is independent, but its ultimate control is government related. As a public service, it has operated under a Royal Charter since 1927. "The members of the Corporation are its Governors, and they are appointed by the Queen in Council. The Governors, who are twelve in number, are not called upon to make broadcasting their sole concern. The term of appointment is normally five years. The Governors work through a permanent executive staff headed by the Director-General, who is the chief officer of the Corporation."[11] Working in close collaboration with other educational organisations, agencies and advisory councils, this service has from its inception been regarded as a successful model towards which to aspire.[12]

It is an American undertaking, however, which gave educational television the publicity and legitimacy it needed to gain worldwide recognition - this was the *Children's Television Workshop's* (CTW) *Sesame Street*. This more specific (and controversial) application of ETV began in the late 1960's and it has been said that "the programme was designed and intended to be a symbol of the new potential

of educational television, and it was shortly declared that it had met its goals, if not surpassed them."[13]

The major differences between this approach and the British approach will be indicated by the brief analysis of some of the major characteristics of the CTW below:

CTW is an unusual organisation, developed in the USA. Its format, goals and objectives are guided strictly by the context for which specific programmes are intended. Unlike most ETV institutions, CTW makes but does not broadcast its own programmes and has never been dependent on large or sustaining government subsidies or the backing of any major broadcasting organization. It is run on a commercial basis and one of its major sources of funds is a commercial marketing organization. "This subsidiary licences the production and marketing of CTW's copyrighted materials, ranging from motion pictures to books and games, and is involved in amusement parks based on CTW images and characters such as those from *Sesame Street*."[14] A single objective underlies all of the CTW's programmes - it produces television series "intended to explore and extend the medium's educational and information-providing capabilities, not merely for the benefit of children but also for adults.....It focuses on specific skills and attitudes which a potential audience does not possess but has the ability to acquire. It expects to have to gain the audiences' attention, and hold it, not only during each t also during a series."[15] The Workshop's intention and co policy is to cater to the disadvantaged - children and adults.

This highly innovative organisation has been criticised and its efficacy challenged - especially by Cook *et al.* (1975), Cook and Conner (1975) and Goldsen and Bibliowicz (1976) - for being too "commercial", not causing significant gains in achievement etc., but its effectiveness in instructing which its marketers ensure are measurable, have been convincingly illustrated (cf Ball and Bogatz (1970), (1975)).

The Response of the Third World to the Promise of Educational Broadcasting

As has already been shown, the high hopes held for education to overcome "underdevelopment" and disadvantage were carried over to the "new educational media" as they came to be called. The apparent success of educational broadcasting in general and educational television in particular in the West was enthusiastically acknowledged and applied by the so called "developing" countries as well as by large funding/development agencies and organizations such as UNESCO, and former colonial powers.

The major claim made for broadcasting was that it would bring more education to more learners and would also improve that education and whereas Western countries concentrated upon increasing educational quality and variety in this manner, developing countries concentrated on quality and quantity.

> "The general claim staked out for technology was (and is) much the same. Technology it was (and is) said, would increase numbers of those with access to education, either

> by breaking down physical barriers of distance and time, or by lowering the cost per student, thus enabling an educational system to take on more students. Technology would also improve the quality of education by bringing to students richer curricula, well-structured lessons and outstanding teachers, and by providing a powerful motivational aid to learning. Students would learn more each year."[16]

An overriding feature of educational broadcasting technology which made it so attractive, was that it would democratize education by making access to it more equal.

All these hopes and promises were reflected by many of the major educational communications theorists in the early 1970's. For example Lerner and Schramm (1972) reflected the prevalent optimistic mood, and Schramm (1973) listed the great accomplishments of educational television in El Salvador, Samoa, Niger and the Ivory Coast. In retrospect even the solid theoretical foundation of Rogers (1976) seems excessively optimistic and as early as 1971 the director of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation CERI sounded a discreet warning not to be too optimistic:

> "In a period when technology has performed such wonders, it is perhaps to be expected that 'educational technology' has the magic appeal of a solution to the crowded classroom, shortages of teachers, continuing education for adults and so on. The simple lesson of this report is that there is no technological miracle in education."[17]

Thus, from the 1960's to the early 1980's massive so called "interventions" occurred where many major powers, funding agencies and former colonialists poured financial aid, technical expertise, personnel, ideas and ideology into the Third World. The success or failure of this action and the way in which it effects the potential of ETV in South Africa will be examined after the potential applications of ETV, past and present, have been discussed.

CHAPTER 7 - REFERENCES AND NOTES

1. HAWKRIDGE, D, "Educational technology, present and future" in *Prospects*, vol. xii, no. 3, 1982. See also ARNOVE (1975); HAWKRIDGE and ROBINSON (1982); ARUJO e OLIVEIRA (1983).

2. HAWKRIDGE and ROBINSON (1982), p.26.

3. NOKANENG, M. (1980), *Didactical Guidelines for Educational Television with Special Reference to Education for Blacks in the Republic of South Africa* D. Ed. Thesis, University of South Africa, p.18.

4. ARNOVE (1976), p. xvii.

5. STERLING, C.H. (1976) (ed) *International Propaganda and Communications* New York, Arno Press in NOKANENG (1980), p.13.

6. NOKANENG (1980), p.15.

7. IBID.

8. STERLING, C.H. (1972) (ed), p.16.

9. MACLEAN, R. (1968) *Television in Education*, Butler and Tanner Ltd.,p.60.

10. HAWKRIDGE and ROBINSON (1982), p.212.

11. IBID , p.211.

12. NOTE: Many characteristics of the SABC are similar to those of the BBC, in particular, its aims to "inform, educate and entertain".

13. ARUJO e OLIVEIRA, J.B. "Making good use of educational technology", in *Prospects*, vol. xii, no. 3, 1983, p.336.

14. HAWKRIDGE and ROBINSON (1982), p.236.

15. IBID.

16. HAWKRIDGE, D. (1982), p.326.

17. OECD (1971) *Educational Technology: The Design and Implementation of Learning Systems*, Paris, OECD/CERI.

CHAPTER 8

The Capacity of Television as an Aid in Education

The aim of this chapter is to analyse and assess what is factually known about the didactic properties of ETV and about specific applications of this medium in education. This is done by classifying the potential of ETV according to certain categories.

- the characteristics of television that lend themselves to the educational context such as distribution, storage, magnification, assembly and instantaneous relay
- quality improvement and improving access (distance learning and extended schools)
- television for formal education including enrichment, direct instruction, extending in-school education and distance teaching. This will include an analysis of the potential use of ETV in pre-school, primary, secondary and higher education, teacher training and adult education
- the use of ETV for specifically development communication in order to motivate, inform, teach, change and direct behaviour. The translation of radio strategies into television strategies (including open broadcasting, campaigns and regular listening groups).

8.1. Characteristics and Capacities of Television in the Educational Context

This short analysis is based upon that of Nokaneng[1] whose summary is derived from Steyn[2] and MacLean[3]

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