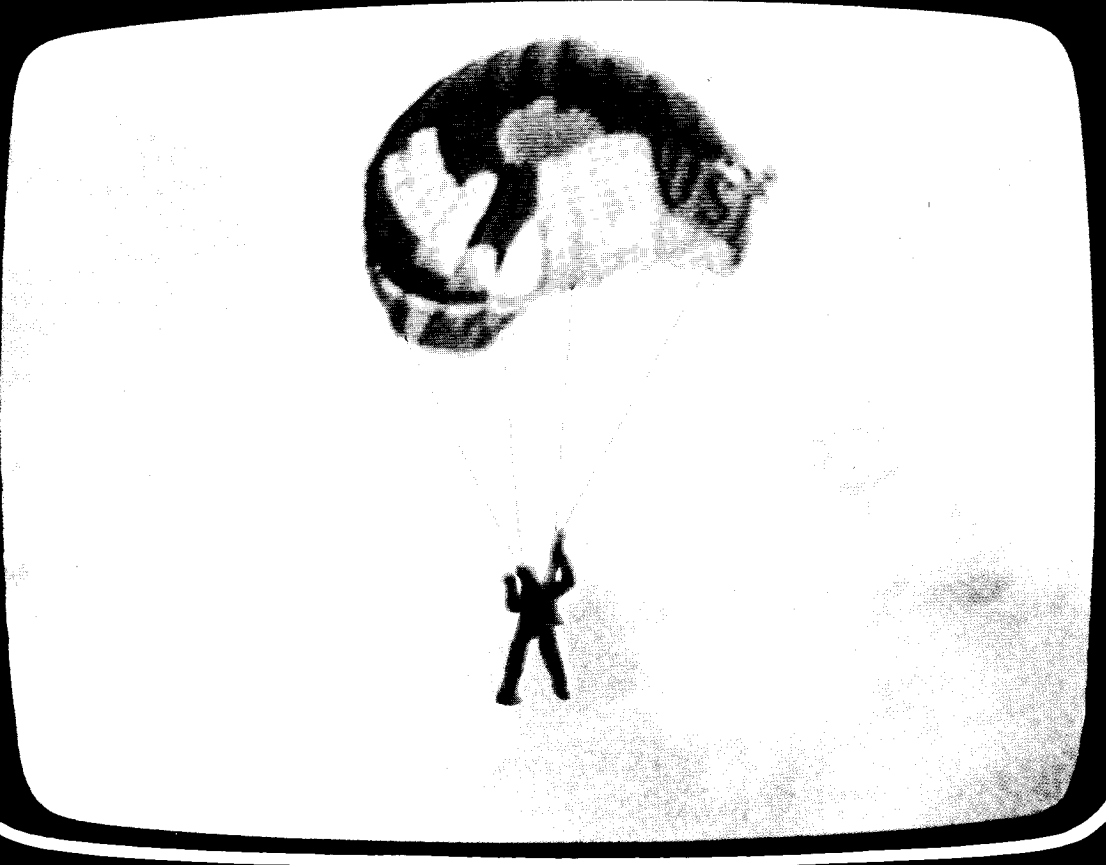


Radical Software



 **Changing Channels** 

In issue one, volume one of *Radical Software* (Summer, 1970) we introduced the hypothesis that people must assert control over the information tools and processes that shape their lives in order to free themselves from the mass manipulation perpetrated by commercial media in this country and state controlled television abroad. By accessing low cost 1/2" portable videotape equipment to produce or create or partake in the information gathering process, we suggested that people would contribute greatly to restructuring their own information environments: YOU ARE THE INFORMATION . . . Through such decentralization of the information medium, we asserted that the overall information environment of this country could be humanized and revitalized. Defining media ecology as any set of dynamic relationships existing among information tools, information processes and human nutrition the paper focused attention on ecologically valid media processes and their relationship to the social and psychological nourishment of human beings.

In *particular* it focused on the increasing number of *experiments* conducted by people using this 1/2" video tool: experiments in producing locally originated programming for closed-circuit and cable tv and for public access cablevision; construction of video information environments/structures/assemblages as related to information presentation and audience involvement; creation of new formats for the presentation of video information; creation of new organic designs for the electronic camera (who says that an electronic camera must be designed so that the cameraman is still *shooting* with the camera in front of his face); explorations of the unique potentialities of *feedback* through video and audio *infolding*, and feedback as facilitator in encouraging play between people in pursuit of new life styles and/or as examination of the transformation of the director/actor relationship implicit in video. Long theoretical discussions were printed concerning such concepts as cybernetic guerrilla warfare, triadic logic, biotopological resensitization, nutritive contexts, electronic democracy . . . On the theoretical/practical level discussions of an information based economy led to suggestions of a video distribution plan based on information exchange. And so on.

Most of these experiments, though often requiring a great deal more of the experimenters' patience and time to implement in view of very limited economic resources, consistently produced growth oriented results in terms of the selection of information gathered on tape, and the information process of gathering and assembling that information. Public access evolved from the conceptual state to the implementation state when it was pioneered on Sterling Manhattan and Teleprompter cable systems in New York City this past year. For the first time (as far as we know) cable stations cooperated with video groups and individuals who had been producing and creating many hours of experimental programming for several years with no outlets for their tapes. The public access year ended with a 3-day celebration taking place to inform the people of the city of the existence of community oriented public access channels. (See brief discussion in this issue.) Early this summer, public access on the small town level was pioneered by Woodstock Community Video on Kingston Cablevision. (See letter of agreement between these two parties within this issue.) However, the question of how the community programmers will be paid for their services so that they can support themselves without relying on granting institutions is yet unresolved. Another experiment, the outcome of many smaller experiments, was implemented this summer by Top Value Television (a joint Raindance/Ant Farm project) when it brought together a group of about 30 people from several video groups to provide alternate coverage of the political conventions in Miami. This was the first time that we know of that 1/2" video technology was used to provide alternate, specialized market, coverage of a national event. It is also the first time we know of that money was raised from cable companies in support of a 1/2" video production that did not originate from the cable companies' own production facilities.

Throughout the first volume of *Radical Software* the paper/magazine functioned as a conduit or passageway through which information flowed and was disseminated. Editorial decisions functioned more in relationship to the organization and juxtaposition of pieces of information than in their elimination, and editorial opinion functioned more in behalf of access than in asserting any one particular approach to this new information medium.

As we announced in *Radical Software* #5, we will no longer be turning the major part of our energies towards print production. We expressed the desire, which we maintain, to turn our full-time energies to experiments in information formatting and alternate video coverage of events and environments. However, since we feel that the continuation of a print forum of this nature is important (most information of a non-commercial nature is still circulated via print) and since we desire to expand and share our information resources with others, we have *decided to farm out most of the issues of this new volume*. We feel that this is an important format experiment since each group will bring its own style and bias towards the presentation and selection of information. We also feel that this experiment will lead to in-depth reporting on events and phenomena only casually mentioned in our attempt to service *all*, or not mentioned at all for lack of room or our own bias. We expect and welcome diversity.

On the back inside cover are some announcements of forthcoming issues, including some which solicit information. Send specific solicited information to the group requesting it. In the case of video directory information, tape distribution and data bank information send it to us and we will either collate the information and forward it to the appropriate groups for publication, or include it in one of the issues which we will be producing.

(continued on back inside cover)

This issue is brought to you by:

Beryl Korot
Ira Schneider

Special thanks to Joan Hennessy and Skip Blumberg.
Also thanks to Evelyn Honig for lending us her
darkroom equipment, and George Korot for donating
a 35mm Canon camera.

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Program Guide

Channel 1 **MOVIES ROUND-THE-CLOCK (RE-RUNS)**

Channel 3 **ABC**

Channel 5 **NBC**

Channel 6 **METROMEDIA**

Channel 9 **EDUCATION**

Channel 10 **CBS**

Channel 12 **MONITORING OF EARTH FROM ORBITING SATELLITES**

Channel 15 **SPANISH LANGUAGE I**

Channel 17 **PBS**

Channel 20 **LOCAL CITY GOVERNMENT**

Channel 23 **AP NEWSWIRE, STOCK LISTINGS, WEATHER REPORTS**

Channel 24 **CATV: POSSIBILITIES AND EXPERIMENTS**

<i>Wiring Megalopolis: Two Scenarios</i> by Mark Hinshaw	p. 3
Top Value TV Coverage of National Conventions	p. 11
Public Access Birthday Celebration	p. 15
Woodstock Community Video	p. 16
New Paltz Community Video	p. 18
Downsville Community Video	p. 18
Environmental Information Network	p. 19
<i>A Tentative Look at some Potential Benefits and Costs of Cable TV</i> by Gary Gappert	p. 20
Brief Minnesota CATV directory	p. 17
Telecommunity for Appalachia	p. 22

	Berkeley Public Access	p. 23
	CATVIS	p. 23
	Letter from Australia	p. 23
Channel 25	SCIENCE FOR SURVIVAL	
	<i>Why are we in the Universe?</i> by Don Benson	p. 24
	Synergy Project	p. 27
	<i>Hierarchical Restructuring</i> by John Platt	p. 28
	Excerpts from <i>What We Must Do</i> by John Platt	p. 33
Channel 26	META-SCIENCE: GROWTH, FORM AND STRUCTURE	
	Excerpts from <i>Geometric Extensions</i> <i>of Consciousness</i> by Anne Tyng	p. 35
Channel 27	CYBERNETIC DATA AND DADA	
	<i>Matrices, Loops and Circuits</i> by Frank Gillette	p. 40
	<i>C Sync</i> by Christopher Venne	p. 39
	<i>Eulogy for Culture</i> by Willard Van de Bogart	p. 42
	Environetic Synthesis	p. 44
Channel 28	CULTURE, COMMUNICATIONS AND CHANGE	
	<i>Communications and Change</i> by Robert Theobold	p. 45
	Proposal to Found the Society for Visual Anthropology	p. 49
Channel 29	VIDEO EXPERIMENTATION	
	<i>Video Birth</i> by Tobe Carey	p. 52
	Pilchuk Proposal	p. 56
	Mini-TV Broadcasting Station	p. 51
	Lanesville TV	p. 54
Channel 30	VIDEO PEOPLE ACCESS	
	Directory	p. 57
Channel 31	VIDEO TOOLS AND TIPS	
	Three Methods for Making Clean Video Edits	p. 63
	Making Video Inserts and Compensating for Sound Lag	p. 67
	Tips from Dan Drasin	p. 65
	Video Equipment Exchange Center	p. 68
	Random Access	p. 68
Channel 32	COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATED PUBLICATIONS AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES	
	Listings	p. 70
Channel 33	SPORTS	
Channel 34	CONSUMER AFFAIRS	
Channel 35	MOVIES	
Channel 36	UNINTERRUPTED ROUND-THE-CLOCK CLASSICAL MUSIC	
Channel 37	SCIENCE PROGRAMS FOR KIDS AND ADULTS	
Channel 38	CONTEMPORARY MUSIC AND ABSTRACT VISUALS	
Channel 39	HOW TO: COOKING, CRAFTS, BUILDING STRUCTURES	
Channel 40	THEATRE	

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Wiring Megalopolis: Two Scenarios

by Mark Hinshaw

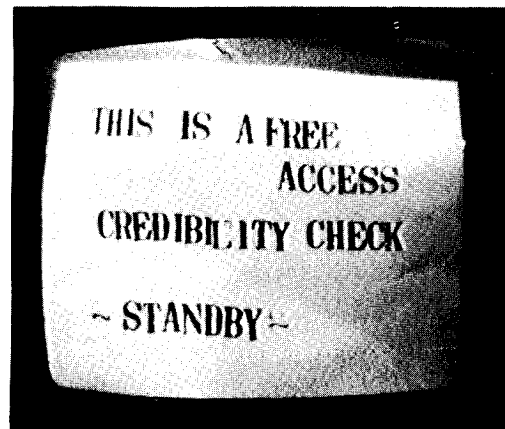


It is becoming increasingly evident that we are in the midst of a tremendous societal transformation. Students of social change have begun in recent years to examine its form and substance and to make predictions as to its consequences for human existence. In an effort to give it an appropriate historical identity, scholars have christened this systemic transformation out of the industrial era variously as the arrival of post-industrialism, the coming of a super-industrial age (Toffler, 1970), the Age of Discontinuity (Drucker, 1968), the dawning of a Universal Civilization (Ribiera, 1968), the evolution of Consciousness III (Reich, 1971), and emergence of the Technetronic Age (Brzezinski, 1970). At least two authors have identified this social phenomenon as revolving primarily around the invention, use, and proliferation of new communications technologies and processes. Robert Theobald (1970) maintains that we are entering into nothing less than a full-blown Communications Era, while L. Clark Stevens (1970) applies the title of Electronic Social Transformation.

In the area of urban affairs and planning few attempts beyond those of Richard Meier and Melvin Webber have been made to analyze the impact of communications on urban change. Among the myriad of conferences, symposia, books, and journals examining current and future urban development, planners have given virtually no recognition to the consequences of communications for alternative urban life styles. As Jerome Aumente (1971) has noted: "Professional planners who should know better persist today in conventional predictions of future land use and population movement without sufficiently examining the new set of communication variables that turn their predictions topsy-turvy." Indeed many planners may well feel that communications technology will have little or no effect upon urban development. Virtually any recognition at all of the relationships between urbanism and communications has come from academicians and professionals outside the fields most directly involved in urban analysis and policy development. Most of the literature coming from such sources, however, treats communication and information-generating hardware seemingly as the means of solving most of the urban problems with which we are presently confronted.

It is imperative that communications resources, goals, and potentials be included in the urban planning process, taking into account local, regional, and national needs. The development of communications technologies and communicative structures is intimately related to housing, transportation, social services, and the political economy. Communications systems must be considered a major component of the urban infrastructure, both as a public resource and as an integral part of urban movement systems involving people, goods, energy, and information. There is a clear need for substantive analysis and synthesis of urban change in terms of concomitant communications developments...

Cable communications has particular import for urban change in that it has the potential for radically altering the very concept of the urban community. Entirely new perceptions of community life may develop. In addition, it may well be a key to determining the ability of urban inhabitants to understand their individual and collective problems and deal with them effectively. However, it should be pointed out that predictions of the emergence of "the wired-city" are clearly shortsighted in that they fail to realize that with such extensive a communicative system, the very term, "city", will no longer be a useful term for symbolizing urban way of life. Indeed, as Melvin Webber (1968) has already pointed out, we are even now in a "post-city age"



Fourth of July Parade in Saugerties cablecast on Public Access Television.



Nicholas Johnson (1970) has commented that communications will be the primary technological determinant of urban life in the next several decades. "Communications will be to the last third of the twentieth century what the automobile has been to the middle third." Such a statement is as foreboding as it is promising. Forecasts of the development of communications media already range from eloquent prose about the tremendous potential of new media (Youngblood, 1970; Shamberg/Raindance 1971) to horrifying suggestions of a future society unprecedented in the degree of control and repression (Gross, 1970). Cable communication in particular has probably as many potentially negative consequences as it has positive ones. Cable technology is so imminently powerful that it deserves immediate assessment with respect both to its effect upon urban institutions and related technology and the effect of the institutions and technologies upon cable itself.

Two Possible Futures

It is obviously difficult, if not hazardous, to attempt to make forecasts about changes in the nature of urbanism brought on by such a rapidly changing area as cable communications. Peter Drucker (1968) has noted that in the future "the unsuspected and apparently insignificant (will) derail the massive and seemingly invincible trends of today." Nevertheless, it is important to engage in an anticipatory delineation of first, second, and third order consequences of various alternative developments. Of the many futures that are possible, I will elaborate on two.

The first alternative is essentially an extrapolation into the next few decades, the events, developments and value systems of the present. This assumes a continuation of current social trends. Thus we will witness a rapid growth of megalopoli possibly developing into

Doxiadis' world of ecumenopolis: a continual global city. We will, in addition, continue to see the flight of upper income groups, together with industry and the economic base, to exclusive suburban areas. Older urban centers will then become massive human sinks with palliatives being perennially applied through quasi-benevolent welfare-state policies. Complex bureaucratic institutions will continue to proliferate, becoming diffused and interwoven throughout all areas of society. Finally, with social disorganization increasing, environmental degradation reaching a new high, and clamor for security and control mounting from all sides, government and its corporate cohorts will look to research organizations and academia for solutions in systematic applications of a new and powerful union of the social, behavioral, and technological sciences.

The second alternative assumes that the forecasts of increasing exponential change are wrong; that we are instead entering into an historical era in which exponential curves begin to flatten into logistic or S-shapes—an era of evolutionary change into a fundamentally different level of societal existence. This future assumes an eventual emergence of a corresponding shift in values, with voluntary reductions in overall consumption levels, a redefinition of individual rights and responsibilities, an acceptance of cultural diversity, a recognition of ecological interdependence, and a critical attitude toward the possibilities and the problems of technology. There will be simultaneous undertakings to create a variety of new patterns of urban habitation, with access to life support systems and services being increasingly seen as a basic human right. Cable communications and its attendant services will be recognized as a medium for the creation of wholly new communities as a tool for exchanging socially useable and useful information.

The scenarios below attempt to expand upon these two alternatives in terms of an overall societal framework.



Scenario I

Six months after the end of the Viet-Nam War in mid-1973, it seemed fairly evident that the much hoped-for diverting of funds from military expenditures to domestic social problems was not going to materialize in any significant amount. Dissidents began to turn their energies to the inefficiencies and insensibilities of corporate practices and headlines were soon occupied with news of several coordinated, large scale explosions and communications disruptions in factories and corporate offices around the country. It did not take long for Neo-Luddites to coalesce around the goal of bringing the megamachine-society to a standstill.

Within urban areas the crime rate had reached an all time high in June of 1973 with the vast bulk of crime consisting of thefts of personal property and street mugging, much of it violent. There also was an exponential increase in the number of apparently senseless crimes: random shooting and knifing of people in all major American cities.

By 1974 blacks essentially had control of two major cities, and militants in at least one other large city and a half dozen smaller ones were in the process of trying to wrench control from bureaucrats and civil servants who lived outside their communities. Demands for immediate community control came not only from blacks and Spanish-speaking peoples, but from poor and middle-income ethnic white areas as well. Many reacted with violence at attempts by decision-makers to change the character of their areas. The chief concern of many politicians was the very real prospect of widespread social disorder occurring before and during the upcoming Bicentennial Celebration. Most people regardless of their race, income, or ethnicity felt such a crisis demanded immediate and drastic action.

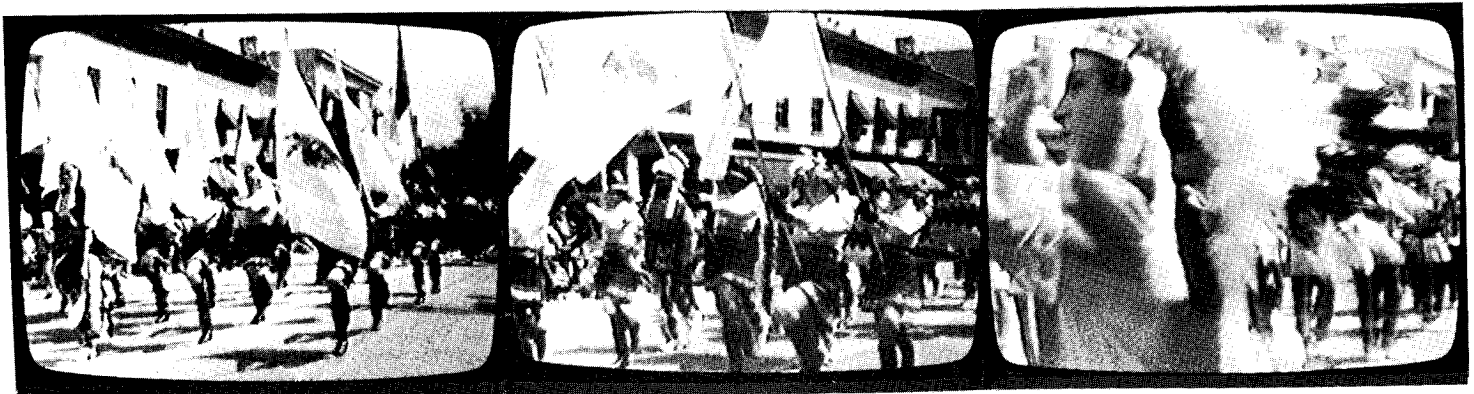
So it was that in 1976 a President was elected on a "Security and Stability" platform and together with a sympathetic Congress instituted a number of swiftly implemented measures. The National Internal Security Administration was created and under the Urban Communications Act of 1977 the Department of Communications was added to the Cabinet. DOC was empowered and given funding to immediately establish a National Communications System, or NATCOM for short. Each megalopolitan complex was to see to the construction, by public or private means, of intra-urban cable networks to feed into NATCOM. The scheme developed by national communications planners was multifold.

First NATCOM was devised so as to enable government, military, and police operations to function swiftly and effectively in a widely dispersed pattern. Information about potentially dangerous people or groups was data-banked and made instantaneously available. Computers were utilized to collate personal information and activities and to predict by simulation the probability of a particular disruptive action. Thus those potential dissidents who could not be coopted or otherwise cooled out could be closely monitored. A proposal made back in 1971 for mobile transmitters implanted in the brains of habitual criminals was being implemented experimentally.

The personal crimes in urban areas that were not eliminated by local heroin distribution programs, NATCOM sought to minimize by installing miniature video cameras at strategic points on streets. One of the major reasons for the popularity of two-way cable television was its burglar protection service. It thus came to be that privacy from electronic surveillance ceased to become a major concern; after all, it was felt, no decent citizen had anything to hide.

Second, NATCOM could help satisfy public demands for greater localized control through the establishment of intracommunity cable systems within urban areas. By the end of the 70's almost all urban places over 2500 were fully wired. Planners maintained that by encouraging intense involvement in local cable systems a sense of control over local affairs and participation in local matters could be produced. (Behaviorial research by several prestigious institutions had shown that only a sense of participation was necessary to satisfy most people.) With attention so intensely focused on local developments, higher levels of government could thus be freed to pursue their activities unharrassed.

Third, NATCOM facilitated the formation of eight regional superagencies to control urban population distribution, housing, transportation, environmental resources, land use, and internal security. The formerly sticky issue of metropolitan government was skirted by instituting not a new level of government but rather technical service agencies empowered to set policy without the chaotic process of public involvement that had bogged down the implementation of so many plans in previous decades. Possible objections to such an arrangement were largely forestalled by the strategy of including into the agencies potential dissidents.





Finally, cable communications was seen by NATCOM planners as a means of eliminating the propensity of mass media for unnecessarily inflaming emotions about particular events and for raising aspirations and expectations of people beyond what corporate enterprises and government could practically provide. This led in the early 1980's to the custom tailoring of packaged information and entertainment to fit the unique characteristics of particular cultural and social groups. Not that this was unwelcome; the previous decade had seen a widespread clamoring for programming more relevant to the experiences of specific racial, ethnic, and economic urban subcultures. NATCOM enlisted the aid of former advertising and public relations specialists, social and behavioral scientists, video artists, and communications experts to research the needs of various publics and to prepare carefully designed pieces of programming for distribution by cable and cassettes. NATCOM operated in close partnership with the three former broadcast networks which by the mid-80's had turned their investments entirely from broadcasting to broadband communications. These corporations discovered entirely new areas of profit-making by marketing cable hardware and producing programming for video cassettes (particularly with the tremendous demand for violent sports and pornography).

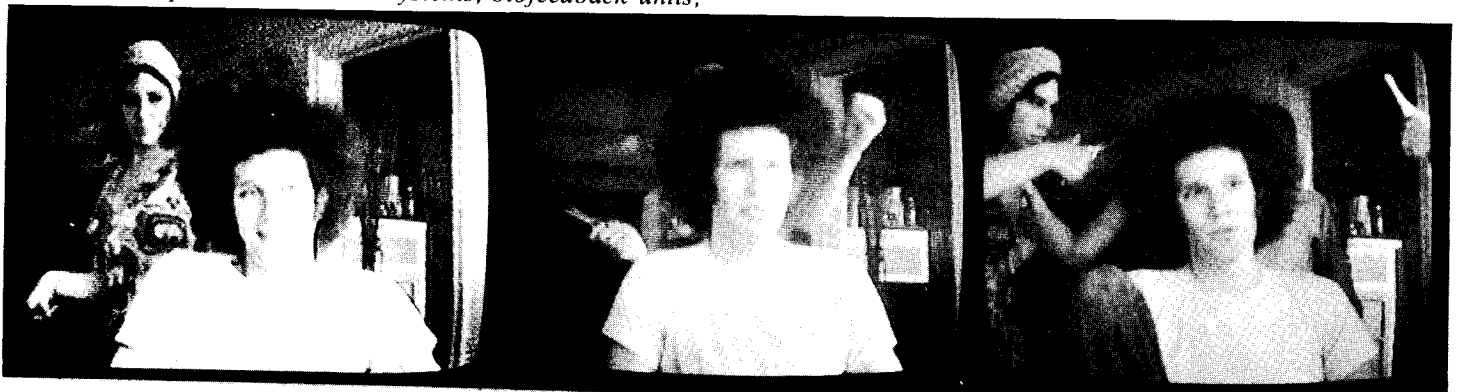
By the mid-1980's the results of the Emergency Housing Act of 1978 were being seen. The Act has provided for the simultaneous construction of forty-five new towns and twenty linear megastructures within megalopolitan areas entirely by rapid industrialized methods. Such a massive urban development effort was unprecedented in scale and scope.

At the same time, national obsession with the automobile was being gradually replaced with an equally if not more intense obsession with personal communication systems. Status began to be measured by the number and type of equipment one could wear or affix to home cable terminals: wall-sized plasma screens, quadrasonic sound systems, biofeedback units,

cameras and video recorders, colorizers, CAI terminals, facsimile attachments, and other paraphernalia. Waiting on the horizon, holography promised yet another addition to personal "telecoms". Not that the automotive corporations simply disappeared; they like former broadcast networks transformed themselves. Megalopolitan living in the 1980's demanded new forms of transportation—personal rapid transit, gravity-vacuum carriers, "people-movers", aerobuses—all of which required both sophisticated transport technology and highly developed and coordinated cybernetic communications systems.

Other corporate institutions were transformed under the impact of universal cable communications. It did not take long for marketing analysts to discover that vastly greater profits could be made by designing information about products and services for particular consumer groups. Even channels devoted entirely to consumer reports, at first resisted by corporate structures, eventually resulted in greater sales, because they further encouraged high consumption patterns. Electronic home shopping with instantaneous credit accounting proved to be a particular boon to commerce as impulse purchases soared.

The 1980's also saw the advent of educational cable networks. Experiments conducted by a number of independent academic centers, and research sponsored by the Department of Communications had proven conclusively that cable communications learning consoles utilizing stimulus-response and reinforcement patterns could significantly increase certain computational and reading skills. It was found particularly suitable for students who showed, through early testing methods, little capacity for more than basic skills. By putting the earlier theories of B.F. Skinner into practice, educational psychologists found that such learning units could also be structured so as to produce a certain degree of satisfaction with a particular role in society. Frustrations and anxieties due to unmet expectations could thus be minimized.





Two-way cable was soon recognized by social, behavioral, and demographic scientists to be a blessing. Not only was a continual census possible, but researchers were afforded a means by which to gather wholly new varieties of information about the activities, behavior, and characteristics of people. Never before had such accurate statistical data been available to social scientists and planners. Government and corporate decision-makers, seeing the enormous potential of such statistical data gathering, defined this as a major element in public participation in policy-making, a method by which government could continually determine the needs of its people. This was deemed much more effective than the mere voting on issues and candidates. Therefore, 1995 was set as target date by which time all homes would be required to have at least one basic, two-way cable terminal.

In America the beginning years of the last decade of the twentieth century saw an unprecedented era of social stability brought about by strictly-imposed government policies. Although conflicts and disturbances periodically arose they were largely localized, short-lived and had little effect on society as a whole. The 1900's also saw the gradual formation of a new type of social stratification based upon differing degrees of access to certain types and qualities of information. The Kerner Commission and political scientists who in the late 1960's had warned of a racially divided society had not foreseen the impact of localized community communications. This permitted urban communities to defend themselves against intrusion by people they considered undesirable, resulting in a vast array of exclusive subcultural urban enclaves. Many communities formed around economic levels, while others formed around ethnic, racial, or work-role distinctions. Local cable systems facilitated the emergence of rigid in-group/out-group attitudes within communities while helping to legitimize and reinforce their particular beliefs and values. Such community atomization permitted government to identify and isolate potential trouble spots and deal with them without upsetting the larger society. The degree of social stability within America was, however, in sharp contrast to the increasing intensity of social, political, and ecological chaos in many other parts of the world.

Scenario II

Urban America in the last quarter of the twentieth century was the locus of a series of widespread social and institutional changes. The mid-1970's saw the breaking down of restrictive zoning laws in suburban areas while the general movement to outlying urban areas continued. Increasingly entropic conditions in central cities due to an overload of population concentration and diseconomies of overly complex institutions gave rise to desire throughout all economic, social, ethnic, and racial groups for alternative environments and live styles. Even while the popularity of suburban living continued to grow, however, it too was beginning to be seriously questioned as a suitable choice.

Concern for the environment and the quality of goods and services, initiated at the end of the 1960's, had by the middle of the 1970's expanded to a greater concern for the total living environment, including housing, transportation, services, community, and social inequities. Demands for a more humanely organized society were echoed by feelings that megalopolis had passed the point of diminishing returns and that different choices were sorely needed.

Moreover, people began to realize in the last few years of the decade that full and responsible participation in decisions affecting their lives and their communities demanded access to means of generating, receiving, and exchanging ideas and information. Only in such a way could common areas of concern be discovered and cooperative efforts at problem-solving be attempted. Adequate and easily available methods of inter-community and intra-community communications were necessary for effectuating mutually beneficial change.

By the end of 1976, cable communications systems had been installed in enough areas that people in many communities began to see their potential for facilitating collective action. Awareness of the potential of community cable resulted not only by the increasing availability of the medium, but from educational campaigns conducted by universities, video groups, and citizens organizations which explained that the cable was not merely an extension of further refinement of television, but an entirely new means of communication.

← Andy gets a haircut--shown on Public Access television. →

With an acceptance of the value of subcultural diversity within the larger society, the abundance of cable channels and inter-networking of community systems permitted sharing of experiences, customs, and artistic expression among various urban groups. Local cable systems and portable video recorders helped foster community awareness and self-development. With the steady proliferation of switched two-way systems in the early 1980's, cable communication was gradually seen as an indispensable tool for local planning.

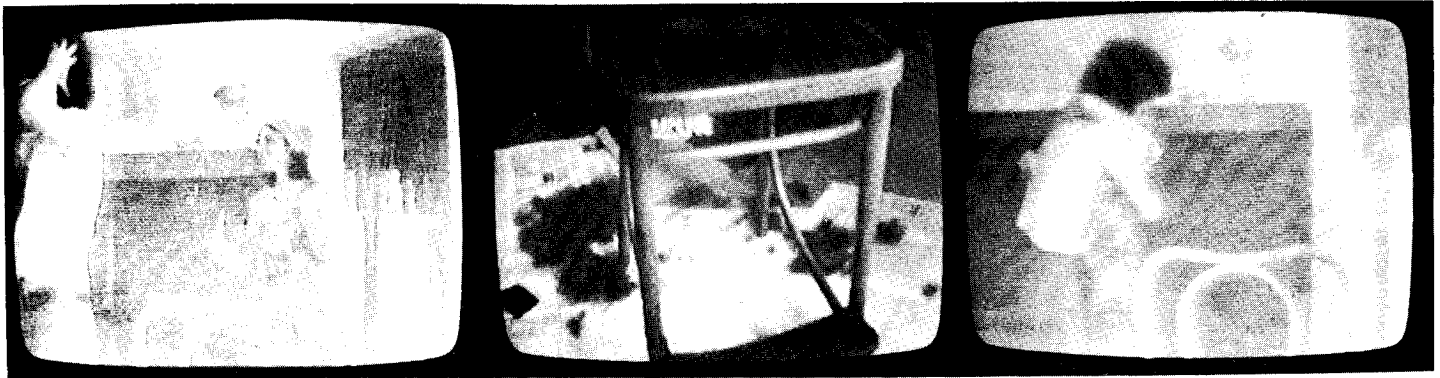
By 1977 the shift from employment in primary and secondary economic activities to employment in services was virtually complete. Fully seventy-five percent of the work force was engaged in such tertiary service activities. It was also becoming clear that the single term "services" was inadequate, for cybernation had begun to reduce employment even in many service categories. At the same time, there was a dramatic increase in the need for people engaged in human care and community development activities such as health services delivery, education, and child care. Simultaneously a desire for performing socially useful roles which permitted more choice and flexibility instead of a single lifelong occupation were pervading all sectors of the population. Moreover, the very concept of what activities constituted "work" came under intense criticism, with a wide range of people from housewives to students at all levels, arguing that they performed functions that made a valuable contribution to the resources and development of society. Finally, the awareness of the fact that American society had decades ago shifted from an economy centered around competition for scarce resources to one of an abundance, gave rise to a wide-spread belief that the provision of basic goods and services required for a life of dignity should be a right of citizenship. The collective force of such events and demands resulted in the institution in 1978 of a guaranteed annual income to all persons.

The cumulative effect of such structural changes in society as a more equitable distribution of goods and services, a reduction in levels of consumption, a more careful use of resources, a blurring of distinctions between leisure, work, and education, and concurrent changes in technologies of information, energy, transportation, and housing was to diminish the necessity for megalopolitan concentrations of people. Two-way cable communication services played a vital role in facilitating the formation during the 1980's of a great variety of urban environments. "New" towns, medium-sized urban areas, community clusters, communal settings, and former small towns and rural areas were receiving emigrants from the denser urban complexes. This expanded range of different environments encouraged more involvement with alternative social relationships such as extended families, family clusters, learning groups, group marriages, and religious groups that had previously enjoyed only limited experimentation. Interactive cable systems with ownership having been separated from programming in the mid-1970's permitted people to maintain linkages within and between differing types of communities; some geographically concentrated, some spatially diffuse, others transient and based solely upon temporary convergence of interest.

For the first time, people were able to enjoy both the benefits of smaller, intimate communities and the access to and participation in larger, more culturally diverse urban environments: national, trans-national, and global. By the mid-1980's the former model of the urban-rural dichotomy had all but disappeared from sociological theory: participation in urban ways of life no longer depended upon habitation within an area arbitrarily defined by population, density, or political boundaries but was instead determined by the access to communicative and informational nets.

The maturation of cable communications and its ancillary services aided in the emergence of a full-blown post-mass-consumption/production urban economy. Advanced cybernation with computer operations capable of rapid reprogramming was permitting a return to high quality crafted goods designed and produced to fit unique criteria. Housing, for instance, could be built to meet the specific needs of particular communities or even individual families. Urban planners and designers saw cable as a means of receiving information about the needs and preferences directly from potential user groups. Cable was also seen as a medium of presenting simulated alternative environments and housing configurations and eliciting reactions to them. Outcomes of various policy choices were projected and compared in terms of their possible long-run ecological consequences. Thus it served as a valuable tool for the creation of more responsive and responsible designs.

Interactive cable systems permitted the development of more individualized inter-personal, intra-community and trans-community communicative services as well. People involved in kinetic and visual arts used cable and related technologies or portable video and cassettes to introduce other people to the process of expressing images and ideas. Many people became involved in the production and distribution of entertainment for specialized audiences. Still others engaged in gathering, arranging, and presenting widely varying types of informational materials to meet the demands for more useful and useable knowledge. Multiple-access retrieval systems via cable gave rise to large groups of people engaged in reading, reviewing, cataloging, and abstracting literature and research documents for users who had been suffering from an overload of data and were in need of more manageable forms of information. Completely new forms of exchanging and presenting information were created, centering around methods for understanding interrelationships of societal changes. Still other people became involved in various types of community development, organization, advocacy, individual and group therapy, and the analysis of problems, goals, and potential areas of conflict and cooperation. Finally, others engaged themselves in the communication of customs, beliefs, events, and cultural contributions of the particular communities of which they were a part. Members of communities which were mobile used cable to form ties with those which were geographically stationary. With the realization that urban communities were socially interdependent, cable nets enabled the creation of shared pools of information and ideas and the joining together of disparate groups of people in collective attempts at bringing about desired changes.



During the 1980's an indirect by-product of a universally-accessible urban communications medium was the gradual replacement of the former two party political structure with a political environment containing a multiplicity of active interest groups each possessing differing value patterns and community myths. In some cases political associations coincided with physically identifiable communities, while others cut across separate communities. Interactive broadband communications networks permitted these groups to coalesce, separate, and recombine around particular issues as the need for effective action demanded cooperative group efforts.

One of the many proposals for government reform that had enjoyed public popularity during the Great Debates of 1976 was a voter response feedback system. As in earlier proposals, it had been suggested that the system could be implemented through two-way cable. At that time, however, cable linkages had been made with only a small proportion of the total number of households. An argument at that time against the system was that such a readily available access to a voting mechanism would effectively discriminate against those who did not have cable. By the late 1980's, however, cable penetration had approached ninety-five percent and the voter system became politically practical. By that time since the hardware was essentially in place, all that was necessary for full implementation was a computerized accounting apparatus. However, once the system had been in operation it soon became clear that a simple yes-no response to proposed policies and candidates was entirely inadequate. Such a system of "feedback" had been based on the notion of "feeding" reactions back up to representatives and administrators involved in public policy-making. What was needed, it was claimed, was an interactive, truly participatory structure that would give individuals and groups the opportunity to originate and present proposals. This subsequently brought about a movement during the early 1990's to replace the system of representation with more direct and cooperative decision-making mechanisms.

The development and proliferation of interactive cable communications as an urban information utility influenced the development of more fluid, diverse, and participative social environments during the late 1970's and 1980's. The 1990's began to see the impact of ubiquitous information access on the physical environment. Static, fixed, and technologically obsolescent building forms were increasingly replaced by flexible, user-controlled environments. One manifestation of this was the construction of basic life support infrastructures providing water, climate control, waste recycling, and communication services which would be designed to last for a relatively long period of time. Attached to these infrastructures or service grids could be virtually an infinite variety of housing types which would either be designed intentionally with short life spans or with the capability of being modified when the needs of the inhabitants changed. Many forms of shelter and community facilities even became entirely mobile, some entirely self-sufficient, others requiring links with service networks. Urban architecture like communications had become more process-oriented, individualized, adaptive and diverse.

The last decade of the twentieth century witnessed a general trend toward more dispersed, polynodal patterns of urban habitation and away from large concentrations of population. Several large urban complexes like New York and San Francisco were maintained because of their unique qualities, but were considerably diminished in population, as they became simply alternatives in a wide range of urban configurations. Locational decisions and choice of lifestyle became based more upon preferences for different environmental or cultural characteristics rather than upon economic determinants. The majority of people were engaged in such activities as interpersonal care and development and cooperative crafts and it was discovered that these activities could be performed well in smaller urban units.

THE WORLD'S LARGEST TV STUDIO

TOP VALUE TELEVISION —OVERVIEW

Top Value Television (T VTV) began in early 1972 as an Ant Farm/Raindance fantasy project to cover the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. It became a reality in April, '72 when the project received full press accreditation. The people who worked on the tape were chosen because of certain video skills, organizational skills and/or equipment which they could provide. For the Democratic Convention there were 28 of us; four from Raindance, four from Ant Farm, four from Antioch, Ohio, three Videofreex, and independent video people from New York, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

Funding came from small foundations, individual donors, and four cable systems (Teleprompter, Sterling Manhattan, Cypress Communications, and Continental CableVision) to whom the tape was pre-sold. Although the cable systems provided only 25% of the funding, the precedent of selling programming to cable stations was established. The agreement made with cable systems was that the program would be finished within 2 weeks after the end of the convention and the systems could view the tape and choose whether or not to air it. In essence, we felt we were doing some programming R&D for cable systems.

All of our footage was shot on 1/2" Sony portapak and then edited on Sony 1". We have the capability of distributing on 1/2", 1", 2" or cassette.

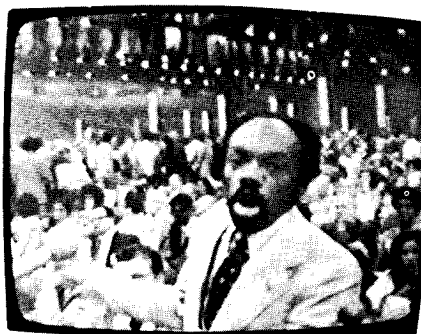
After the Democratic edit we were able to sell the tape to a UHF station in Chicago (Channel 44), and to approach more cable systems with a finished program in hand.

We found that tooling up for the second (Republican) convention went a lot more smoothly. First of all we had learned how to save money. The Democrat edit cost \$12,000; the second was budgeted at \$8,500. Again money came from similar sources. We had fewer people, less tape and a firmer outline of which stories to pursue.

The Republican edit was also done on 1" and was ready two weeks after the convention. The need now is to establish firmer distribution channels; to sell the tape to more cable systems, additional UHF stations and colleges. Monies generated from sales will go towards personal debts assumed and



Willy Brown—California delegation leader.



"We've just got to fan out among the delegation and work our asses off!"



VICTORY! Shirley and Willy.



Wallace Delegate, Alberta Johnston: "I think all the media's slanted."

deferred on equipment rental and salaries to those who worked on Top Value Television.

INSTRUCTIONS TO T VTV CREW:

THINGS TO TAPE: No way we can compete with the networks. Their resources are astounding.

Our tape will be about us trying to tape the Convention and have it make sense as tape; behind-the-scenes encounters between people; and a different aesthetic approach to the events that the networks will also be covering (e.g. inside the Hall itself). In addition, we'll cover official outside activities (e.g. the Democratic Telethon, parties) and ad hoc ones (e.g. demonstrations).

Specifically, we want tape of:

Delegates: Because we will not have unlimited access to the floor, we want to pick up on specific behind-the-lines Convention-related activity. If we can develop a rapport with delegates and hang out with them we can be there at the informal moments which the networks can't cover but which can give a better sense of the Convention than staged interviews.

Specifically, we should try to be with delegates at dinner, in caucus rooms, in their hotel rooms, at parties, etc. We already have pledges of access from different state delegates and one may even take a Porta-Pak on the floor. Rather than cover a lot of them, we should concentrate on a few as tape, others for intelligence. The continuing saga of a delegate may make a good continuity device in the final edit.

In terms of what types of delegates, they should be chosen as to color and articulation of viewpoint, and whether or not you'd want to hang out with them. Specifically we're thinking of people like a middle-aged Texas liberal friend of LBJ's, and Wallace people.

The Media: Miami Beach is the world's largest TV studio. The hall itself is a TV studio. We need to document the media presence. This can be done partly through visuals which show equipment, crews, and interviews; and partly through sound: either newsmen talking to each other, or interviews with newsmen. In fact, newsmen are the only people we would consider doing a formal interview with.

You should also make friends with newsmen as they'll give you tips about events and processes. Chances are they

FOUR MORE YEARS

won't feel threatened by us but will be amused and want to help.

Pseudo-Events: Anything which happens for the media will be overcovered by it. Yuppies, for example, will stage media events. Instead of taking them at face value we need to shoot behind-the-scenes and debunk them just as we would the straight media or straight culture. A lot of people are coming down here to get press attention. They will. By the time our edit appears people will be tired of hearing and seeing them. Moreover, demonstrations and press conferences tend to be didactic in that it's people telling you what to think. That makes slow, talky tape. Better to have spontaneous behavior which happens in process (as in hanging out with delegates).

Confrontations: People in Miami Beach are real edgy (see enclosed situation report). Some hippies may be into violence although their leaders have been cool. Some shots of trashing might be worth it. But chances are it won't turn into permanent confrontation like in Chicago in 1968. Our feeling is that confrontation tape is a cliché of Porta-Pak video and we're tired of it. One reason for TVTV is to give viewers an idea of the range of alternate video, because too often they mistake the possibilities of the equipment with the fact that it's always used in the service of the same content.

We're not into declarative, explicit typed action or statements done wholly for the media. At best, we want to cover the media covering those actions and cover the people planning for or reflecting on them. The actions themselves are of negligible importance to us.

Other possibilities: You should try and screen your tape as much as possible and get feedback on it. If something's working we'll want more, and if not etc. Unlike the pencil press we can't report on something if we weren't there. Unlike broadcast TV, we can't make it happen. Thus, everyone working on TVTV has an intelligence function to ensure that we have cameras in the right place at the right time.

Style: Whatever Porta-Paks do that TV doesn't is what we want to do. This means injecting ourselves into the material, intimate access to situations, the use of special lenses. The print analogue to what we're trying to do is collage, but not of hard-edged well



Nixon Supporter



Private Party



Promises alone can't win over Sammy Davis, Jr...



"The women here are very enjoyable..."

cropped images. Rather we're looking for found art like snapshots, postcards, and sketches, whatever their video counterparts might be.

HARDWARE

... We will have about 10 Porta-Paks with five and possibly seven in use at a time (we hope to use two cameras on some situations). This means that backups can be gotten if something goes bad, and that people taping at night won't need daytimers to return to get equipment.

If you've brought hardware we need an inventory form filled out and you must label your equipment. TVTV will return all borrowed equipment in operating condition, assuming it was brought to us that way.

SOFTWARE

If we lose track of tape we're fucked. In addition to screening your own tape and telling us what's on it (tape screening will happen in the living room), you've got to make sure it's labeled. We have to edit 70 hours in two weeks and if there's a lot of searching to be done we can't do it.

When a crew returns from shooting they must see that their tape is given to the person who is logging software at the time. Any raw (i.e. unused tape) must also be returned.

We will also maintain a log book which has a numbered page for each corresponding number tape. This book will be for in-depth notation of tape content. Any time someone decides to preview tape he or she should note the chronological sequence of action in the log book. You should also make odometer (i.e. counter) notations corresponding to hot spots with the counter set at zero when the tape starts.

Got that?

CONTENT RAP

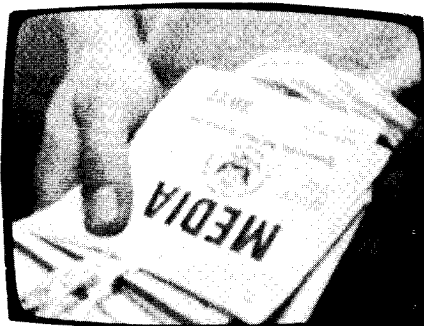
In the end, our tapes must represent the event—far less so than traditional media trips—but the content of the event must be there. Our role is unique. Our slant is unique. The emphasis is on the feel of the events and the reactions of real people involved in the Miami Beach process, including ourselves. Audio *does* matter. We are reporting, albeit in our own manner. We have to get people to talk—not FOR us, but hopefully while they're talking and really saying things to each other. Our focus on the subjective feel

of the place and time is not a license or a substitute for random video. The subjectivity and honest feel of real occurrences comes from shooting real things, things that include the media floating all around the city and the convention hall; the real interaction between delegates and the powers that be on a personal level in the hall and particularly around the hotels and such during the day. In toto, what we're about is producing quality tape that will stand on its own to communicate that there is another and a viable way to present the feel of an event and a social space that has been neglected, rejected and missing from media coverage to date. Our documents should and must document OUR activities in the process of going about taping them. The tape should be running when we sit down with an interviewee-type. How they relate to us and to the media is a crucial part of the total image we have to project. Our ability to move in and out of process within the tapes will determine the success of communicating our point of view.

The conventions ARE a television event. The networks do their thing. Ours encompasses them and their activities. We must relate to what we see them doing and try to amplify it—not in terms of the image, so much as in terms of capturing the process that they are into. We, like everyone else in Miami, realize that the networks are what the convention is about. Our tape has to reflect their presence and their ineptitudes, inabilities, and limitations.

DECISION STRUCTURE

Instead of jobs, i.e. one person charged with the same task no matter where he or she is, we plan to have roles.



Press Passes.



"I'm not interested in the convention."



Jerry Rubin in Flamingo Park.

Specifically, there will be one central co-ordinator stationed at the house at all times. This person will change. But whoever it is at the time will be at the center of the decision structure.

That structure is based on our communications resources. Specifically, there are two phones at the house and two at the hall. In addition, the house will have all scheduling information and the UPI convention wire.

Each morning we will determine assignments through intelligence and what people want to do. When you get to a spot it's up to you to determine if your energy is being well spent. If you think you need more help then call the house and we'll provide what's available. If you think it's time to leave then call and we'll let you know if there's somewhere else to go. If you need a ride or your equipment breaks down, then the house is also the place to call.

It's assumed that if you're not in regular touch you're doing something useful. But you should let us know whenever you make a major change of location. Ultimately, the success of the project depends on being in the right place at the right time and that means having someone to be there, not just knowing about it.

Finally, people shooting tape will have to do just that. We've attempted to set-up our structure to provide as much support for camera crews as possible in terms of logistics and back-up. Taping has priority over everything.

**For more information contact:
Michael Shamberg or Megan Williams
Top Value Television
P.O.B. 630
San Francisco, Calif. 94101**

TVTV tapes are available on EIAJ I format for \$125 each and in cassette format for \$135 each.



"I think I might rather watch this one at home. Honest."



"We can't cover the news in a half-hour every evening...that's ridiculous. People shouldn't rely on tv alone for all the news..."



"There's nothing to this that a woman couldn't have done a long time ago. It's a piece of cake..." NBC's Cassie Macken.

Public Access Birthday

On July 6, 7, 8 the first anniversary of Public Access Cable TV in Manhattan was celebrated. A coalition of educational, service and arts organizations and video groups worked in cooperation with both Sterling and Teleprompter Cable Companies with support from the New York State Council on the Arts. The event "Public Access Celebration" was designed to make *General Public* aware that Public Access existed, to expose its mechanisms and point out possibilities of its use.

There was an interconnect made between the two cable systems for the three day event and from 10am to midnight Public Access Channels "C" and "D" were programmed specifically for the Celebration. Channel "C" presented a retrospective of the years Public Access programming and Channel "D" was kept open to receive feedback tapes generated at viewing centers. Monitors were placed in 16 community centers (church, park, schools, libraries, hospitals as well as community organizations). Locations were chosen because they already had cable or were then cabled for free, specifically for

the Celebration. This allowed General Public to see Public Access. Since there are only 100,000 cable subscribers, most people visiting the viewing centers were new to P.A. and cable. At the majority of these centers there were people familiar with 1/2" video and there was equipment available for General Public to initiate programming which was then bussed or subwired up to Teleprompter's 179th St. studio and sent out over the interconnect on P.A. channel "D". People could then view their tapes coming over the cable.

Other elements of the event were: a live microwave broadcast on two of the days from Central Park which went out on the company channel 10, live studio programming from both Sterling and Teleprompter; live telephones; and a simulcast over radio station WRVR.

There will be a complete analysis of the event forthcoming in *Radical Software* by Survival Arts Media and Dumping Place. This is merely notice that something happened.

Survival Arts Media,
595 Bdwy., NYC, NY 10012



FOR ONE YEAR, PEOPLE HAVE BEEN MAKING THEIR OWN TELEVISION PROGRAMS USING CABLE TELEVISION'S PUBLIC ACCESS CHANNELS C & D

ON JULY 6-7-8 YOU CAN LEARN TO USE PUBLIC ACCESS. VISIT ONE OF THE VIEWING CENTERS, SEE PROGRAMS MADE BY PEOPLE OF NEW YORK, LEARN TO RESPOND BY MAKING PROGRAMS WITH PEOPLE IN THE VIEWING CENTERS AND SEE THEM PLAYED BACK. HELP TO MAKE TELEVISION AN ACTIVE EXPERIENCE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: 942-7200, EXT 273.

Viewing Centers:
TelePrompTer Studio One, 60 W. 125th St. - Museum of the City of New York 104 5th Ave. - Harlem Prep 2535 8th Ave. - St. Mathew's and St. Timothy's 26 W. 84th St. - Bethesda Fountain Central Park - Automation House 49 E. 68th St. - Bellevue Hospital 131 Ave. at 29th - Knickerbocker Hospital Union Square 14th St. & Park St. - Washington Heights Library 1000 St. Nicholas - Inwood Library 4750 Broadway - County Office Library 104 W. 136th - YMCA 180 W. 185th - Riviera Bar 7th Ave. at Sheridan Square - West Side "Y" 5 W. 63rd St. - Washington Square Village Bleeker and La Guardia and others to be announced.

PUBLIC ACCESS CELEBRATION

BY AND FOR THE PEOPLE PUBLIC ACCESS IS CABLE TELEVISION

JULY 6-7-8 JULY

With support from TelePrompTer Corporation, Sterling Manhattan Cable Television, The New York State Council on the Arts.

IF YOU OR A NEIGHBOR HAS CABLE TELEVISION, TURN TO CHANNELS C & D BETWEEN 10 A.M. AND 12 MIDNIGHT AND CALL YOUR QUESTIONS, IDEAS OR MESSAGES TO 781-9830, 31, 32. MEET THE PEOPLE WHO ARE USING PUBLIC ACCESS ON CHANNEL D FROM 6 TO 9 P.M., JULY 6-7-8.

COME TO CENTRAL PARK ON FRIDAY, JULY 7, AND SATURDAY, JULY 8, BETWEEN ONE AND 5 P.M. TO CELEBRATE WITH MUSIC, THEATRE, AND PARTICIPATE IN A LIVE TELECAST OVER CABLE CHANNEL 10.

GET TOGETHER AT EAST GREEN, NEAR THE EAST 72ND STREET ENTRANCE TO CENTRAL PARK, ON SATURDAY, JULY 8, AT 6 P.M.

Additional cable public access participants: Alternate Media Center - Automation House - Archive C.V.S. - Bellevue Hospital - Central Harlem Youth Council - Communifit - C.T.E. - Lu Electronics - Genus Project - Global Village - Filmmakers Coop - Harlem Prep - The Kitchens - Lincoln Square Community Council - N.Y.U. Video Tech - Museum of the City of New York - New York Public Library - Open Channel - People's Communication Network - People's Video Theatre - P.S. 20 Space Video Arts - Survival Arts Media - Rivington Video - Teachers College Horace Mann Hall Center for the Arts - Technosphere - Voodoo - Video Access - University Settlement House - West Side Women's Center and many others.

New York Woodstock Community Video

It's not the great youth camp acclaimed in some historical fantasies of the 60's—simply it's rural suburbia. As a Northeastern upper-middle American habitat Woodstock is similar to many communities in this nation. It is dissimilar in that it has been an art colony for some 75 years and has attracted to its foothill Catskill Mountain environment a variety of life-stylists with significant contributions to make and tourist bandwagoneers with significant consumptions to make. A closely located IBM plant helps populate the town of 5000 with red-blooded engineers and executives who rub noses with settled down rock stars, urban refugee writers and actors and town folk with roots dating back to the origins of this country.

Woodstock is a town where local programming is a task demanding responsiveness to Firehouse bazaars, ecological group actions, town government, women's civic and lib groups, musicians, straights, long-hairs, culture-vultures, snowmobilers, etc.

The above agreement with Kingston Cablevision marked a first in this town. On May 29, 1972 the first 2 hour program went out to some 1800 cabled homes. Every week about 2 hours of locally produced documentaries about the town can be seen on Wednesday nights from 7:30 to 9:30.

For us, the video programmer, once pursuing the allusions of our rhetoric about alternate media ideals, the task has now become tedious, sometimes monotonous but always and consistently satisfying. Day-to-day programming is not the sort of thing conceived by rhetoricians. Weekly taped programming is no celebrated task for media revolutionaries. The only models to look to for direction are the rhetorically defined enemy—the networks—who also are the models for the audience. The changes seem more in the revolutionary than in the establishment.

Electronic media to date doesn't provide for computer access, info-economics, electronic democracy, etc. Things no doubt in the future but today the media soldier with his semi-home consumer—not so pro 1/2" armory can only approximate a TV subculture acting like a mini-network programmer. No disillusionment intended.

The media person of 1/2" video can now discern between ideology and the *real*—the day-to-day process of taped programming to an audience within a provincial environment with a homespun consciousness. Settling into a community, accepting day-to-day realities of it and ourselves, bridging gaps of miscomprehension around and within us will serve eventual user rehabilitation and that "revolution" of electronic media technology. This will depend on the willingness, patience and perserverance of media activists.

May 18, 1972

Mr. Kenneth Marsh, Director
Woodstock Community Video
Woodstock, New York 12496

Dear Mr. Marsh:

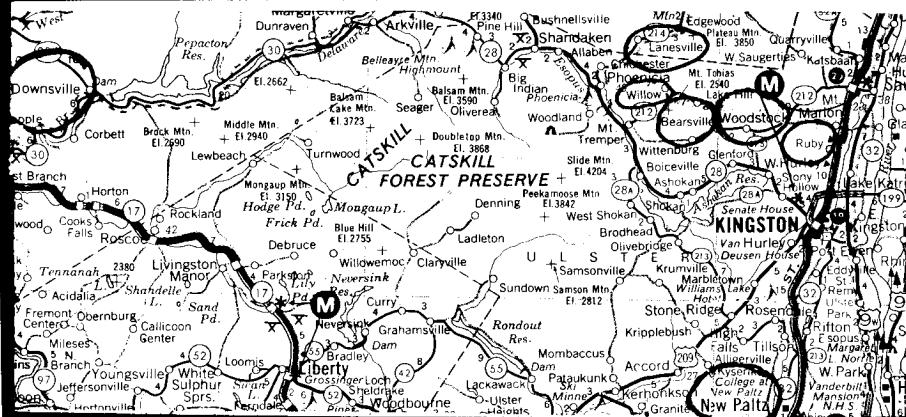
This will confirm the conversation with you Tuesday, May 2nd, regarding the non-commercial use on a non-exclusive basis of an unused channel on Kingston Cablevision's Woodstock CATV system for the presentation of programming produced by Woodstock Community Video. The following constitutes the ground rules mutually agreed upon:

1. Kingston Cablevision will make available its Woodstock system transmission facilities to Woodstock Community Video for the cablecasting of taped community-oriented, non-commercial, television programs on a mutually agreed upon day/evening each week for up to two hours duration on a channel which Kingston will designate as a "public access" channel.
2. Woodstock Community Video will be responsible for furnishing and maintaining the tape recorder(s) and related equipment required for the cablecasts.
3. Kingston Cablevision will furnish a qualified individual to supervise the cablecasting at the Woodstock system's headend and handle the interfacing functions.
4. Woodstock Community Video will submit to Kingston Cablevision the tapes of the programs to be cablecast each week at least 48 hours before air time in order that Kingston Cablevision may satisfy itself that the programs meet acceptable broadcast standards and legal requirements. Kingston Cablevision shall have the right to refuse to cablecast any programs which fail to meet these standards or requirements.
5. At the end of each program to be cablecast, Woodstock Community Video will provide the following disclaimer: This program was produced by Woodstock Community Video and does not necessarily reflect the views of Kingston Cablevision, Inc.
6. If any of the programs produced by Woodstock Community Video contain commercial announcements, Kingston Cablevision will charge Woodstock Community Video for the use of its Woodstock CATV facilities as it would any other party to whom it would make available time for commercial leased channel operations.

The foregoing conditions are subject to all local, state, and federal regulations and the parties agree to modify or change these conditions if at any time they are not consistent with such regulations.

Accepted Kenn Marsh
WOODSTOCK COMMUNITY VIDEO

Ken Marsh
KINGSTON CABLEVISION



new york state
video grange

WOODSTOCK COMMUNITY VIDEO CABLECASTS

May 29

Local Baseball; Rap on developing new viewing habits for watchers of community video; Town Board Meeting; Operation Trashlift; Memorial Day Parade; American Legion Picnic.

June 7

Editorial from editor of Woodstock Times; Whiz Bang Quick City—Architectural Event; Musician—Tim Moore; Dr. Glenn Benjamin—local vet; The Elephant Emporium; Mower's Grocery; Women's Concerns—Consciousness Raising Group Session.

June 14

Women's Concerns—Class on Auto Mechanics and Lecture on Breast Self-Examination for Cancer; Woodstock Garden Center; New Jewish Deli—Sabbath Feast; Editorial from editor of Woodstock Times; Firing of Jr. High School Teacher (Part I); Musician—Vince Martin with John Simon.

June 21

Firing of Jr. High School Teacher (Part II); Woodstock Police (Part I); Editorial from editor of Woodstock Times; Woodstock Meats.

SWITCH ON
WOODSTOCK
COMMUNITY VIDEO

Channel 6 on your cable

June 28

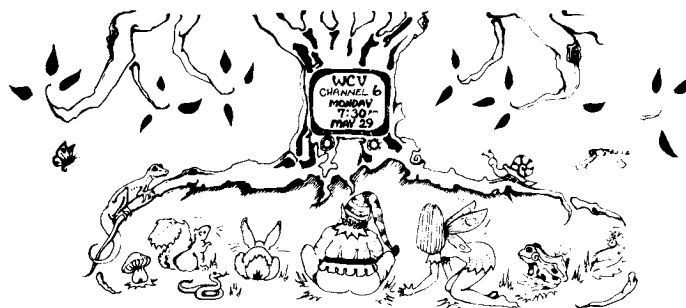
Town Board Meeting

July 5

Woodstock Police (Part II); Christ Lutheran Church Fair; Onteora Lions and Women's League of Voters Recycling Paper Drive; Musician—Dave Mason with John Simon; Overlook Mountain Amateur Radio Club Event; Panel Discussion on Abortion at local high school.

July 12

Wooden Village—Mari Gallery; Zena Recreation Park Opening; Women's Concerns—Discussion with editors of women's lib publication, *Wombat*; Senior Citizens Picnic and Shuffle Board Contest; Restoration process of Longyear Building; Artist—Albert Handell, painter; Earth Water Fire Air—Introduction into vegetarian cooking; Year One Catalogue—Survey of spiritual activities in U.S.; Musician—Jean Ives Lebat, Electronic Music.



July 19

Volunteers building home for aging artist-eccentric; Just Allen—collector of eastern artifacts; Musician—Eve Otto on harp; Video editorial with drawing; Lele Johnson—goat husbandry; Alfie—cobbler; Poetry—Lynn Schneider; Maverick Concert Hall.

July 26

Fresh Air Fund Children in Woodstock; Catskill Game Farm—Preservation of rare species; Artist—Lili Ente, sculptress; Woodstock New Shop.

Miscellaneous Woodstock Productions 1971-72:

Woodstock Elections 1971—Five local political parties contest for 4 major offices with comments by the citizenry and some surprising results. 25 min.

Grand Union Supermarket, Woodstock—An investigative report on the supermarket's planned relocation and expansion—consuming some prime property in town—causing an uproar by local ecologists. 40 min.

A Reading Method—With the N.Y.S. Dept. of Mental Hygiene WCV produced an introduction to a Reading Skills Program it has developed for teacher training. 22 min.

BRIEF REPORT FROM MINNESOTA—CATV ORGANIZATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

Public Interest Cable (PIC) is a public interest coalition of community groups and public institutions in St. Paul formed to promote the public's interest in the franchise proceedings for a cable TV system. PIC, 1617 Summit Ave., St. Paul, Minn. 55105.

Minneapolis Cable Coalition is similar in intention to PIC, e.g. pushing for establishment of a citizens' advisory committee through city council. Contact Douglas Hedin, Rm. 103, 625 2nd Ave. So., Mpls., Minn. 50402 or phone 333-6916.

Community Information Systems at Jonathan, a new town 25 miles SW of Mpls. is receiving several million dollars of HUD money to establish a full 2-way cable communications system with most of the services mentioned in "blue sky" articles. The object is to find out which are used, how they are used so as to determine which are financially viable. C.I.S., Jonathan Village, One Community Center, Chaska, Minn. 55318, or phone 448-4800.

A "public interest research and organizing project in cable communications" is underway through the *Living-Learning Center* at U. Of Minn. For details on this or to get a free copy of *An Annotated Bibliography on Cable TV* contact Jon Shafer, 2616 Bloomington Ave. So., Mpls., Minn. 55407 or phone 721-5616.

MINNESOTA

A Cable TV Guide for Educators, a 44 page guide for people in places now being franchised is available for \$1.50 from the Educational Research and Development Council, 221 Student Health Services Bldg., U. of Minn., St. Paul, Minn. 55101 or phone 373-4860.

Jon Shafer

COMMUNITY VIDEO IN NEW PALTZ

New Paltz, New York, is located about eighty miles northeast of New York City. New Paltz is 1) a college town 2) a farming town and 3) the victim of incredible urban sprawl. There are so many different types of people in New Paltz, that the problem of social integration among the populous is a staggering one. There is no doubt about it—New Paltz is a highly polarized community.

... "in" steps the Community Video Project. What are we all about? It is our intention to help to bring the community together via video. After checking out the disparate elements within the town, we concluded that the only thing that the community has in common is one nasty habit: they all watch the tube. So we have set out to present via the New Paltz cable system (independently owned) some "community programming." Perhaps a definition is in order. To our way of thinking, "community programming" is programming that originates at the grass roots level—in this case, in the town or village of New Paltz, and concentrates on an individual within a larger entity—the community. We show people at work, at play, just hanging out, at civic affairs (meetings, library fairs, etc.). We concentrate on the old, the young, the middle aged, the poor, the rich, and the middle class. In other words, we want to put everybody on the box doing what they normally do and showing their special gifts and interests. We have all lived here four years or more, so we know a good many people in a community of about 7500.

Each week, we put on an hour feedback, "Community MIX," along with our other programming, which right now is pretty sporadic, but developing nicely. "COMMUNITY MIX" is more or less a collage of things and people in the community, including the college (five thousand students). We put out our software on half-inch Sony AV-3400 and 3650s. So far, community response to our experiment has been really astounding. All those disparate elements which I glanced over earlier in this article have all been responsive. Most response has been extremely positive, and criticism (much of it justly deserved, some of it unfounded) has been generated to a lesser degree.

Our only hassle now is the problem of commercials. Our Project is against commercials on Channel 12 (New Paltz's cable station). It is not that we oppose commercials per se, it is only that the power structure in this community is such that the real estate-banking-insurance conglomerates, the group responsible for the urban sprawl and loss of character in New Paltz, is in power here. We don't want to see a community station go the way of all flesh in this place, and become absorbed into this insidious structure. Presently, we are showing people at their places of work, in their stores, restaurants, etc., and these programs have been pretty interesting. It's all free, and serves the community a lot more fruitfully—a community paying six dollars a month for a cable should not be subjected to advertising too. Anyway, we're trying to work it out and see what happens.

Incidentally, we have unlimited access to the channel, and no outside censorship, so it's a pretty good situation. The cable owner has been extremely cooperative (Russell Bogie) and we really have a free hand. So far.

Anybody in the videosphere who is interested in sending or swapping us some tape for showing on Channel 12, don't hesitate to contact me:

Steven Kolpan
c/o Community Video Project
Seven North Front Street
New Paltz, New York
12561
(914) 255-1278

THE FOLLOWING TAPES ARE AVAILABLE FROM THE NEW PALTZ COMMUNITY VIDEO PROJECT:

EXPERIMENTAL:

GRAY STRAWBERRIES NEVER KNOWS:
VIDEO DISTORTION WITH SOUND TRACK WHICH MAKES THE TAPE ONE RHYTHMIC EXPERIENCE. TEN MINUTES.

ACUPUNCTURE BALLET:
VIDEO FEEDBACK WITH ORIGINAL SOUND TRACK CREATED BY A SINE AND SQUARE WAVE AUDIO GENERATOR, WHICH OSCILLATES TO THE RHYTHM OF THE FEEDBACK IMAGE. TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES.

MEDIA SINK:
FOUR TRACK AUDIO TAPE MADE WITH SIX TAPE LOOPS AND DOUBLED SPEED FED INTO OSCILLOSCOPE WHICH IS MANIPULATED AT RANDOM. BECAUSE OF SPEED OF IMAGE, VIOLETS, GREENS AND REDS APPEAR WITHIN BLACK AND WHITE IMAGE. TWENTY MINUTES.

PRICES:
ONE DOLLAR PER MINUTE, YOU PROVIDE TAPE. OR WE'LL WORK A STRAIGHT EXCHANGE SYSTEM. YOU SEND ME A TAPE. I'LL SEND YOU A TAPE. IF YOU WANT ME TO PROVIDE TAPE, PRICE IS ONE DOLLAR AND FIFTY CENTS PER MINUTE.

CONTACT:
STEVEN KOLPAN
SEVEN NORTH FRONT STREET
NEW PALTZ, NEW YORK 12561
(914) 255-1278

DOWNSVILLE COMMUNITY TV



There's a funny, funky video thing happening in Downsville, New York in the Catskills. At a pre-scheduled time, on a given evening each week, a green VW van pulls up to a telephone pole on a country road and unhooks two cables which are hanging there waiting to be plugged into a Sony 3600 or a portapak. With the flip of a few switches, the local community cable cast begins. In their homes, all the local folks are sitting eagerly by their TV sets, waiting to see themselves, their friends and neighbors on Channel 3. Usually there are some live announcements, an invitation to come on down and be on TV, and a description of the tapes to be played. There are strong requests for feedback: any technical problems (interference on other channels, bad audio, etc.) as well as requests for ideas on programs people would like to make or see made. Our first official cablecast was interrupted temporarily after the first tape was shown in order for us to follow some fire engines down the road to report on a fire. We returned shortly to resume transmission, having arrived at the fire too late to catch it, but we did interview some people who had been there. Lots of people stopped by to tell us they were watching (some even invited us to a backyard barbecue), and of course the usual entourage of kids showed up on their bicycles to see themselves on television.

Response in town has been overwhelming. Contrary to conditions in a big city where you never even know if anyone is watching, people in a small town are really tuned in. In fact, one afternoon after we had made a successful but unannounced test on the system, we went into town to get groceries and some woman came running out of the beauty parlor (she must have jumped right out of her chair because she still had her plastic smock on) just to tell us how wonderful it was!



So much for enthusiasm. As far as programming is concerned, possibilities keep growing. We have shown only local tapes so far, mainly because people are most excited about seeing their own little town on TV . . . the local grocer making sausage, a former school teacher caning chairs, the cop talking about the non-existence of crime in a small town, a terra firma man talking about his Wallace politics and how his life has changed since he came to live in the country, some city kids turning people on to video at a fire house bazaar, interviews with townspeople about a local controversy on whether to close an old covered bridge to cars, American Indians dancing at a nearby crafts fair as well as people demonstrating their crafts, an auction, a square dance, the Memorial Day Parade (much requested since everyone in town was there), and numerous events from the school. The school by the way, is purchasing a portapack and a 3600 in September, so hopefully a lot of programming will be originating from the kids themselves.

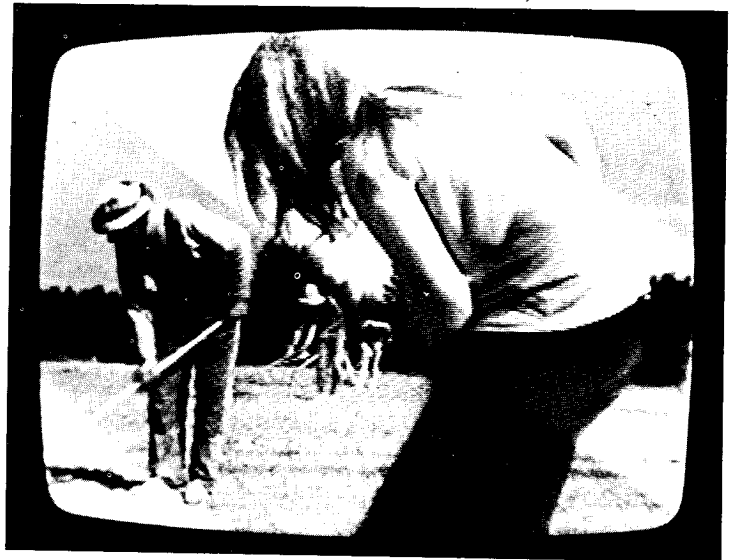
We are quite interested in generating a series on small farmers and the problems they encounter in trying to maintain a living in a society which consistently supports bigger and bigger farming operations. We hope to gather



survival information which may be of help to those people who want to earn a living in the country, be they farmers who don't want to be forced to sell out to city people because they can get more for their land than from farming, or whether they are young people who want to leave the city and get into the land, learn a craft, and simply live as self-sufficiently as possible. This also applies to local young people who may be tempted to move to a city to find work because they haven't gotten themselves out of the "get a job" mentality.

TECHNICAL DATA: We are using the Sony RF modulator out of the 3600 and the portapack, going through an old tube RF amplifier (worth about \$10, could be better but it works), and padded down to match the other signals. At the moment, we are going into a 30db down test tap in the first trunk amplifier. Hopefully, when we get the right kind of connector, we'll go directly into the line without a pad. We're ordering a Hamlin band pass filter (\$15 from Hamlin International Corp., 126-B S.W. 153rd St., Seattle, Wash. 98166) to minimize spurious side band signals.

A few sets in town do get bleeding of video into Channel 2 (noticeable as a herringbone pattern). The point we are plugged into is the first place the cable splits after coming down the mountain from the antenna. We also get AC there. People usually have to fine tune their sets (some old sets don't get the signal at all) but, in general, quality is quite acceptable. The cable system is in good shape and there are about 250 subscribers. It is a community-owned system which tends to minimize bureaucracy!



ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION NETWORK

We have an hour edit from the Environmental events in Stockholm last June which should be seen by anyone concerned about the quality of life on the planet. There is emerging an unquestionable realization that our basic value systems must be changed before we can maintain a standard of living which meets our spiritual as well as our material needs. Also of note is a half hour edit on some people in Sweden who are into what they call "friendly farming." This goes beyond simple organic techniques. They don't believe in plowing (it disrupts the ecological balance of the soil and thus requires even more energy to be put back into the earth in order to regain the balance) and of course, they use no chemicals or even animal waste to fertilize. They work with nature, not against it, and the old man who is their inspiration has much to teach us all about living on the earth and making things grow.

We are interested in gathering and disseminating information which raises people's consciousness about the environment. Unfortunately, since ecology has become such a political issue, many people relate to it only superficially rather than trying to develop life styles that are ecologically sound. It seems that video could generate information to change some of these patterns.

Dean & Dudley
P.O. 190, Downsville, N.Y. 13755

photos: Dudley Evenson

by GARY GAPPERT

(of the Departments of Economics and Urban Affairs, University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee & member of the Wisconsin Futures Society)

(Testimony for the Governor's Commission—Milwaukee, Friday, February 18, 1972)

In the last several weeks I have attempted to review some of the material which relates to the economic aspects of cable television and the wired city. In this brief review I have concluded that the array of potential costs and benefits is complex, extensive and not easily predictable. I have thus concluded that a cautionary and experimental approach to aspects of cable development is the best way to safeguard the interest of the members of the general public.

Let me note some general propositions which lie behind my general conclusion.

Proposition No. One is the fact that the development of any concentration urban infrastructure leads to the formation of great wealth. The development of ports and railways in the 19th century are one example and the development of the interstate highway system in the 20th century is a more contemporary example. The development of a concentrated urban infrastructure always leads to increases in land values and, most typically, this great wealth has accrued to the private speculator or developer.

Proposition No. Two is that in the next decade or so great value will be created by the public development of both cable TV and New Towns. These are the two areas in which the emerging "social-industrial complex" representing business, government, technological interests and the knowledge producers such as universities and media interests will parlay government seed money into great wealth and potentially great fortunes. This is a favorite theme of Simon Ramo, the chairman of the executive committee of TRW, Inc., the California aerospace firm.

As one investment-oriented writer has written:

At no other time has there generally been an industry with virtually a guaranteed astronomical growth, high profits and little risk.

The figure often quoted is that by 1980 revenues from the operation of cable systems will rise to over \$3 billion from less than \$300 million today.

Proposition No. Three is that it is difficult to determine how much of this sales revenue will be more than an appropriate return to capital investment. There are high start-up costs involved in cable TV. This is no Mom and Pop shop operation. If however we assume that the public will respond to the diversified services offered by Cable TV, the riskness of the capital investment declines or disappears, thereby justifying a lower rate of return. It is also true that once a threshold of subscriber saturation is reached in a given area, all additional subscribers represent "pure" profit.

Proposition No. Four is that incomes to cable operators from several sources are available. Not only is it likely that the average TV watcher will be willing to pay for improved reception especially for color programs, he is also likely to respond to specialized programming. The analogy is often made between diversified programming potentially available over multi-channel cable and the response in the last decade to specialized magazines (such as *American Sportsman*, *Ski*, *Playboy*, etc.) and specialized radio broadcasting. Paying the equivalent of a monthly telephone bill for access to this diversified potential will probably bring 50 to 80 percent area saturation.

The other potentially large source of revenues comes from the improved access to TV advertising of many small businesses. Although the large networks may, in the advent of cable, find it difficult to continue to charge \$80,000 a minute to national advertisers, many small and local companies will be able to purchase advertising on cable for as little as \$5.00 a minute (the amount paid by Montgomery Wards on a 7000 subscriber network in Illinois). One can suggest that a Mexican restaurant could beam advertising to Spanish speaking subscribers while travel agencies plug a charter flight to Poland to subscribers on Milwaukee's south side.

Other sources of revenue can also be suggested but the point is that there seems to be little doubt that cable will be used, subscribed to, and paid for, from several different sources.¹

Proposition No. Five however is that it is difficult to specify precisely the demand and supply schedules represented by a Cable TV system. Therefore it is difficult to ascertain exactly who will benefit and who may suffer losses from the development of a cable TV system over the next two decades. Each of the following represent possible recipients of benefits or costs.

1. Owners of the cable system.
2. Technical operators and servicers of the cable system.
3. Manufacturers of cable hardware and software equipment.
4. New and existing program producers including members of the education establishment.
5. Existing and new advertisers.
6. Existing broadcasters at both the network and local station level.
7. Producers of local public services including police, education, etc.
8. The consumer or subscriber to cable.

Each of these identify a possible set of beneficiaries or incurrers of cost. Premature investors are a particular problem. Because of the early costs which they have incurred, they might resist converting their system into a higher service system. Also because it is likely that an expanded cable system will suffer bottlenecks in the supply of personnel, capital and management, high incomes are likely to be captured by those with early expertise in this area.

1. Other services commonly cited include: meter readings, alarm services, education (Think of the implications for "open enrollment"!) merchandising, printouts, business communications.

Some Potential Benefits and Costs of Cable TV

Proposition No. Six raises the advisability of government ownership of a cable TV system or network.

A report prepared for the Dayton, Ohio area describes this issue in these words:

Still another broad issue is the role of government in ownership of the system. To use two-way, high capacity systems effectively will require extensive experimentation with hardware (such as the home terminal) and with software (such as instructional programming to supplement formal education as well as to innovate in applications in such areas as health and welfare services). Thus the capital costs will exceed \$21 million if the system is fully utilized. The difficulty of private entrepreneurship in raising capital on a long-term basis, 10 to 15 years, and high cost of capital for construction, suggest the potential desirability of joint ventures between the local governments and cable TV system operators. In these joint ventures, the local governments could provide funds through bond issues and the operators could provide technical and managerial expertise. This should result in a reduced cost of service to subscribers while providing equity ownership for the city comparable to that provided to other investors. This is one of many arrangements that deserves careful examination.

Other forms of ownership might be based upon the public utility model, or be vested in local or regional development authorities.

The issue of public ownership and/or regulation comes down to the question as to the best way to capture a portion of the "monopoly profits" represented by the development of a cable franchise. But as indicated in Proposition No. Five, there are other profits which will be accruing to other beneficiaries, especially producer and manufacturing interests. Public state policy should also seek to develop a public policy to help Wisconsin receive a portion of these benefits as well. This is the intent of Proposition No. Nine below.

Proposition No. Seven is that an attempt should be made to monitor the cash flow resulting from the expansion of cable within the community to some extent. It is difficult to establish however at this point in time which elements of the cash flow will really represent a "surplus." If, over time and with experimentation, it is possible to identify and capture some of the surplus from a cable system, it then becomes a question as to whether this surplus should be (1) used to expand service; (2) returned to the consumer in terms of lower service costs, or (3) used for other forms of public investment and improvement.

Proposition No. Eight returns to the conclusion that many of the economic benefits of an extended cable system are difficult to ascertain at this time. It is as if we, in the year 1902, attempted to predict the full array of costs and benefits associated with the development of the automobile and all attendant circumstances including freeways, parking lots, urban sprawl, adolescent behavior, etc. In 1972, with the full development of the automobile culture, we are only now drawing some appropriate conclusions. What then can we say about a cable TV culture in the year 2002 or 2042. The economic impact on business services, the very nature of the city itself, the effect on property values all are issues ultimately related to the expansion of cable TV. In fact the newer developments of "futures forecasting" would allow us to make some rough first estimates but these studies have yet to be done.

In my final Proposition No. Nine let me urge that a spirit of experimentation be the criteria for your explicit recommendations. Don't kill the Golden Goose before we see if in fact her eggs are golden. More explicitly do not sell away our future rights in this new public domain. Encourage a variety of ownership forms. Indeed establish at least a public ownership system. Perhaps the communities around the campuses of the universities would be a good place to institute a public ownership cable system for which experimentation could be developed.


Along with this should be an explicit policy to encourage manufacturers of both hardware and software items to locate their laboratory and manufacturing facilities in Wisconsin in return for some access to the experimental system. We might as well get some employment fallout from the expansion of cable while we are at it. Perhaps the engineering community on our universities and in Milwaukee should be given a five year grant to begin to develop cable laboratory facilities.

Likewise the University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee could be encouraged explicitly to develop a research and education competence in urban telecommunications as part of their "urban mission." Not only could UWM possibly develop a masters level degree program, but, in connection with Extension, a college without walls could be developed to which other communities could send their personnel for short courses in the development of all aspects of cable TV.

In sum what I am suggesting is that the development of urban telecommunications become an explicit part of the Wisconsin Idea—that unique association between government, the working community, business and engineering, and the university. As I suggested at the beginning great public wealth will be created from the advent of cable. *It will be in the best traditions of Wisconsin if we show the way in which this great wealth can enhance the quality of life in our society.*

PRELIMINARY PROSPECTUS DATED JULY 7, 1972

PROSPECTUS



1,000,000 Shares
Cable Funding Corp.
Common Stock
(Par Value \$.02 Per Share)

THE SHARES OFFERED HEREBY INVOLVE A HIGH DEGREE OF RISK.

There is no present market for the Common Stock of the Company. Accordingly, the public offering price has been determined by negotiation between the Company and the Underwriters.

THESE SECURITIES HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED OR DISAPPROVED BY THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION NOR HAS THE COMMISSION PASSED UPON THE ACCURACY OR ADEQUACY OF THIS PROSPECTUS. ANY REPRESENTATION TO THE CONTRARY IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE.

	Price to Public	Underwriting Discount (1)	Proceeds to Company(2)
Per Share	\$15.00	\$	\$
Total	\$15,000,000	\$	\$

(1) See "Underwriting" for information as to indemnification of the Underwriters and (c) below for information as to additional underwriting compensation.

(2) Before deducting expenses estimated at \$ payable by the Company, including an allowance of \$50,000 payable to the Underwriters for expenses incurred in connection with the offering.

This offering involves:

(a) Special risks concerning the Company. See "Risk Factors", page 3.

(b) Immediate substantial dilution of the book value of the Common Stock from the public offering price. See "Risk Factors", page 3.

(c) Additional underwriting compensation through the issue to White, Weld & Co. Incorporated of warrants to purchase 48,000 shares of Common Stock of the Company at an exercise price of \$18, subject to adjustment in certain events, exercisable during the period commencing one year from the date hereof and terminating five years from the date hereof. See "Underwriting", page 21.

The shares of Common Stock are offered by the several Underwriters named herein, subject to prior sale, when, as and if delivered to and accepted by such Underwriters, and subject to approval of certain legal matters by counsel and to certain other conditions.

White, Weld & Co.
Incorporated

The date of this Prospectus is 1972.

A registration statement relating to these securities has been filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission but has not yet become effective. Information contained herein is subject to completion or amendment. These securities may not be sold prior to the time the registration statement becomes effective. This prospectus shall not constitute an offer to sell or the solicitation of an offer to buy nor shall there be any sale of these securities in any State in which such solicitation or sale would be unlawful prior to registration or qualification under the securities laws of any such State.