

The new EBU Secretary General was appointed by the extraordinary Administrative Council meeting on 16 March. Mr Jean Stock will take office by the end of 2001 at the latest. We bring you a portrait on pages 2 and 3.

Our dossier: the protection of minors!

Everyone agrees that children should be protected from anything in the media that might harm them, whether on television, video, electronic games or the Internet. However, not everyone agrees on everything – What is a minor? What means should be used to protect children? From what? Throughout Europe, the answers are different, though there is a consensus of opinion on the general idea: pornography, bad language, violence.

Sweden, which currently has presidency of the European Union, organized a colloquium for the heads of the main media sectors in an attempt to get things moving. This is an opportunity for Diffusion to look into what will be possible for the various media sectors – either at European level or in each country – in terms of legislative or technical protection.

Another important chapter in this edition: “radio” articles on the occasion of the 2001 Rencontre de Torremolinos.

Happy reading!

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Jean Stock

Jean Stock, president of TV5, nominated as EBU Secretary General.

The EBU's Administrative Council nominated Mr Jean Stock, president of TV5 and Canal France International, as the next secretary general at an extraordinary meeting held in Geneva on 16 March 2001. He will succeed Jean-Bernard Münch by the end of this year at the latest.

EBU President Arne Wessberg, director general of YLE (Finland), told the Council he was convinced Mr Stock would be a worthy successor to Mr Münch, who has headed the EBU since 1990. *"He is a very experienced broadcasting professional with a truly international profile and highly developed personal and professional skills,"* he said. Mr Wessberg paid tribute to the *"outstanding results"* achieved by Mr Münch over the past 11 years: *"Mr Münch was a pioneer in integrating central and eastern European broadcasters, the continued acquisition of major sports contracts, a sharp rise in productivity and significant reductions in costs."*

In May, the Council will designate new directors for three of the EBU's five departments – radio, television, and operations.

Career

At 52, Frenchman Jean Stock has enjoyed an international career encompassing France, the USA, Belgium and Luxembourg, among others. He was appointed President and CEO of TV5 Europe and Canal France International (CFI) in July 1998, President of Portinvest in April 1999 and Chairman of TV5 USA's Board of Directors in September 1998. He was appointed Senior Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of TV5 Quebec.

Previously, he was audiovisual director for the Havas Group, member of the Havas management board (1997–1998), deputy general director and programming & news director of M6 (1987–1989). He was news director at RTL-Radio for

Eastern France (1969–1971). His other functions have included: president of CLT-USA in Los Angeles (1995–1996), managing director of RTL-TVi (1989–1994), executive director for all of CLT's television activities (1989–1995), programming and news director for RTL-Télévision (1984–1986), and assistant programming director for RTL-Télévision (1981–1984).

While serving as producer and director of RTL-Télévision's midday edition (1977–1981), Mr Stock introduced the first televised computer game show in Europe. From 1971 to 1977, he was an anchor on RTL-Télévision's newscast and from 1967 to 1970, a reporter for the station.

Jean Stock has also served as a director of Sofirad since April 1999, and director of RFI since December 1998. Previously, he was a director of Planète, Ciné-Cinéma, Canal Jimmy, Monégasque des Ondes (TMC), Canal J, MCM Euromusique, Muzzik, Eurosport France, C., Multithématiques, Havas Overseas (1997–1998), founding director of Multivision (1993–1994), and a member of the Executive Board of M6 (1987–1994).

In production, Mr Stock was a director at MK2, Télé-Images from

Stock

the new Secretary General

1997 to 1998 and at VCF from 1989 to 1994. In the advertising industry, Mr Stock was a director of Havas Advertising (1997–1998), member of

the management board of IP/RTV, the CLT group's advertising watchdog, from 1993 to 1994 and a director of M6 Publicité (1989–1995).

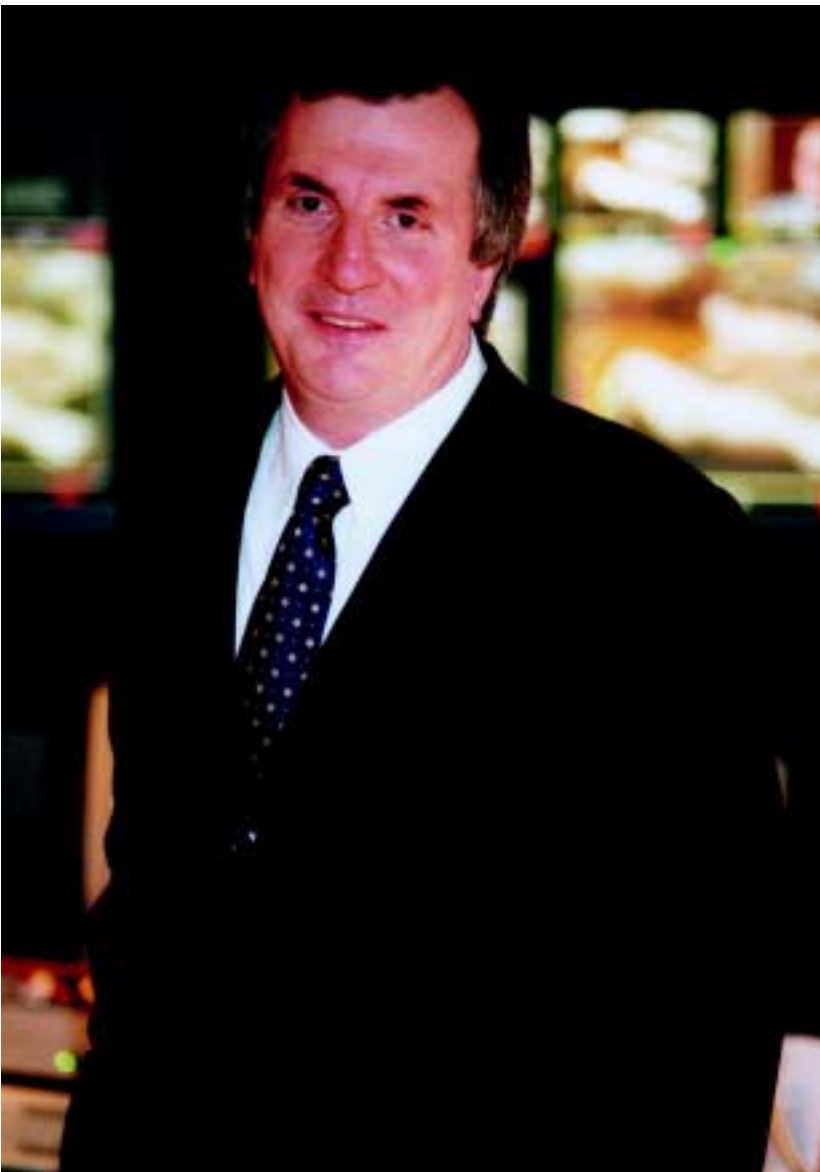
He was appointed senior vice-chairman of the Board of Directors of TV5 Quebec in 1998. Jean Stock was a director of RTL Plus (1989–1994), a member of the programming committee of RTL Télévision (1989–1994), president of TVi Radio (Bel RTL) (1991–1994), president of TVi Édition (1992–1994), founding director of RTL4 (1990–1993) and subsequently, a member of its management board (1990–1994).

Mr Stock has also been a director of the International Council of NATAS, New York, since 1991. He was a member of the council of heads of delegations for the French-language television community from 1984 to 1994.

The future secretary general has been a consultant for the French department of international trade since 1996. He was appointed an officer of the Order of Merit of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg in 1991 and a knight of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic in 1989.

Born in 1947 in Sarrebourg (Moselle), France, Jean Stock was educated at the Centre International d'Enseignement Supérieur du Journalisme in Strasbourg. He is married and father of two children.

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Children and the new

Cecilia von Feilitzen

Scientific Coordinator, UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen, Nordicom, Göteborg University

Children are not a small minority group 'on the side'.

Persons under the age of 18 constitute approximately 36% (2.1 billion) of the total world population. Of the 729 million people living in Europe in 2000, an estimated 160 million are children. (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989)

The former vice-chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, Thomas Hammarberg, summarized the main principles of the Convention, and those related to the mass media: decisions should be taken with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration, the opinions of children themselves should be heard, their survival and also their development should be ensured, there should be no discrimination between children; each child should be able to enjoy his/her rights.

Article 13 states: "The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice." Article 17 declares, among other things, that Member States "recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of

media landscape

national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral wellbeing and physical and mental health. To this end, [Members States] shall also encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her wellbeing.”

Does the new media landscape meet these rights? Do children grow up as competent media users, as a skilful and interactive IT generation acquainted with and tolerant towards other peoples, and who in the future will change the world for the better? Or do children devote too much time in front of screens with the inherent risks that the media contribute to unjust age, gender, ethnicity and class relations in society, to fear, aggression, racism, consumerism, eating disorders, physical passivity or sexual abuse? Does the changing media environment imply more freedom to the young or, instead, greater inequalities and divides due to different media access and differences in children’s socio-cultural and regional backgrounds?

New media landscape

What, then, do we mean by the new media landscape?

In 1996, 7 out of 10 households in the world were estimated to own a TV set – far more than had a telephone. This was a 100% increase of channel expansion, hours of television watched and television sets possessed by households since the end of the 1980s (Lamb 1997). A few per cent of the population already receives digital TV and we can expect greater access to a whole range of digitalized TV channels in the near future. The video and computer game industry has become the fastest growing and most profitable children’s entertainment business, earning in 1998 an estimated US\$18

billion worldwide for the corporations that manufacture, design and sell console game systems, domestic computers, Internet play sites, and gaming arcades. The Internet is an even younger medium. In November 2000, the number of Internet users worldwide was estimated at nearly 7% of the world population (almost twice as much as one or two years ago) who had accessed the Internet at least once during the three months prior to the survey. In some European countries (especially the Nordic countries), and in Australia and North America, the corresponding figures are about half the population.

The convergence of media, is radically changing the landscape. Games, newspapers, magazines, books, radio, music, film, and television are already available on the Internet, and the net will soon be even easier to access because of broader cables, mobile phones and personal digital assistants. In the same vein, digital TV receivers will make other media use (than just TV watching) possible, offering a whole range of information services. Not only technology lies behind this new media order. There is also a comprehensive restructuring of media markets around the world, driven by economic forces and increased competition. The media and communication market is now dominated by a minority of extensive

conglomerates or whole commercial worlds that deliver media content to increasingly larger audiences over the world. The increased commercialization of media and the globalization of media content have also reduced the possibility for individual countries to supervise media output and of implementing national media policies.

The new media landscape is not only characterized by new media – and technology, economic privatization, concentration of media ownership and globalized media content – but also of an expanding volume of entertaining and informational media content conveyed via the new media technologies. No-one – and no research – has been able to survey, take in and describe in detail the whole situation. There are mostly beliefs, hopes and fears.

Hopes and fears

Satellite television has aroused expectations of greater freedom of choice and equal access to information for all, but also fear of standardization, more violent entertainment, advertising, pornography and discriminating portrayals of gender, social groups, cultures and nations.

Hopes and fears are not altogether the same for all media, but depend on the output and character of the medium.



Stokholm, 12–13 February 2001



Video and computer games are not only an extension of moving images on film and television, but also of play. Electronic games form an interactive medium in the sense that the player can, at certain levels, influence the course and outcome of the game. Optimists, therefore, believe that video and computer games mean an educational revolution and a different socialization. The games are regarded as a fabulous gateway to the future, training children and youth to cope with virtual reality in cyberspace – training that increases young people’s perceptual motor skills and social competence, as well as providing them with a greater sense of agency and control of the changing digital environment. Pessimists, however, remark that the content of video and computer games are overwhelmingly violent, sexist and racist, leading to possible aggression, desensitization, fear, and decreased empathy.

Advertising

Advertising has increased enormously due to the mere existence of new commercial satellite channels, electronic games and the Internet, either because the media contain traditional advertisements or products placed within the narrative, and/or because the media content themselves are parts of an entire selling concept. One reason for the launch and spread of global commercial children’s satellite channels is the insight that children in prosperous countries and those from affluent families control considerable amounts of money, both their own pocket money and, by virtue of their influence, their parents’.

One important point here is that this type of advertising is becoming increasingly interwoven with animation and violent portrayals. “Animation is an attractive investment because of its longevity, its ability to travel, and the potential to create ancillary revenue streams from home

video, publishing, toys and other licensing activities.” (*The Challenge for Investors* (2001), http://screendigest.com/rep_animation.htm January 2001)

Violence

Due to our motives, intentions and different living conditions, we get different kinds of impressions from media violence, we need and like it differently and we react differently to it. If we widen the perspective and consider other types of influences than aggressive behaviour – which is most often thought of in this context – we see more clearly that media violence plays a role. On different levels and in different – often not especially desirable – ways we are all influenced by media violence. For example, many children and adults have non-constructive frightening experiences and/or erroneous conceptions of violence in the real world. In addition, we become habituated to media violence *per se*. Taken together, the results of empirical studies become pieces in a jigsaw puzzle which complement each other.

The kind of media violence most often referred to in public debate and research is the manifest, physical, visible violence, and the threat of it: murder, blood, shooting, fighting, slaughter, etc. However, apart from these physical elements of violence in the increasing media flow, there are other types of violence that have been given less attention. I am thinking of the more latent mental violence and the structural violence, for which perpetrators and victims cannot always be identified, whose causes and consequences are more difficult to analyze as they are often deeply rooted in culture and society at large.

Participation

Children’s rights, their right to access information, especially good quality information, and their right to

protection from harmful media content have been guiding principles. However, the protection of children is not only a question of regulation and self-regulation of the media, of diversified and high quality media content, of media education of children, or of increasing awareness among parents, teachers, media professionals and politicians of the relationship between children and the media. Children's right to freedom of expression and children's right to participate in the media are also principles that could work in the direction of protection.

There are a wide range of practical examples¹ of 'media by children', presented by teachers, media professionals, researchers and organizations all over the world. The examples have different backgrounds and aims: Japanese children sending video letters in English to classrooms in other countries; children in Ghana making radio programmes; Indian working children regularly producing a wallpaper on the rights of working children; Australian children making their own music and recording it on CDs, as well as writing short stories for a book collection; children and young people producing on the Internet; and much much more.

- The examples clearly show that children have become empowered through their creative media participation. It has strengthened their pride, sense of power, and self-esteem since they have felt that their voices are worth listening to, that they belong to their community, that they have achieved an understanding of others and of their own culture.

- Certain examples show – as do children's explicitly expressed viewpoints about what they want to see, hear and read about in the media – that children often wish to meet their own everyday dreams and their own local, social and ethnic culture and reality in the media.

- Moreover, the examples support the thesis that many of the goals set up by media education are realized through children's participation in the media: participation in 'real' media strengthens children's ability and curiosity, gives them a critical understanding of the media, and increases their media competence.

- Some examples also demonstrate that children's participation in audiovisual media production is particularly suitable for children who otherwise do not manage well in the traditional school system with its print-based culture, which is why media production in itself brings about greater social justice.

- Several examples also show that children's participation in the media bridges the gap between media use, on the one hand, and children's participation in their community, on the other, something which, in turn, has had further consequences. Participation in the media has been something real for them, on terms not directed or controlled by adults, and has led to knowledge of and interest in the local community and inspired collective action, or so that they have been able to use the media in order to improve their situation in the community. With that some progress towards more worthy media representation of children, as well as towards increased democracy, could be made.

However, the examples also show that the success of the project requires that adults not only listen to children but also participate with the children in equal partnership, a partnership where all involved are experts.

Increased participation in the media by children would thus counteract the under-representation of children in the media and create a positive spiral. The unsatisfactory media images of children can be improved by children's right to freedom of

expression and children's right to participate in media and in society.

Changing children's media situation means that the circumstances in their personal environment and in society must be improved. Firstly, the risk of unwanted media influence is far less for children who are growing up in safe conditions and who have a good relationship with their parents, school and peers. Secondly, it is necessary that children and young people are allowed to participate actively in shaping their society's future. Statements about how we adults need to hear children's voices and how we must listen to them will remain empty words unless children are given more opportunities to affect their own conditions. If children and young people become involved in activities that are both meaningful for themselves and important to the decision-making process in society then automatically they will also be better protected and at the same time represented and heard in the media.

¹ 1999 Yearbook of the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen (von Feilitzen & Carlsson 1999)

Excerpts from a speech made at the EU Expert Seminar "Children and Young People in the New Media Landscape", Stockholm, 12–13 February 2001, organized in association with the European Commission, as part of Sweden's Presidency of the European Union.

TV professionals are more liberal about TV violence than kids and mothers.

Violence on the screen is often used as a measure to separate children's programmes into the categories 'good' and 'bad'. However, instead of looking at how harmful a programme might be, one may also take the suitability of a programme as a measure. Parents are not only interested in which programmes they should protect their children from, but are also looking for children's programmes they could recommend. Producers, too, want their programmes to be viewed with enjoyment. Violence may be a programme element that attracts viewers, or at least some viewers, but it is not a sufficient condition for popularity among children. If that were the case, all popular programmes would be violent and all violent programmes would be popular. Thus, other programme attributes are also important as determinants of good pro-

Violence

Peter Nikken
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grammes that children like to watch.

Quality standards

The question of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ in children’s television programming is often debated – especially when violent productions like *Power Rangers* are broadcast – but has rarely been investigated. In cooperation with Leiden University (the Netherlands), I performed a systematic study of the standards that a good children’s television programme should meet. Four separate studies were conducted among distinct groups of judges: children and their mothers in their capacity as consumers of children’s programming, and programme makers and critics who are professionally occupied with the production and evaluation of children’s television. The standards each group applies when evaluating

the quality of a children’s TV programme were determined, not only for children’s programmes in general, but also for two types of genres: fictional children’s programmes (cartoons and dramatic programmes) and non-fictional programmes (educational and news programmes for children).

No less than 19 different types of quality standards were found that are applicable to children’s TV programmes. Of these standards, seven were shared by mothers, children, professionals and TV critics. One of these seven standards was labeled ‘innocuousness’, meaning that a children’s programme should not frighten children, make them sad or contain violence or foul language. The other standards used by all four groups when evaluating the quality of children’s programmes were: ‘comprehensibility’, ‘aesthetic quality’

(e.g. beautiful images, high production standards), ‘involvement’ (i.e. winning the child audience’s dedication to the programme), ‘entertainment’, ‘credibility’ and ‘presence of role models’. In addition to these common standards, several other quality standards were distinguished. Children, for example, also expected programmes to be ‘thought provoking’, whereas among programme makers a standard like ‘originality’ emerged. Among critics additional standards like ‘informativeness’ (i.e. attunement to the child’s world of experience) and ‘appeal to adults’ (i.e. the programme should not only be attractive to children) were found.

Diverging views

It appeared that each of the four groups had its own view on the importance of the seven shared

nice

on TV



standards. Significant differences were found particularly between producers and critics on the one hand and children and mothers on the other. For example, children and mothers foremost expected a programme to be 'comprehensible', whereas professionals ranked this standard only fourth, after 'involvement' and 'credibility'.

All groups assigned the standard 'innocuousness' a middle ranking. Apparently when these groups are deciding whether a children's programme is 'good' or 'bad', attributes such as frightening scenes, violent acts and foul language are relatively less important than other programme attributes. More importance was attached by all groups to 'involvement', 'aesthetic quality', and the 'entertainment' value of a programme. Also, within each group, no significant differences were found between the importance of 'innocuousness' for different types of programmes. Cartoons, for example, were expected to be just as 'innocuous' as children's news programmes.

One explanation for the relative unimportance of 'innocuousness' may be that the study dealt with children's programmes. Generally, violent acts in children's programming are presented in a rather unreal and sometimes humorous situation (especially in cartoons and dramatic programmes). Such acts in typical children's programmes can hardly – be taken seriously, and are therefore seen as relatively less important. In children's news programmes real violence is sometimes portrayed because that is what the news should report. However, the producers of such programmes take into account that their audience may have difficulty in fully understanding images of real violence and therefore carefully present and explain them. This may be the reason why 'innocuousness' is not the most important standard for non-fictional

programmes either. If my study had been aimed at finding standards for programmes intended for a general audience, other results might have emerged. Violence and frightening scenes in television programmes or movies/videos for adults can have stronger influences on children. A standard like 'innocuousness' would undoubtedly have emerged for such media too, and it seems reasonable that it would be seen as rather important.

Although no relative differences were found between the four groups of judges with respect to the 'innocuousness' standard, significant differences were found between the absolute importance each group attached to it. Mothers expected children's programmes to be free of violence and frightening scenes significantly more than children did, whereas programme makers were the least concerned about violence, foul language and frightening scenes. One explanation might be that television professionals find it difficult to anticipate how a given category of children will react to their programme. In contrast to a theatre performer, the television producer does not receive immediate feedback from the audience. Moreover, since television programmes are not watched by a clearly defined group of children in terms of age, social background and cognitive development, it is difficult to tailor a programme content to the children watching.

Nevertheless, the diverging views of professionals and the audience on the 'innocuousness' of children's programmes should give us cause to worry, because as long as television professionals are less convinced about the possible harmful attributes of their programmes, they may continue to contribute to negative media effects. This result is particularly significant when combined with the finding that professionals also find children's full 'comprehension' of a programme less

important, making negative effects such as imitation and approval of portrayed violence more likely.

In sum

As stated above, when discussing 'good' and 'bad' programming for children, it is important to take aspects other than violence into account. The study shows that consensus exists among several groups of judges that 'innocuousness' is only one standard among others. For children's programmes there are at least six other standards that are used by mothers, children, television professionals and TV critics. If these groups are to exchange views on the quality of children's programming, these seven standards can be used as a point of departure.

The study further suggests that it is important to recognize that the four groups did not find these standards equally essential, and that in terms of these standards, consumers and producers of children's television do differ significantly in their views. Television producers in particular ought to be made more aware of the importance of standards like 'innocuousness' and 'comprehensibility', which are specific to children's programmes.

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Respect

of minors

Bob Collins
 Director General, RTÉ
 Chairman, Television Committee, EBU

Good programmes are the best protection broadcasters can offer to children.

I think that will be true in the digital future as it was in the analogue past.

Young people, and everyone concerned with their welfare, are entitled to know where they can find good listening and viewing. This is an area in which the public broadcasters of Europe have a special responsibility. Our television and radio channels are broadcast free-to-air. We receive financing from citizens, as well as commercial revenue, in support of our activities. And we hold a public trust. Our programme services must be suitable for their intended audiences, and under national and European law, we must satisfy fundamental obligations to respect human dignity.

Values

The spirit of those laws and the nature of the public trust exercised by broadcasters indicate that negative regulation is not sufficient to protect

children from harm. It is not enough that we avoid wrong-doing in the form of irresponsible scheduling, or showing bad behaviour in an attractive light. The essential requirement is that we strive continuously to improve the programmes and the production values that we present for children.

For many years, the Working Party for Young People's Programmes has been one of the most productive and valuable projects arranged under the aegis of the EBU. The Working Party (now known as the Experts' Group) organizes production exchanges and co-productions among children's programme-makers in the public broadcasters around Europe. These activities improve the professional skills and objectives of the people who make programmes for our children. By joining together, the large and small countries can pool their resources to make expensive productions suitable for broadcast in many territories. The animation series

The Animals of Farthing Wood (or in the French language version, *Les animaux du bois de quat'sous*) is one such production. It offers high value and high quality to young viewers and it recognizes their entitlement to television programming of the highest standard. More recent examples include *Noah's Island* and *The Adventures of Zepi et Zinia*.

Good programmes

Good children's programmes can be made only by people interested in children and by people who are informed about how children lead their lives. This is such an elementary point, but it must be stressed. We can behave responsibly towards children only when we understand their present realities. How do they spend their days? What relationships are most important to them? How do they form their ideas of right and wrong? Whom do they respect and try to imitate?

Last November, the UK's Independent Television Commission (ITC) published research entitled *Copycat Kids? The Influence of Television Advertising on Children and Teenagers*. In my view, this was a significant piece of work for the reason that it paid careful attention to a group of youngsters in Britain

today, observing how they actually experience the world.

The research found that “children considered television to be one of life’s necessities.” It also showed the relative power of television. “Compared with other forms of media, television was seen as playing the most influential role in children’s lives.” Yet the research concluded that television was a secondary influence on the children. Important, yes – but secondary. The key influences on children were found to be the people in direct contact with them – their parents, brothers and sisters, relatives and friends, teachers.

I do not make this point in order to diminish the significance of television for children and young people, or to suggest that we broadcasters can be in any way complacent about the degree of influence exercised by the service we provide.

What I am saying is that we have to look very carefully at the contexts in which television is used by younger viewers. We need to ask the questions: how does it fit into their lives? How does the picture differ from one country to another? And from one ethnic group to another within the same country?

From experience, I would say that when it comes to protecting children from harmful material, there are three difficult areas that we are always discussing, analyzing and debating.

In the first area, we face a set of questions about advertising and commercial messages. Should we direct advertisements at children? Or at adults during children’s programmes. Is a blanket ban the only acceptable position? Can other approaches work?

The second problem can be expressed as “how to protect children from premature encounters with adult experiences”. We are speaking now

about forms of language and behaviour which we think unsuitable for younger people to witness and to imitate. Under this heading, we must distinguish particular difficulties that are too often bundled together in phrases like ‘sex and violence’, which suggests that sex and violence are, if not identical, then closely linked or that there is between them a moral equivalence. We also need to think about the impact of bad behaviour by, for example, footballers and other significant role models for children.

The third set of problems arise because we can all receive large numbers of television channels, many of them showing material unsuited to children, even at times when children are available to watch. Faced with that reality, what is a responsible position for a broadcaster to take?

Let me offer some thoughts about each of these three areas of concern, beginning with the broad subject of advertising.

Here I would like to talk a little about RTÉ’s policy and experience as the public broadcaster in Ireland where multi-channel viewing is available in over three-quarters of households.

In 1996, RTÉ took steps to cut down the number of commercial messages in and around its programmes for children. Since then, no commercial breaks have been permitted before, during or immediately after any programme for pre-school children. There has been a reduction in the frequency of advertising breaks in programmes for older children. A key step was to make a clear separation between programmes on the one hand and advertising, commercial messages and sponsorship on the other hand.

In addition to reducing the amount of advertising, we decided to make

information messages for young viewers. These aim to show that, while we live in a material world, life is not about getting everything that you want. The messages support the relationship between children and parents. They direct attention to values like sharing, seeing other points of view, and being unselfish. Sporting celebrities and pop groups like Ronan



Keating (Boyzone) and the Corrs have presented these messages.

Responsibility

Such measures have been put in place by one broadcaster in Ireland where a vast array of channels are available to the majority of viewers. In these circumstances, a public broadcaster

may set an example and seek to give a lead. But there is no way to compel other channels and services to follow. On the other hand, such a policy tells parents, guardians, teachers and other responsible adults that there is a qualitative difference in public broadcasting. It says, this broadcaster is taking its responsibility seriously; it is acting with a sense of care for the young audience.

It is possible for broadcasters to build up a relationship of trust with parents. Responsible adults will come to know what standards to expect of particular channels. This is especially desirable and helpful in a world of increasing choice. In this respect, I think it is clear what broadcasters must seek to do. The fundamental requirement is that we broadcasters improve the quality of information we give about programmes before they are broadcast. We are a long way from a common European rating and categorization scheme for television programmes. Personally, I wonder whether such a thing is possible. Or, to put it another way, I fear that such a common rating system would be of very limited value, if it were achievable. However, in the digital order of things, we will all need Electronic Programme Guides (EPGs) to help us pick and choose among the offerings on the various channels. It seems to me that the EPG may have the great advantage of giving information about programmes at the very point of use – on screen. This will be a useful instrument in the hands of parents and others who want to assess in advance a storyline about a crime, or a death in the family, or a strained relationship. I think this development will be welcome progress in our efforts to protect children from harmful material but we should not wait until EPGs are widespread before we take initiatives in this respect.

Broadcasters can and should make such information available. We should

do all we can to ensure that it is attractive, easy to access and that its purpose is readily apparent. I think these are the contributions we can make to help parents exercise their proper responsibilities. Earlier I mentioned the study carried out by the ITC in Britain. One of its findings is that while parents are responsible in theory for what their children watch, many parents fail to pay attention and to exercise care. This is a reality which is of importance to us as public broadcasters. Even if all parents were entirely dutiful, we cannot simply assume that the matter of childrens' viewing choices is something for parents alone. We must acknowledge that there is a shared responsibility between parents and broadcasters. We must honour the trust that should exist between both. Parents are entitled to expect responsible behaviour and a clearly understood standard of practice. Broadcasters, in their turn, are entitled to expect that parents will take an active interest in their childrens' viewing. This combination of trust and shared responsibility is the hallmark of public broadcasting and a core element in the protection of our younger citizens.



There has been particular concern about the relationship between screen violence and children's social behaviour.



Parental

cont

David Wood
Head of New Technology, EBU

Intuition suggests that the more children are exposed to screen violence, the more normal and acceptable it may seem to them, and the more they may behave in a violent or anti-social way.

The media industry's norms for screen behaviour have evolved over the years. Arguably, the movie industry has increasingly fed a public appetite for violence, to increase or keep their audiences.

Norms for on-screen sex and strong language have also evolved. Many parents and guardians believe that extremes of explicit sex and strong language can be traumatic for the young. These on-screen elements can be an essential part of a creative narrative. But sometimes they may be a lowest common denominator to feed a public appetite, and maximize audiences without regard for the consequences. It is reasonable to ask if further measures are valuable in Europe to help adults control the content to which their charges are subjected by television.

Classification

Movies for general release have been subject to content classification for years. Prior to distribution, a movie is usually given a grade by an external national group of assessors. This normally defines the age threshold for which the movie is suitable. Cinemas can use the grade to limit entry of young people. Movies shown on pay-TV channels, VCR cassettes, and sometimes, general TV channels include information on the classification. Parents and guardians can use the information to decide whether or not they watch the movie, or whether or not their charges watch it.

In the home, there is no box office policing of age for broadcasts or VCR tapes. Quite apart from parents being not home when their children are watching television, viewing is becoming a more individual activity for all age groups. The idea of parents controlling what their children watch by looking over their shoulders is less and less relevant.

Other systems are used e.g. oral warnings or on-screen icons which can be shown before and during the programme, though in some cases such warnings may attract young viewers in practice. Another approach is to use a time 'watershed' before which content normally considered only suitable for adults is not shown. All these systems are in use in different parts of Europe.

TV and violence

Although intuition tells us there should be a definite link between children's behaviour and violence seen on television, establishing scientific evidence of this has been difficult. To date no study has established a significant correlation between screen violence and anti-social behaviour. It is likely that there is no unique relationship between what children see and hear, and how they behave, which depends on an interacting combination of the particular content seen, the viewing context, and their disposition.

Given the number of independent tests done, the results do suggest that, such effects as there are, may be confined to a small portion of the community.

Europe

European programming on national networks usually has less crime and mayhem as part of normal viewing hours than in North America. European national broadcasters see themselves as being their own policemen.

Nevertheless, in the mid-1990s, interest in the V-chip¹ in the US prompted European broadcasters to consider the relevance of the issue for Europe. Without pre-judging whether it would be launched, the EBU studied the options for a European 'V-chip' system.

tro
in Europe

The EBU requires that the European Parental Control System (PCS) must meet a number of requirements, such as:

- 1 It must be possible to broadcast the PCS data within all the various European television standards.
- 2 It must be difficult to defeat the system by the viewer who does not have the right to change the rating filter.
- 3 It must be possible to record television programmes on a VCR, and yet maintain the integrity of the PCS data.
- 4 The cost to the viewer of the system must be small, because the system is likely to be valuable for low-income families.
- 5 The system must be comprehensible to everyone including those least able to understand a complex rating system, and understand a complex

set of technical instructions to operate it.

- 6 The system needs to provide the same data continuously throughout a programme, so that viewers are instantly told about the content rating when switching on.

Technical options

It was not possible to use an identical system to the American V-chip system in Europe. Thirty years ago, Europe went down a different road than the United States in text broadcasting. In Europe there is near universal use of the teletext system, this is carried in the vertical interval of the television signal. The closed captioning system developed in the United States in the early 1970s (though not widely introduced until later), the vehicle for the V-chip signals, is not available.

Possible ways to transmit Parental Control Signalling data in Europe include:

- 1 the European teletext format;
- 2 the current allocation for 'widescreen signalling';
- 3 an Internet delivery system running in parallel with the broadcast.

The European teletext format has the capability to carry data streams of the kind that would be needed for PCS. One disadvantage of the use of this format is that the PCS signal would

not be recordable. Defeating the system would be very simple – the programme could simply be recorded.

Another problem is that the signal is quite easy to corrupt, and thus defeat, by moving the aerial to make the picture watchable and the PCS data not useable.

For widescreen signalling, European television standards allow signalling to be included in the space above the picture. These are intended for widescreen receivers to adjust their picture display to widescreen or normal modes, according to the transmission. This same signalling gives other information about the surround sound system.

The widescreen signalling data was arranged to be slower than the teletext data, and the widescreen signalling allocation is recordable on a home VCR.

The main problem with using the widescreen signalling is available space. All but one of the signalling bits in the widescreen allocation is already spoken for. Thus long words, if the PCS signal were more than a simple on/off signal, will have to build up over a number of frames. This would increase the response time of the system, and make it much less useful.

Once again, it is difficult to find a good home for PCS in the European analogue television signal.

In principle, arrangements could be made to use the Internet as a means to deliver PCS data for a broadcast.

The World Wide Web Consortium has developed a set of tools for Internet content classification, called PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection). Using these tools, independent agencies or originators can set up their own content classification services for sites. Web users can call on these agencies which can reflect particular religious or other leanings. A similar approach could be used for PCS for broadcast content. However, it is difficult to see how this could be practically done for analogue broadcasting. The installation would be complex and expensive.

Digital

As with colour television, digital technology will eventually impose itself. Flexible by definition, digital TV can carry any number of programme or data services.

Digital broadcasting offers the technical capacity to provide a parental control system. Its technology multiplies the television channel capacity of the radio waves by 4 to 10 times, so the viewer has a larger choice of channels. As well as being more practical, the need for PCS is greater with digital television but there are still major issues to resolve before such services can be put into practice.

The DVB digital broadcasting system already offers some built in signalling in its specification that is relevant to

PCS. The SI, or Service Information, a standardized part of the DVB signal, provides a place for an age description, which gives the minimum age for which the programme being received is appropriate.

There is no problem with finding more data capacity in the DVB broadcast channel for any conceivable kind of PCS signalling, but a mechanism would have to be devised to use it. Equally, since the entire signal is digital, the difficulty of having the data corrupted but not the programme would not arise. Either both will work or neither will work.

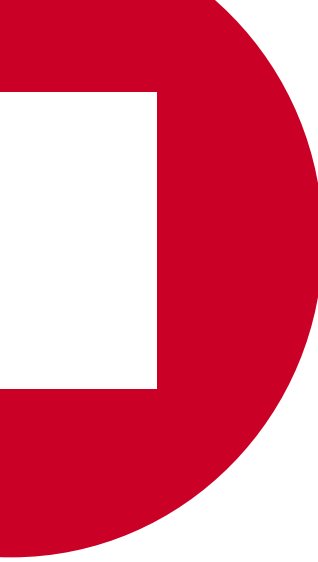
Standardization

A digital receiver shares properties with a computer. It can be pre-programmed in relatively elaborate ways to respond when it receives incoming data. In the digital environment, the issues to be resolved for PCS are essentially what kind of responding system should the television have, and what kind of data about programme content should be

made available. In other words, the main issue is the extent to which the system should include standardized elements, and the extent to which it should include elements that are exclusive to different services.

In the simplest system, there might be a standardized set of codes for programme content rating, which are required to be broadcast. One example of the way this could be done would be to assign a score to individual programmes of between 1 and 10 for each of the 3 critical factors: language, sex, and violence. The receiver would interpret these incoming codes. The viewer might have a template of grades that are acceptable, and the receiver would restrict viewing when the scores exceeded certain thresholds. There are certainly many other ways of doing this, and this is only an example.

In a more complex system, the standardized codes could be used and interpreted by a broadcast



‘application’. That is, the broadcast could include a set of electronic instructions to the receiver to present the viewer with more elaborate multimedia screens, to help him through the process of programming the receiver to do what he wanted.

Things could be taken yet a further step. The codes that described the programme might not be standardized at all, and could be provided together with a broadcast application, as a package. In this case, there would be no need to standardize the programme content rating system, and the user would just work through the multimedia broadcast to him.

This same pattern of options is illustrated by the current situation for electronic programme guides, which are seen in different digital television broadcasting services in Europe. The receiver can just make use of the standard codes that are automatically broadcast with digital television – the title of the current programme and the next one. But if the receiver is so equipped, the broadcaster can broadcast a fancier electronic programme guide to help the viewer choose his programmes. The programme guide can be more or less elaborate, and easy to use, depending on how much additional data is broadcast beyond the simple details that are in a standardized format.

One of the major difficulties of a PCS system that has standardized elements is that it could be difficult to find a common grading system that applied equally well across the different

cultures of Europe. Who would grade the programmes, and by which rules?

An ideal PCS?

Perhaps in the ideal digital world, because of the plurality of social norms and world views, a plurality of parental control systems could be made available to the viewer. The viewer could choose one or other, if he wished, based on whichever matched best his world view. This would call for broadcasters, or independent bodies, to broadcast different PCS services. The viewer would put his trust in the organization that prepared the PCS broadcast application. In a sense, a competitive environment would exist in parental control signalling systems, and services that were of value would survive by market forces.

For this arrangement to work, the multimedia interface (the ‘API’) and the broadcast channel itself would have to be made open to those who wanted to broadcast the PCS services. There would be many questions to consider, including how such bodies would be chosen, be funded, and how they would obtain prior knowledge of the programme content.

Another issue to consider is the extent to which a broadcast PCS system should be similar to any services used for the World Wide Web. If eventually a single home receiver is used both for web browsing and broadcast reception, it could make sense to have some commonality of approach so that viewers would have even-handed

control over all the content that their children were able to watch.

Current situation

All of the means of potentially providing PCS in Europe with analogue television have drawbacks. There is a risk that all the options may be able to be defeated by an astute child and a portable aerial.

In order to make use of the PCS function with analogue television, viewers would need to buy or be given a new television or set-top unit adapter. New television replacements are made about once every 10 years. The time to achieve a large installed base of PCS-capable receivers would be long. The first users would not be those in low-income groups, who might most welcome the facility. ‘Legacy’ sets used in bedrooms, where there may be most need, would be the last to feature PCS.

Before the analogue PCS system had taken a major hold, Europe will be well down the path to an entirely new technology, digital broadcasting. In this light, although analogue television will not close down overnight, developing PCS systems for analogue television does not seem justified. Existing methods of giving parental advice such as watersheds and oral or icon warnings should continue, as thought most relevant in the national situation.

In principle, a range of PCS services could be offered with digital television. But there are many issues

to be studied in a European and even national context. These include the notions of which factors should be monitored, notions about degrees of seriousness attributed to content, deciding on the providers and the funding mechanisms, deciding on the multimedia systems to be used, and on the relationships with similar systems for the web.

We can hopefully look to the European instances for leadership in arranging the dialogue which will lead to an equitable and useful approach for Europe for digital broadcasting.

The discussion has begun...

¹ *In the United States and Canada, a proposal arose in the mid-1990s to provide automatic control of access to the television receiver, based on programme content rating. This is the so-called 'V-chip' (V = Viewer). The idea is that a code is broadcast alongside the television programme, and the television receiver is able to recognize and interpret it. Parents or guardians can pre-programme their television receivers to allow through only programmes with a given range of content ratings, and block other ranges of content rating. This is a simple five-grade age suitability classification system.*

The technical means used to distribute the V-chip signal in the United States is to use the so-called 'vertical blanking interval'. This is the space above the picture, which is normally hidden from view, though it can be seen if the picture height control is adjusted. The V-chip signal is transmitted very often, and describes the instantaneous classification of the programme being broadcast. The 'container' that is used to carry the V-chip signal is the space also used for transmitting sub-titles for the deaf – the 'closed captioning system'.

Technical and statutory

measures

Anne-Catherine Berg
Legal Adviser, EBU

The European Union is becoming increasingly concerned about the protection of minors in the information society.



On 24 September 1998, the European Council adopted a recommendation aiming to improve the protection of minors in audiovisual and online services¹.

What we need to know is whether the tools television currently uses to protect minors such as an evening watershed and appropriate visual warnings^{*2} are appropriate to the new digital environment and online services. What statutory and technical measures must be taken to guarantee their protection in this new audiovisual landscape?

Renewed debate

This issue has provoked renewed debate, particularly since there are plans to revise the Directive^{**} at the end of 2002.

A great deal of work is currently being done in this area. For example, the European Commission is set to approve a report evaluating the consequences of the Council's 1998 recommendation³. Meanwhile, the conference organized by the Swedish Presidency of the European Union in Stockholm on 12 and 13 February entitled "Children and young people in the new media landscape" offered an opportunity to review the methods and strategies which need to be

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developed or improved in order to guarantee the protection of minors in all types of media (cinema, television, video games, Internet, etc.).

Digital television

On 12 July 1999, the Commission published a Communication on the results of a study by Oxford University. This study examined the possible advantages and disadvantages of measures other than the watershed and acoustic or visual warnings, designed to help parents control what television programmes their children watch⁴.

The study highlighted the changes brought about by digital technology which have complicated the procedure for checking broadcasting content employed by statutory bodies (increase in number of transnational channels; development of digital decoders equipped with hard disks enabling viewers to compile their own viewing schedule and giving them access to the Internet) and undermined the effectiveness of the watershed concept.

The study emphasized the ways and means offered by digital for developing more reliable and sophisticated content selection systems (EPGs or filtering systems).

However, it is worth pointing out that digital systems are currently still in their infancy in most countries.

In view of this fact, descriptive, common, transparent criteria which describe content without judging it must be worked out so that technical equipment can filter transnational channels on the basis of this descriptive information and according to cultural and moral values appropriate for each user.

Owing to cultural differences between the Member States, it is impossible to adopt a common content classification system for determining whether certain media content is suitable for a particular age group. Yet, neither is it an easy task to draw up a set of common descriptive criteria for content (information on content which is as objective as possible without passing judgement, for example, whether or not there is violence in a programme) as proposed by the Oxford study.

Neutrality, objectivity

How can content be described in a neutral and objective manner for the whole of Europe? By 'describing' content we are already judging it to some extent. What criteria should be used: violence, sex, nudity,

pornography, or use of bad language? Can these standards be used in the same manner for different kinds of programmes (fiction, documentaries, animation, news)? How many tolerance thresholds should there be for each criterion? Should a descriptive system of content apply to all media types (cinema, television, video games, video and Internet) and is this feasible? All of these questions have to be examined in more detail.

Furthermore, even if digital television continues to develop, analogue television will still dominate the market. Consumer habits do not change at the same rate as technological advances. The current system for protecting minors used in television (watershed and warnings) is actually very satisfactory and will continue to operate during the period of transition towards digital.

The study reveals that technical measures alone cannot be a complete substitute for broadcasters' liability.

* stipulated in Article 22 of the *Television without Frontiers Directive*

** *European Parliament and Council Directive 97/36/EC of 30 June 1997, Television without Frontiers*

Responsibility is borne by several parties but essentially lies with parents. It may be that prohibition and control of content are not the best tools. Education of children and parents and an awareness of the media are also of fundamental importance. The broadcaster's main concern must be the production and broadcast of quality programmes. More information must be provided on programmes and on protection mechanisms.

Without actually stating its position in relation to the Oxford University study, the Commission reiterates its main conclusions (Principles and Guidelines for the Community's Audiovisual Policy in the Digital Age, 14 December 1999)⁵. But the study also emphasizes the usefulness of codes of conduct and other self-regulatory measures in the protection of minors. In a resolution dated 5 October 2000, the European Parliament stressed the need for broadcasters to draw up a self-regulatory code valid throughout the European Union.

The Council Recommendation on the Protection of Minors and Human Dignity in Audiovisual and Information Services Industry (24 September 1998) illustrates the complementary nature of regulation and self-regulation. It invites the Member States to encourage broadcasting organizations to investigate and experiment on a voluntary basis with new methods for protecting minors and warning viewers, over and above the existing national and EU regulations.

This recommendation also encourages the Commission to facilitate the exchange of experience and practices between those parties concerned, to encourage cooperation among self-regulatory bodies and to evaluate measures taken in application of the recommendation.

The Commission's evaluation report of 27 February 2001 notes that the

application of the Recommendation by the Member States is generally satisfactory, if very mixed. Some States, such as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, are currently adopting a new approach to the media, while others have yet to take the initiative. In fact, as a result of the Recommendation, in December 1999, the Netherlands created a new instrument (NICAM-Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media) responsible for devising an efficient, uniform, descriptive content classification system (see article on page 24). Moreover, this system is valid for the whole of the audiovisual sector (cinema, television, electronic games and videos).

Although the situation concerning the protection of minors remains practically unchanged with regard to video games and television, numerous initiatives have been taken by the industry in relation to the Internet.

Online services

In view of the open structure of the Internet, the question of protecting minors here has to be approached in a totally different manner, in that each user is a potential content supplier. Given the impossibility of monitoring all the content available on the Internet, minors are protected by parental control systems and codes of conduct which aim to identify harmful content (warning pages, systems for checking the age of the user, classification of content, etc.). A watershed has little or no effect here.

Without going into detail, there are several ways of classifying content on the Internet, including the self-rating system proposed by the ICRA (Internet Content Rating Association), or the third-party rating system which is essentially based on a lists of prohibited (black-list) or acceptable (white-list) sites. The best-known of these systems is Cyberpatrol.

So far, initiatives to classify and filter content on the Internet have mainly come from US industry and advocate the use of the PICS platform (Platform for Internet Content Selection), a common language for describing content devised in 1995 by the World Wide Web Consortium and supported by the European Union.

The multiannual Community action plan on promoting safer use of the Internet (1999–2002), adopted by the European Parliament and the Council on 25 January 1999 (6) has enabled the co-financing of a number of projects. These include classification and filtering systems such as the ICRA (see article on page 29); a European network of telephone hotlines, (for example, INHOPE); codes of conduct and measures for information and exchange of experiences. Improvements are required to ensure that existing techniques meet the expectations and needs of European users.

As part of this action plan, new calls have been launched for proposals, particularly in relation to the potential and limits of classification and filtering systems. One of the main difficulties at this stage is to try to agree on the type of information (descriptive or evaluative) which should accompany the content and to devise systems which are easy to use. Needless to say, classification and filtering systems of this kind are only useful if parents are responsible and minors do not have the ability to bypass these control mechanisms.



Main points raised during the Stockholm Conference

- Difficulties of defining neutral content classification systems owing to cultural and moral differences in Europe;
- Need to envisage other methods of protection apart from parental control systems (development of information and awareness campaigns targeting children and parents, creation of complaints systems);
- Production of quality programmes and content;
- Shared responsibility of the various parties involved (European Union, Member States, industry, parents, other adults);
- Complementary nature of regulation and self-regulation;
- Transparency and proportionality of regulation should be limited to the objective in hand;
- Differences of opinion on the advantages and disadvantages of self-regulation;
- Need for cooperation between the various public and private parties at European and international level.

- 1 *European Council Recommendation of 24.09.98 on the protection of minors and human dignity in the audiovisual and information services industry, Official Journal, L 120, 07.19.98.*
- 2 *European Parliament and Council Directive 97/36/EC of 30 June 1997 amending Council Directive 89/552/EEC of 3 October 1989 on the coordination of certain provisions laid down by law, regulation or administrative action in Member States concerning the pursuit of television broadcasting activities, Official Journal, L202, p.60, 30.07.97. In particular, see Article 22 of the Directive which makes a clear distinction between programmes which are entirely prohibited and those which may be authorized on the condition that appropriate methods are used (choice of time for the programme, acoustic warning and/or visual symbol).*
- 3 *Evaluation report from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament concerning the application of the Council Recommendation of 24.09.98 on the protection of minors and human dignity in the audiovisual and information services industry, COM (2001) 106 final.*
- 4 *Communication from the Commission relating to the Study on Parental Control of Television Broadcasting, 19.07.99 COM (1999) 371 final.*
- 5 *Communication from the Commission on the Principles and Guidelines for the Community's Audiovisual Policy in the Digital Age, 14.12.99. COM (99) 657 final.*
- 6 *Decision No 276/1999/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 January 1999 adopting a multiannual Community action plan on promoting safer use of the Internet by combating illegal and harmful content on global networks OJ L 033/1, 06.12.99.*

Kijkwijzer

Wim Bekkers
*The Netherlands Institute for
 the Classification of
 Audiovisual Media*

Kijkwijzer is the new classification system for audiovisual productions in the Netherlands.

This is an international first for the Netherlands, which becomes the first country to introduce a uniform classification system for almost the entire audiovisual sector. This marks the end of the government-run Filmkeuring and the beginning of classification by the film industry itself. The film industry is the first among the audiovisual sector to introduce Kijkwijzer. Television, both in the form of the public and commercial broadcasters followed in March. In the video and computer games industries, Kijkwijzer replaced the existing classifications in April 2001.

Kijkwijzer is an initiative by NICAM, (the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media). Participants in NICAM include the Dutch TV broadcasters, film distributors and cinema operators, distributors of films on video and

DVD and of computer games, videotheques and retailers.

Consumers can approach NICAM with complaints or other information on everything involved in classification.

The Internet is excluded from the new arrangement as it is impossible to make agreements at national level for this medium. NICAM is investigating the possibilities of joining in with international self-regulation initiatives currently being developed for the Internet.

Kijkwijzer informs parents and guardians whether a film, video or DVD production, television programme or computer game could be harmful to children. The following age categories are indicated: all ages, adult supervision required with children up to 6 years, not for children younger than 12 or 16 years. By means of pictograms, Kijkwijzer also shows what the potential problems of a product are for a particular age category: violence, fear, sex, discrimination, drugs, alcohol abuse and swearing.

The Kijkwijzer age classifications and pictograms will be applied in film screening schedules, advertising campaigns, on the packaging of

Kijkwijzer



videos and DVDs, in the programme schedules of TV listings' magazines and before the start of films in the cinema, on video and on TV. The new classification system complies with the wishes of Dutch parents to be informed and warned. A recent survey has revealed that more than 80% of parents need this service and a similar percentage say they would use it.

For Kijkwijzer, a classification system has been developed by an independent group of experts in the field of youth and media, taking into consideration the experiences of comparable systems both in the Netherlands and abroad. Businesses and organizations within the various audiovisual sectors can then classify their productions themselves using this standardized classification system.

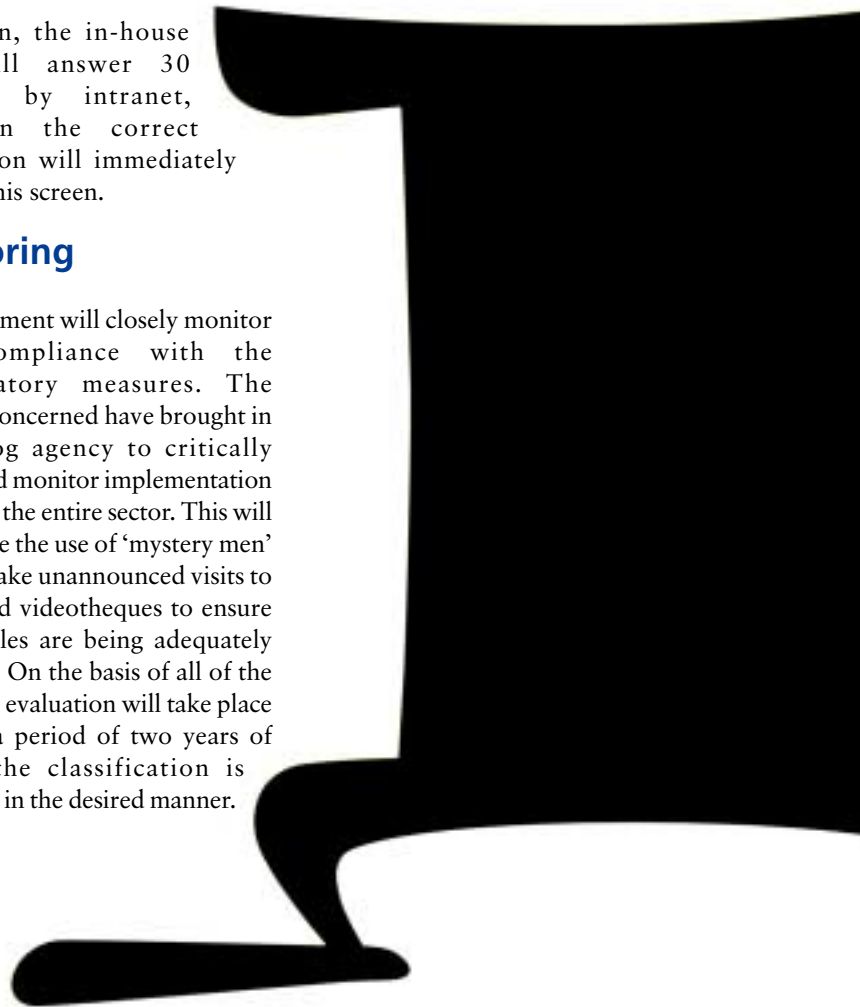
Self-regulation

The advent of Kijkwijzer means that it is no longer necessary to report audiovisual productions to an external board of coders. Kijkwijzer replaces the board that used to operate in the film world, among others. From now on, film and video companies, as well as broadcasters, will classify productions themselves on the basis of the Kijkwijzer code formula. Having viewed a

production, the in-house coder will answer 30 questions by intranet, whereupon the correct classification will immediately appear on his screen.

Monitoring

The government will closely monitor actual compliance with the self-regulatory measures. The ministries concerned have brought in a watchdog agency to critically evaluate and monitor implementation throughout the entire sector. This will even include the use of 'mystery men' who will make unannounced visits to cinemas and videotheques to ensure that the rules are being adequately adhered to. On the basis of all of the findings, an evaluation will take place following a period of two years of whether the classification is functioning in the desired manner.



Children must be protected – but from what, how and by whom?

The Internet is no different from the real world where there are certain things we don't want children to see. But identifying a 'bad neighbourhood' on the Internet is not as easy as in the real world. You don't have to confront broken street lamps, dark alleys etc. before you arrive at the content. On the Internet you can literally stumble on disturbing content by doing a search on certain words and phrases, by clicking on a website link, or simply by receiving an e-mail.

Can we not close these websites, or ask Internet Service Providers to filter out all traffic to and from these sites? The problem is more complicated than this.

Harmful or illegal

We have to distinguish between harmful and illegal content. The definition of 'illegal' is defined by law but laws differ between geographical regions in the world. Who should be legally accountable: the server holding the information or the recipient? As different laws may apply to the two parties involved in the transaction, it is difficult to decide which laws should be used. If we define that it is the receiver of the information, how can the web server know where the client is? If this server is breaking the laws of the country

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Patrik Fältström

Consulting Engineer, Cisco Systems, Member of the Internet Engineering Task Force

where the client is, how do law enforcement agencies find the server, or the administrator, or the person publishing the information on that server?

Software

It becomes much easier, but also in some cases harder, if we look only at 'harmful' content, or rather, only look at information which the receiver is not interested in seeing. The problem with this definition is that the receiver probably doesn't have the same interests or rather non-interests as another type of user which leads to having rules per user rather than per country. Therefore the receiver needs to have some software which can help him make a decision whether the content is interesting or not.

The receiver of information is the one defining what is problematic. But, he cannot do that without first looking at the content, and that is precisely what he doesn't want to do. Conclusion: the receiver cannot make that decision. It has to be up to either the publisher or a third party i.e. someone else than the receiver.

Rating systems

A system has to be devised that will be widely agreed upon and then used.

What kind of system should it be and which values should be measured? Violence? Sex? Language? In some cases the context is more important than the content. Sex for example: some educational sex information is very explicit and should get a high rating by itself, but in a teaching context it might be acceptable. Can we ever agree on one single system? The only solution is to allow more than one system, and have the end-user choose the one he wants to use, and not only which values are acceptable for each measured element.

But if an author is setting the rating, will the values be correct and objective? How do different users interpret a '3' rating on a scale from 1 to 6 on a theme such as violence? The answer is we don't know. However, there is a group of people who do know about these things: librarians who categorize books and other material, and have done so as long as printed material has existed.

A good solution?

The solution is to have multiple rating agencies with different possible rating mechanisms. Before going to a web page the end-user must send a query to the rating agency(ies) of his choice (based on whether their rating

standards are acceptable to him) and ask for a content rating. If the content has not been rated, he can then check how the author has rated the information. If the author has not rated it either then perhaps the information should not be fetched. At least not without having been warned.

For this to work, all parties involved have to use the same basic protocol. A protocol which can be used not only to rate web pages but also random information and services with an associated URL. An example of this is the PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection) standard established by the World Wide Web Consortium, and it is my belief that we don't need anything else. Having one protocol allows all agencies to communicate – and compete.

One such agency can operate in different ways. One (simple) way is to have normal end-users (in the context of the World Wide Web) click a button on their browser while looking at the page and 'report' back to the agency on what they think of the page. This way, if the agency deems that the content is harmful it is immediately blacklisted and only one user will have seen the content. A different way is to have people actively looking at pages but this is probably not a viable solution. A third

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solution is that authors send pages to rating agencies to get them rated.

Cost

Who should pay for the rating agencies? Governments could create agencies that would maintain a blacklist of illegal sites (and to whom people could report illicit material).

End-users could subscribe to (and pay for) the services of rating agencies. A third solution would be to make authors pay for their material to be rated.

My personal guess (and hope) is that all three of these solutions will be used. In a multi-cultural world it is impossible to try and go against this.

Patrik Fältström is an active participant in the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). Three years ago he became a member of the Steering Group of the IETF (IESG) which makes decisions on new standards for protocols on the Internet. Mr Fältström has been working on Internet issues since 1986. His work includes the building of the first IP-based networks in Sweden (SUNET and NORDUNET) and since 1992 he has been working with the standardization of protocols in the IETF. He is also the author of many RFCs (Request for Comments).

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Labelling

Ola-Kristian Hoff

Director, European Internet Content Rating Association

The Internet is now integrated into millions of people's lives.

The Internet Content Rating Association (ICRA) exists to empower people, especially parents of young children, to make informed decisions about what they and their children see on the Internet. This is achieved by means of the open and objective labelling of content and by the filtering of websites, based on the user's own preferences.

New uses, new services and new ideas are being explored all the time. Internet makes information exchange cheap, quick and it recognizes none of the usual boundaries. This opens up limitless opportunities for expression and communication, but there is also a need for the protection of children from potentially harmful material.

The ICRA was founded by leading Internet companies and organizations to square that circle: to protect children *and* to protect free speech.

The system

There are two elements to the system:

Web authors fill in an online questionnaire describing the content of their site, simply in terms of what is and isn't present. The ICRA then generates a Content Label (a short piece of computer code) which the author adds to his site.

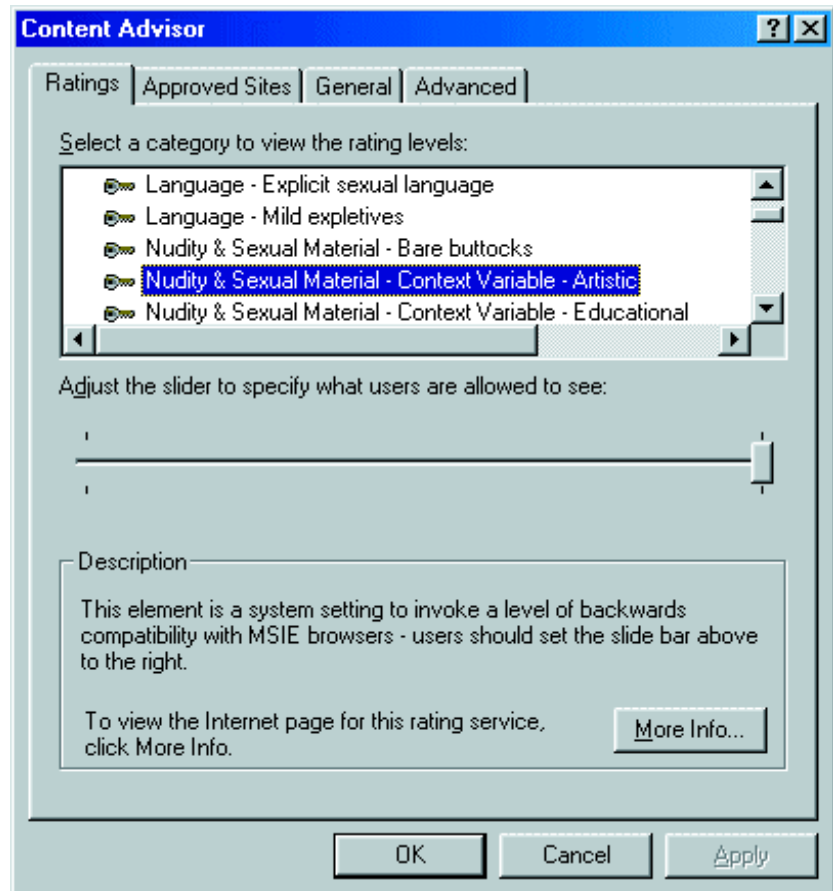
Users, especially parents of young children, can then set their Internet browser to allow or disallow access to websites based on the objective information declared in the label and the subjective preferences of the user.

A key point is that the Internet Content Rating Association does not rate Internet content – the content providers do that, using the ICRA system. The ICRA makes no value judgement about sites.

The ICRA system already functions with Microsoft's Internet Explorer, and its use with other applications is under development.

Labels

The ICRA is working both independently and with third parties to create a range of filtering products. Each will allow for a combination of features such as: one-click setting of the filter in line with recognized criteria such as film classifications; incorporation of allow/disallow lists which may be produced by third parties; addition of the user's own allow/disallow lists; different settings to be applied for different users. In all cases, the settings will be under password control!



The broad topics covered are: chat, language, nudity and sexual content, violence, and others topics such as gambling, drugs and alcohol.

Within each broad category the web author is asked questions about whether a specific item/feature is present or not on the site.

Violence

There are many criteria for evaluating violence: sexual violence/rape; blood and gore, killing and maiming of human beings, fantasy characters, animals; damage to objects; or none of the above.

The context is also important: is it artistic, suitable for young children, educational, sports related?

The ICRA's labelling system is designed to be as objective as possible, and to cover a wide range of content

types. The system gives users a great deal of flexibility in their choice of what should and shouldn't be seen in their home or workplace. The browser's filtering system can of course be disabled and enabled easily... if you're the one with the password!

The PICS standard

Content Labels generated by the ICRA conform to an Internet industry standard known as PICS (Platform for Internet Content Selection). ICRA's forerunner, the Recreational Software Advisory Council (RSAC) was involved in the development of the standard, created by the World Wide Web Consortium. The RSACi system (RSAC on the Internet) has been incorporated into Netscape Navigator and Microsoft's Internet Explorer, the latter since the release of version 3.0 in February 1996.

Why label a site?

There are a number of compelling reasons why a web author would label his site with the ICRA. Let's take four examples:

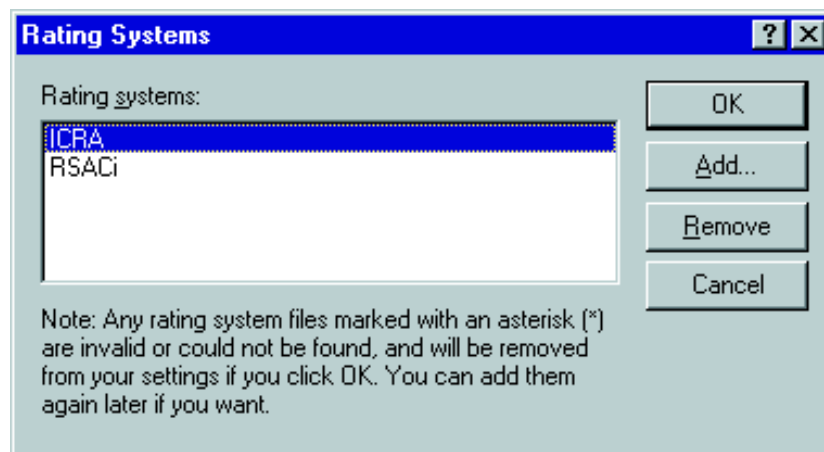
- 1 Commercial sites, with little or no objectionable material will want to label their site so as not to be blocked by default. When a parent sets up the filter for their child, they will be offered an option to allow or disallow access to sites that have no rating. Most sites want the maximum number of visits to justify advertising or other related commercial activity. It would make good marketing sense for all commercial sites to be rated
- 2 Operators of sites designed specifically for children will want to label their sites as some search engines build their database of 'child-friendly sites' by looking for the ICRA labels.
- 3 The majority of operators of 'adults only' sites are generally just as keen not to offend young children as the next person. Furthermore, labelling their site sends a clear signal to governments that the World Wide Web is willing and able to self-regulate, rather than have the

(labelled), whether or not they have any content that could be described as harmful.

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heavy hand of government legislation decide what is or is not acceptable.

- 4 All other things being equal, a site carrying an ICRA label is more likely to be perceived as trustworthy than one which is not labelled.



The issue of parental control is a central one in the question of children's advertising.

Responsible parents exercise their responsibility as they understand it. This may include requiring their children to watch, or not to watch, particular programmes. It may involve rationing the TV or otherwise constraining children's own media predilections. The important thing to remember is that this responsibility is properly and legitimately discharged by parents and not by government or other public officials.

I have been trying to understand the motivations of those who wish to stop children from watching commercial TV. This is not the way that state authorities would put it, of course. Politically, such a restrictive and authoritarian belief system must be seen to apply to faceless corporations and not to angel-faced children. With public support, big business and the media are told not to communicate

to children whereas the real issue is about whether children should be allowed to watch television.

Who has the power?

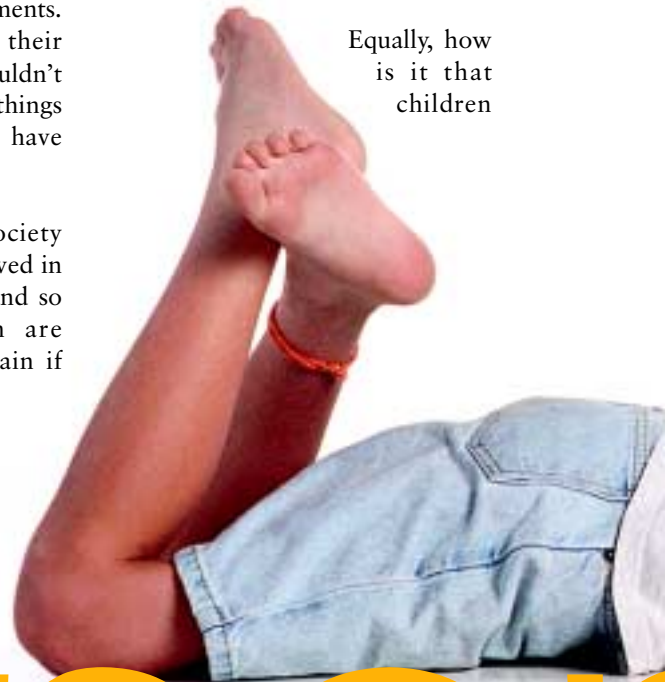
Ads cause kids to pester their parents, don't they? Such pestering, however, appears to occur whether there is advertising or not. It is highly misleading to ascribe this time-honoured characteristic of the parent-child relationship to advertisements. Children have always asked their parents for things that they couldn't and shouldn't have, and for things they have seen or think they have seen.

In our modern European society children are increasingly involved in family purchasing decisions, and so they should be. Children are consumers, they have a certain if

limited amount of money and rather more influence, and they have preferences like everyone else. They are real people. While there is a variety of limits on their choices, not least economic, the assumption that they are incapable of making informed choices and, in this context, are simply being manipulated by advertising is just patronising. It also overstates and misrepresents the actual potency and role of advertising.

In so many areas parents are being reminded of their responsibilities and the need to say 'no' as well as 'yes'. It is very illogical to say that in the area of collective family decision-making parents can't cope and shouldn't have to. Still less that this is an area in which the State has a moral responsibility to intervene.

Equally, how is it that children



Responsible

Lionel Stanbrook

Director, The Children's Programme, The Advertising Association, London, UK

can appear, especially to their parents, contentious and argumentative but apparently are immediately suckered by ads? How is it that children can appear to be rebellious, argumentative and unresponsive to some arguments and messages, but utterly docile in respect to others?

Slogans in advertising that are aimed at getting children to ask their parents for goodies are now generally unacceptable – an early victim of the obsession that people seem to have about the nature of childhood. The implicit charge here is that of brainwashing. Give them something to say, and without any irony whatsoever, the young ones will parrot it back to their parents with that glazed expression and listless demeanour that is necessarily generated by hours of dedicated, unblinking attention to the contents of the commercial breaks. Clearly, these are children who go to the toilet during the programmes and rush back to the sofa for the ads.

Medias

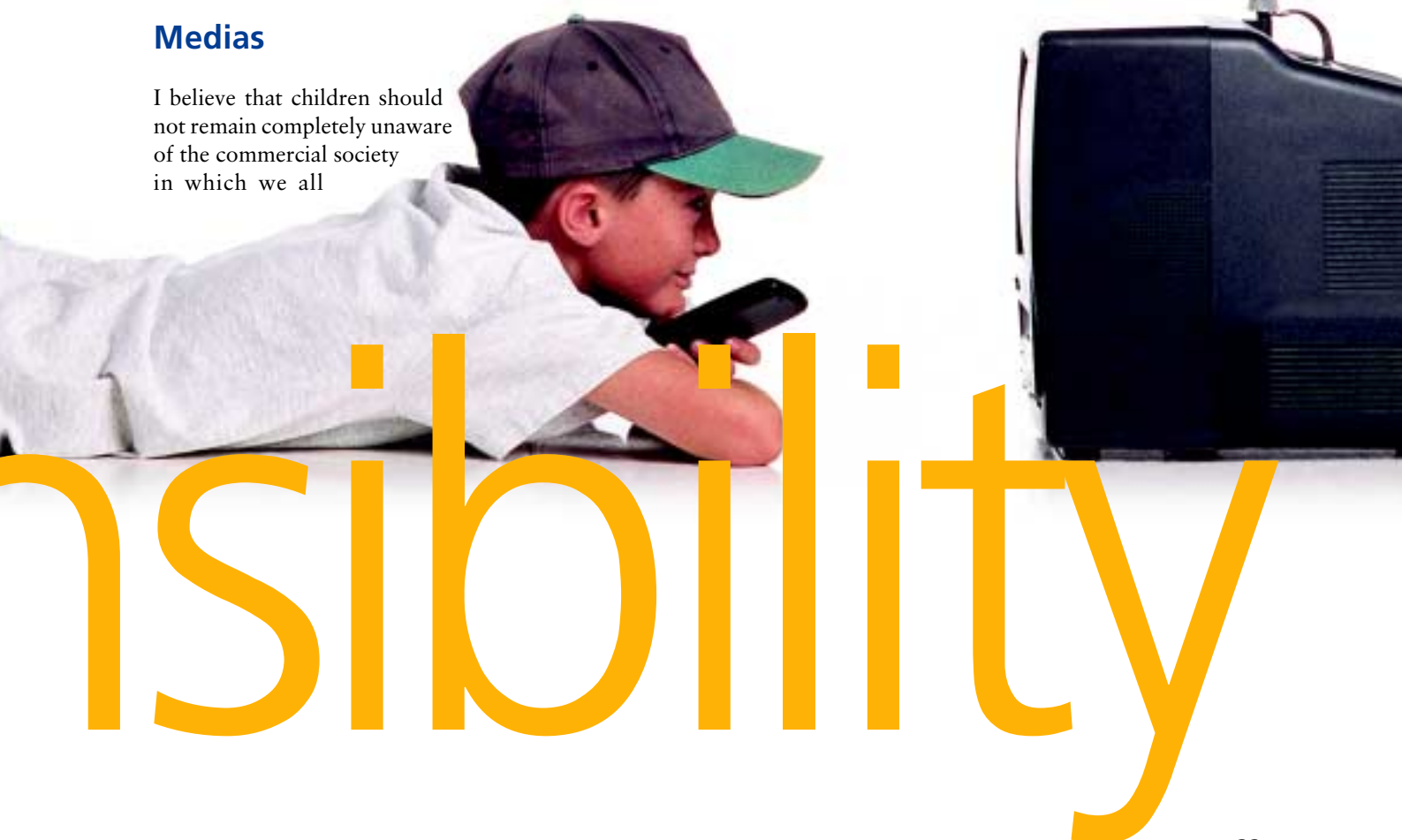
I believe that children should not remain completely unaware of the commercial society in which we all

live. At some stage they will have to cope with it knowledgeably and effectively. It is no help to children to keep them completely unaware of the nature of commercial blandishment. I believe that advertisements can usefully be taken into the learning environment that should exist between parent, teacher and child; the more, perhaps, to allow children to build up sensible criteria about advertising techniques and objectives.

Most children over five years old can distinguish between advertisements and programmes on television, even if they may not understand the persuasive nature of commercial blandishment. I am not clear why it particularly matters to state authorities if they don't. It may serve only to increase their gullibility at a later stage if commercial communication to them is banned altogether, especially as they are subject – as we know they are – to plenty of persuasive discourse (nagging) well before the age of 12.

The demonstrable fact that many children, even under 12, are better than their parents at understanding computers, computer games, cable TV and even VCR machines seems to suggest that here is a ban that is scarcely on solid foundations. And why limit only ads on TV? What about the rest of the media?

It is true that children's recall of advertisements can be quite high, but advertisement recall is often deliberately confused with effect. Children are increasingly media literate: they watch and sometimes enjoy advertisements in a way that is quite disassociated with behaviour. This is not surprising; the first duty of an advertisement is to be noticed, but the commercial and competitive reality is that, in mass media, most advertisements that are seen by a majority are actually targeted at a minority. Misunderstanding cause and consequence in this business is very common and, in any serious consideration of the



advertising business, needs to be constantly addressed.

The context

In spite of claims to the contrary, it must be remembered that in general children watch less television daily than any other sector of the population. The heaviest viewing sectors in most countries are the middle-aged and the elderly. It has also been shown that in most countries more children watch programmes that are not made exclusively for them than programmes which are. This makes a mockery of advertising controls aimed at restricting advertising during that part of the day attributed to children's programmes.

This context is critical to understanding the nature of advertisement content in commercial breaks in children's programmes. Of course food, soft drinks, and toys (particularly seasonally) are the predominant products because these are the products in which children are the most interested. Also, the more recent combination of an increasing household penetration of VCRs (of particular importance amongst children) coupled with subscription and pay-per-view TV services has resulted in the first ever decline in the supply of advertising impacts and this seems likely to continue as media proliferation increases.

Protective measures

Most advertising codes, including that of the International Chamber of Commerce, contain comprehensive and effective safeguards which acknowledge children's natural credulity and gullibility. These codes follow from both statutory and self-regulatory provisions. A workable set of standards for children's advertising is also included within the TV without Frontiers Directive.

Increasing fears about the impact of societal change on children's safety, security and health are often translated into proposals for advertising restrictions and bans. Since advertising is the most visible and accessible form of 'external influence' it is easily targeted by those seeking an all-encompassing panacea to society's ills. It is supposed that if action is taken to restrict commercial communication then a defined range of dietary, behavioural and health problems will disappear. For governments it has the added advantages of neither appearing to be a direct intervention in the operation of the market, nor of bringing a cost to the public purse.

However, this supposition is a clear misunderstanding of the role of advertising and the nature of consumer choice. It ignores the many other, more important, factors that influence our children and their behaviour. It also contradicts the simple fact that children, no matter how well protected from inappropriate commercialism, nevertheless need to grow up in a commercial environment as this experience will provide the best chance of ensuring that they become sceptical and critical consumers as adults.

Much of the concerted effort made to introduce a ban on children's advertising is based on the false premise that controls either do not exist or are insufficient. These controls are made up of a mixture of statutory and self-regulatory intervention. In general, the industry recognizes that these controls are necessary and the record of the toy and food industry in particular in complying with the conditions set by the regulators is exemplary. Few other advertising sectors in Europe have such a responsible record in code or standards compliance.

Attitudes to advertising among European politicians and regulators

are starting to change towards a more positive approach that recognizes the realities of the overall commercial environment. But with this change comes a wider consideration, linked more to the ability of a commercial industry to speak up for the system and the means by which it survives and prospers. Forty years of commercial television in the UK have largely removed from serious consideration the more fanciful claims of the 1950s that advertising was a devious and hidden persuader. Such habits still die hard but such claims are now heard more often in those countries



which have only recently introduced their publics to the delights of terrestrial commercial television, such as Denmark (1988) and Sweden (1991).

New campaign

The Advertising Association, together with its European partners in the Advertising Information Group, have set up a new campaign, the Children's Programme. The Children's Programme has commissioned research and identified activities to defend and promote the industry position on advertising to children,

plug the gaps and provide answers to the muddle of criticisms that confront the industry. The Children's Programme argues first for respect to be given to the European children's programme industry, probably the most creative and resourceful in the world. There is clear evidence that such programmes are enjoyed and appreciated by children, most of whom (certainly those over seven) have a very good idea indeed of the difference between programming and advertising.

Defending children's programmes from the restrictive proposals of those

who wish to stop children watching TV advertisements is a major preoccupation of the industry. The Children's Programme, supported by TV companies, publishers, advertisers and advertising agencies, is taking every opportunity to state the case for continuing to offer children choices in television viewing and encouraging diverse and high quality European TV production.

One final point: has anyone ever asked children if they agree that advertising to them should be banned? (I have, and they never do. I wonder why?)



Information

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Prohibit

Karin Lindell

Consumer Ombudsman, Director General, Swedish Consumer Agency

Sweden has an explicit ban on TV advertising targeted at children.

The ban is 10 years old and requires that commercials should not intentionally attract the attention of children under 12. All kinds of advertising immediately before, during, or after children's programmes are also forbidden. The ban is supported by consumer organizations, a majority of the Swedish public and — the Swedish Advertising Association.

The argument is that children do not fully understand what advertising is. Any advertising directed at them therefore breaches the advertising industry's own standards. The International Chamber of Commerce Code of Advertising Practice has a basic principle that advertising should be easily identified as such. There are corresponding clauses in the EC Television without Frontiers Directive.

This means that it should be possible to distinguish easily an advertisement from other media content. The

problem is that children lack the experience to make such a distinction and to know the purpose behind the ads. This is important because the ability to do that establishes the principle of fair play between advertiser and consumer.

Difference

Sceptical adults will know very well that a commercial does not give the whole picture. But children below a certain level of maturity cannot tell the difference between TV advertising and TV programmes. They may recognize that advertising differs stylistically from programmes, but they are generally unclear about the purpose of the advert.

This is a common sense observation for parents, but it is also underpinned by research. In 1994, Swedish sociologist Erling Bjurström published a comprehensive survey of international research on the effects of TV commercials on children.

According to the study some children can understand the purpose of TV commercials early. But there is much evidence that this ability is purely perceptual for younger children. They notice that something happens when a commercial break interrupts or follows a programme, but they are hardly aware that they are watching a different presentation with a different purpose. It is only by the age of 8 to 10 that most children have developed a basic understanding of the purpose of advertising. Furthermore, research results indicate that it is only around the age of 12 that we can be more certain that most children have developed a more complete understanding*.

Recently, Gunilla Jarlbro, another Swedish sociologist and also associate professor in journalism and mass communication, came to the same conclusion in her survey of international research, 1994–2000.

Even if children see the difference between commercials and programmes, it does not mean that they understand the purpose, that the commercial is there because somebody wants to persuade them to buy toys, magazines, sweets or snacks. Adults can easily see through an attempt to persuade children to pester them for new toys or new brands of

sweet breakfast cereals, but to many children the ad is a piece of product information or an instruction on how to play with the new gadgets.

If advertisers really take the business codes seriously they should not target TV advertising at small children. But a glance around the world reveals that this is just what they do.

Position

Sweden's right to enact a ban in this area has been challenged by advertisers. The European Court of Justice issued a preliminary ruling in 1997. The conclusion was that Sweden is entitled to uphold the ban in its domestic broadcasts, but not in transborder transmissions from other Member States. Swedish legislation applies when it comes to misleading or unfair advertising.

Of course there are arguments against the ban. One is that TV advertising funds programmes and without children's TV advertising there would not be any children's programming on commercial television.

I do not find this argument convincing. If there are no compelling reasons for the targeting of TV advertising at young children then there simply should not be any, regardless of how the advertising income is spent. In any case this provides a strong argument for supporting public service television.

Sometimes advertisers claim 'commercial freedom of speech'. This means they want a free ride on the back of the highly respected principle of freedom of expression in political, religious, scientific and artistic matters.

Freedom of expression is essential in an open and democratic society, but we should not debase the idea of freedom of expression by confusing it with the right of a merchant to use any argument to sell goods.



It is sometimes argued that children understand these things much better than their parents think they do. Old-fashioned parents need someone else to introduce children to the modern world of commercial communication. And who is better placed to do that than advertisers?

It is true that measuring the awareness of young children is not an exact science. Children differ and so do social scientists. But personally I think that most parents are perfectly well equipped to judge the needs of their children. Most of them would refuse any offer from the advertising industry to take over the media education of their children. And if they had an opportunity to choose, they would opt for a television free from advertising targeted at children, as in Sweden.

Does this mean that there is no room at all for advertising children's products on Swedish TV? Provided ads do not target children directly, they can address parents, grandparents or any other interested adult.

* www.konsumentverket.se

Reality

Michel Grégoire

Secretary General, European Group of Television Advertisers

The position of EGTA is based on two pillars, a quantitative one and a qualitative one.

The first one deliberately adopts an economic point of view by relating* the revenues gained from advertising to children** with the amounts spent on children's programmes (producing and buying). The second pillar is ethics-based and reviews the numerous rules shared by EGTA's members concerning the psychological protection of children.

Economic aspects

The gross global annual revenue collected by EGTA members based in the European Union from advertising to children, amounts to €320 million. Advertising to children represents, on average, 4.2% of members global turnover. To assess the net global annual revenue received by the channels it is necessary to deduct 20% which represents the commissions to various intermediaries (agencies, media buyers, etc.), leaving approximately €256 million.

These same channels spend each year €241 million for the purchase or the production of children's programmes. This amount is made up as follows :

- €124 million spent on own original productions (51.5%);
- €36 million for European purchases (15%);
- €81 million spent on the acquisition of the rights to non-European programmes (33.5%).

The amounts spent on children's programmes therefore represent 94% of the net revenues generated by advertising to children and do not take into account the general overheads imputable to children's programmes: so the financial balance is largely negative for the channels concerned.

Those investments allow 271 hours per week of broadcasting of children's programmes among 13 channels (RAI and TVE hours per week are missing).

Loss of revenue from children's advertising would create a serious problem for the financing of channels, whether they are private or public. For public channels, reduction of advertising revenue would have to be redressed by an increase in public funding, which seems very unlikely. Some of the private channels have obtained their licences through a bidding system which obliges them to make long-term financial commitments; restrictions about advertising to children were not taken into account. Others have signed terms of reference with government authorities and made commitments for several years which would be put at risk by such restrictions.

The production and broadcasting of children's programmes costs more money than is raised from advertising to children. Any loss of advertising revenue would force channels (both public and private) to adopt one of the following courses:

- find another source of finance: for example an increase in public funding for public service channels (extremely unlikely);
- discontinue children's programmes;
- import cheap programmes (Japanese cartoons).

Europe

Of the total sum spent on children's programmes, 66.5% (or some €160 million) is invested in the European audiovisual industry (own original productions and European acquisitions). This figure concerns only 15 television channels.

The consequences of a loss in advertising revenue for the European audiovisual industry would be in clear contradiction with the efforts made by the authorities of the European Union to develop it. Regardless of the course adopted by the television channels in the face of a reduction of children's advertising income, a major part of the amount currently injected into the European audiovisual industry would be put at risk.

Respect for children

EGTA assessed the degree of protection nowadays accorded to children in the field of television advertising by carrying out a survey on the origin of the provisions applied by its members established in the European Union:

- Television without Frontiers Directive (3 October 1989)
- national legislation
- self-regulatory code
- licence obligations (specific state contractual obligations)
- restrictions imposed by the TV channel itself.

Three conclusions can be drawn from this inquiry.

There is a common core of provisions which are applied by all EGTA members which proves that children are granted very effective protection which often goes unrecognized. This is characterised by the members' concern not to mislead or manipulate children. The provisions tend to make them responsible consumers by not treating them as children. Other measures are implied by ethical

considerations and concerns relating to physical safety, health and hygiene.

43% of the provisions stem from self-discipline (self-regulatory codes or restrictions that the channels impose upon themselves), apart from the restrictions imposed by the Television without Frontiers Directive. These provisions are now respected: channels have been free to apply them and they have adopted them.

Numerous measures differ from one country to another; their analysis shows the effectiveness of self-discipline which allows Northern and Southern European countries to translate their cultural differences into specific provisions that no legal provisions, made at the European level, would be able to guarantee.

Most parents' and children's wishes expressed in the study carried out by ITC Research*** are covered by the provisions currently in force and are applied by EGTA members. Thus,

- advertisements do not encourage children to pester their parents to make them buy what they want;
- advertisements for alcoholic beverages are not targeted towards children;
- the revenue from advertising to children is reinvested in children's programmes;
- there is a clear distinction between advertisements and programmes;
- sponsors may not influence the programme content and the broadcaster's editorial integrity must be respected.

Children would also like to be considered as responsible decision-makers; they do not feel as though they are being manipulated by the TV sponsorship of their programmes.

So that protective measures are effective, there must still be a coherence between the different restrictions imposed on the ways through which advertising can reach

children. Television, which is without a doubt a victim of its own success, today finds itself hemmed in on various levels by numerous regulations which are disproportionate to the ends in view and which may lead to a proliferation of regulations. The danger is to hamper the free movement of commercial communication without even making it possible to attain the objectives aimed for.

EGTA would like to help to objectify a discussion which is all too often marked with demagoguery or prejudices and which is only centred on one particular aspect of the problem. EGTA members believe that the problems raised by advertising to children must once again be put into their global context.

* *This relation has been highlighted in a questionnaire survey among the advertising sales houses that are members of the association and active in European Union countries. This survey has been updated with 1999 data and does not take into account the channels which do not broadcast advertising to children.*

** *The age from which a viewer is no longer considered a child is set, for the majority of countries, at 12 years.*

*** *In order to gauge the relevance of the provision, it is interesting to compare them with the results of the study made by the ITC (the UK Independent Television Commission) on TV sponsorship of children's programmes, although the EGTA survey is broader since it covers both commercial advertising and TV sponsorship.*



Asia

The law of

Anura Goonasekera

Head of Research, Asian Media Information and Communication Centre

Most mass media programmes are not produced with children's interests in mind.



Like other commercial commodities these are produced for profit in the marketplace. However it is sometimes asserted that the marketplace provides children with what they like to get. Critics have called this the 'pornographer's logic'*

The quotation, from *Alice in Wonderland*, cited in the title makes a valid distinction between getting what one likes and liking what one gets. They are not the same thing. This issue has more to do with producing television programmes to commercial dictates rather than devoting resources to producing good quality children's programmes. Only public policies aimed at producing good quality children's programmes will get children out of this vicious circle.

In most Asian countries children under the age of 15 comprise around

30% of the population. This proportion is even higher in poorer countries such as India and Bangladesh. However only a very small proportion of TV programmes, radio programmes, cinema, books, periodicals and newspapers are made for children. It has been estimated that in some Asian countries, such as India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka this is less than 5%. The lack of information on children and media is indicative of the lack of interest among the research community and the ruling classes about this issue. This situation becomes all the more glaring when one considers the fact that in many of the poorer countries in Asia, a large proportion of children play truant. The proportion is particularly high in the case of Asian girls.

In those countries where the economies are growing rapidly, rampant commercialism has entered children's media programming. Different media systems collaborate to produce and market children's products as part of their media fare, e.g. the TV programme *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle* spawned comic books, computer games, movies and countless commercials over radio and TV to make it a household name.

In this situation what kind of television programmes are offered to

the market

children between the ages of 6 and 15 in Asian countries? Do they get what they like or do they like what they get?

What sort of a world is created for children by these programmes? To what extent are the policy-makers and programme producers in Asian television stations aware of children's rights as enunciated by the UN¹? What are the resources available for the production of children's television programmes in Asia? These are some of the questions that the Asian Media Information and Communication Centre (AMIC) addressed in an empirical study of television and children in seven Asian countries².

Countries in Asia have many cultural, economic and social differences. One can discern two Asias: the poorer Asia and the richer Asia. Access to television is different. Bangladesh and Nepal, two of the less developed countries in Asia, have around 14

television sets and 6 television sets respectively per 1,000 population. India and Indonesia 67 sets and 46 sets respectively. In the richer parts of Asia television ownership is quite wide-spread. South Korea has 416 sets per 1,000 population; Singapore 224 sets (Goonasekera and Holaday, 1998). There are also different types of ownership and management of television stations in different countries in Asia (government-owned private or a mixture of the two). These factors have an important bearing on development of television. They also influence the policies that are followed in relation to children's television programmes (Table 1).

What kind of TV?

The study classified television programmes were classified into 12 types: animation or cartoons; puppets; story telling; serial/drama; pre-school magazine; magazine information; information/news;

magazine entertainment; quiz/games; music; religious; cultural/traditional. There is also an 'other' category to include those programmes that cannot be classified within these 12 categories.

Tables 2, 3 and 4 give data on the basis of this classification for two countries: India and China. India has an open skies policy regarding reception of satellite television programmes. China has imposed restrictions.

Table 2 gives data for Doordarshan in India. Two factors stand out in this data. One is the predominance of animation and serial/drama programmes. This is so for many other countries in Asia. The second is the dominance of foreign programmes in the animation category (95%).

The predominance of foreign programmes is compounded by a relatively recent phenomena in

Table 1 – Television ownership in 11 Asian countries

	Public	Private	Mixed
Less-Industrialized / Poor	China, Nepal Vietnam	Philippines ³	India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka
Industrialized /Rich			Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand

³ The Philippines has two government supported stations.

India: the transmission of programmes by foreign multinational television broadcasters such as StarTV, CNN and BBC World Service. In addition India has its own satellite channels, some of which are up-linked from foreign points of origin such as Hong Kong (Table 3). Here again the dominant type of programme for children are magazine/information (Animal Planet: 24-hour programming) with 46%, and animation (including 16 hours of the TNT Cartoon Network). India has not controlled direct access to satellite programmes. However most of the foreign satellite programmes are distributed mainly through Indian cable companies. Most people in India cannot afford satellite reception dishes. These people subscribe to cable services which re-transmit foreign satellite services along with local programmes such as local language movies.

Unlike India, China (Table 4) controls access of its citizens to foreign satellite broadcasts by requiring them to get a licence to use a satellite dish. Here again there is a predominance of foreign material among children's programmes (over 65% of children's programmes broadcast over CCTV, Beijing TV and Cable TV in 1998).

Controlling satellite access alone is not enough to prevent the dominance of foreign programmes. There should also be active encouragement of local programme producers to produce programmes for children. Market forces by themselves will not generate sufficient programmes. In the case of China, where television is managed by the State, except for animation programmes, all other programmes for children are locally produced.

How widespread are the characteristics of children's programmes we have described for India and China? Summary statistics for China, India, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand** show the pre-

dominance of animation programmes among these countries: 28%. This was followed by serial dramas (15%). Furthermore, around 47% of all programmes for children are of foreign origin. The data also shows the paucity of informational, cultural and pre-school programmes among the total fare offered to children.

While these characteristics are common to many Asian countries there are also significant differences in policies regarding children's television in Asia.

In China⁴ there are two kinds of programmes relating to children. One is programmes aimed directly at children. Such programmes include entertainment, education and news. The other type is programmes aimed at educating adults regarding their duties towards children. How familiar are the TV producers of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child? CCTV in Beijing and particularly CCTV's youth and children's department were aware of the Convention and are consciously incorporated into TV programmes. Examples of such television programmes are those made for Children's Broadcast Day (December), International Children's Day (June) and programmes telecast during the winter and summer vacations. *Big Wind Mill* and *Tell It Like It Is* are two television programmes that incorporated the principles of the Convention.

Implementation of these provisions is often considered in combin-

ation with that of the National Programme of Action for Child Development in China.

In India⁵ the total number of children's programmes on all channels is less than 1%. Most of these programmes are designed for the upper-class urban child. However these are not popular among this audience because they lack entertainment. Not a single programme recalled by the sample of children interviewed was made in India. When respondents from DDI were asked about programme priorities none of them mentioned children's programmes. None of the networks has any specific policies to create awareness or to create programmes on children's rights. An obvious gap in children's television programming in India is the virtual absence of programmes specifically made for early teens.

In Indonesia⁶ little attention being paid to children's programmes because such programmes are perceived as being less attractive to advertisers. The emergence of private television and lack of proper policies and guidelines about programming content has resulted in an uncontrolled and confused situation. It has become difficult to develop children's television. Of 15 programmes most preferred by children, 7 were programmes for adults. Station managers had little or

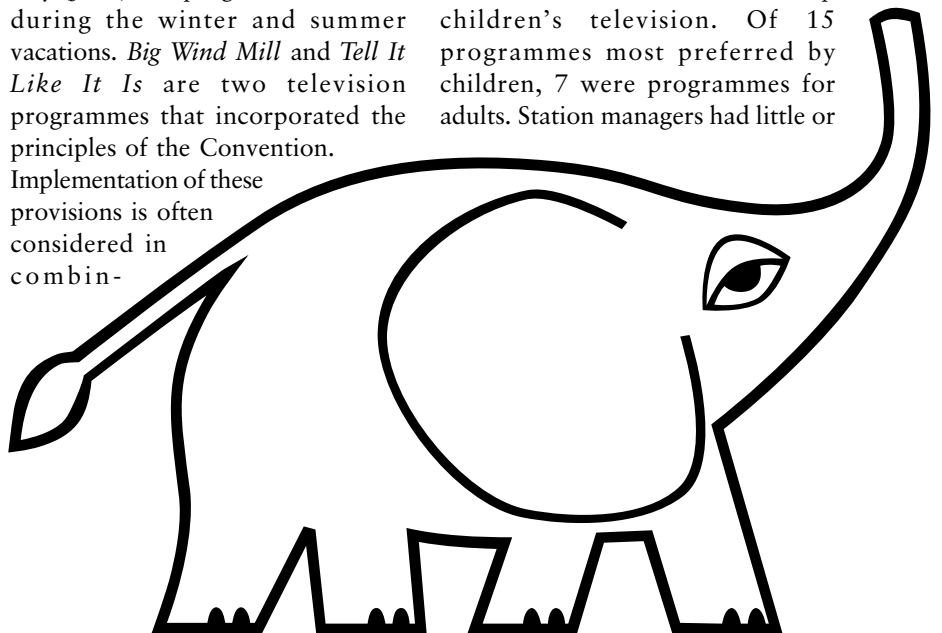


Table 2 – Telecast of Children’s Programmes, Doordarshan, India* (1999)

Type of programme	Duration in minutes per week		Total broadcast time per year in minutes (hours)**		As percentage of all children’s programmes
	Local	Foreign			
Animation	30	690	37440	(624)	27.7
Puppets	-	-	-	-	-
Storytelling	-	-	-	-	-
Serial/Drama	870	-	45240	(754)	33.5
Pre-shool magazine	-	-	-	-	-
Magazine information	150	-	7800	(130)	5.8
Information/	-	-	-	-	-
News magazine	300	-	15600	(260)	11.5
Entertainment	120	-	6240	(104)	4.6
Quiz/Games	-	-	-	-	-
Pop music	-	-	-	-	-
Religious	-	-	-	-	-
Cultural/Traditional	-	-	-	-	-
Educational	120	-	6240	(104)	4.6
Others***	320	-	16640	(277.3)	12.3
TOTAL	1910	690	1135200	(2253.3)	100.0

* Based on programme schedule for one week.

** Calculated on the basis of broadcast time during one week in 1999.

*** Covers variety programmes for children which include storytelling, drama, quiz/games, music, dance, etc.

Table 3 – Telecast of Children’s Programmes in Satellite Channels*

Type of programme	Duration in minutes per week		Total broadcast time per year in minutes (hours)**		As percentage of all programmes for children
	Local	Foreign			
Animation (Including 16 hrs TNT Cartoon Network)	90	8490	446160	(7436)	38.7
Puppets	60	-	3120	(52)	0.3
Storytelling	150	90	12480	(208)	1.1
Serial/Drama	480	660	59280	(988)	5.2
Pre-shool magazine	-	-	-	-	-
Magazine information (Animal Planet 24-hr programme)	-	10200	530400	(8840)	46.0
Information/News	60	-	3120	(52)	0.3
Magazine entertainment	270	-	14040	(234)	1.2
Quiz/Games	120	210	17160	(286)	1.5
Pop music	-	-	-	-	-
Religious	-	-	-	-	-
Cultural/Traditional	210	-	10920	(182)	0.9
Educational	570	-	29640	(494)	2.6
Others***	180	-	9360	(156)	0.8
Category not known	-	300	15600	(260)	1.4
TOTAL	2190	19950	1151280	(19188)	100.0

* Based on programme schedule for one week (India 1999).

** Calculated on the basis of broadcast time during one week in 1999.

*** Covers variety programmes for children which include storytelling, drama, quiz/games, music, dance, etc.

no knowledge about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In Malaysia⁷ the government broadcasting station, RTM, is making a serious effort to produce children's television programmes. The commercial stations, TV3 and Metrovision, have not shown similar enthusiasm. This neglect is due to the perception that children's programmes do not have much appeal to the advertisers. RTM producers are quite aware of the UN Convention on Children's Rights. They have gained this knowledge through international conferences in which they have participated. Private broadcasters on the other hand are unaware or vaguely aware of the Convention.

In Nepal⁸ severe financial constraints have hampered the production of children's television programmes. Children's programmes are low priority due to the perceived lack of advertising/ market support. This is made worse by the lack of adequate training in the production of children's programmes and the lack of creativity. Nepalese television producers have heard of the Convention but are not familiar with its detailed provisions.

In Singapore⁹ there has been some revival of children's television programmes after corporatization of television in 1994. Locally produced children's TV programmes target a wide age range: from 4 to 12 years. Children within this age range have a wide variation of cognitive abilities. Television programmes targeting such a wide age range are generally ineffective in appealing to such a group. Television stations also broadcast a large number of programmes for pre-schoolers. Older children's needs are not sufficiently met. Consequently older children consume a large proportion of adult programmes. No special training has been provided for children's programme producers. The programmes reflect Singapore's political and cultural climate. Stress is on maintaining racial and religious harmony and political stability. The priority given to children's programmes is low. This is because of the belief among managers that the audience ratings of these programmes do not justify high expenditure. Only a few producers were aware of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In Vietnam¹⁰ the government sets targets for producing children's programmes every year. These

programmes are directed at children or are aimed at educating adults regarding the needs of children. Financial limitations are a major factor which inhibit production of children's television programmes. There are very few programmes catering to children over 10 years of age. Producers are aware of the Convention and related state policies.

Overall, children's programmes produced in many Asian countries do not appeal to the children for whom they are meant. Consequently only a small percentage of what is made available are actually watched by children. According to Indian media researcher Mira Aghi, around 75% of her sample of children mentioned programmes made for adults as the ones they liked: crime, thrillers, comedies and family serials. Sri Lankan researcher Dharmadasa observes that locally produced children's programmes are often not up to the level with regard to quality and content that most children demand. According to a survey carried out by Survey Research Malaysia (1994) of 100 most viewed programmes in Malaysian television by children between the ages of 6 and 14, only 3 are children's programmes. These are all foreign productions. Their rank is given in brackets: *Cyber*

Table 4 – Telecast of Children's Programmes in China: CCTV, Beijing TV, Cable TV

Type of programme	Duration in minutes per week		Total broadcast time per year in minutes (hours)		As percentage of all programmes for children
	Local	Foreign			
Animation	1677.5	1677.5	174460	(2907.7)	65.91
Puppets	-	-	-	-	-
Storytelling	140	-	7280	(121.3)	2.74
Drama	50	-	2600	(43.3)	0.98
Pre-school magazine	-	-	-	-	-
Magazine information	245	-	12740	(212.3)	4.81
Magazine entertainment	760	-	39520	(658.7)	14.93
Quiz/Games	200	-	10400	(173.3)	3.92
Pop music	100	-	5200	(86.7)	1.97
Religious	-	-	-	-	-
Cultural/Traditional	140	-	7280	(121.3)	2.75
Other	100	-	5200	(86.7)	1.97
TOTAL	3412.5	1677.5	264680	(4411.3)	100

Cop (39); Ultraman Trio (63); Alamria Disney (80).

Of the countries surveyed, three have followed policies conducive to the development of television programmes for children: China, Vietnam and Japan. In Japan, the public broadcasting policy of NHK was behind the success of children's television. However in many other countries children's television programmes had to compete in the marketplace. In this it could not succeed. The advertisers and marketers saw little profit to be made from children's television. The AMIC survey shows clearly the need to develop children's television in many countries in Asia. It also shows that market forces will not do this. A concerted effort by concerned groups is needed to mobilize support for children's television in Asia. Resources of government, civil society, educational institutions and commercial organizations need to be mobilized.

Notes

- 1) *Children have inalienable rights. Adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the UN General Assembly in 1989. 187 governments are now State Parties to this international treaty including all nations in Asia-Pacific.*
- 2) *China, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Singapore and Vietnam. Study was partially funded by UNICEF.*
- 3) *The Philippines has two government supported stations.*
- 4) *Prof. Huang Chang Zhu, deputy*

* Goonasekera, 1998
 ** Yearbook of the UNESCO International Clearinghouse on Children and Violence on the Screen
 (Carlsson and von Feilitzen, 1998)

director and senior research fellow, Centre for Documentation and Information of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing was the lead researcher for the study in China.

- 5) *Ms Lalita Eashwer of Kanoi Marketing Services, Madras, was the lead researcher for the study in India.*
- 6) *Mr Bob Gantarto, researcher at Indonesian Child Welfare Foundation in Jakarta, was the lead researcher for the study in Indonesia.*
- 7) *Dr Shanti Balraj-Ambigapathy of the School of Communication, University Sains Malaysia in Penang, was the lead researcher for the study in Malaysia.*
- 8) *Ms Josefina Dhungana of DECORE Consultancy Group in Katmandu was the lead researcher for the study in Nepal.*
- 9) *Ms Lin Ai Leen of the School of Communication Studies at Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, was the lead researcher for the study in Singapore.*
- 10) *Prof. Chung A, director of the Centre for Sociology at Ho Chi Minh National Political Academy was the lead researcher for the study in Vietnam.*

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- A) *Aghi, Mira (1996) Cited in Television and Children: What Kids are Viewing in Asia. Presentation by Anura Goonasekera at International Forum of Researchers: Young People and Media Tomorrow. GRREM, Paris.*
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- C) *Goonasekera, Anura (1998) Quoted in Final Report, 1998 The Second World Summit on Television for Children P.13. London, Blackmore Ltd.*
- D) *Goonasekera, Anura and Duncan Holaday (1998) Asian Communication Handbook 1998. Singapore, AMIC.*
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Torremolinos

Thomas Alexanderson
Director of Radio, EBU

“Honestly, I do not know of anyone in my family or among my friends who has ever paid their licence fee.”

Such was the frank confession of one of the keynote speakers, a former French ambassador, at the 1987 Rencontre de Torremolinos conference, the theme of which was dedicated to ‘Radio, its Audience and the Public Authorities’. Maybe it was the relaxed character, as well as when and where this event takes place, which tempted the speaker to display such unexpected candour because, just as for Prix Italia, the Rencontre has its own, quite specific, atmosphere. As John Thompson (UKIB) put it in his conference report in 1989: “What an extraordinary phenomenon these Rencontres de Torremolinos are. I can think of no other similar meeting that is held within the radio world anywhere in Europe. The mixture of the formal and the informal, of the vague and the precise, is unrivalled by any other regular encounter.”

It has been organized every second year since 1973 by RNE in cooperation with the EBU, led with elegance, professional authority and impeccable organization successively by Ramon Villot, Alfonso Gallego and Eduardo Hernaiz. The setting since 1979 has been a pleasant seaside resort on the Costa del Sol in early May, when it is blessed by mild and sunny weather and well before the arrival of hordes of funseekers from Northern Europe.

molinos

The conference centre is located sufficiently far away from downtown to keep the captive audience from escaping to urban pleasures at coffee and lunch breaks. In the evenings, however, delegates can mingle in a number of small, pleasant restaurants on the water-front.

The Rencontre is a two-day affair, open to EBU members only and, since 1987, dedicated to one main topic with sub-themes discussed in eight plenary sessions, always provoking a lively debate. Over the years, the topics have been very different such as audience research, radio and culture, music and radio, radio on the threshold of the satellite age, and radio and advertising. Session chairpersons are drawn from the EBU membership, whereas keynote speakers and panellists, all of an eminently high quality, might sometimes come from outside the circle of public service broadcasters. At the end of the conference, a General Rapporteur summarizes the main features of the two preceding days, a very demanding task since it allows very little time for preparation.

Some topics have recurred over the years: radio's adaptation to new times, financing difficulties, multimedia opportunities and relations with the European Union.

In 1985 (radio and advertising), a speaker from the Netherlands suggested that the best thing that ever happened to radio was the arrival of television, when it became possible for radio to stop trying to be all things to all men and start concentrating on the things it did best. In 1987 (Radio, its Audience and the Public Authorities), it was stated that a common problem was one of finance, particularly for public stations, forced to eliminate services and to face the fact that governments refuse to increase budgets adequately for fear of adding to the public deficit, or to raise licence fees because of the electoral risks involved.

In the report from 1989 (Radio Tomorrow – Competing for the Public's Attention), it was noted that a representative of the European Commission spoke on (radio) development which were going, or rather not going, on in Brussels and concluded that there should be “a good deal of opportunity at least for a friendly and working dialogue between the broadcasters and the officials at the Community headquarters.” As far as radio is concerned, ongoing attempts to open such a dialogue by the EBU and others, representing a European medium transmitted by 9,600 stations with a daily listening audience of 300

million people, have so far fallen on deaf ears in Brussels.

In 1997 (Radio in the Multimedia Environment), which saw the emergence of this topic, it was pointed out “that the Internet was used by many radio and TV broadcasters in a manner which fell short of the actual potential of this new communication medium. Yet multimedia applications represent an enormous opportunity for broadcasters, since their networks are ideally suited to current multimedia production, to experimenting with new formats and to training specialized personnel. The broadcasters' task is to create multimedia productions with the desired content and geared to available resources.” However, four years later, how much has happened in this respect?

The issue of political pressure on broadcasters is also more topical than one might imagine. In 1987 the former British Minister for Northern Ireland, Mervyn Rees, indicated that the public authorities' relations with broadcasters should remain distant and not become friendly; this was less a matter of fear than of mutual respect and a means of ensuring greater freedom and scope for critical examination on both sides. The public authorities, notably the political ones,

draw up legislation and establish the general context in which radio operates. The greater the financial involvement, the greater they are tempted to exert pressure on broadcasters. On 11 January 2001, the director general of Czech Television was forced to resign, following a massive strike by his journalists. Their reason: they claimed that his appointment had been a political one, to enable the government to control the programme policy of Czech Television.

Radio's relationship to its audience is an eternally fascinating subject, and in the same year Stéphane Duhamel (RTL) suggested that audience and quality are not mutually exclusive. The competition between stations leads to a certain diversity, and presents a challenge for the promotion of quality in terms both of form and content. Influence is also exercised through various forms of individual participation in programmes, for example by phone-ins. However, this should not conceal the risks involved that radio will delegate to the audience its duties and responsibilities of informing and creating. It should not be thought that telephone calls are sociologically representative. Organized groups of listeners sometimes exert collective pressure. A channelling process is required, and care needs to be taken to avoid being carried away by false notions of participation. Such suggestions are even more valid in an age when participation is possible over the Internet.

The key to radio's dilemma in the crossfire between the audience and the public authorities lies in the difficulty of defining the difference between information and propaganda, particularly since, nowadays, the latter often masquerades under various forms. Radio must not fall into its own trap.

It is the best-equipped medium for reporting news fast, and speed can become an obsession. It is preferable to delay broadcasting a piece of news briefly to be able to place it in its context and help the listener to be better informed. In addition to the request for bread and circuses, or music and sport, there is also the responsibility for public service radio to help improve society's social, educational and cultural levels. And do not these questions continue to occupy EBU radio members on a daily basis?

In 1991, it was decided to relax a bit from more solemn topics and discuss Entertainment in Radio – a Question of Quality, although it was agreed that writing and producing entertainment for radio is a serious business and that the radio comedy department was probably the best place to be, but certainly the hardest. "The radio comedian", said David Hatch (BBC and part of the original *Monty Python's Flying Circus*), "is a blend of journalist, doctor, politician and priest, not only because comedy covers a wide range of matters but also since its social function covers a wide range of needs. It helps control politicians when they act outside the limits of common sense, cures depression or loneliness, makes unnecessary the extensive use of psychiatrists (in fact one could speak of 'radio therapy') and comforts everyone's soul. Groucho Marx, Charlie Chaplin, Buster Keaton and Woody Allen might be even more important than the UN or Parliament. And, moreover, to write a comedy show one needs only to read the front page headlines of the daily newspaper. The main problem however, is that writing comedy for radio pays very little compared to television. Improving the comedy budgets, maybe by merging them with radio drama, might bring radio entertainment back to its former heights and show that radio can be funny again, giving it a new lease on life." So, what are EBU members waiting for?

The Rencontre in 1989 (Radio Tomorrow – Competing for the Public's Attention), 1993 (Europe in 1993 and Public Service Radio) and 1995 (Public and Private: the Two Faces of European Radio) were particularly dynamic in dealing with the profound problems of existence and co-existence of public and private, national and local radio. While agreeing that nobody had an exclusive right to broadcasting (radio is a public commodity and both the public and private sectors have the right to use it), the view on regulation differed widely from those who advocated centralized regulations with public radio standards for all, both public and independent stations, to spokesmen for complete freedom with no (except self-) regulation at all. Public and private radio stations maintained a new balance of mutual acceptance. Public radio had improved its role in this competition, and the boundary between them was not so much the ownership as the quality. But one principle applied to both kinds of radio alike: it was essential to concentrate on the daytime schedule and to schedule the programming with an awareness of audience segments as related to changes in television, other media and social habits.

Two recurring trends in radio were localization and segmentation, and in many countries local radio was advancing very successfully. A local radio station might be “the mouse that could get in where the cat could not”, where national radio was too blunt an instrument to report on events and developments of sometimes greater interest to the local population than the national ones. The exception was, of course, events such as when radio reported to the Spanish people on the attempted coup in the Cortes in February 1981, popularly known as “the night of the transistors”.

No discussion of the kind would be complete without reference to money, or the lack of it. Could costs be cut by the more extensive use of independent producers, utilized more than in-house producers to control productions cost? The answer might be ‘yes’, although the degree to which the BBC made use of independent producers could probably not be reached by other broadcasters. Moreover, public radio, maintaining orchestras and producing radio drama, did this at cost levels which would never affect independent producers, or independent radio for that matter. Today José Manuel Nunes (RDP) might bite his tongue for having said at the time that he faced dark hours because of lack of money. Now he is presiding over what, in relative terms, might be one of the wealthiest radio organizations in Europe.

The issue of cultural programming and whether private radio gave it too little attention was hotly debated. UK Classic FM was quoted as an example of a successful commercial station offering culture, but was criticized for transmitting too easily digestible programming, forgetting new composers and not offering the audience enough background information on the works and their authors. David Hatch suggested that the secret of reaching a larger

audience for cultural programming was not to change the programme itself but to change its presentation and its presenters, taking away from them the rifles they used as gatekeepers and telling them to invite people in. Then too, it is possible even to make money out of culture, as proven by Classic FM. Gert Haedecke (SWF) underlined the importance of avant-garde programming because it represented “the past of tomorrow”. He offered the example of his mother (and all the mothers of the world), upset when listening to Stravinsky for the first time and now a fervent devotee of his music.

This brings us to the matter of programming for the young. The independent broadcaster, Colin Mason (UKIB), said that although popular music should be available to all broadcasters, the commercial presentation and exploitation of it should be left to the people who invented it, i.e. commercial radio, who need to earn a living through advertising. This set off a storm of protest among public broadcasters. Piet van Roe (VRT), stressed two key notions: the right of the listener and the responsibility of the State. Young people are the most vulnerable. We cannot simply hand them over to commercial broadcasters. We are responsible for young and less educated people. We cannot allow 95% to pay for a 5% elite. He called for a popular public radio: if news is better understood through songs or pop music than Mozart, so be it. Today ‘Eurosonic’, featuring popular music, is the fastest growing activity in EBU radio.

The popularity of the Rencontre has grown over the years and, during the last editions, the number of participants has exceeded 100, many of them returning time and again. The 2001 Rencontre is entitled Highlighting Radio News in the Future and includes themes such as credibility, quality, ethics: the pillars of public service, covering violence –

a difficult necessity, how to make young listeners news conscious and news and multimedia. It will feature chairpersons, speakers and panellists from 18 countries.

In his elegant 1989 report, John Thompson recalled the story about the journalist who was covering political upheaval in a Central American republic. He asked the chancellor of the local university what role it had played in it, and the answer was: “We are the brains of the subversives.” John went on to say that the Rencontre de Torremolinos was offering to the radio world throughout Europe “the brains of the subversives.”

Could the Rencontre receive more distinguished praise than this?



Pursue more...

For the past seven decades, the BBC's motivation in supporting its orchestras has remained unchanged: the performing groups exist to pursue a distinctive editorial agenda which the market alone will not provide. Back in the 1930s, of course, the orchestra only worked for radio, but now the remit has widened to include new media and television work, educational involvement, commercial recordings and concert giving. In an ongoing commitment to the orchestras, new studios are being planned for London, Glasgow and Cardiff. Increasing audience focus lies at the heart of this initiative, since these new spaces are essentially tools to reach a wider public.

Though the BBC maintains its five orchestras to fulfil its public service remit, the word 'radio' does not feature in their names, since it would imply limits on their activity. BBC consumers can experience orchestras performing public concerts for broadcast and hear studio work, as well as running projects in schools, universities and even prisons. They can also appreciate the soundtrack of the landmark BBC television series, *History of Britain* and access orchestral recordings on the Internet. The orchestras are part of a media organization which serves its listeners using various platforms.

BBC Symphony Orchestra

Happy b

Roger Wright
Administrator, BBC Radio 3

The national role

The BBC's role of cultural patron provides the justification for investing in five orchestras. In particular, orchestras provide Radio 3 with the resources to pursue an ambitious editorial programme, clearly differentiated from commercial music stations. The *BBC Proms*, about 70 concerts throughout the summer, have introduced generations of young people to classical music. The series depends on BBC orchestras, both for a unique sense of occasion and the broad range of repertoire. About half the concerts are performed by the BBC's own orchestras, and thanks to the EBU, they now have a greater international impact, generating 735 further broadcasts last year through the invaluable EBU music exchange.

Five orchestras might seem extravagant, but the BBC is committed to bringing high quality music to remote communities, which get fewer chances to hear live music than better-served urban areas. The BBC makes a significant contributions to culture across the whole UK, not only in London with the BBC Symphony Orchestra and Concert Orchestra, but also in the nations and English regions. It supports the only symphony orchestra in Wales, and helps sustain orchestral music in Northern Ireland through an

arrangement with the Ulster Orchestra. In this context, we cannot overlook the BBC Singers, the only full-time professional choir in the UK, which makes a unique contribution to national musical life. It performs a wide range of challenging choral music which would otherwise not be heard; the BBC's commissioning policy complements this activity by developing choral repertoire.

Particularly in London, the orchestras work in a crowded market and therefore a distinctive artistic policy is essential to enhance their profile. Daring cycles and seasons have made a strong impact recently, including a Schnittke festival and Copland season, as well as regular *Composer Portraits*, including packed houses for Stockhausen, Berio and Henze. The commitment to British music is reflected in both performances and commissions. The orchestras are also central to *Music Live*, an annual broadcast event when the BBC takes its musical resources to a particular region of the UK. For the millennium the entire country was involved: 3 million people attended live music events, a sixth of whom had never attended one before.

The orchestras offer more than simply high-quality broadcasts and concerts. They are heavily involved in educational projects, some of which

cross cultural boundaries. The BBC Philharmonic recently collaborated with Kala Sangam, whose artists include internationally acclaimed musicians from South Asia, to combine Eastern rhythms with classical sounds. Another long-running project, Aiming High, has so far involved 25,000 school pupils. In Wales school children created new music for the Welsh Orchestra, as well as performing together with them.

Within the BBC

Three years ago contractual changes meant that the orchestras were re-positioned to serve the wider interests of the BBC. In a ground-breaking deal, orchestras accepted an 'all rights' position with no extra payments attached. Until then ensembles were fundamentally employed as 'radio orchestras', and extra payments were made for television, including the *Last Night of the Proms* – broadcast on BBC 1 and BBC 2 – which earned two separate television fees!

This new agreement has radically changed the relationship between the orchestras and the BBC: previously there was no advantage for producers in using BBC orchestras, and non-BBC groups were frequently used, even for television music programmes. Now, television producers

Birth day!

in drama, natural history, arts, and entertainment work closely with the orchestras to enhance their own series. Though the orchestras are best known internationally for their role in the concert hall, there is something of the Hollywood studio orchestra in the way they now work, supporting a range of programming, from landmark series to charity appeals. These days the BBC Concert Orchestra is a regular part of universally acclaimed BBC Natural History productions. On radio too flexibility has proved useful: during one introductory programme for classical music, called *Discovering Music*, the orchestra plays excerpts and single instrumental lines, dissecting the chosen work as the presenter explains it.

In a multimedia world, rights are a hot topic. It is increasingly important to own media properties across radio, television, Internet or mobile phones, as well as other mediums yet to be invented. Apart from News, BBC Radio is now the most accessed sector of www.bbc.co.uk. Growing cross-platform use has increased the orchestras' relevance, and some performances can already be accessed on demand across the web. Even for conventional media, this flexibility of use is crucial: orchestral performances contribute to the richness of the BBC World Service, as well as to Euroclassic Notturmo, assisting the BBC and other EBU members in maintaining a high-quality night radio distinctive from commercial channels.

Live and new

BBC Radio 3 has recently focussed on two main objectives, presenting live music and encouraging new work. The orchestras make this possible: currently 56% of broadcast hours are live or specially recorded, and the last year has seen a 20% increase in material actually transmitted live. The recent weekend-long celebration of Schnittke, involved two orchestras and the BBC Singers. This continued

the tradition of January weekends – offered to the EBU – focussing on contemporary composers, an ambitious, well-attended London series which makes considerable demands on the BBC's own resources. Later this year, the five orchestras and singers are coming together for a week-long live broadcast season, (planned in collaboration with the composer Alexander Goehr).

All too often on radio, broadcasting orchestras reach only the evening audience, the listeners to the main concert. We have attempted to bring orchestras to different audiences across the day by featuring them regularly in a morning performance programme, as well as on weekday afternoons. From summer 2001, BBC orchestras will feature alongside offers from EBU members in a new international programme at peak listening time on Sunday mornings.

New talent

The BBC currently spends around €600,000 a year commissioning new music at a time when funds have almost dried up elsewhere. The Arts Council of England is scarcely active in this area any more, and copyright societies and publishers have largely withdrawn from this type of patronage. Against this background, the BBC underpins national musical life, ensuring the originality on which its continuing vitality depends.

In a new initiative, each of our six ensembles will have a composer-in-association ranging from young, up-and-coming talent, to established names from the international stage. The BBC Philharmonic with James MacMillan; the BBC Symphony with Mark-Anthony Turnage; the BBC Scottish with Stuart MacRae; the BBC National Orchestra of Wales with Michael Berkeley; the BBC Singers with Judith Weir; and the BBC Concert Orchestra with Anne Dudley. We're also supporting young artists through our extensive New

Generations scheme which gives opportunities for them to work with the BBC orchestras.

Cultural ambition

Working with our own forces gives the BBC the independence to pursue an ambitious artistic policy, on occasion bringing the groups together to realize a single editorial agenda. The orchestras are also encouraged to develop commercial relationships, and one particularly successful example of this is the joint venture between the BBC Philharmonic and Chandos Records has created a new source of revenue, as well as enhancing the profile of the orchestra.

Simply playing CD recordings is not sufficient for a BBC which is dedicated to presenting music as a living and evolving art. Many of its productions are available to EBU colleagues through music exchanges, which strongly feature both the Proms and BBC Orchestras, resulting in over 1,300 broadcasts across Europe last year. The BBC's orchestras are not simply radio ensembles; that view would limit our vision in the rapidly-changing media world. The orchestras embody the BBC's unique editorial proposition in the music sphere; they enhance a wide variety of quality programming and fulfil the BBC cultural agenda, with its clear commitment to live performance and new work.

Ars Acustica

José Iges

Coordinator of Ars Acustica, Director of Ars Sonora, RNE

2001



The CD *Ars Acustica 2001* can also be entitled *Open Window*, *Panoply* or *Sound Sample* or even *Sound Portrait*. This CD, included in this magazine, is a compilation of recent productions by 16 radio organizations which are members of the Ars Acustica Group.

Radio art is at the heart of our activities. The Ars Acustica experts use radio as a medium, and not only as technology, in two complementary areas: theory and production. Often creative artists ourselves, we are in any case closely connected with the artists and composers for whom sound art is of the utmost importance. Thus, for instance, you can listen to remarkable excerpts from such works as *Topophonia* (Barry Bermange), *Cikoria* (Hanna Hartman), *The 7448* (Paul Carter) or *The Wheel* (Tom Johnson). Other works produced by some of our colleagues represent the purely creative aspect. The Slovene Bor Turel, the Greek Michalis Mitras, the Dane Peter Kristiansen, the Russian Dmitri Nikolaev, the Fin Pekka Sirén, the Pole Agnieszka

Waligorska and the Hungarian composer Janos Decsenyi all illustrate here this very productive area of artistic activity.

This CD features all the various approaches to Ars Acustica: from the more or less stylized and even dramatized sound landscapes (Turel, Waligorska-Sirén, Hartman, María de Alvear) to developments more open to electro-acoustics (Decsenyi) and including the most striking expressions of free sounds (Kristiansen-Dunkerly, Carter).

The enclosed CD will enable you to discover and to disseminate the works produced by organizations participating in the Ars Acustica Group. I hope that you will find it interesting and even as exciting as we do.

In the shadows but always effective.

Few outsiders are familiar with the EBU's Radio Sports Programme Group, or the periodic Sports Specialized Meetings at which all members are invited to be represented. The work that is done at and outside these meetings goes more or less unnoticed, yet they have as their task to provide assistance to EBU members for such major sports events as the Olympic Games, European and world championships or major European football matches. Radio members benefit from these discussions and agreements with the various sports bodies almost as a matter of course. The members of the Programme Group and participants in the Specialized Meetings expect no particular recognition for this work, which they view as a normal part of their duties. They always come into the limelight, however, as soon as something goes wrong. This is the

case when, for instance, two days before a European Cup football match, the home club suddenly requires payment for radio rights or use of commentary booths. Then alarm bells begin going off at radio member organizations, and the Permanent Services in Geneva has its hands full trying to reach a settlement acceptable to all parties. That is not always easy, as Arlette Dumont, the head of EBU Sport, Radio News and Current Affairs, can attest. Generally, a mutually satisfactory compromise is hammered out, whereby the members' costs are reduced, while the home club saves face despite lower revenue.

Necessary regulation

Incidents of this kind recently led the Sports Programme Group to undertake discussions with the

Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) in order to arrive at a uniform settlement. The initial problem was the various legal interpretations among EBU members, most of whom do not recognize radio rights as such and consequently are not prepared to pay for them. The overwhelming majority of EBU members consider that radio transmissions become an event only when a reporter is involved. There are therefore no rights to be paid for a sports broadcast. This long-standing dispute has brought out into the open the differing interpretations mentioned above. Practical solutions were nevertheless reached. Organizers and radio broadcasters agreed on the term 'right of access'. The host broadcaster provides facilities and technical assistance to relaying organizations, who pay for them.

In the past, rightsholders in general – and football clubs in particular – had often made what amounted to fanciful demands on radio broadcasters. In their discussions, UEFA and the EBU Sports Programme Group under its

Radio

Claus Beissner
ARD/NDR, Hamburg

chairman, Per Josefson (SR), have arrived at a series of understandings which, while not of a binding nature, nonetheless could serve as guidelines for future contract negotiations.

EBU radio members used to be able to count on free technical assistance for major sporting (and other) events. Restructuring within broadcasting organizations has resulted in the elimination of some of the production units which provided this assistance to their own and other organizations.

Account

The ensuing outcry of indignation, particularly among those broadcasters still providing free assistance, has meant that the Sports Working Party has had to intervene here as well, setting cost limits. Insofar as possible, these take into account a cost-neutral solution for unilateral sports events and the host broadcaster's expenditure for multilateral events. The number of relaying organizations and the duration of the event also enter into consideration. Here too, exceptions – especially in the sense

of higher costs – are possible. EBU non-members may occasionally have a very different viewpoint, but the setting of these cost limits provides radio members with greater certainty when preparing their budgets for major sports events. The Programme Group also defined its conception of the organizational and technical infrastructure necessary for such events, and this should help host broadcasters to do their job. The suggestions are contained in an EBU working document.

In the past, the individual national broadcasters have worked more or less independently of each other, and each organization has developed and maintained its own philosophy. The Radio Sports Programme Group has now proposed a greater mutual exchange of experience and views. “Learning from each other” was the slogan heard at the last Radio Assembly, where members reported on football championship coverage. In future, there should be discussions on digital radio, Internet offers and synergistic effects for coverage of the Olympic Games.

The old saying goes, “Where there is smoke, there is fire.” The EBU Radio Sports Programme Group and radio members have demonstrated that while their work often involves kindling a discussion, it need not mean that their audience gets burned in the process.



Sports

UK's major

change

Tony Stoller

Chief Executive, Radio Authority

The British Government is currently planning major changes in the way in which broadcasting is regarded, organized and regulated.

A White Paper, or policy document, is intended to pave the way for major new legislation in the next British Parliament, probably in a year or two's time. One of the most significant features of this policy document is its title: the Communications White Paper. It covers not just broadcasting but communications as a whole, thus including all telephony-delivered services including the Internet.

We are not first into this field, by any means. But what is striking is that in the UK of all places, with its broadcasting heritage and history, new structures for broadcasting are being looked at in the same landscape as those for telecommunications. The likely outcome is going to be legislation which, in one way or another, seeks to equate those two hitherto distinct fields.

Convergence

All this arises out of the concept of 'convergence'. On this, people make all sorts of assumptions. A colleague said yesterday from this platform, that "the Internet is the future of broadcasting". I wonder. It all depends how you regard that word, 'convergence'.

That takes several forms. There is, supposedly, 'industry convergence'.

ges

There are surprisingly few examples of corporate convergence. Media companies may well have Internet interests, but acquiring major telephony companies is rare and risky. And vice versa. The fall of the chairman of Telefonica has been attributed by the *Financial Times* to mistakes which included “the costly acquisition of a stable of media companies”.

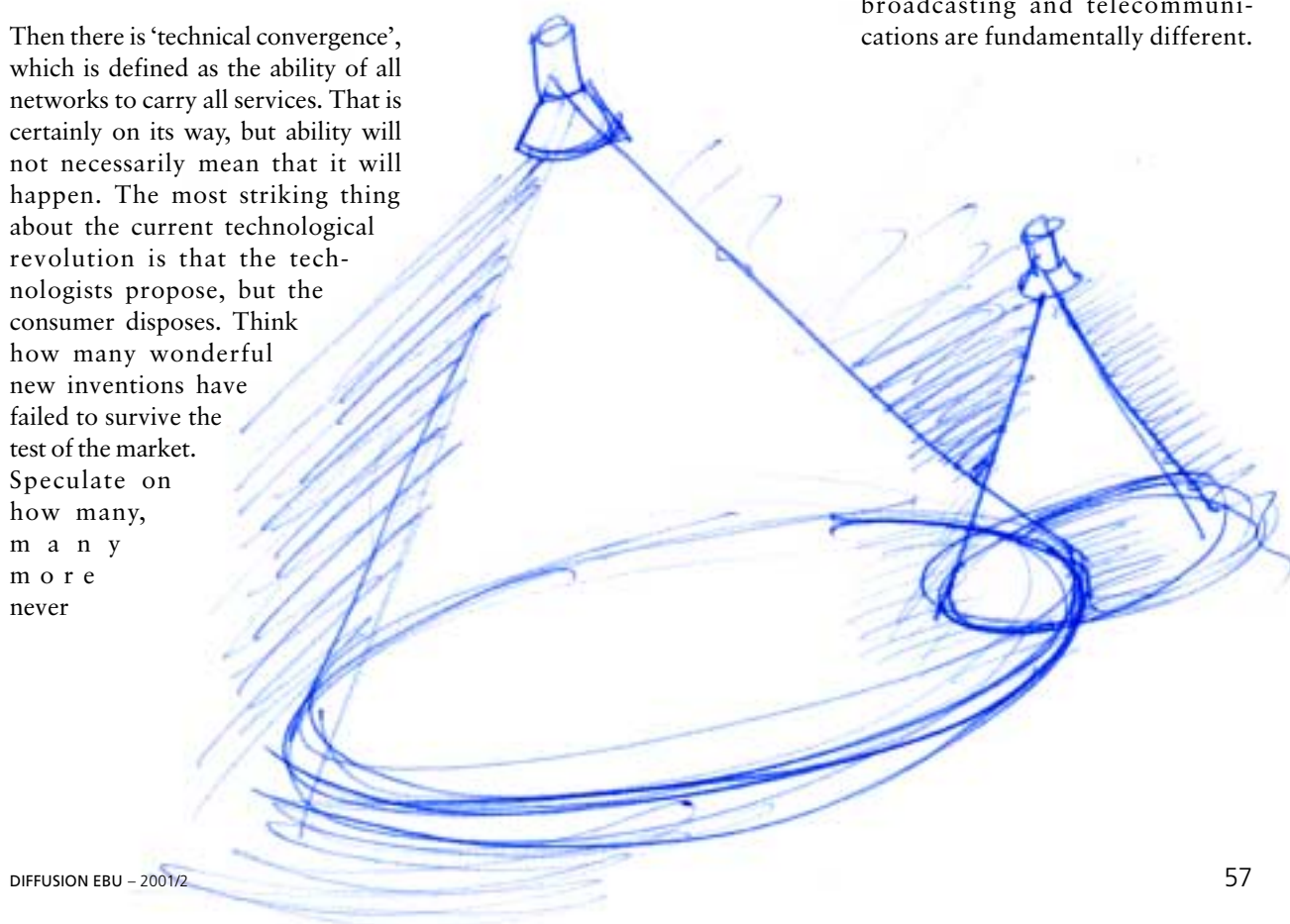
Then there is ‘technical convergence’, which is defined as the ability of all networks to carry all services. That is certainly on its way, but ability will not necessarily mean that it will happen. The most striking thing about the current technological revolution is that the technologists propose, but the consumer disposes. Think how many wonderful new inventions have failed to survive the test of the market. Speculate on how many, m a n y m o r e never

made it beyond the design prototype, however good the design concept. And then consider how many of our listeners and viewers will discard the – highly effective – current forms of distribution, for the multi-platform future. Of course they can; but, in practice, will they?

Too much optimism

Giving one of this year’s BBC Reith Lectures, Dr Gro Harlem Bruntland claimed that “the Internet will be a great equaliser. Everybody will have the same access to information about health care.” Yet in the same speech she said that, of the world’s 6 billion people, 3 billion survive on less than \$2 a day, and 1.3 billion on less than \$1. Given that 70% of the world’s population have never used a telephone, and 95% have never used a computer, the Internet revolution may be a little while in coming.

Politicians are all too easily attracted by the excitement of the concept of bringing together all electronic communications into a single, monolithic regulatory structure. It seems tidy, and it seems ‘modern’. Worst of all, it meets that most dangerous of ambitions that ‘something must be done’ about an issue which only a few people think is a problem. Broadcasters need to be both clear in understanding, and vociferous in asserting, that broadcasting and telecommunications are fundamentally different.



It is not just the economics that are different. One radio or television transmitter broadcasts to (at least in theory) an infinite number of people. It doesn't matter therefore whether you are reaching one person or a million, the costs are the same. This is true broadcasting. In telecommunications, every time you add even a single extra listener or viewer, there is an added cost. This is narrow-casting, or one-to-one. We use the broadcasting method where a single output is desired by a substantial number of people. It is a better use of resources, both technical and financial. It is not the same as a telephone call or an Internet hook-up.

I might add that listeners and viewers, used to the high standards of broadcasting, will not put up with the delays, interruptions and erratic delivery which characterize the net.

It is not just that broadcasting people and telecommunications people are fundamentally different from each other. There is in practice very little cross-over between these two industries, as attendance at any conference – including this one – will testify.

And it is not even just that the regulators are different, although again they are. Telecoms regulators believe that they can ensure that the public interest is served through competition policy alone. Media regulators are more sceptical that the operation of the market alone will deliver what listeners and viewers are

entitled to expect. This is at the heart of the debate over whether and how far you can bring together all communications regulation.

The public good

The essential point is that broadcasting has always had a different social purpose than telecommunications. It need not be grand, or high-flown. But it takes in values and aims which are not merely industrial or commercial, but which deploy a public good (in both the technical and vernacular sense of the word) for the broad benefit of listeners and viewers, and of the society they inhabit. Sarah Thane, and Richard Holme, have addressed two crucial aspects of that aim: achieving public service through broadcasting; and the maintenance of community standards.

The point I want to make is simply this. They will tell you, and those who make policy in your country just as in ours, that the technologies for delivering broadcasting and telecommunications are converging, and will overlap more and more in future years. They may well be right. They will also tell you that the Internet is a major new means of disseminating what has previously been largely broadcast material. That is undeniable.

But what they are not going to say is that the economics of broadcasting make it just as relevant in the Internet age as before; that in practice the striking thing about convergence is

how slowly it is happening, not how quickly; and, most crucially, that there is a quantitative difference between what broadcasting is obligated to provide for society and what the telecommunications industry offers.

All of us in broadcasting right across the Commonwealth need to believe this. We need to keep faith when the preachers climb onto the back of their wagons to sell us the latest gospel. And we need to make sure that what we know and believe is understood by politicians and law-makers. Like all of us, they are attracted by the new. They need to be reminded constantly of the virtues of what broadcasting already offers and will continue to do into the new century.



Tony Stoller is head of the UK's regulatory body for private radio.

Radio refugee

Cathy Loughran
Joint Deputy Editor, Ariel (BBC magazine)

They talk about their hopes
and fears,...

...about hunger and abuse, AIDS, landmines and lack of places to play, where they find pleasure, their thirst for education, their longing to go home. All the interviewers and interviewees heard in the 60 special reports for the BBC Children's Radio Service are children in some of the most desperate refugee camps in the world.

Their target listeners are other young people like them, aged 8–15, living in similar circumstances.

It is an ambitious project funded jointly by the Department for International Development's Innovation Fund and BBC World Service, through its charitable arm, the World Service Trust.



Commissioned by World Service Education, the 60 programmes, most of which will be broadcast in the New Year, are in six languages: Pashto and Persian, for Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran; Nepali, for refugees from Bhutan in Nepal; Azeri, for internal refugees in Azerbaijan; Portuguese for Africa, for the internally displaced in Angola, and Angolan refugees in neighbouring countries; and Somali, for Somalian refugees in Kenya.

The six series will go out on World Service's regional short wave transmitters – and in Nepal, on Radio Nepal – but will also be distributed on cassette with the help of the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and UNICEF.

The Children's Radio Service aims to build on the success of the Albanian Children's Radio Club, also backed by the World Service Trust, which,

using the resources of the BBC Albanian Service, broadcasts a daily 15-minute children's programme for Kosovan refugees, as they began returning to their homes last year.

This latest, much bigger project also goes further than other child-centred initiatives mounted by World Service Education and the Trust – such as Children of Conflict and A World for Children, about children's rights – in handing over the microphone and recorder to the children themselves.

The programmes are all in a magazine format, with the children's reports alongside a drama serial or story and an educational feature with special relevance to the target audience – basic hygiene, how best to avoid abuse, the rights that they have as children.

And for the six Bush House producers compiling the series, the business of

making radio with children, by children, for children meant going back to school.

A training programme, devised by former drama teacher John Tuckey, took the producers into a North London school to practise techniques that would help them work successfully with children in the field.

"This project is asking a lot of the children and a lot of the producers – more used to dealing with politicians and community leaders than vulnerable children," Tuckey explains. "Children do listen in a different way to adults, and need to be addressed in a different way. That's not an easy thing to learn."

All sited close to war zones, the refugee camps visited for the series were chosen after consultation with the UNHCR and aid agencies about

"Most of the children featured have lived in refugee camps for the majority of their lives. They may live daily under the threat of landmines, malaria, abuse, poor sanitation. We're using an extremely cost effective resource to try to get through to some of the most deprived and vulnerable children on earth.

"By asking them to share their experiences with other children over the air – allowing them to ask the questions they want answers to, and not just respond to questioning by adults – we are trying to help them build on their own resilience. And by getting the children to focus on the future, we hope to help adults in the community to do the same."

John Tuckey
Project Coordinator



where the project's resources could be targeted most effectively.

Some decisions were made on the sheer scale of refugee populations in, say, Somalia, Pakistan and Iran. Other populations, like the Butanese in Nepal, were targeted because they have been largely forgotten.

“From the experience of the Albanian Children’s Radio Club, we know that there is value in providing something specifically for children, who, because they are so traumatized, are not ready for overtly educational radio,” says World Service Trust Project Director Karen Merkel. “With this new initiative, we’re offering refugee children some ‘safe radio’, some space of their own, radio just for them. “Having said that, the series deals with issues like AIDS, with relevance to whole communities, so we hope the programmes will be listened to by adults as well.”

Other producers involved in the project are: Portuguese for Africa Producer Walter Santos who has worked with refugees in Angola; the Azeri Service’s Zulfougar Akhmedzada, in Azerbaijan; Asif Maroof of the Persian Service, in Pakistan; and Mani Rana, of the BBC Nepali Service, in Nepal.



Speaking out

Daud Junbish of the Pashto Service met with a ‘wall of mistrust’ when he made his first approaches to Afghan refugee children in camps in Peshawar, Pakistan. But within weeks, children who had mastered the BBC recording kit were conducting interviews with community leaders, doctors, and even famous entertainers, and competing to have their own voices heard.

“I took them to a local drug rehabilitation centre – heroin, or ‘white death’, is a big problem in the camps – and they interviewed the doctor in charge and the patients,” Junbish explains.

“There was also an amazingly confident interview with an internationally famous singer.”

Most surprising of all, he says, was the eventual frankness of the young girls, traditionally suppressed by Afghan culture, but quite outspoken during an interview with an activist for women’s rights in Afghanistan.

“Some of the children were probably being more outspoken than they had ever been in their lives, and that was a huge responsibility for me as producer. I had to make sure everything that was recorded was checked back with them.”

Junbish’s programmes will deal with issues like child labour, water and the question of identity for children who have never seen even their homeland. One of the most optimistic interviews the children recorded was with an Afghan poet who had lost a leg and his sight in a landmine explosion.

“They asked him what his first feelings were after he’d been injured so horribly. He told them ‘life goes on’.”

The idea of cultural exception was not mentioned in the final agreement of the 1986–94 Uruguay Round of trade negotiations, signed in Marrakech on 15 April 1994.

Yet this idea has gained support and mobilized an army of defenders during the final few years of negotiations. The General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS) caused concern about the consequences that its application could have on cultural services, and broadcasting and the film industry in particular. Although it was not possible to have the idea of cultural exception included in the framework agreement on services, no commitment to broadcasting was made by European States either. The EU's audiovisual policy and individual national policies were granted a stay of execution.

The way the World Trade Organization (WTO) functions and the agreements under which it operates are constantly changing. On the one hand, the implementation of the GATS involves a regular revision of the various commitments by Member States and negotiations on services are currently under way; on the other, a new global round of negotiations could be launched this year. The most recent ministerial conference of the WTO in Seattle (December 1999) did not finalize the agenda for the next round but it could be agreed at the next ministerial conference to be held in Qatar from 9 to 13 November 2001.

Cause for alarm

The issue of whether our cultural interests need defending from growing economic globalization has therefore once again become a cause for alarm requiring an urgent response. This was the background that gave rise to the idea of cultural diversity and it has produced many different initiatives. It would be impossible to mention all of them in this one article, but we can examine the most significant of them.

The Council of Europe, the Round Table of Ministers of Culture, the World Culture Network, the Forum on Globalization and Cultural Diversity, and UNESCO are all working on this issue. Although the institutional framework and the legal basis vary considerably, the objectives of these initiatives are generally the same. Culture in its broadest sense is a fundamental part of any society: it is an essential element of a nation's development; it plays a fundamental role in the democratic process. It is therefore legitimate for States to have the freedom to take measures to support and promote their cultures. However, we must ensure that economic globalization encourages the development of all cultures and contributes to increased cultural

Cultural
divers

Jacques Briquemont
Delegate to the European Institutions, EBU

exchanges without threatening cultural diversity by hindering States' freedom.

The Council of Europe, on 7 December 2000, was the first to adopt a declaration by the Committee of Ministers on cultural diversity, a document that EBU representatives made an active contribution to drafting.

Technologies

This declaration attempts to define cultural diversity and includes it in the notion of sustainable development so that technological progress does not compromise the possibility for future generations to satisfy their own need for culture. It stressed that cultural and audiovisual policies that promote and respect cultural diversity must be considered as a necessary complement to trade policy. Member States have been asked to bear in mind the need to support and promote cultural diversity when they negotiate in other international forums – a clear reference to the WTO. The declaration also recognizes public service broadcasters' important role in safeguarding cultural diversity. The Committee of Ministers has agreed to re-examine the situation at regular intervals.

Although this declaration is without any enforceable legal value, it is deserving of merit in that it is the first political instrument underlining the legitimacy of defending and promoting cultural diversity and the need to take it into account in trade negotiations.

The theme of the Round Table of Ministers of Culture (second meeting at UNESCO in Paris on 11 and 12 December 2000) was 'Cultural diversity 2000–10: the challenges of the marketplace'. More than 50 ministers and deputy ministers of culture from around the world solemnly confirmed the need to respect, preserve and defend cultural diversity, albeit a complex and ambiguous notion, as the key to our future. Underlining the need for a broad definition of culture and therefore of cultural diversity, they recognized that globalization carries great potential but also the risk of quashing the most vulnerable cultures. Consequently some of the aspects mentioned were the need to merge the laws of economics with civil, social and cultural rights, the need for solidarity between industrialized countries and developing countries, and the risk of an excessively protectionist attitude which would stifle

creativity and ultimately culture itself.

The ministers confirmed the unique and irreplaceable role that UNESCO has to play in this field and the institution was encouraged to pursue its work. Many ministers stressed that it was crucial to have the full cooperation of the USA in this universal debate organized by UNESCO.

The International Network on Cultural Policy and the International Network for Cultural Diversity both grew out of the Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development organized by UNESCO in Stockholm in April 1998. The first of these brings together government representatives, the second more than 150 NGOs (Non-Governmental Organization) from 25 countries throughout the world. The common principles of these networks recognize that expression through culture and the arts is a fundamental element of all human society and that cultural diversity is one of the strengths of humanity. Market forces alone are unable to guarantee creativity and sustainable support for cultural diversity. International trade regulations, drawn up for goods and services, do not promote the development of culture and the arts. Several meetings and conferences have been held in defence of these principles, the last of which was in Santorini in Greece in 2000, from 24 to 26 September for the NGO network, and from 27 to 29 September for the ministerial network. The discussions focused on structuring the network and linking up with other initiatives and will be continued at the next meeting in Switzerland in 2001.

Globalization

At the Forum on Globalization and Cultural Diversity held in Valencia in Spain from 22 to 24 May 2000 under the patronage, in particular, of

ity
diversity of
initiatives

UNESCO and with the support of the European Commission, many European cultural organizations, including the EBU, adopted a declaration which states that culture, cultural creativity and language are the very basis of human identity, belonging and progress, that all culture is unique and irreplaceable, and that every country has a duty to guarantee that it is promoted and preserved. The media, in particular the public service broadcasters, have a fundamental role to play in preserving and promoting cultural diversity. In its conclusion, this declaration invites UNESCO, as a unique intergovernmental cultural organization, to adopt a declaration on cultural diversity at its General Conference in 2001 and to take initiatives in cinema production and training.

UNESCO has received many requests and has also taken a number of initiatives. The most recent of these was a meeting in Paris of an Experts Committee on strengthening UNESCO's role in promoting cultural diversity in the context of globalization (21 and 22 September 2000). This committee of 18 independent experts met in the presence of observers from certain Member States, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs including the EBU.

The UNESCO General Secretariat is in the process of preparing a solemn declaration founded on these principles which the director general is due to submit for approval to the next General Conference in November 2001. The Round Table of Ministers of Culture has given its support to this proposal.

Preserving cultures

UNESCO is now taking all these movements under its wing and is in charge of consolidating them. This profusion of initiatives confirms that

a strong political will has been clearly expressed in favour of preserving cultural diversity from the risks of globalization. The road ahead remains long because the very idea of cultural diversity remains to be clarified and it still has to be ensured that the WTO's work will enable the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity to be included in the rules of international trade.

Proposals for an action plan

- *further discuss the concept of cultural diversity based on a group of universal principles such as human rights, the rule of law, and human dignity;*
- *recognize the premise that cultural and trading policies are not intrinsically contradictory and identify potential 'grey areas' where trade rules and cultural policy measures in favour of cultural diversity need to be reconciled, respecting the legitimacy of the States to design and implement their cultural policies;*
- *appeal to Member States encouraging adequate coordination at national level between the ministries of culture, finance and trade in the area of cultural diversity and international trade in order to draw up their national priorities and envisage the possibility of organizing a meeting of these ministers at UNESCO;*
- *further develop the idea of a Global Alliance for Cultural Diversity aiming at the development of domestic cultural industries in developing countries and the dissemination of their products abroad.*

Declaration

The Committee of Ministers,

- Recognizing that respect for cultural diversity is an essential condition of human society;
- Recognizing that the development of new information technologies, globalization and evolving multilateral trade policies have an impact on cultural diversity;
- Reaffirming that to sustain, protect and promote cultural cooperation and democratic norms and structures in European societies is a central task of the Council of Europe;
- Recalling that cultural diversity has always been a dominant European characteristic and a fundamental political objective in the process of European construction, and that it assumes particular importance in the building of an information and knowledge based society in the 21st century;
- Acknowledging that all democratic societies based on the rule of law have in the past developed measures to sustain and protect cultural diversity within their cultural and media policies;
- Aware of the tradition of the Council of Europe to protect and foster cultural diversity and recalling, in this context, the instruments already developed by the Organization on the basis of the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Cultural Convention;
- Emphasizing that, in the context of global market influences on cultures and cultural exchange, modern democratic states have a new challenge: the development of policies for assuring the recognition and expression of forms of cultural diversity coexisting within their jurisdictions;
- Recalling the commitments of the

Member States of the Council of Europe to defend and promote media freedoms and media pluralism as a basic precondition for cultural exchange, and affirming that media pluralism is essential for democracy and cultural diversity;

- Recalling in this respect the important contribution made by public service broadcasters;
- Convinced that all Member States and other States party to the European Cultural Convention must confront this challenge from a culturally distinct perspective, but that the shared global context for development requires the elaboration of a set of principles which will provide a coherent framework for sustaining and enabling cultural diversity at all levels;
- Affirms that the legitimate objectives of Member States to develop international agreements for cultural cooperation, which promote cultural diversity, must be respected,

Declares the following:

Cultural Diversity

- Cultural diversity is expressed in the co-existence and exchange of culturally different practices and in the provision and consumption of culturally different services and products;
- Cultural diversity cannot be expressed without the conditions for free creative expression, and freedom of information existing in all forms of cultural exchange, notably with respect to audiovisual services;
- Sustainable development as defined in relation to cultural diversity, assumes that technological and other developments, which occur to meet the needs of the present, will not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their needs

with respect to the production, provision and exchange of culturally diverse services, products and practices.

Cultural and Audiovisual Policies for Sustainable Cultural Diversity in a Global World

- Cultural and audiovisual policies, which promote and respect cultural diversity, are a necessary complement to trade policies;
- Cultural diversity has an essential economic role to play in the development of the knowledge economy. Strong cultural industries which encourage linguistic diversity and artistic expression, when reflecting genuine diversity, have a positive impact on pluralism, innovation, competitiveness and employment;
- Culturally diverse forms of production and practices should not be limited but enhanced by technological developments;
- Wide distribution of diverse cultural products and services, and exchange of cultural practices in general, can stimulate creativity, enhance access to and widen the provision of such products and services;
- Public service broadcasting plays an important role for the safeguarding of cultural diversity;
- Education, training of professionals and users of new services, and reinforcement of cultural and audiovisual production are notable factors in the promotion of cultural diversity.

Sustaining and Enabling Cultural Diversity

- Member States are called upon to examine ways of sustaining and promoting cultural and linguistic diversity in the new global environment, at all levels;
- Member States are urged to pay particular attention to the need

to sustain and promote cultural diversity, in line with the relevant Council of Europe instruments, in other international fora where they might be called on to undertake commitments which might prejudice these instruments;

- The competent organs of the Council of Europe are requested to identify those aspects of cultural policy which are in need of special consideration in the context of the new global economy, and to elaborate a catalogue of measures, which may be useful to Member States in their quest to sustain and enable cultural diversity;
- The Committee of Ministers agrees to review the situation at regular intervals.

Olympic Games:

Online

Pete Clifton

Project Leader, BBC Sport Online

And now... the trick question!

The convergence of old and new technologies will fundamentally change the relationship between sport, its administrators and the public. Will convergence liberate or restrict clubs and athletes? How will established broadcasters and governing bodies react to the changes ahead and how will a change in the power and ownership of the media affect the organization and ownership of sport?

So what was your abiding memory of the Sydney Olympics? Cathy Freeman lighting the flame or her emotional victory, Steve Redgrave's fifth Gold medal, Michael Johnson's farewell, Haile Gebreselassie's epic win in the 10,000 metres, Ian Thorpe's domination of the pool?

The list is endless. The choice is yours.

My abiding memories?

Being telephoned at three in the morning to be asked why a video piece we were carrying on BBC Sport Online about the journey of the torch included **THREE WHOLE SECONDS** of the torch arriving in the Olympic Stadium.

Or another call in the small hours to ask if I could say without question that a video interview with the athlete

Colin Jackson was at a training camp and not in an accredited area in Sydney.

Or the 4.00 a.m. fax from one of the BBC's lawyers in Sydney telling me that BBC Sport Online was now on a 'yellow card' for breaking the audio/

to be heavily disguised as a TV or radio person, carrying a microphone but e-mailing material back to base in the dead of night.

Not to mention the vexed issue of Olympic items on the TV news bulletins that BBC News Online

commentary with a UK slant really affect global TV figures? How about a daily three-minute audio highlights package? Or the breathless interview with a triumphant or demoralized athlete at trackside? And does the two-minute piece on our six o'clock TV news really threaten overseas

video ban on the Internet, with any further transgressions possibly leading to the whole of the BBC team in Sydney having its accreditation withdrawn – quite a step with the athletics events still to come, and with the BBC due to beam TV pictures around the world...

Mercifully we managed to toe the line for the remainder of the Games – in fact, the Jackson interview was in a camp and the only other outrage was the use of the Olympic rings on the banner of our Olympics site.

So the BBC stayed in place and the award-winning TV pictures were relayed to an expectant world – though not on the Internet, of course.

A nasty taste

And that, looking back on an otherwise spectacular fortnight for the Games, the BBC and our site, leaves a nasty taste in the mouth.

Paying the millions of pounds to be part of the Olympic family worked against the BBC online operation – output from the heart of the action, where the BBC was based, could not go on the web. Yet I could have sat in a garage on a dingy estate in West London, watched the TV coverage and offered my own commentary on the web and escaped sanction from the army of web monitors watching the BBC's every move.

And what about sending any of our team to write about this festival of sport, this global carnival of athletic endeavour? Sorry, not a chance. Anyone who did write for a site had

streams every day. Not allowed. Take them off. Result? Four additional staff employed specifically to press a button to black out the 30-second clip of a race when it appeared on the news.

Still, that is now in the past. We understand the issues. The financial commitment of NBC, the need to preserve television rights, the need to amend contracts originally drafted when the web had not been woven.

Together

I hope the lesson to be learned is that old and new technology can work together to the mutual benefit of both, and that the convergence of the two with web TV and interactive TV makes this inevitable and not merely a possibility.

Only a brave man or a fool would say exactly where these technologies will be in five years' time, but let's look at some of the realities here and now.

Users expect to find audio and video on a serious sport site. Feedback we received ranged from polite to raving mad – "Why can't I listen to Redgrave rowing?", "Where is the 100 metre final?", "The BBC has let us down again"...

A constant stream of live video, even if at present it may resemble a scratchy home movie from the 1950s, could just about be seen as a threat to the TV audience.

But what about some video clips after the event? Would live audio

audiences when it is streamed on the web?

We believe there is room for compromise for the broadcasters whose commitment to the Games cannot be doubted.

Advantages

And what about how websites actually help TV and the Games?

Our site appeals to a younger audience who may not be regular viewers of BBC Sport on the television. The site actively promoted the BBC's round-the-clock coverage of the Games, with full TV and radio schedules, details of presenters, our previews of the big events included details of TV and radio coverage, and there was a welter of other material underlining the excellence of the BBC's all-round effort.

We linked up with programmes and asked our users to send questions to presenters and their panels of expert analysts – a sample of the questions and observations were used each day on the TV, and suggestions from the users even helped TV to focus on events they had previously given a low profile.

In fact, over the two weeks of the Games we received over 6,000 e-mails specifically for the TV programmes, never mind the thousands more for our daily forums on the site.

This was not the spotty new kid on the block kicking its Auntie in the teeth. This was old and new coming together in harmony.



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And in the future we expect the relationship to blossom further – live chats online at the end of programmes, e-mails coming in live to the studio, live votes on the day's big issue, the joint development of new graphical and statistical services for both platforms, interactive games and fantasy games that live on the site but are a part of the TV coverage too, joint quizzes/competitions – the list is endless.

An excellent partnership now and all the more sensible as the two areas converge.

It has been a long struggle, but BBC Sport is starting to embrace the value of online, seeing it as a central part, a driving force in the overall operation.

Missing link

The missing link in our Olympic model was the lack of any audio/video coverage. Users expect this as part of an online proposition. They were mystified by its absence, and rather than preserving television audiences I believe it damaged the overall image of the Games.

As I said before, we don't possess the muscle of TV at present, we understand the money being spent and the advertising revenues at stake. But there is some middle ground between an audio/video blackout and blanket online coverage, and finding

that level can be a good thing for all sides.

And this does not just apply to the Olympics. Sports right owners in all our dealings are cautious, fearful of giving too much away, waiting for the pot of gold that any number of consultants tell them is waiting at the end of the online rainbow.

In the meantime, I believe it is the role of sites like Sport Online to show how it can bring added benefit to an event or a sport – with detailed live coverage, more background, interactive guides, statistics and fun, not to mention links to the sites of the sport owners.

Some sensible access to audio/video is part of that deal. There may be crown jewels to be held back, but the increasing number of sports followers who come to the web first expect a flavour of an event in text, graphics, audio and video.

The sooner we embrace this the better – the web is becoming an increasingly important part of sports coverage. At present it complements TV coverage, in the future the two will be indistinguishable and we are already well down that road.

I hope the IOC can steal a march on other sports and events, and genuinely embrace the Internet in all its facets, bringing massive benefits to a carnival of sport that more than any other

lends itself to the spirit of the World Wide Web.

European Bouquet

AsiaSat 2

Werner Neven
Satellite Subleasing, Deutsche Welle

(100.5° East)

Are you planning to broadcast in analogue or in digital?

Today, such a question is almost anachronistic. In 1994 it was definitely not. Back then Deutsche Welle (DW) was going to lease a 36 MHz transponder on AsiaSat 2 and transmit an analogue signal to more than 50 countries within the satellite's footprint.

So why was that plan changed to a digital transmission? After all, digital compression technology was fairly new and MPEG 2/DVB was only on the way to becoming a standard. Receivers, the so-called IRDs, were scarce and quite expensive. An answer to this can be found with the question: "Why not?" DW's radio and TV programmes had not been available in Asia and the Pacific up to then. So, if you have to start from scratch anyway why not start with a promising new technology?

Targets

The main target groups of AsiaSat 2's C-band signals are cable operators and terrestrial stations. Since the technology was going to be something special, the content had to be as well.

At the time DW's Director of International Distribution, Burkhard Nowotny, was vice-chairman of the Bruges Group. Founded in 1991, it discussed mainly European activities. During the course of its development, however, some of the members were well on the way to creating global networks. Four of them decided to follow that new way and use DW's capacity on AsiaSat 2 as a common platform (RAI, TV5, TVE, DW plus the private station MCM International). The intention was to offer a bouquet of European quality programmes and market value of each channel.

DW has today 731 partner stations in Asia (cable operators) which rebroadcast the TV programme 24 hours a day. The programme is available in 450 hotels and many terrestrial stations rebroadcast parts of DW-tv. In a survey among rebroadcasters conducted by AsiaSat in early 2000 (25 countries, excluding China) the broadcast penetration of the two satellites AsiaSat 2 and 3S exceeded 70%. And three of the five most popular

channels on AsiaSat 2 are members of the bouquet (DW-tv, MCM International and TV5).

Pioneers

It is only fair to say that the European bouquet belongs to the early pioneers of digital broadcasting in Asia. Now that DW has signed a lease extension agreement for a further five-year period the bouquet will hopefully become even more colourful. Together with DW-tv the television stations are French language TV5 Asie, RAI International, TVE Internacional, and since September 2000 RTP Internacional. The radio broadcasters are Radiodifusão Portuguesa, Radio Exterior de España, Radio France Internationale, RAI International, Swiss Radio International, Dutch Radio Nederland Wereldomroep, YLE Radio Finland, Radio Canada International, World Radio Network from London and DW-radio.

The new European bouquet has 'room' for a maximum of 8 TV stations and almost 20 radio channels. It is open for cooperation with interested international broadcasters. Among others, negotiations are still being conducted with the private music channel MCM International from Paris.

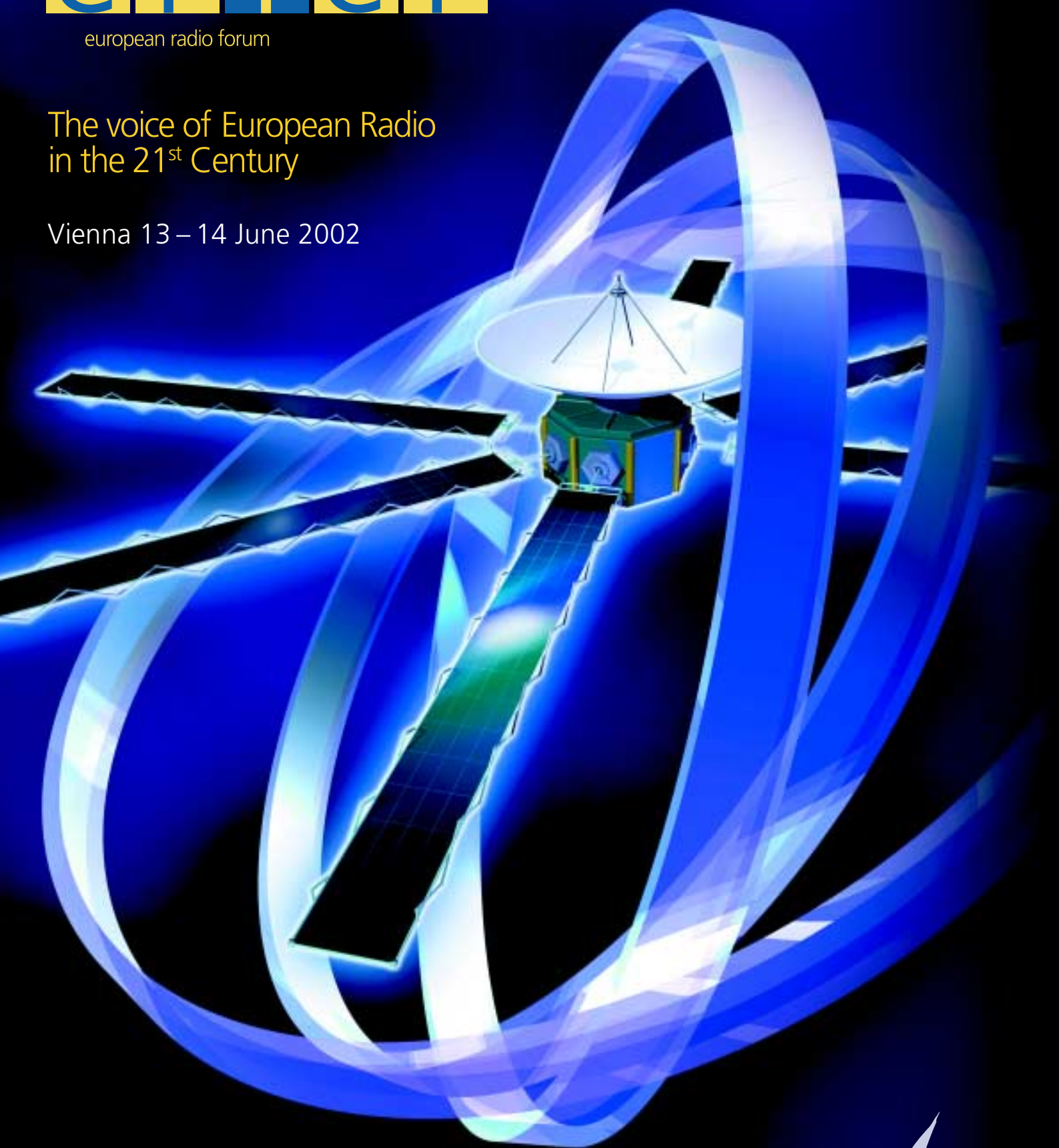
forum européen de la radio

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european radio forum

The voice of European Radio
in the 21st Century

Vienna 13 – 14 June 2002



A conference for public and private radios



April

LAS VEGAS 21–26
NAB 2001

PARIS 25–26
EBU Master Course: Negotiations and coproduction

MONTREUX 26/04–1/05
41st Rose d'Or de Montreux Festival

GENEVA 27
Finance Group Meeting

WARSAW 27
Documentary Bureau Meeting

LUCERN 28/04–2/05
34th Annual GEAR Conference

SYDNEY 28/04–3/05
International Features Conference

May

GENEVA 3–4
EBU Seminar: Produce programmes for interactive TV

GENEVA 3–4
Meeting of Radio Sports Programme Group

PRAGUE 4–5
Music and Dance Bureau Meeting /
Plenary Meeting of the Music and Dance Experts Group

PRAGUE 6–10
Golden Prague Festival

GENEVA 7 / 8–9
Meeting of Music Programme Group /
Specialized Meeting of Music Experts

GENEVA 10
Euroradio Opera Season

TORREMOLINOS 10–11
Rencontre de Torremolinos

COPENHAGEN 12
46th Eurovision Song Contest

GENEVA 14–15
Eurovision Programmes Coordinators Meeting

SARREBRÜCKEN 14–16
Saarebrücken – EBU Exchange of Magazine Items for Young Children

PRAGUE 16–17
EBU Seminar: Strategy of radio regional broadcasting

GENEVA 17–18
108th Meeting of the Administrative Council

TRIPOLI 21–22
EBU Workshop: Digital broadcasting

HELSINKI 22–27
14th European Television Festival of Religious Programmes

MOSCOW 29–30
EBU Workshop: Digital techniques in broadcasting

BRATISLAVA 30/05–3/06
Radio Drama Workshop

June

GENEVA 13
19th Ordinary Meeting of the Radio Committee

VENICE 15
Euroradio Users' Group

MUNICH 18–19
EBU Seminar: Business process planning

LONDON 18–24
Eurovision Grand Prix for Young Dancers

GENEVA 20
21st Meeting of the Technical Committee

GENEVA 21
26th Meeting of the Television Committee

ISTANBUL 26–27
EBU Workshop: Digital broadcasting and DVB

MARSEILLE 27–30
12th Sunny Side of the Doc-

MARSEILLE 28
Co-production Meeting of the Documentary Programmes Group

July

ANTALYA 2–3
EBU Seminar (international audience): Week of the news

BUCHAREST 5–6
EBU Workshop: Economics reporting

SOFIA 5–6
EBU Workshop: Independent coverage of news

MADRID 6–7
52nd Ordinary Session of the General Assembly

KALAKO 6–8
22nd EBU Folk Festival

September

BRATISLAVA/WARSAW/ BUDAPEST 4–6
EBU Workshop and Roadshow: Digital equipment

REYKJAVIK 6–7
3rd Annual Conference of the EBU Statistics Network

DUBROVNIK 7–8
EBU Seminar: Questions from broadcasting lawyers' daily practice

OSLO 12
EBU Seminar: Financial topics

OSLO 13–14
7th Ordinary Session of the Finance Assembly

GENEVA 13–17
SMPTE European Meeting

BOLOGNA 15–23
Prix Italia

BOLOGNA 21–22
Music and Dance Bureau Meeting

GALAMADAMMEN 26–28
EBU Master Course: Children on screen

PORTOFINO 28
Meeting of Documentary Bureau

UNDA, the Catholic Media Organisation, and WACC, World Association for Christian Communication, are holding a European Television Festival of Religious Programmes in 2001. The event will be hosted by YLE, the Finnish Broadcasting Company, in Helsinki. The Festival aims to be a showcase and to reward the very best of television programmes that express, explore and examine values from the perspective of faith; encourage networking between producers and broadcasters of these programmes, particularly in Europe; develop further innovative and popular religious broadcasting.

unda.wacc@yle.fi



NOKIA

Arne Wessberg was appointed to the Board of Directors of Nokia at the Annual General Meeting of Nokia Corporation 21 March 2001.

2002 European Radio Forum

The first 'European Radio Forum', an extraordinary international conference bringing together public service and commercial radio broadcasters as well as media experts, will be held in Vienna on 13 and 14 June 2001.

This meeting will have as its theme "The Voice of European Radio in the 21st Century" and will deal with a large number of issues faced by radio in a multimedia society, such as how to manage a radio station, what kind of programming and technology, new works for radio, financing, marketing, new career opportunities in radio with the Internet, networks and multimedia production.

Leading public service radio executives, media experts and representatives of manufacturers and the commercial sector will exchange ideas and experiences with commercial radio management figures. An exhibition on the latest technological achievements in the world of radio will be held in conjunction with the Forum in adjoining rooms of the Vienna Hilton.

Contact: Thomas Alexanderson, EBU, Tel. :+41 22 717 26 01



Bye Bye

Tinky, Winky, Dipsy, Laa Laa and Po will say good-bye to the BBC in the autumn after 365 episodes.