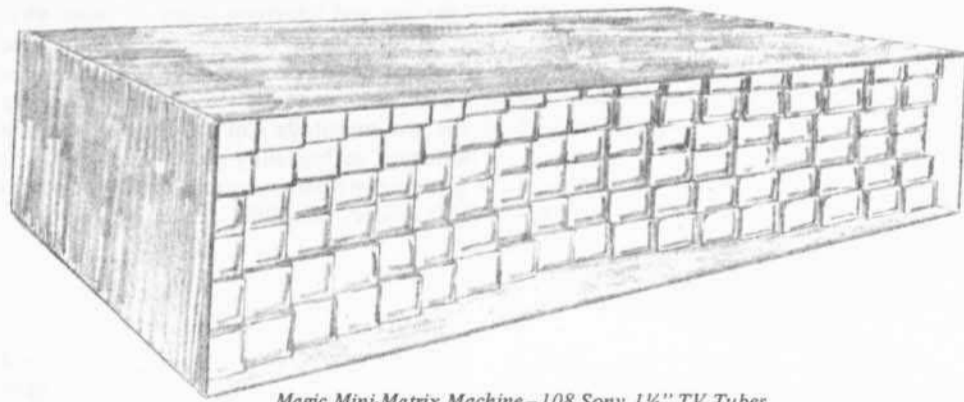


The media must be liberated, must be removed from private ownership and commercial sponsorship, must be placed in the service of all humanity. We must assume conscious control over the videosphere. We must wrench the intermedia network free from the archaic and corrupt intelligence that now dominates it!

THE MEDIA MUST BE LIBERATED, MUST BE REMOVED FROM PRIVATE OWNERSHIP AND COMMERCIAL SPONSORSHIP, MUST BE PLACED IN THE SERVICE OF ALL HUMANITY. WE MUST MAKE THE MEDIA BELIEVABLE. WE MUST ASSUME CONSCIOUS CONTROL OVER THE VIDEOSPHERE. WE MUST WRENCH THE INTERMEDIA NETWORK FREE FROM THE ARCHAIC AND CORRUPT INTELLIGENCE THAT NOW DOMINATES IT. GENE YOUNGBLOOD *The Videosphere*



Magic Mini-Matrix Machine—108 Sony 1 1/4" TV Tubes

**A DEMAND ON THE NETWORKS:
SERVE THE PEOPLE**

With the killings of students at Kent State University, the moral bankruptcy resulting from the United States role in Indochina has been tragically highlighted.

The democratic forms of the American political life are in a state of impotence and near breakdown. The Administration's attacks upon dissent combined with unconstitutional presidential launchings of new military campaigns and escalation of the war have brought us to a crisis point in the history of the American nation.

The communications media, while reacting to the specific events such as the killings at Kent State, have not measured up to the immense scale of the crisis. This crisis—instead of receiving the amount of time called for by its gravity—has been squeezed into the standard programming and promotional plugs of "normal" TV practice.

We, the *Universities for Open Communications*, representing the following groups from colleges throughout the country, charge the media with failing to fulfill their stewardship of the public airwaves in not responding with sufficient seriousness to a "clear and present danger" to inalienable American rights.

Furthermore, we regard the student bodies and faculties of American universities as, at this time, representing a community—an "estate"—having the obligation and responsibility to speak up and act for the American conscience.

In light of these facts, we feel justified in demanding the following from the networks:

- A. An immediate cessation of all regular programming for the duration of the current crisis—one of the gravest of recent times.
- B. Continuous, live coverage of the march on Washington and all events which represent the dissenting voices against government policy.
- C. A continuing opportunity for all dissenting spokesmen to represent their positions vis-a-vis the government with which we find ourselves in principled disagreement.

Only by meeting these demands will you fulfill your responsibility to the American people.

Introduction "I believe that television—which provides most of the people of this country with their principal source of education, entertainment, information and opinion—bears perhaps more responsibility for (the) state of the nation than any other single institution." (p. 8)	→
The Crush of Television "There are 60 million homes in the United States and over 95 percent of them are equipped with a television set. (More than 25 percent have two or more sets.) In the average home the television is turned on some five hours forty-five minutes a day. The average male viewer, between his second and sixty-fifth year, will watch television for over 3000 entire days—roughly nine full years of his life. During the average weekday winter evening nearly half of the American people are to be found silently seated with fixed gaze upon a phosphorescent screen." (p. 14) "Water systems engineers must build city water supply systems to accommodate the drop in water pressure occasioned by the toilet-flushing during television commercials." (p. 27)	→
The Media Barons and the Public Interest "Everybody's in 'cable television'—networks, book publishers, newspapers... so everybody's hedging their bets... Indeed, about all the vested interests can agree upon is that none of them want us to have direct, satellite-to-home radio and television." (p. 67)	→
CATV: Promise and Peril "Once the investment is made (by private money) it heavily tips the scales against future innovation." (p. 162)	→
What you can do to improve TV "A broadcast television station owner is using the public's property—the airwaves—and Congress has provided that he cannot 'own' this property in the sense that the corner druggist owns his drugstore." (p. 206)	→

How to Talk Back to Your Television Set

by Nicholas Johnson. Bantam Book, 95¢, 221 pp.

Nicholas Johnson is the most imaginative member of the 7-man Federal Communications Commission.

Johnson know what's happening, as well he should, though he fails to make some important connects in this book, a structural weakness probably due to the fact that it's really an anthology of published magazine articles.

Nevertheless, in one chapter Johnson incisively writes of television's financial over-centralization, while in the next he details technological trends which can overcome this, but he never ultimately suggests that the same people he encourages to write their Congressmen and the FCC might do better to organize and make their own television—or at least make sure their kids have the chance.

In short, Johnson sees the solution in changing the contents of broadcast television, without conceding that the system structures its content, instead of urging that the whole system be redesigned or abandoned.

Striving towards better content on broadcast TV is like building a healthy dinosaur. Better to decentralize the medium and get people into using it as their tool. There just isn't enough time to fool around with changing the broadcast mode of television when decentralized, portable VT systems can and are leapfrogging the old system.

e.g. The Ford Foundation gave \$1,000,000 to KQED in San Francisco to produce 26 weeks of a video magazine off-the-air. The first thing KQED did was form committees to worry about how the series would handle obscene words.

e.g. All the money pumped into *Sesame Street* could have put 8,000 VTR systems directly into children's hands.

MICHAEL SHAMBERG