

Raymond Manitoba

MEMO TO: Dean David J. Oppenheim
School of the Arts

FROM: Red Burns
Community Media Coordinator

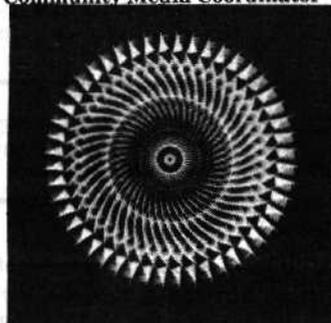
A PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A
COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

AT THE
SCHOOL OF THE ARTS

Prepared for the Kresge Foundation

New York University School of the Arts
February, 1971

Red Burns
Community Media Coordinator



3733 R St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007

April 2, 1971

Thought you might be interested in this.

On March 25, 1971 the first attempt was made to consolidate, coordinate and enlarge the community video movement in the Washington area. About twenty people attended the first meeting. During this meeting, information was exchanged, introductions made and priorities established. The groups and individuals represented included Federal City College, Catholic University, the Federal Communications Commission, Antioch-Columbia, Source Coalition, the newly formed Philadelphia Media Group, the Capital Area Media Educators Organization, the Smith-Mattingly Corporation, a number of independent filmmakers and others.

The aims of this group are to insure the availability to the community of a number of "channels" on any CATV system, to guarantee that 1/2" videotape is not excluded from playback on the cable system and to promote the community use of 1/2" videotape through a travelling video theater, mobile video production and monitor units, a media center and a video tape library.

I have had initial conversations with various cable operators (those with interests in outside Metropolitan New York) and there is definite indication that they will cooperate with us.

They have a vague sense of "community participation" but cannot put forth resources for experimentation because of their initial capital investment in hardware. On the other hand they need programming.

The question is what kind of material will they deliver when the economics of their current situation prohibits them in dollars and cents to do anything other than inexpensively financed programming—e.g. the revolving weather and time clock.

Their response to us was "when can we meet?"

They need us as much as we need them and if we don't move NOW to fill the void we will have abrogated our responsibility as an educational institution to train our people to develop and create programming. The kind of experimentation and training we should develop at NYU can spearhead a concept that will have national implications. I cannot urge too strongly that the time is NOW.



Immediate actions of the group is the organization of several VTR screenings and the setting up of "workshops" for training members of the community in the use of 1/2" videotape recording equipment.

For further information contact:

Paul Schatzkin (Baltimore-Columbia, MD Area) 301-730-5469
Bill Pratt (Washington, D.C. Area) 202-333-7926
Eddy Becker (Washington, D.C. Area) 202-387-5100 (during the day)

We are in the process of getting it together and discovering what we are. Hopefully, we will start having screenings in the very near future. We are trying to locate VTR units and investigating possible sources of income.

W.B. Pratt

ORAL PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED CATV RULES
PRESENTED

BEFORE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION, MARCH 26, 1971

BY DR. BILLY KLUVER, EXPERIMENTS IN ART AND
TECHNOLOGY

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Commission:

I am President of Experiments in Art and Technology which is a non-profit, tax-exempt operating foundation with offices in New York City and Los Angeles. We initiate and carry out collaborative projects involving artists, engineers and scientists. Several of our current projects are concerned with procedures and methods for better utilizing the physical and human resources in television programming. My comments will deal with issues related to the artist's participation in the development of cable television. My argument assumes that the optimum goal for cable television is a multi-channel, multi-purpose, open-access system which will satisfy both mass and individual needs. Cable television will have to rely on a variety of inputs to accomplish this.

I propose that a planned involvement of contemporary artists working in cable television is necessary for the system to develop in the desired direction. In particular, when standards and regulations are established they must accommodate the artist so that he is not arbitrarily shut out of the system. I am using the term artist to mean painters, sculptors, poets, dancers, composers, musicians, etc. This is to say, the developing cable television system must be able to respond to the inputs of artists such as John Cage, Yvonne Rainer, Alexander Calder, Andrew Wyeth and their younger colleagues. I would like to argue that an important problem in the development of cable television is the adoption of the arbitrary esthetic standards of broadcast television which have been consciously or unconsciously determined by commercial interests and engineering practices. A result of this institutionalized esthetic thinking is given by the feeling among those who are faced with the prospect of providing programming for 12 to 20 channels that "there isn't enough stuff around for 20 channels." It is true that based on the existing notion of what is acceptable as quality for programming, there is a lack of programming material, and will be.

... I am suggesting that the Commission develop a continuing direct contact with as many operating artists as possible. The commission should not rely on intermediaries like myself to speak for the artist. At this point no one knows what cable television will look like ten years from now, or what its programming content will be. In breaking through into these new areas we are all amateurs; and in this situation the artist may be the best amateur.