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 institutionalized esthetic thinking which has 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” for the day.

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 traveling video theater, mobile video production and monitor units, a media center and a video tape library.

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

ORAL PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED CATV RULES
PRESENTED
BEFORE THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS
COMMISSION, MARCH 26, 1971
BY DR. BILLY KLUVER, EXPERIMENTS IN ART AND
TECHNOLOGY

Ours is an artist-oriented, 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 institutionalized esthetic thinking which has 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” for the day.

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 traveling video theater, mobile video production and monitor units, a media center and a video tape library.

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

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 inexpenesily 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.

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-McCay Corporation, a number of independent filmmakers and others.

Thought you might be interested in this.

W.B. Pratt

April 2, 1971

Washington, D.C. 20007

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-McCay 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.

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 Banker (Washington, D.C. Area) 202-387-6100 (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

January 2, 1971

Washington, D.C. 20007

From: Red Burns
Community Media Coordinator

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.

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-McCay 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.

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 Banker (Washington, D.C. Area) 202-387-6100 (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