

Media Development

3/2019

WACC

MacBride +40: What next for media democracy?



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Media Development is an international quarterly journal dedicated to the theory and practice of communication around the world. Many contributors write from the perspective of the South, highlighting social, cultural, and spiritual values.

Media Development seeks to keep abreast of developments in the field of mass, community and social media and to articulate common concerns in the search for equality, justice and human dignity in communication.

In the Next Issue

The 4/2019 issue of *Media Development* will examine the current media and communications scene in the Caribbean.



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EDITORIAL

In 1976, UNESCO's General Conference instructed its then Director General, Amadou-Mahtar M'Bow, to undertake "a review of all the problems of communication in contemporary society seen against the background of technological progress and recent developments in international relations with due regard to their complexity and magnitude."¹

M'Bow created what he called a "brains trust", an International Commission of 15



prominent figures from 15 different countries and backgrounds under the presidency of Seán MacBride (photo above). In the course of its work, they participated in numerous conferences, meetings, seminars, and discussion groups, and reviewed countless documents, codes of ethics and papers on specific aspects of communication. The outcome, published in 1980, was *Many Voices, One World*, whose slogan was "Towards a new more just and more efficient world information and communication order".

Seán MacBride was a keynote speaker at a consultation sponsored by WACC held in

London in October 1982 titled "A new Babel: The communication revolution". He noted:

"The conclusions of the UNESCO report are founded on the firm conviction that communication is a basic individual right, as well as a collective one, required by all communities and all nations. Freedom of information and more specifically the right to seek, to receive and impart information is a fundamental human right, indeed a prerequisite for many other human rights."

Controversy and misunderstanding followed the publication of the MacBride Report, especially from powerful countries ideologically against democratisation and empowerment. As expert commentators have pointed out, the Report was less a challenge to information ownership and control than to the political and economic hegemony of a few dominant countries:

"The work of the MacBride commissioners was not primarily a scientific exercise to discover the worldwide state of media and communication; it was first and foremost designed to be a political stocktaking of the socioeconomic forces influencing the contemporary media and communication field... The MacBride Report, combined with recent work on the determinants of inequality in information societies, provides a foundation for essential future work on the politics of the media and communication globally, and on the prospects for equitable evolution of information societies."²

To a certain extent, the findings and recommendations of the MacBride Report – nearly 40 years old – are still relevant and applicable today, despite the world's vastly changed political, economic, social and cultural structures and despite the proliferation of digital information and communication technologies. As the Report itself warns (p. 33):

“We must beware the temptation to regard technology as an all-purpose tool capable of superseding social action and eclipsing efforts to make structural transformations in the developed and developing countries. *The future largely depends upon awareness of the choices open, upon the balance of social forces and upon the conscious effort to promote optimum conditions for communications systems within and between nations*” [emphasis added].

The MacBride Report led directly to the communication rights movement, largely energized by the work of the CRIS Campaign³ and the World Summit on the Information Society.⁴ After that, there was a kind of falling away as Internet service providers, digital platforms, and multinational corporations seized the day. The kind of social progress envisioned by the MacBride Report took a back seat to neoliberalism, globalization, corporate greed, and the politics of fear. That is not to say that its arguments were invalid or that its principles were misplaced. In fact, as articles in this issue of *Media Development* attest, the thinking behind MacBride Report still has enormous relevance in the struggle for political, economic, and social justice – and in the struggle to expand what is often referred to as “shrinking public space”.

The question naturally arises: If the MacBride Commission were to be set up today, what issues would it look into? What constraints would it find? What new possibilities would it discover?

One clear answer can be found in the article “Media, communication and the struggle for social progress” by Nick Couldry,

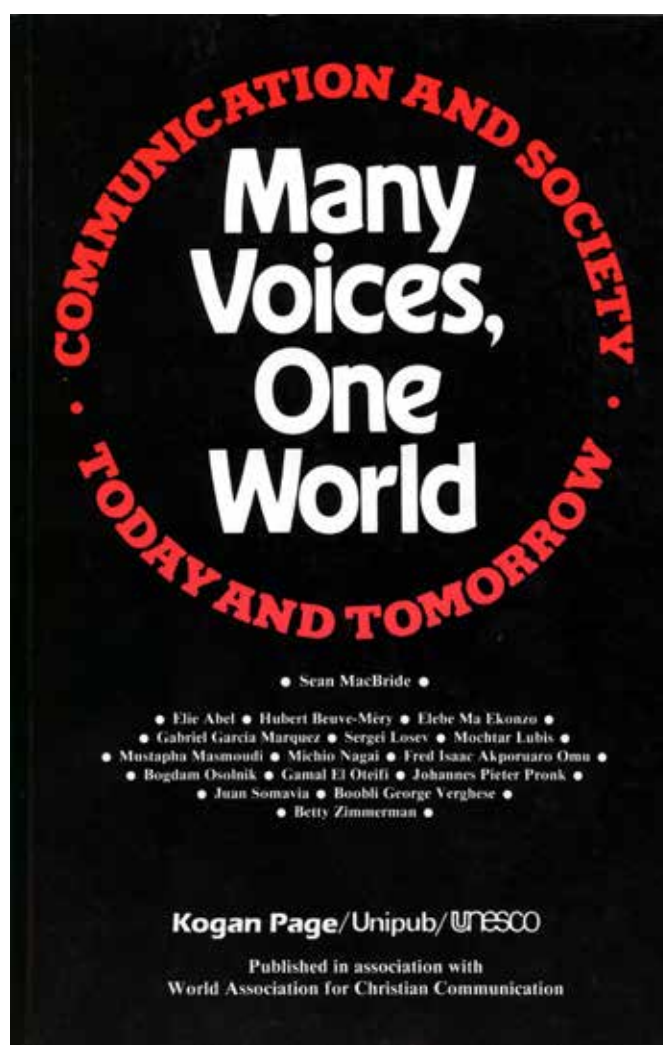
Clemencia Rodriguez et al in this issue of *Media Development*. It identifies media and communications infrastructures as a common good, arguing that they should be removed from the grasp of market forces and underlining participation by civil society and transparency as guiding principles for regulatory frameworks.

One major difference between 1980 and 2019, of course, is the existence of the Internet and digital communication platforms. On this, Couldry, Rodriguez et al are absolutely clear:

“Processes for the design of digital platforms and other means of accessing the Internet should recognize and effectively include representation from the full range of human communities. Media infrastructures will not realize their potential for contributing to social progress unless they operate effectively to facilitate content creation by diverse communities. Access to media infrastructures as consumers, receivers or audiences of content and information is not enough, individuals and communities need access as content creators; issues of language, affordability, user competencies and technology design are fundamental.”

And stressing the need for accountability and equality of access:

“Since we can expect that core aspects of society such as health care, social services and financial services will be increasingly provided over the Internet, access to digital systems needs to be equally distributed among populations, and such access should come free of commercial tracking and surveillance. The risk that the data infrastructures supporting today’s media



and communications will be used for increased state and corporate surveillance, censorship and data gathering need to become the focus of extensive civic debate and regulatory attention.”

This thinking forms part of a larger initiative led by the [International Panel on Social Progress](#), whose aim is to develop research-based, multi-disciplinary, non-partisan, action-driven solutions to the most pressing challenges of our time. In a sense, it is civil society’s take on how to respond positively and with dignity to issues of social justice that may not be addressed by the government-led SDGs. Guided by a host of luminaries including Amartya Sen, Manuel Castells, and Sunita Narain, the IPSP assigns a crucial role for democracy to media and communications (Chapter 13 of the IPSP’s 2018 Report).

In a sense, Chapter 13 is the MacBride Report of our times and should certainly be read as such. It underlines Seán MacBride’s assertion that there is “no magic solution to efface by a single stroke the existing complicated and interconnected web of communication problems” and that, while the particulars of the process will continually alter, “its goals will be constant – more justice, more equity, more reciprocity.”⁵ ■

Notes

1. *Many Voices One World. Towards a new more just and more efficient world information and communication order*, p. xiv. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. Reprinted London: WACC, 1988.
2. “Great Media and Communication Debates: WSIS and the MacBride Report” by Robin Mansell and Kaarle Nordenstreng in the MIT’s *Information Technologies and International Development* Volume 3, Number 4, Summer 2006, 15–36.
3. See Pradip N. Thomas (2006). “The Communication Rights in the Information Society (CRIS) Campaign.” *International Communication Gazette* 68(4):291–312 August 2006.
4. The [World Summit on the Information Society](#) (WSIS) was held in two phases. The first phase took place in Geneva hosted by the Government of Switzerland from 10 to 12 December 2003, and the second phase took place in Tunis hosted by the Government of Tunisia, from 16 to 18 November 2005.
5. *Many Voices One World. Towards a new more just and more efficient world information and communication order*, p. xviii. Paris: UNESCO, 1980. Reprinted London: WACC, 1988.

Media, communication and the struggle for social progress

Nick Couldry, Clemencia Rodriguez et al¹

This article discusses the role of media and communications in contributing to social progress, as elaborated in a landmark international project – the International Panel on Social Progress. First, it analyses how media and digital platforms have contributed to global inequality by examining media access and infrastructure across world regions. Second, it looks at media governance and the different mechanisms of corporatized control over media platforms, algorithms and content. Third, the article examines how the democratization of media is a key element in the struggle for social justice. It argues that effective media access – in terms of distribution of media resources, even relations between spaces of connection and the design and operation of spaces that foster dialogue, free speech and respectful cultural exchange – is a core component of social progress.

In January 2015, a group of academics from different disciplines and areas of the world convened in Paris to plan an initiative known as the International Panel for Social Progress: Rethinking Society for the XXI Century (IPSP). Spearheaded by Princeton University philoso-

pher Marc Fleurbaey and Olivier Bouin, director of the College d'Etudes Mondiales in Paris, the IPSP examines pressing issues in contemporary society in an attempt to formulate a diagnosis and clear a path toward more just communities.

Behind the IPSP is the realization that neo-liberal economic models have become the dominant narrative in both the industrialized world and the Global South. As a hegemonic narrative, capitalism and neo-liberal economic and political models have eclipsed alternative modes of thinking and envisioning of how to organize our societies. And yet, since World War II, social scientists have produced a vast body of evidence and knowledge about the negative impacts of neo-liberal economics on all areas of social life, from gender equity to environmental degradation and war.

According to the IPSP: "Inequality has been the hallmark of neoliberal economic policies that have been well entrenched since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the signing of the World Trade Agreement, and the creation of the WTO" (IPSP, 2016: 5). The IPSP sought to harness the competence of 250 social scientists from all areas of the world and a wide variety of disciplinary fields to produce a report by 2017 (IPSP, 2017).

The IPSP approaches the concept of progress as a somewhat flexible compass that can help delineate the process of rethinking society, but insists that progress must be conceived of in a pluralistic way, consistent with the diversity of our shared world. The IPSP's definition of progress includes "basic values of well-being (itself multi-dimensional), freedom and agency, esteem, and reconciliation & non-alienation. There are also various objective (or 'merit') goods. The most important principles in this context are justice (of various types, esp. distributive justice), respect for basic rights, and charity or beneficence" (IPSP, 2016: 13).

The IPSP has established a critical dialogue with the Social Progress Index (SPI), a set of indicators developed recently in an attempt to "move beyond GDP" (Social Progress Index,

2016). Under the heading "Foundations of Well-being", the SPI includes a component on "Access to Information and Communication", with three indicators: 1) mobile telephone subscriptions; 2) Internet users; and 3) the Press Freedom Index. One of the goals of Chapter 13 of the IPSP report on Media and Communications was to critically assess such narrow approaches to questions of communication and information access and subsequently build a more encompassing narrative, both of what "media" are and media's potential contributions, negative and positive, to social progress broadly defined.

Chapter 13 was written by a team of twelve primary authors and five contributing authors from China, South Africa, Colombia, Mexico, Lebanon, England, Japan and several other countries. The original team was assembled by Nick Couldry with an emphasis on regional diversity and a commitment to working across the boundaries of disciplines that intersect in the media and communications field. Of particular value are the inclusion of the interdisciplinary insights of legal theorist Julie Cohen and the perspectives of media advocacy experts and activists.

In this article, we intend to present the core findings of IPSP's Chapter 13, with the goal of encouraging an expansion of the public conversation around key issues of inequality, access, and governance of information and communication technologies and platforms, and the practical measures and policy tools that might enable media to contribute to social progress in the way that so many hope. Our effort clearly builds upon important foundations such as the MacBride report, *Many Voices, One World* (UNESCO, 1980), prepared for UNESCO in 1980, as well as decades of effort to foster media freedom and collective and individual rights of expression, information and ideas captured in the resonant Article 19 of the 1948 UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Our joint belief is that it is an important moment for the development of the field of Communication for Social Change. The expertise of media and communications researchers is called

upon within a wider global debate about the future of social progress. That belief has motivated our shared efforts and will, we hope, stimulate further debate and discussion.

In proposing a new analysis and approach to the present high stakes moment in global media and communications, we hope this article will serve to highlight the urgent research and developing policy, practitioner and activist struggles that require our sustained attention.

Media and digital platforms: Key factors of global inequality

Much of humanity now holds in its hands the means to connect across the world: to family, entertainment and the broadcasts of corporations, states and, increasingly, counter-state organizations such as ISIS. This differently connected world has major implications for social progress and global justice, but the media and information infrastructures that make it possible must be part of any discussion of those lofty goals. Developments in digital technologies over the last 30 years have massively expanded humans' capacity to communicate across time and space. Media infrastructures have simultaneously become increasingly complex.

By "media", we mean technologies used for the production, dissemination and reception of communication, but also the content distributed through those technologies and their associated institutions.² The relations between media, communications and social progress are complex. More people can now connect and make meaning through media, providing an important resource for new movements for justice and social progress. Meanwhile, addressing the uneven distribution of opportunities to access and use media is itself a dimension of working towards social justice.

Media infrastructures and access have spread unevenly across the world. Traditional and digital media developed according to distinctive histories across the world, with varying marketization and state control. Inequalities of access are starkly evident both between and within re-

gions and inside countries, with implications for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Cultural flows through media vary greatly within and between regions as well.

For example, the media system in Mexico is highly concentrated and deeply marketized. Its core is commercial broadcasting, owned by private corporations controlled by a handful of individuals. The power of those media corporations was built from alliances between powerful economic groups aligned with government interests that have benefited from discretionary grants, television and radio concessions, lucrative contracts for governmental advertising in print media, and ad hoc legislation (or lack of it) in

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favour of the sector's economic interests. After the Mexican Revolution (1910-20), the country adopted a capitalist economic model and initiated corporatization of the Mexican state. Lack of regulation and communication policies led to a concentration of media in the hands of a few families.

In the early 20th century, well-established industrial families (railway, mining and banking) invested in radio broadcasting. Today there are 1,600 radio stations, 80% of which are owned by just 13 families. The Azcárraga family owns the Televisa conglomerate, the most influential global producer and distributor of Spanish-language audio-visual content, as well as free-to-air television channels, restricted television systems (satellite and cable), a leading Spanish editorial house, radio stations, entertainment companies, soccer teams and stadiums, music recording companies and cinema distribution companies. Carlos Slim's Telmex/Telcel conglomerate started with landline telephone services (Telmex has 65% of the national market) and moved on to mobile telephony (Telcel has 65% of subscribers) and Internet services (75% of subscribers). Mexico's mobile phone and Internet service costs are in the middle of international rankings (ITU, 2014), making these services out of reach for Mexico's rural poor majority.

In contrast, Sweden's media is shaped by a welfare state system (typical of Scandinavian Nordic countries) and characterized by a distinctive relation between media and state, market and civil society. Traditionally, Sweden has had high voter turnout and high levels of literacy and newspaper reading, not least due to the national subsidy system for print newspapers, which has resulted in a plurality of local newspapers with high readership. Typically, the subsidy system provided for a plurality of political positions, with at least two local or regional newspapers representing divergent political viewpoints. Like other European countries, Sweden has had a strong public service broadcaster for radio and TV, which, since the late 1980s, has faced strong competition from commercial broadcasters. The

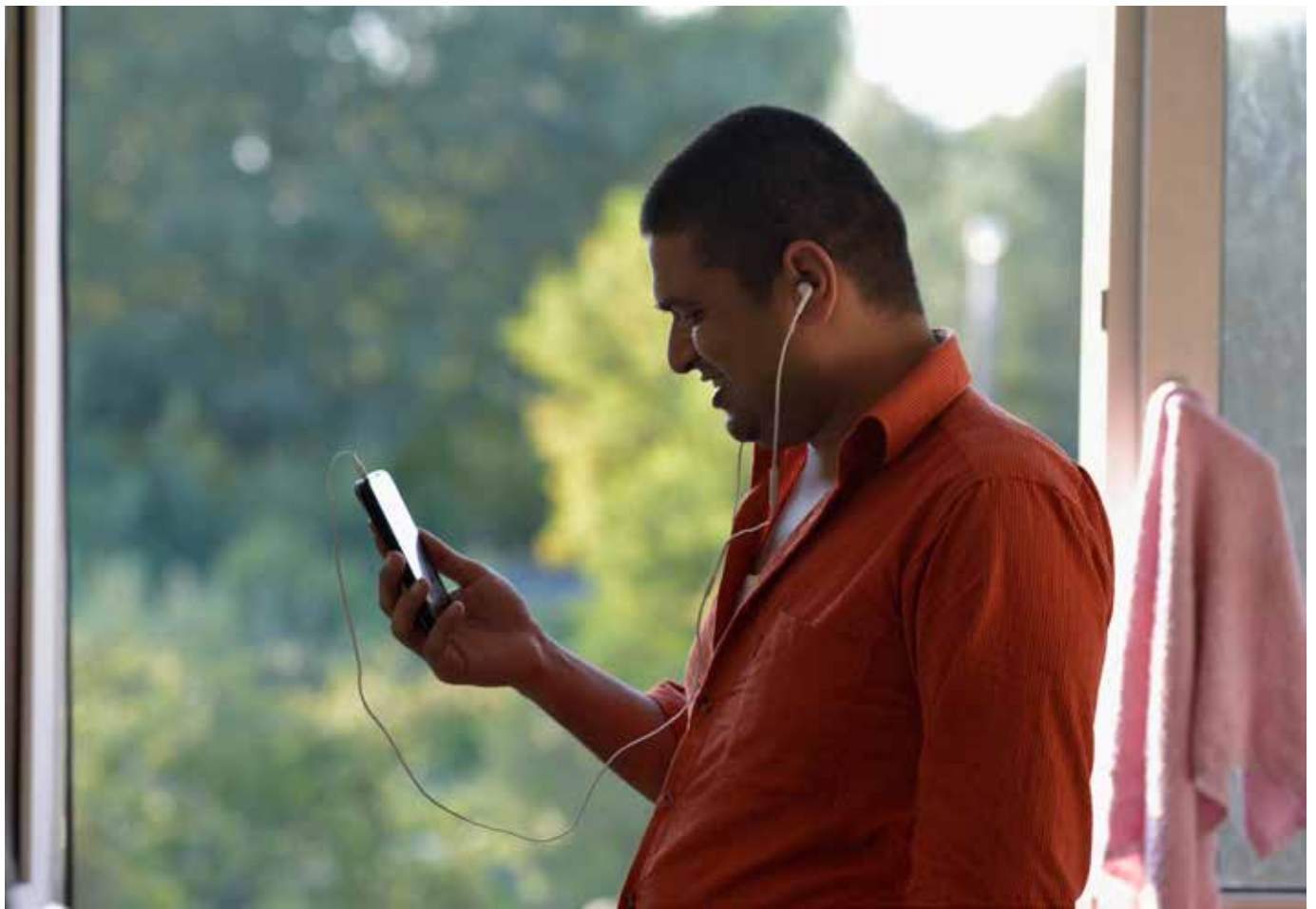
communications infrastructure has been well developed, with high penetrations of landline phones, mobile phones and computers.

People's increasing dependence on an on-line infrastructure that *mediates* daily life increases the importance of the corporations that provide that infrastructure. This has transformed the governance of media infrastructures, with a shift from formal to informal governance and the growing importance of transnational governance institutions and practices, whereby corporations, not states, exercise predominant influence, including through the design of algorithms, with ambiguous implications for corporate power, individual rights, the public sphere and social progress. This situation also creates new challenges and opportunities for nation-states and state sovereignty (Flew & Waisbord, 2015). On the one hand, the role of nation-states and state sovereignty in media is diminished. On the other hand, nation-states still play an important – if often quite different and novel – role in crucial areas of policy, infrastructure and design. This is evident in the way that nation-states have asserted their regulatory role over social media platforms, though not always successfully.

The project of “networking the world”, as Armand Mattelart once put it (Mattelart, 2000) is more than two centuries old. It has always been the project of states, but increasingly it has become the preserve of some of the world's largest corporations: for example, Facebook, Google and, less well known in the West, China's Tencent and Baidu. Just as neo-liberal economic models rooted in markets and consumption are expanding into ever more world regions and intruding into ever more domains of everyday life, so are corporate logics colonizing our media and digital platforms. Market forces have appropriated the design, regulation and pricing of the platforms we use to connect, portray the world around us, express our political allegiances, and forge our visions for the future. Yet these platforms have so far been driven by only one goal: profit.

The emergence of a networked information economy and the globalization of mediated in-

Mohammed Adnan talks with his mother, Fripat Bibi, on Skype from a government-run refugee center in Vamosszabadi, Hungary. Hungarian Interchurch Aid, a member of the ACT Alliance, provides child care and other services to residents in the center, who come from Syria, Iraq and other countries and are bound for western Europe. Adnan's mother is in Pakistan, which he left to seek employment in Europe. Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance



formation flows have catalysed two significant shifts in the nature and quality of governance. The first is a shift away from formal government regulation and towards informal and often highly corporatized governance mechanisms. The second is a shift away from state-based governance (and global governance institutions – such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) – organized around state membership) and towards transnational governance institutions, such as the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), which are more directly responsive to the asserted needs of private entities, often corporations that are those institutions' most powerful “stakeholders” (outflanking new constituencies of media users and citizens).

Particularly in the Global North, but also in the Global South, the information networks and communication protocols that underlie media infrastructures are designed and operated by private corporate entities. Direct technical authority over networks and protocols gives those entities an authority that is inherently regulatory. Global platform companies such as Google, Twitter,

Facebook, Microsoft and Apple, each of which occupies a dominant market position globally, enjoy correspondingly stronger and more pervasive regulatory power.

For citizens, networked digital media infrastructures may lower the costs of access to knowledge and enable new forms of participation in social, cultural and economic life. At the same time, however, citizens' access to many important informational and cultural resources is subject to control by neo-authoritarian states and various information intermediaries, including Internet access providers, search engines, mobile application developers and designers of proprietary media ecosystems. Access to these resources may be offered at no financial cost to users on an advertiser-supported basis, but often such access has a price in the form of the automated collection of information about personal reading, viewing and listening habits (Hoofnagle & Whittington, 2014). Such information can be used both to target advertising and suggest content more likely to appeal to each user.

Such predictive targeting of information access has a number of troubling economic and political implications. To mention but one example, algorithms for predictive targeting based

on data about personal habits and preferences enable the identification of population segments sorted by race/nationality, cultural background, religious affiliation, socio-economic status and political preferences.

Reclaiming communication for social progress: Voices, issues, struggles and initiatives

For centuries, journalism has been a key institutional forum for disseminating public knowledge and contributing to social progress. While digital technologies have expanded and citizens' media and citizens' journalism initiatives proliferate, other aspects of digitization have undermined the economics of journalism, with new threats to journalists from growing political instability.

Struggles for social justice through the democratization of media have acquired new prominence, echoing previous struggles and foregrounding the transparency and accountability of media infrastructures in general, and data flows in particular. This is not the first time, however, that the implications of media flows and infrastructures for social progress have been considered on a global scale. Such questions were central to the MacBride Report (UNESCO, 1980), which proposed a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) and challenged the assumption that a global media infrastructure dominated by 'the West' was good for democracy, social order and human rights. But the MacBride Report's proposals were not implemented, and a recent attempt to revive their broad agenda (the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003) has also achieved only limited success (Vincent & Nordenstreng, 2016).

Meanwhile, media control's ramifications for social progress continue to expand and digital infrastructures – for example, social media platforms and the vast new architectures for data collection and processing on which they rely – pose increasingly urgent questions about social life and democratic practice. Concerns include Net neutrality, Internet freedom, discriminatory algorithms and the automated surveillance on which most online businesses now rely. There are

implications for state and corporate power, which civil society has challenged, such as the case of Facebook's Free Basics in India. In 2015, Facebook negotiated with the Indian government to introduce Free Basics, a platform that would expand Internet access and at the same time give Facebook unrivalled access to a new market of 125 million users. However, Indian civil society succeeded in blocking Free Basics as an attempt by a commercial vendor to tether users to its product and monopolize the terms of access to the wider Internet, compromising the tenets of network neutrality.

Similarly, other civil society initiatives have attempted to design governance frameworks. After the Snowden scandal of 2013 revealed massive digital surveillance and espionage on a global scale by US intelligence agencies, diverse initiatives to defend the freedom of the Internet emerged. At the time of writing, the most progressive regulatory framework for the Internet, founded on principles of social justice and inclusion, is Brazil's Marco Civil da Internet (Civil Rights Framework for the Internet), an initiative developed by Brazil's civil society and centred on the protection of freedom and privacy, open governance, universal inclusion, cultural diversity and network neutrality.

Media remain important channels through which many struggles for social progress are pursued. Back in 1994, the Zapatistas in Mexico provided a pioneer example of innovative media use for social justice, but social movements' use of media technologies has taken many forms across the world, exposing important constraints. Since old media generally do not disappear, instead linking up in new ways through digital platforms, movements that struggle for social justice have learned to operate within complex and always changing media ecologies that offer different resources and constraints in each historical case. Harbingers of this transformation include the fusion between Catholic radio and SMS in the EDSA II movement in the Philippines and the interaction between citizens' journalism website OhmyNews and the Nosamo activists network

during the South Korean presidential election of 2002 (Qiu, 2008). The interplay among traditional and digital media reached new heights as the Arab uprisings of 2010 and 2011 spawned a vibrant scene of dissident media and culture.

The affordances of mobile technologies and social networking platforms enable new kinds of everyday, intimate solidarity and dialogue. Notable cases of appropriation of mobile phones, Internet and social media have emerged among migrants and their dispersed families and cultural and political networks (Fortunati, Pertiera & Vincent, 2012). Among Filipino and other domestic workers (generally women) who spend years away from their families and communities, mobile phones and social media provide a way to maintain bonds and connections with friends and families (Madianou & Miller, 2012). Chinese migrants who leave rural areas to find work in cities (Chu *et al.*, 2012) rely on mobile phones to create a new 'modern' identity, spanning urban and rural settings (Wallis, 2013).

It is a myth that rural communities, Indigenous peoples and the Global South are disinterested in media and the digital world, but our current media infrastructures carry little if any input from these large sections of humanity. What if media infrastructures and digital platforms were designed with communities' diverse languages, needs and resources in mind? The re-

sults can be transformative, as when the Talea de Castro Indigenous community in southern Mexico designed Rhizomatica Administration Interface (RAI), a graphic interface for a local mobile phone network, to be responsive to their needs, resources and languages (Magallanes-Blanco & Rodriguez-Medina, 2016). Much more often, however, the algorithmic mechanisms that shape what appears to users of digital platforms are driven exclusively by an advertising logic that undermines diversity and reproduces the social capital of those with power (Couldry, 2014; Ochigame & Holston, 2016).

Work toward more just media infrastructures needs to hold a central place in social progress initiatives. Social progress is contingent on accessible, affordable and inclusive media infrastructures – including traditional media, digital platforms, social media and the Internet. Any intervention that works for social progress must also consider the need for a parallel struggle to democratize media infrastructures and demand better, more transparent media policies and governance. These technologies' potential to shape more sustainable, just and inclusive societies will be hampered so long as decisions about the design and governance of media infrastructures are made without the wider body of citizens having the opportunity to be consulted on their needs.

A radio presenter in the cabin of the Lutheran radio station in La Paz, Bolivia. Sean Hawkey/ACT Alliance. The penetration of media and telecommunications is relatively low in Bolivia. Only 75.5% of Bolivian households have radio, 66.5% have television, 60% have telephone (mostly cellular). Internet access is one of the lowest in the region – 9.6% of households. The penetration levels are even lower in rural areas. In such a context, community radio has a key role to play.



A proposal toward media justice

This survey of media and communications' potential contributions to social progress does not suggest easy conclusions. Without a doubt, media are an important resource for movements that promote social progress, and effective access to media is a necessary (and too often ignored) component of social justice. By "effective access", we mean that all individuals and communities should be able to use media infrastructures to produce content, access information and knowledge, and actively participate in the realms of politics, culture and governance. Issues of accessibility, as well as the potential affordances of these platforms, are particularly salient for people with disabilities, for example, captioning on TV and radio for the print handicapped. Despite their long histories, disability media such as Braille formats and sign language communication are still given little recognition in wider society, although there have been concerted international efforts on some aspects of digital technology (accessible computers and software, web accessibility, mobile phone accessibility, 'apps' for people with disabilities).

Three major factors complicate the media and social change picture considerably. First, the distribution of media resources (including traditional media and digital platforms) is skewed towards the wealthy and powerful world regions and away from the majority of the world's population, especially poor, marginalized and excluded groups. This basic fact is ignored by the recurrent "social imaginary" (Taylor, 2004) that sees media infrastructures as automatically progressive and socially transformative (for critique, see Herman, Hadlaw & Swiss, 2014; Mansell, 2012; Mosco, 2004). Although people rely on media platforms for connection and communication, they generally have very little influence over the design and pricing of these platforms, or the conditions of access, use, content production and distribution.

Second, multiple simultaneous spaces of connection are enabled by media and the relations between these spaces are highly uneven: questions of language and culture, unequal influ-

ence over Internet governance, software localization and technical design all make the Internet an unequal, highly uneven playing field for diverse groups, especially cultural and linguistic minorities. Third, even with access and more even distribution of opportunities for effective use, it may not be solidarity and dialogue that are facilitated when people come together via media (online abuse is also on the rise): the Internet's capacity, in principle, to enable multiple producers of content is not therefore sufficient. A central issue remains how to design and sustain online spaces that encourage dialogue, free speech, respectful cultural exchange and action for social progress. The governance of Internet infrastructures is crucial in all of this, but this itself is highly contested and uneven.

In response to these challenges, we propose that *effective access to media and digital communication should be recognized as a new core component of social progress*. While it is important that the SPI's "Foundations of Wellbeing" include "access to information and communications" (defined in terms of numbers of Internet users, mobile phone subscriptions and a Press Freedom Index), this is insufficient; additional measures are needed to ensure the distribution of opportunities for effective access and use. Such measures would concern not only access to the technological means to receive information and content, but also access to appropriate affordable technologies to produce content. The design of media infrastructures and digital platforms needs to consider diverse language communities and individuals with different ability levels, learning styles and financial resources.

While it is important that the SPI includes "personal rights" and "tolerance and inclusion" under the category of "Opportunity", communication rights must be added to the basket of personal rights, and the direct relation between lack of participation and diversity in the design and governance of media infrastructures and lack of tolerance and inclusion at a cultural level must be addressed. The right to privacy should also be added, including appropriate regulatory frame-

works to protect against surveillance and data extraction. In addition, references to “tolerance” elsewhere in the Social Progress Index need to be interpreted to include tolerance in the media (that is, the absence of hate speech against women and girls, ethnic minorities, and so on).

Media and communications infrastructures should be regarded as a common good, in the same way as other infrastructure (such as roads, railways, power and water). The recent wave of privatization and concentration in the media and information industries should be reviewed by regulators for its effects on the quality of media and media’s diversity and ability to meet people’s needs. Subsidies and spaces to encourage non-profit media should become an essential component of struggles for social progress and social justice. If progress is to be made towards these wider goals, major efforts are needed by civil society, governments and international organizations to promote and sustain media that exist outside of market forces. Internet governance should not be in the hands of organizations who make decisions, implement policy and design online architectures behind closed doors. Popular participation and transparency should be the guiding principles that frame Internet governance, policy and regulatory frameworks.

Equally, processes for the design of digital platforms and other means of accessing the Internet should recognize and effectively include representation from the full range of human communities. Media infrastructures will not realize their potential for contributing to social progress unless they operate effectively to facilitate content creation by diverse communities. Access to media infrastructures as consumers, receivers or audiences of content and information is not enough, individuals and communities need access as content creators; issues of language, affordability, user competencies and technology design are fundamental.

Since we can expect that core aspects of society such as health care, social services and financial services will be increasingly provided over the Internet, access to digital systems needs

to be equally distributed among populations, and such access should come free of commercial tracking and surveillance. The risk that the data infrastructures supporting today’s media and communications will be used for increased state and corporate surveillance, censorship and data gathering need to become the focus of extensive civic debate and regulatory attention.

Although social media and digital platforms have accelerated access to information, solid independent journalism, especially investigative journalism, is essential to democratic life. Citizens need curated, credible, verified and contextualized information to be able to make reasonable decisions in political, cultural and social arenas. Alternative forms of funding investigative journalism need to compensate for the threat to the commercial newspaper business model.

The environmental impact of the waste generated by today’s communication devices and the vast data-processing infrastructure that supports their use requires serious attention as well. These environmental consequences are an unintended long-term side-effect of intensified connection through media (Maxwell & Miller, 2012).

The indispensable first step for social progress is to perceive media and communications flows and infrastructures not as mere background to social struggles, but as a site of struggle. This, in turn, requires acknowledging the overall lack of progress in media reform over the past 40 years. Since 1980, when the NWICO’s MacBride Report was presented by UNESCO, numerous initiatives have attempted to reform media infrastructures, including the World Summit of the Information Society (WSIS), the Free Press movement in the US, and the Net neutrality and free software international movements.

However, international organizations have not generally pursued such concerns. The international organizations assuming responsibility for proposing new aspects of media policy, such as ITU and ICANN, have limited their scope to technical matters discussed with little input from civil society or social movements. At the level of nation-states, key issues of media justice and so-

cial progress are often raised, but then are not necessarily developed or represented by governments in their negotiations, policy and governance work with either other states and parties at the international level, or with the large, influential media corporations in either the national or transnational sphere in which they operate. All in all, a renewed, comprehensive and more inclusive debate on media reform must be launched.

A plan of action

Chapter 13 of the IPSP, on which this summary is based, provides a resonant, bold and detailed analysis and normative argument about the pivotal role of media and communications claims and struggles in any vision of social justice, equality and rights. Developing a strategy to turn this agenda into a powerful, concrete and achievable programme with pragmatic force is the next challenge. Based on the above diagnosis, we propose the following action plan:

1. To add effective media access as a new core component of social progress in the SPI, to 'ensure affordable, reliable, sustainable and effective access to communication infrastructure', while acknowledging the long-term environmental waste from IT devices and data-processing infrastructure.
2. To open a public discussion in which matters of inclusion, affordability and diversity in media take precedence over markets and profit.
3. To position communication rights as central to official definitions of social progress. Communication rights include the right to be a content creator; the right to free expression; the right to knowledge and information; and the right to privacy.
4. To pressure international and national regulatory bodies and policy-makers to design and implement processes for civil society participation in Internet and media infrastructure governance and policy. Media infrastructure should be governed by transparent and open multi-stakeholder bodies.
5. To pressure governments, the private sector

and universities to be accountable for designing media platforms that are accessible to inputs from diverse individuals and communities – especially marginalized communities such as communities of colour, gender minorities, LGBTQ communities, disabled communities and communities in the Global South.

6. To push for media and Internet regulation that protects users from state and/or corporate surveillance and data extraction for control or marketing purposes.
7. To promote media and Internet regulatory regimes that forbid any type of censorship or discrimination based on disability, gender, sexual orientation or political, religious or ethnic affiliations.
8. To promote the notion that 'access' also includes opportunities for content creation and not just technological access to platforms for media consumption. Media and information literacy, technical competencies, linguistic diversity and capacity building are fundamental elements of access.
9. To re-establish independent, sound journalism as an essential element of democracy.
10. To promote free access to software and free knowledge as the commons of humankind.

Such principles, however, also need to be converted into a map of practical actions to be taken by a range of actors involved in the regulation of media and digital platforms. To lay out the key initiatives required, we have created a toolkit³ which can be [found here](#). ■

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Notes

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2. There are longstanding debates about the terms “media” and “communication”, of which we are conscious, but in this paper, we wish to harness both categories in the most productive and expansive way.
3. We have allocated the tasks in the toolkit matrix to the actor who should have the main responsibility for each task, however various tasks should be developed by multi-stakeholder bodies.

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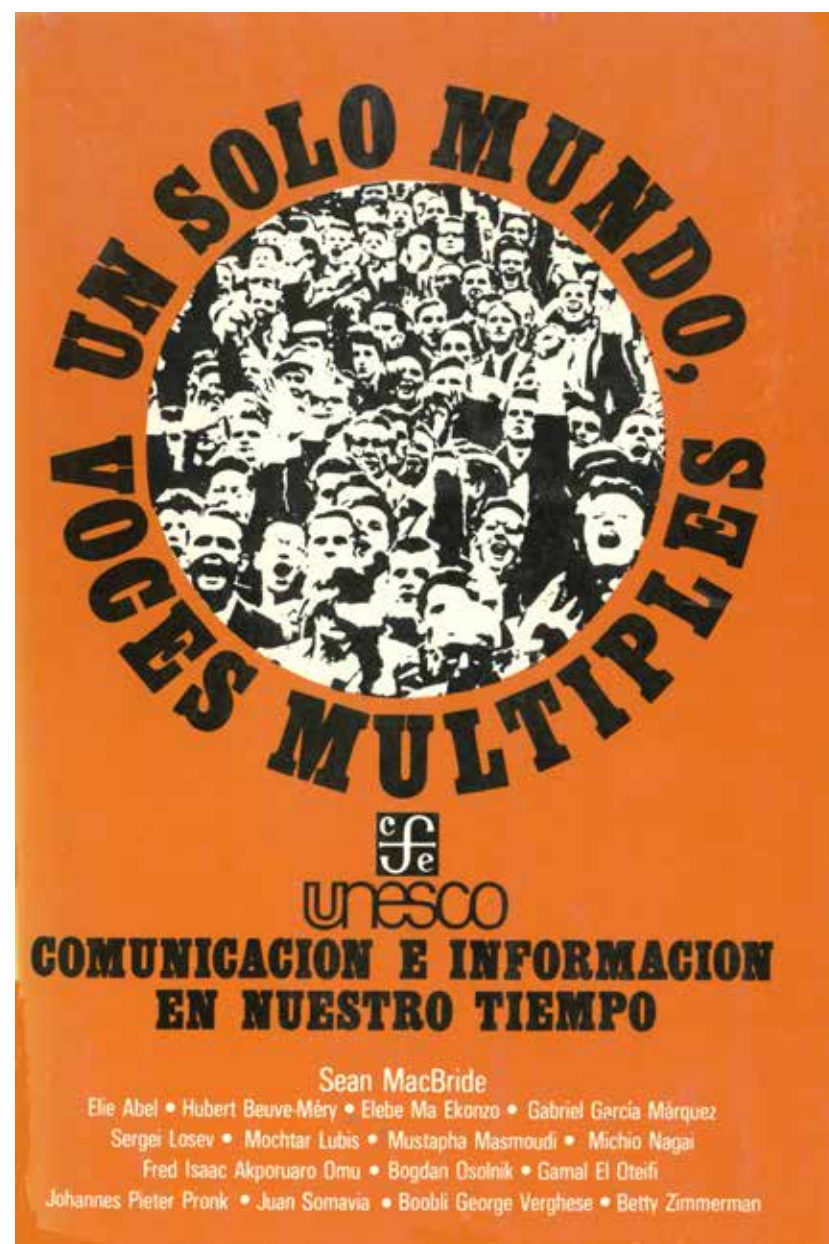
The MacBride Report legacy and media democracy today

Clemencia Rodriguez and Andrew Iliadis

In 1980, the year UNESCO first released the MacBride Report, one of us (Clemencia) was a second-year undergraduate communication major at Universidad Javeriana in Bogotá, Colombia. I remember knocking on the door of Professor Gabriel Jaime Pérez, who taught our course on media ethics. He welcomed me in, and I told him I was confused.

I felt the communication curriculum was full of contradictions: some courses seemed to be training us to work for transnational media industries while other courses deeply questioned the roles those same media industries played in a country like Colombia. Some of my professors insisted on teaching us the communication models of Berlo, Lasswell, and Lazarsfeld, training us to use media technologies effectively and persuasively to transmit messages for specific purposes that were mostly profit-driven or electorally centered.

In the same department, other professors lectured about *Para Leer al Pato Donald* [How to Read Donald Duck] (Dorfman and Mattelart 1971) and *Pedagogía del Oprimido* [Pedagogy of the Oppressed] (Freire 1967). In these lectures, the media industries, and especially transnational media corporations (TNMCs), were presented as imperialist entities that bulldozed local cultures. Their ultimate goal was to open new markets for ideas, ways of life, and products imported from



the Global North – all for the ultimate profit of the TNMCs, with no regard for the well-being of local communities or the health of local democracies.

My experience as a college student in the early 1980s, studying communication and media at a university in the Global South, reflected the global debates around media, information, and communication that were taking place on the floors of UNESCO, the United Nations, and other international forums at that time (Nordenstreng 2010).

Professor Pérez agreed with me and told me that some of those same issues were discussed in a new book he had just received from overseas called the MacBride Report. He asked me how my English was and, when I responded it was good, he gave me the book and asked me to translate the introduction into Spanish because he wanted to use this text in his courses.

I returned with a very clumsy translation of the MacBride Report's eight-page introduction,

done on my typewriter. Professor Pérez photocopied and distributed my homemade MacBride introduction to my fellow students and then, a few months later, we got a copy of the Spanish version of the book, *Un Sólo Mundo, Voces Múltiples: Comunicación e Información en Nuestro Tiempo* (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems 1980). This story illustrates how, since I was a 24-year-old college student, the MacBride Report has framed everything I think and do in the field of communication and media. The Report became part of my academic and activist DNA.

Now, almost forty years later, I think about the MacBride Report as one of the most significant documents in my field, mass communication and media technologies. And yet, I can also see how the discussions that immediately followed the release of the MacBride Report marked a turn toward the unprecedented global control of communication and information that TNMCs have today.

In the late 1970s, representatives from Third World countries exposed a scenario of global communication inequity at UNESCO and the UN. They revealed the almost one-directional flow of information and communication from First World countries into Third World countries and highlighted the starkly inferior communication infrastructure in these poorer countries. In 1977, UNESCO convened the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems to further explore and verify the inequalities in communication flows and media infrastructures denounced by Third World delegates. In April 1980, the Commission delivered its final report titled, *Many voices, one world: towards a new, more just, and more efficient world information and communication order* (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems 1980), also known as the MacBride Report after the Commission's president, Séan MacBride.

The MacBride Report, which was translated into many languages and widely distributed and debated across the planet, but especially in the Global South, demonstrated that most global

media traffic was controlled by a few transnational communication corporations in the “developed world”. At the time, the Report stated that “fifteen transnational corporations control, in different ways, the largest part of operations in international communications, located in five countries” (page 109); those countries were the U.S., The Netherlands, FRG, France, and Japan. The Report alerted the world to the negative effects that media concentration has on free and democratic societies:

“We can sum up by stating that, in the communication industry, there is a relatively small number of predominant corporations which integrate all aspects of production and distribution, which are based in the leading developed countries and which have become transnational in their operations. Concentration of resources and infrastructures is not only a growing trend, but also a worrying phenomenon that may adversely affect the freedom and democratization of communication” (page 111).

From today's perspective, the Report's call for social responsibility by transnational communication corporations seems prophetic:

“Transnational corporations have a special responsibility in today's world for, given that societies are heavily dependent upon them for the provision of information, they are part of the structure that fosters the development of economic and social models, as well as a uniformity in consumer behavior, unsuitable to many local environments. Transnational media have a major influence on ideas and opinion, on values and life-styles and therefore, on change for better or for worse in different societies. The owners or managers have a unique kind of responsibility, which society has the right to insist they assume. Public awareness of the structures of ownership is a necessary starting point. But we are inclined to draw two conclusions for communication policies

in developed and developing countries to help safeguard internal democracy and straighten national independence; one, that some restrictions on the process of resource concentration may be in the public interest; second, that some norms, guidelines or codes of conduct for transnational corporations' activities in the field of communication might well be developed to help ensure their operations do not neglect or are not detrimental to the national objectives or social cultural values of host countries. In this connection, the UN Commission on transnational corporations should pay particular attention to the communication, information and cultural implication of their activities" (page 111).

Limiting the power and control of dominant communication corporations

The Report's call to develop and implement national information and communication policies provided support for countries seeking to establish regulations that limited the power and control of dominant communication corporations. During the 1980s and 1990s, several nations restricted how much media content and advertising could be imported from other countries; limited the concentration of media ownership; reserved broadcasting frequencies for public media; taxed commercial media to fund public media; and implemented policy incentives for non-traditional media producers (i.e., independent filmmakers, alternative/community media creators). Media regulation was not the Big Bad Wolf; a wide array of creative regulatory policies emerged to ensure the social responsibility of communication corporations.

In 1985, for example, Colombian Law 42 defined television as "a public service" that could be offered by commercial, for-profit entities and went on to establish a new framework in which civil society was responsible for shaping and regulating public and commercial television in Colombia. Law 42 created the Commission for the Vigilance over Television, which was responsible for regulating the medium in the country. The

commission included delegates elected by different sectors of civil society, including universities, artists' groups, unions, consumer associations, civic neighborhood associations, television critics' and journalists' organizations, advertisers, advertising agencies, the Catholic church, and parents' associations (Vizcaíno G. 2004, 138).

This type of policy unnerved the transnational media corporations, which were eager to maximize profits by exporting their media content and opening new markets around the globe. Countries such as Colombia, which has traditionally managed to maintain a certain degree of autonomy from the U.S., were able to implement regulatory media policies. This was not the case for countries under the imperial domination of the U.S., such as the so-called "banana republics" in Central America, perceived by the U.S. as "*el solar de atrás*" [our backyard] – those countries that grow most of the bananas Americans eat every morning at breakfast with their Kellogg's cornflakes. In 1973, 84% of all prime-time television programming in Guatemala was imported; three quarters of that media content originated in the U.S. (Varis 2003, 74). This type of scenario was the target of the MacBride Report and its proposal for information and communication policies. Obviously, it did not take long for transnational media corporations to oppose the MacBride Report.

The MacBride Report also showed that Global-South-to-South communication was practically non-existent. Calling for a New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO), the Report's recommendations included implementing media regulation in the form of national communication and information policies, increasing South-to-South communication and information initiatives (such as South-to-South press agencies), diversifying information and communication sources, and creating a code of ethics for the mass media.

The forces unleashed in response to the release of the MacBride Report should have been warning signs for what was yet to come. Using freedom of the press as a smoke screen to protect

transnational media corporations from regulatory policies that would restrict their operations – especially in the Third World – the United States threw a temper tantrum and left UNESCO, taking with it 25% of the organization's funding. This was the beginning of the post-MacBride Report debacle, which ultimately led to the consolidation of the corporate communication and information entities' immense power.

In the Global North, the Reagan/Thatcher era emboldened the forces pushing for deregulation and, as a result, media concentration increased with corporate mergers and horizontal/vertical integration. With the fall of the USSR and the Berlin Wall, the ideology of the free market economy gained momentum until it became a quasi-hegemon – the only way to think about economic models (IPSP 2018).

In the Global South, development “experts” pressured Third World governments to privatize their media industries in order to “modernize” their communication infrastructures or risk being left behind by the so-called developed, globalized world. At the same time, during the 1980s the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization began pressuring countries with large foreign debts to adopt structural adjustment programs if they wanted more loans. Many countries in the developing world had accumulated enormous foreign debt; in 1990, for example, Guatemala's international debt was equivalent to 35% of its GDP (U.S. Department of State 1996). Central to structural adjustment programs was the privatization of services, including media and communication. This meant dismantling information and communication policies. Naomi Klein asserts that this scheme of neoliberal policies, privatization, and deregulation – what she calls the “Washington model” – was imposed on Latin American countries first by military interventions and later through structural adjustment programs.

The history of communication technologies is the history of tensions between divergent forces that sometimes moved toward regulation and social accountability and other times moved

toward autonomy and commercial freedom. The MacBride Report marks a point in this history during which these two opposing forces became, for a brief moment, visible, transparent, and loud. Ultimately, however, the forces of deregulation, privatization, and corporate power bulldozed the Report's call for regulatory regimes and communication systems designed to promote equality, justice, and democracy.

Rising power of transnational communication corporations

In 1982, two years after the MacBride Report's release, international media expert Cees Hamelink noted the report's failure to sound enough alarms warning of the rising power of transnational communication corporations when he stated: “The proposed measures – mainly legal in nature – seem to me totally inadequate in confronting the vast politico-economic power exercised by those transnational corporations that play a key role in international communications” (Hamelink 1982, 256).

Hamelink's words sound prophetic today:

“The Report, although rightly pointing to the crucial role of transnational corporations in the field of international communications, did not sufficiently recognize that the new international information order is indeed likely to be the order of the transnational corporations. The ‘one world’ the Report ambitiously refers to in its title may very well be the global marketplace for transnational corporations” (Hamelink 1982, 281).

One of us (Andrew), despite being deeply immersed in regulatory and standards issues related to the internet, did not cross paths with the Report until recently. I think this could be due to a number of reasons. Most of my training has been in computational social science and internet studies. While in retrospect certain aspects of the Report may seem naive to computer scientists and too focused on the Global South,



Bertilus Sainte Therese talks on her mobile phone in Lareserve, a remote village near Jean-Rabel in northwestern Haiti. Photo: Paul Jeffrey/ACT Alliance. The telecommunications market is highly concentrated in Port-au-Prince, its suburbs, and, to a lesser extent, in other cities. It is expected to reach the interior of the country at a rate of 25 to 30% a year over the next five years. Cyber cafés are mainly found in Port-au-Prince and offer access to low-speed internet connections for long distance communications and internet browsing.

there was perhaps a tendency exhibited by my professors over the course of my technical training to overlook or ignore larger social struggles that have occurred throughout the history of communication and media regulation. Engaging tech communities in the conversation about social justice issues is among the main challenges for those of us working towards media democracy. Unless social justice and democratic values are considered from the moment of conception and design, communication technologies won't address the needs of democratic and inclusive communities.

Looking back at the MacBride Report now, after the advent of the web, some sections appear idealistic and overgenerous in their pronouncements about the role of frictionless information transfer via computer networks. The Report states that "A constant flow of information is vital for economic life" and that communication offers "incalculable potentialities" (23). Although the Report was released well before widespread public access to the internet, the writers were able to articulate something analogous to it: "The global web of electronic networks can, potentially, perform a function analogous to that of the nervous system, linking millions of individual brains into an enormous collective intelligence" (34). The reality is that, after the growth of the commercial internet and distributed web services, the power

of TNMCs has become consolidated in a small number of companies in places like Silicon Valley (Galloway 2017) who control the information that is sent along this 'nervous system' – an example of the concerns raised by Hamelink.

These organizations, who traditionally defined themselves as technology firms and who have only recently publicly acknowledged their roles as media companies (Napoli and Caplan 2017) after inadvertently facilitating the social media propaganda crisis of the 2016 US federal election, hold a privileged position in the diffusion of media content. Further entrenching this media power, traditional or "old media" companies must release material through web services to remain economically viable, and the companies that offer those services, mainly by way of California, form a new layer of editors and gatekeepers that control public access to information, automated through algorithms or otherwise (the Report's authors did worry about "the potential dangers of news flow imbalance" and propaganda, [40] – just not in the context of emerging computer networks).

Concern for the Report's idealistic tone in favor of new information and communication technologies (like the emerging internet) was expressed by some members of the commission at the time of writing. In their dissenting opinion in the Report's appendix, Gabriel García Már-

quez and Juan Somavia write, among other criticisms, that:

“There is a tendency in different parts of the report to ‘glorify’ technological solutions to contemporary communication problems. We want to emphasize that the ‘technological promise’ is neither neutral nor value-free. Decisions in this field have enormous political and social implications. Each society has to develop the necessary instruments to make an evaluation of alternative choices and their impact” (page 281).

The above point is crucial for understanding the Report in the light of the formation of the internet, its technologies, and the associated problems they introduced. Internet technologies are indeed not neutral or value free; tools like algorithms may act as filters that sort information according to a set of pre-defined rules, and while such rules are the product of decisions made by human developers at some point along the coding lifecycle, algorithms themselves have political significance. For example, as the technology of choice for California-based, for-profit social media companies, algorithms are the primary mechanism for sorting and ordering news feeds. In this context, algorithms are inherently political, and value loaded, owing to the nature of their probabilistic composition and forecasting technical features (in addition to the biases that algorithms may reproduce through processing already biased human-curated data).

While the Report does, in some places, warn about the limitations of what it calls “data banks” (64) and the sometimes “narrow criteria for the selection of data” (70), it also emphasizes their importance; “higher productivity, better crops, enhanced efficiency [...] cannot be achieved without adequate communication and the provision of needed data (15). The report often seems to move back-and-forth about the utility of data technologies, as noted by Schiller (1982), who compares areas in the Report that seem to describe an electronic utopia with sec-

tions that describe more sober structural realities related to data.

Where the Report does present significant concern is in the realm of advertising and the commercialization of communication. While in the Global North, companies like Google and Facebook operate according to the market logic of the commercialization of data, Fuchs (2015) shows that countries in the Global South have adopted similar logics: “for-profit companies dominate, targeted online advertising is the main capital accumulation strategy, online shops and online advert services are popular, freemium services are combined with advertising” (10).

Fuchs notes that the Report warns about the dangers of advertising and argues for decommercializing the media, yet the authors of the Report perhaps could not have anticipated the intimate connections between datafication and advertising, especially in the context of the emerging internet and the web services that it would enable.

Other aspects of the Report may be problematized in the light of post-internet TNMCs. The Report states that “Denial of vital communication tools to many hundreds of millions of men and women makes a mockery of the right to inform or be informed” (53). While in the abstract this may be true, it would be interesting to think about the potential thoughts of the commission members on topics like Nicholas Negroponte’s One Laptop per Child non-profit initiative, meant to bring computers to millions in developing nations, or Mark Zuckerberg’s Internet.org, a Facebook project in partnership with Samsung, Ericsson, MediaTek, Opera Software, Nokia and Qualcomm, an attempt to bring the Global South online through the Free Basics app.

The projects by Negroponte and Zuckerberg experienced extreme pushback and criticism from groups in the Global South. At the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) event in 2005, held in Tunisia, one conference participant stated of Negroponte’s project, “If you live in a mud hut, what use is that computer for your children who don’t have a doctor within walking

distance?” (Smith 2005).

Similarly, Zuckerberg faced backlash in 2015 when 67 human rights groups and advocacy organizations in 31 countries released an open letter protesting Facebook’s initiative, listing net neutrality, nomenclature, freedom of expression, and privacy as just some of their concerns. These debacles show that framing the digital divide in the simple terms of a “desire to connect” ignores more nuanced political issues related to connection. Connection might not be a justifiable end at any expense, and there has been a growing body of literature that suggests nonparticipation as a right in the digital divide era (Iliadis 2015).

Datafication of surveillance capitalism

In the end, the MacBride Report’s post-internet legacy may finally be tied to its silence on the rapid growth of what Couldry and Mejías (2019) call “data colonialism” and Shoshana Zuboff calls “surveillance capitalism” (2018), “a new economic order that claims human experience as free raw material for hidden commercial practices of extraction, prediction, and sales.”

Variations of the word “propaganda” appear over 10 times in the Report, “capital” over 30 times, “politic” over 280 times, yet the word “surveillance” does not appear even once (though “privacy” is mentioned 15 times). This is meant less as a criticism of the Report and more as an indication of where things have headed.

The datafication of surveillance capitalism is the defining issue of our times, as evidenced by the innumerable crises it has generated, from Edward Snowden’s revelations about US govern-



Photo: ev via unsplash.com

ment spying at the National Security Agency, to facial recognition technologies being developed by companies like Apple, Amazon, Microsoft, and Google to assist police, government, and military with crime and population control.

It may be time to revisit other critical interventions in the history of communication research. Several authors writing before, during, or after the MacBride Commission were attentive to the dangers of what we now may call surveillance capitalism. Writing in 1977, the Canadian communication scholar Dallas W. Smythe wrote that “the materialist answer to the question – What is the commodity form of mass-produced, advertiser-supported communications under monopoly capitalism? – is audiences and readerships [...] The material reality under monopoly capitalism is that all non-sleeping time of most of the population is work time” (3). If now, as Zuboff claims, all human experience is free raw material for hidden commercial practices of extraction, prediction, and sales, Smythe was attentive to these concerns before the publication of the Report in 1980.

Apparently, another Canadian communi-

cation scholar, Marshall McLuhan, was invited to sit on the Report's committee, but had to decline due to ill health. McLuhan's famous dictum, that the "medium is the message", is telling of the new data worlds described in the Report. How the authors did not clue in to the surveillant nature of data technologies, given that the medium is indeed the message, is anyone's guess.

It is easy to review a historical document like the MacBride Report and criticize it for the things that it missed. But there is a utility in doing so, if only because it illuminates just how profoundly sociopolitical issues in communication can change without notice. If there is to be any prescriptive or regulatory power that comes from documents like the Report, it will be found in a preemptive attentiveness to the shifting landscape of communication problems in modern societies. ■

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Towards an intersectional analysis of media, communication and social progress

Sasha Costanza-Chock

This article responds to the International Panel on Social Progress (IPSP) chapter on “Media, Communication, and the Struggle for Social Progress”. I argue that in order to advance the IPSP’s goals of progress towards a media system that advances human capabilities, we must name specific forms of structural oppression; that the IPSP should develop an intersectional analysis of media representation, employment, and ownership; that online hate speech must be addressed; and that the “filter bubble” critique ignores the importance of subaltern counter-publics, although state and corporate propaganda is indeed a real problem. I urge application of a design justice lens and identify free software as one important tool. And I call attention to media policy proposals by social movements.

We live in a chaotic time of media manipulation, resurgent authoritarianism and the general collapse of public trust in nearly all institutions, including the media. In this moment, it is incredibly important for scholars to engage with core questions about how and whether our planetary media and communications system

might be transformed into one that supports human capabilities and ecological sustainability. The International Panel on Social Progress (IPSP) has attempted to do just that in the text “Media, Communication, and the Struggle for Social Progress”.

In the summer of 2017, I had the honour and pleasure of presenting two formal responses to this text, first at a panel at the International Communications Association (ICA) meeting in San Diego, and then in a plenary session at the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) in Cartagena, Colombia. In this paper, I present a synthesis of my comments from both venues, with additional thoughts and references. Overall, the authors have done an excellent job with the daunting task of summarizing the overall state of scholarly knowledge about the global media system. Rather than reiterate the key findings of the chapter, which is in any case also available in this journal, I will move directly to questions, critiques and suggestions.

Name the matrix of domination, and rethink our indices of progress through the lens of intersectionality

First, at a moment of ascendant nationalism, unapologetic white supremacist heteropatriarchy and xenophobia, it is more important than ever to be explicit about the values that guide us and the systems of oppression that we seek to transform. I understand the authors’ need to be strategic and to couch messages in audience-appropriate language. At the same time, if the aim of the IPSP is to restore our faith in the possibility of social progress, it troubles me to avoid naming the structures that stand in the way.

Why not describe, specify and name the constituent elements of what Patricia Hill Collins (2002) calls the matrix of domination: white supremacy and systems of racial and caste control, heteropatriarchy and gendered inequality, capitalism, settler colonialism and the ongoing erasure of indigenous peoples, ableism, and so on? Naming enables us to better analyse the ways

in which our media and communication system both reproduces and is reproduced by the matrix of domination, as well as the ways in which social movement actors use media to challenge, dismantle and transform oppression.

Grappling with the relationship between the media system and the matrix of domination requires us to engage with Kimberlé Crenshaw's concept of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991). Intersectionality describes the way in which our life chances are shaped by our particular location within intersecting fields of race, class and gender. This concept calls attention to the fact that these axes of identity cannot be separated from one another: for example, I experience life as a white trans person, and my experience and life chances would be very different if I were a Latinx trans person. This includes my experience of the media and communications system.

Concretely, intersectional analysis is crucial to any attempt to establish meaningful indicators of progress. For example, if we are interested in progress towards more diverse and inclusive newsrooms, but we only track gender of newsroom employees without also tracking race, we might (hypothetically) observe a statistical advance towards gender parity and thereby decide that social progress has been made.

However, if we look more closely at the numbers and disaggregate them by race, we might find that a slight increase in hires of white women journalists comes at the same time as a wave of firing of men of colour. Presumably, we would then have a less optimistic analysis of whether these changes in employment statistics indicated social progress. The point is that intersectionality is not just an important abstract concept. It has very real implications for how we conceive and measure meaningful social progress, including in our media and communication system.

Representation still matters

Next, representation in mass media, including both in journalism and entertainment media as well as in social media, still matters a great deal. In too many media platforms, minority commun-

ities remain invisibilized, subject to what George Gerbner called symbolic annihilation (Gerbner & Gross, 1976). In other cases, for example in the representation of women and/or of Black people, there is a crisis of over- or mis-representation. Herman Gray talks about this in terms of hypervisibility, hypersexualization and the reproduction of anti-Blackness, as well as misogyny (Gray, 1995). Moya Bailey describes how Black women are misrepresented in the media system in ways that reproduce what she calls misogynoir, or the specific hatred of Black women and Black femmes (Bailey, 2013).

In another example, transgender people and people of third genders have always existed, but, in many places, for hundreds of years, we suffered erasure and invisibility under the hegemony of European settler colonial systems (Driskill, 2011). Recently, trans people have become more visible across the media ecology, and can therefore be said to be advancing in the struggle against symbolic annihilation, even as we are increasingly incorporated into commodity culture (David, 2017). At the same time, transphobic violence has escalated to historic highs in countries across the Americas, including Brazil, Mexico and the United States (Waters & Yacka-Bible, 2017).

So representation still matters, and the media and communication indicators in the Social Progress Index (SPI) should include measures of representational inequality such as those developed and regularly updated by projects like the Global Media Monitoring Project (<http://whomakesthenews.org>), the International Women's Media Foundation Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media (<http://www.iwmf.org/our-research/global-report>), the Byline report, and the [Center for the Study of Women in Television and Film](#) at San Diego State University, among others.

Employment and ownership are important

We need to ask questions such as: who gets paid to do media and communication labour, who sits in positions of authorial and editorial power, and who sits on the boards of old and new media

companies? For example, in the USA, long-term data on employment in the media industries, such as studies of newsroom gender and racial diversity by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Radio Television News Directors Association, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and the US Economic Census all reveal persistent long-term ownership and employment inequality (Wilson, Costanza-Chock & Forelle, 2016).

Not only do employment and ownership in media industries fail to reflect gender or racial diversity (let alone intersectional inclusion), but the data shows media companies backsliding away from demographic parity as newsrooms shrink. Even in sectors such as digital-only newsrooms that show slightly better diversity figures, at the current rate of change, the media industries will never reach parity with the overall population in terms of employment and ownership (Wilson, Costanza-Chock & Forelle, 2016).

Online hate speech and trolling

Despite a surge of both popular and scholarly analysis of the phenomenon, hate speech isn't discussed much in the chapter. In particular, the IPSP should engage with the surge of racism and misogyny online, as well as with new knowledge about the widespread targeting of activists by counter-movements, national governments and corporate information war contractors (Massanari, 2017; Treré, 2016). In the chapter, the term misogyny appears only once; the term racism is not found; homophobia and transphobia are absent from the analysis. There is, however, a commendable engagement with insights from disability studies about accessibility, representation, technology design and affordances, and more (see Mingus, 2010).

The IPSP, and media scholarship in general, needs more sustained attention to the ways in which hate speech, trolling, doxxing, distributed denial of service attacks (ddos) and other forms of online attack are a constant and growing presence that reinforces intersectional structural inequalities and further oppresses already

marginalized peoples. Analysis of threat levels, and discussion of responses to these challenges, need to be incorporated into the Action Plan and Toolkit. For example, there are feminist proposals for steps social media platforms can take to mitigate misogynist trolls; we might include ongoing study or review of the most popular social media platforms in each region and whether they have incorporated these proposals.

Filter bubbles, propaganda, and “fake news”

I also think we need to open a much sharper critique of the liberal democratic rhetoric that positions the “filter bubble” as the key challenge for networked publics (Pariser, 2011). Put simply, the idea is as follows: social media has enabled us all to avoid engaging with the perspectives of people who don't think like us, both because we self-select who we friend and follow, and also because the sophisticated algorithms that social



network sites use to generate our feeds learn from our click habits over time.

In multiple ways, then, we all end up constantly exposed to information, news and views that support and confirm things we already believe. We start to believe that the entire world thinks like us. We end up neither challenged to expand our own thinking, nor even aware of the range of debate. Also, we fail to gain a sense of the conversation that's happening outside of our own circles.

The problem with this framing is that it ignores the importance of subaltern counter-publics for a healthy public sphere, creates a false

equivalency between all groups regardless of power, and fails to understand the notion of double consciousness, whereby groups in subordinate positions are already forced to learn about the ideas of the dominant group in order to survive. Focus on the filter bubble as a frame for “what’s broken” and what “needs to be fixed” typically comes from a place of great privilege. The critique of this stance is perhaps best summed up by the [“Oh My God, I Think America is Racist!”](#) Saturday Night Live election party skit with Dave Chappelle and Chris Rock.

In other words, the filter bubble critique of the media system is based on an uncomplicated reading of Habermasian public sphere theory that ignores decades of work by feminist and antiracist public sphere theorists like Nancy Fraser, Catherine Squires and many, many others (Fraser, 1990; Squires, 2002). We know that subaltern counter-publics are crucial to the formation, articulation, rehearsal and advance of social movements and systematically marginalized identities, yet the conversation constantly collapses into assumptions and framings about fragmented networked public spheres as automatically bad for (neo)liberal democracy. Media scholars must do better.

That said, there is indeed a real problem with right-wing propaganda that is flooding social media sites. The chapter briefly touches on this in a discussion of “fake news”. Although there’s a faddish over-circulation and saturation of the term in current conversations about the media system, we can’t let “fake news fatigue” keep us from confronting the threat of systematic, well-funded, anti-democratic propaganda. We also should not hyper-focus on the manipulation of news around electoral cycles. Media and communications scholars have worked for years to analyse the ways in which nation-states and powerful firms organize systematic, very long-term, cross-platform propaganda efforts to block regulation, fight progressive policy, maximize profitability and undermine social and ecological progress (Auerbach & Castronovo, 2013). This work will be central to addressing the current on-

line iteration of propaganda and “fake news”.

Design is key

I was glad to see that the chapter includes a discussion of design as a key area of analysis. Media and communication scholars have spent a great deal of time analysing the “moments” of media production, circulation and consumption. We’ve spent less time considering the moment of design of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), tools, platforms and software. We may need to engage more deeply with Science and Technology Studies (STS) and Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) scholarship in order to effectively propose an action plan for how to build a future media system that best advances human capabilities (Bardzell, 2010).

Part of this work is also to reclaim the narrative of design and development of digital media from the neo-liberal mythology about how these tools and platforms have evolved (Hirsch, 2013). Ultimately, a media and communications system that advances social progress will be developed through the principles and practices of what a growing community of designers, developers and community organizers call design justice (Costanza-Chock, 2017).

Free software is barely discussed

The free software movement is one of the most important socio-technical processes in the struggle to develop a communicative system that might serve the interests of collective liberation and social justice, and deserves more discussion. I’m not suggesting that free software simply needs to be uncritically lauded. In laying out a grand vision for the future of the global media system we want, we have to come to terms with the failures of the free software movement as well as its power and potential. For example, free software powers most of the servers on the Net, but is also leveraged by all actors, including the multinational social media and search firms that have come to dominate traffic and monetize attention.

Also, unfortunately, there is strong evidence that structural inequality is systematic-



ally reproduced in “open” knowledge systems and spaces. For example, women are dramatically under-represented in free software development, making up just 2% of code contributors, far worse than in proprietary software development (Reagle, 2012). Similarly, women are quite under-represented on Wikipedia, both in articles and in the community of authors and contributors (Ford & Wajcman, 2017).

Media policy proposals from civil society and social movements

The chapter does not spend enough time exploring the multitude of concrete media and communications policy proposals that have been developed by civil society and social movement actors. For decades, social movements focused on media justice and communication rights have not only resisted the hegemony of neo-liberal communications systems, they have also developed frames, strategies and specific proposals about the governance and regulation of media, information and communication systems (Padovani & Calabrese, 2014).

For example, social movements played a key role in defeating past attempts to eliminate Net Neutrality (Benkler *et al.*, 2015), although, as I write these words, the Trump-era FCC has announced its intentions to do just that. The

burgeoning counter-surveillance movement in the post-Snowden moment includes policy proposals, legal battles and also grassroots practices such as Cryptoraves in Brazil or Cryptoharlem workshops in the USA. The Movement for Black Lives includes media and communications in their policy platform (Movement for Black Lives, 2016).

New tools and methods for media analysis

It would also be useful for the IPSP to highlight new methods and tools that enable us to scale certain aspects of media analysis. For example, projects like OpenGenderTracker enable the semi-automation of gendered byline analysis, while PageOneX provides user-friendly approaches to front-page newspaper analysis (Costanza-Chock & Rey Mazón, 2016). Commercial tools and platforms like Google Trends and NGRAM viewer, as well as open source projects like Media Cloud, have greatly simplified certain kinds of attention analysis. We should incorporate these tools into efforts to develop an ongoing progress index for the media and communication system.

Intersectional Media Equity Index

Finally, a powerful outcome of or follow-up project to the IPSP might be an intersectional Media Equity Index. Such an index might employ the tools mentioned above and include indicators of media ownership (who owns the media), employment in media firms (who works in the media), content production (who makes the media), standing (who gets to speak in the media) and attention (who gets listened to). At the same time, this approach opens a normative conversation about what the goal should be.

Are we proposing parity with the general population across all of these indicators? At what scale (for example, should a newspaper’s diversity indicators be measured against the demographics of its readers, its potential readers, the population of the geographic area it serves)? What communities or identity categories are included in parity metrics? Do we attempt to correct for

6) We need design justice. Design justice is a growing social movement that focuses on the fair distribution of design's benefits and burdens; fair and meaningful participation in design decisions; and recognition of community based design traditions, knowledge and practices.

7) Free software remains an important tool for social progress, but it must become a more diverse and inclusive field of practice.

8) Civil society and social movements have made important media policy proposals that we can lift up and fight to implement.

9) We have new tools for media analysis, and we should employ them and develop additional tools to build on existing approaches.

10) Finally, we can use these tools to develop an intersectional Media Equity Index and better track progress towards a more just and equitable media and communications system. ■

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Traditional knowledge, the Kwéyòl language and public policy in a small nation state

Embert Charles

“The fundamental cure for poverty is not money but knowledge”.¹ The wisdom inherent in this quotation is attributed to Saint Lucian Nobel laureate in economics Sir William Arthur Lewis, and has often nourished the economic policies of small nation states. In considering the question of the acquisition of knowledge as a critical tool for economic and social enhancement, the discussion rarely focuses on skills and values in traditional knowledge but rather on the acceptance of modernity.

This bias was first introduced by Lewis himself when he argued that the traditional agrarian sectors were backward and incapable of the progressive attributes of the small capitalist sector such as production for profit and the use of savings to generate growth. The quest for modernisation of these small colonial societies therefore has resulted in the undervaluing and underutilisation and in some instances the misuse of traditional knowledge. The dismantling of the traditional socio-economic structures, technologies and official biases against the indigenous languages influenced public policy when colonies graduated into small nation states.

The underlying assumption in Lewis’ mantra is that poverty is born out of ignorance and



The flag of St. Lucia: Symbol of national identity, pride and unity. According to Hilary La Force, Executive Director, Folk Research Centre, “The colours capture the historical, social and geographical uniqueness of the island: the blue of the Caribbean Sea and Atlantic Oceans that surround us; the three triangles at the centre of the flag echo the majestic Pitons, but also encapsulate the mixed racial history of her peoples, both African (black) and European (white). The gold triangle symbolizes the tropical sunlight under which we live.”

these two characteristics feed on each other. The retention of traditional values is associated with backwardness. One writer on development issues, Thierry Verhelst, argues that this “Eurocentric interpretation of reality in peasant societies” result in the failure of productive enterprises, because the value and importance of traditional knowledge is often disregarded.²

Traditional knowledge, creoles and nation languages, therefore, continue to struggle for a place in the national and regional development debate.

In examining this topic, one must firstly explore and elaborate on concepts such as traditional knowledge, the Kwéyòl and language, the basic characteristics of small nation states, and the key elements of public policy. The Kwéyòl in this

case refers to the Saint Lucian vernacular that was born out of a unique experience of colonialism, conquest and counter conquest. However, Saint Lucian Kwéyòl essentially represents the body of the “nation languages” which are features of all post-colonial Caribbean societies.

Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite who introduced the concept of “*nation language*” recognised that in their grammatical and lexical features, they represent the nation of people who speak these languages.³ In this context therefore Jamaica patois is the nation language of Jamaica, and so is Trini talk, Bajan, Haitian Creole. This is a reaffirmation of rights of use of language and also communications rights. And like all vernaculars Kwéyòl is the primary method of communicating a people’s traditions.

Therefore, to facilitate in any way the death of a nation language, in this case Kwéyòl, is to close off the route to this vast reservoir of knowledge, resources and values which can help build sustainable development policies.

Saint Lucian Kwéyòl

Lawrence Carrington (1992), one of the Caribbean’s leading socio-linguists, describes Kwéyòl as a language which is a variety of the French-lexicon Creole spoken by a significant majority of the Saint Lucian population and mutually intelligible with language varieties spoken in Dominica, Martinique, Guadeloupe and Haiti.⁴ He notes that while the vocabulary is mainly French in origin, a small proportion of the lexicon includes pre-Columbian languages of the Antilles and African languages. The close association with African roots is supported by Saint Lucian linguist and historian Morgan Dalphinis (1985: 126) in his work on Caribbean languages in which he concludes that despite the differences in detail between Saint Lucian Kwéyòl and Guinean Crioulo, “the similarities as far as syntactic behaviour is concerned outweigh these differences. One seems to be viewing the same language twice with different words but the same syntactic categories”.⁵

While the Kwéyòl and the English lan-

guages are unequal in official terms and Kwéyòl speakers have not submitted to the political dominance of English, Kwéyòl has maintained in syntactic integrity but has to accommodate new technical terms.

Notwithstanding the acknowledgement of the fact Kwéyòl was the language of the majority in Saint Lucia; the prejudices have deep historical origins and permeate the local and national institutions. In 1844, historian Henry H. Breen described Saint Lucian Creole as the language of “toothless old women”.⁶ This characterisation speaks to the social biases which have been recorded in the historical texts on Saint Lucia.

Mervyn Alleyne and Morgan Dalphinis both argue that the prejudices against creoles were extra-linguistic, and bias seemed to have been rooted in race and class issues.⁷ In the 1980s, these prejudices were codified in the statutes of a primary organisation of farmers – The Saint Lucia Banana Growers Association – which stipulated that the office of delegate, member of Management Committee or District Branch cannot be held by anyone “... who is unable to speak and ... to read the English Language with a degree of proficiency sufficient to enable him to take an active part in the proceedings of the Management Committee”⁸ This was an organisation a majority of whose members had Kwéyòl as their primary language of communication. This bias became entrenched even though educators in the region were highlighting the high levels of functional illiteracy in the English language.

Critical examination of the use and transformative power of the Kwéyòl began in 1973 with the establishment of the Msgr. Patrick Anthony Folk Research Centre (FRC). This led to a series of studies, programme initiatives and the creation of orthography, issues which will be examined later in this article.

Traditional knowledge and culture

Sé vyé kannawi ki tjwit bon manjé (old/ancient utensils cook good food); Sé pou ou dòmi an poulayé poul pou sav si poul ka wonflé (one can only know if a fowl snores when you sleep in the



Castries, capital of Saint Lucia.

coop). These are two proverbs from Saint Lucian folklore that speak to the intrinsic and extrinsic value of traditional knowledge, and they address issues of the vernacular and the familiar.

The FRC has always approached the definition of culture in its broad formulation as espoused by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), to mean the features of a society “that encompass, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs”.⁹ In mobilisation and advocacy initiatives from inception the FRC rallying cry on culture was “Culture: the things we do and the way we do it”.¹⁰

Further, the National Cultural Policy for Saint Lucia, completed in 2000, states that “Culture is not only the fruit but the root of development and must be considered in every phase and aspect of the development process. Indeed it may be more accurate to say that culture – the way of life of a people – and the physical and social environment are in constant dialectic, shaping and

reshaping each other.”¹¹

The key components of culture for any society or group can be presented as belief systems; traditional technology; cuisine and food; creative expression (arts and literature); language. Language has often been described as one of the fundamental markers of a people’s identity and traditions are also key identifying markers of culture or civilisation. Of course, what is contemporary today will become folklore for upcoming generations.

Public policy in a small Nation State

Saint Lucia is a small state and in the global scheme of things with a population of 178,844 (2017), can be described as a micro-state. Some of the key indicators for 2017 are as follows – GDP of US\$ 1.738 billion; and per capita income of US\$8,830.00. The key economic activities revolve around the tourism sector, service industries including offshore financial services and construction. The tourism sector is estimated to contribute up to 65% of GDP, and the struc-

ture of the sector appears to mimic the monocrop in the plantation economy.

Like the rest of the Caribbean, Saint Lucia was colonised by the major European powers—English and French. The Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch were also colonial powers. The Caribbean countries are, therefore, melting pots of religious influences, races, languages and traditions. The populations of some states like Saint Lucia, Barbados and Dominica are predominantly of African origin while Suriname is a melting pot of African, Asian and Javanese descendants.

Small nation states in the Caribbean were born out of two main conditions. Firstly, there was the colonial political system where privilege and money were the bases of authority. Secondly, they were plantation economies with marked economic and social disparities. Societies were divided into the propertied and the property-less, modern and traditional and in Lewis's formulation subsistence and capitalist production.

When the colonies became independent they assumed responsibilities for their own policies. The process of policy formation in our small states follows a similar pattern. Political parties vying for state power present proposals in their manifesto, which become the basis of executive decisions and in some cases legislation which is eventually passed in parliament. In cases where consultation is required either by law or as a condition of support from external agencies, there is public consultation on policy proposals prior to enactment into law. The large body of policy however is borne out of default rather than design.

Public policy guides the allocation of resources in the nation. Public policy is created to support the major sectors that are identified as the drivers of the economy and in this process, the use of cultural resources are designed to serve the broader goal of economic growth.

Some of the manifestations of public policy on culture in small nation states like Saint Lucia include:

- * The operations of underfunded and understaffed departments of culture whose man-

dates and functions are constrained by narrow partisan intentions. Invariably culturally related state entities such as museums and public service media are underfunded.

- * The implementation of community-based Heritage Tourism Programmes that are also underfunded and receive allocations and concessions which are far inferior to those granted to large-scale hotels and other tourism enterprises.
- * Public allocations to agencies like the Folk Research Centre, with a body of work on behalf of the people of the nation, whose value far exceeds the annual budgetary support.
- * Increasing public support for new non-traditional arts and entertainment events that are presented as part of the national tourism product. These include a slew of modern music festivals.

In 2000, the government of Saint Lucia published a national cultural policy document, following many months of public consultation. The policy treats traditional knowledge as this "aspect of culture, which is most commonly identified, and it forms the matrix of the people's cultural identity".¹² Consequently, policy proposals include enactment of legislation to protect and recover lost patrimony and the management and conservation of the national cultural heritage. Since 2009 however the only significant piece of culture related legislation has been the Act to establish the Cultural Development Foundation (CDF) as a government entity.

The promotion and conservation of traditional cultural resources has generally been left to the people. The FRC and to a lesser extent the St. Lucia National Trust¹³ have become the primary champions for the protection of traditional knowledge and resources in Saint Lucia. The SLNT is mandated by law to protect both tangible and intangible heritage. Like many other Caribbean countries, Saint Lucia enacted legislation on intellectual property rights which has some bearing on the protection of traditional knowledge. Apart from the SLNT Act, additional legislation to specifically protect and manage

the intangible heritage has not been enacted.

Due to the underfunding of institutions and the low priority given to programming on traditional knowledge and indigenous languages by the state, advocacy, research and promotional work has generally been left to hobbyists and non-state agencies like the Folk Research Centre.

The Folk Research Centre: Transformative programmes on culture

The Folk Research Centre was established in 1973 by a young catholic priest named Patrick Anthony and group of young people of different faiths, the majority of whom were students at the leading Catholic secondary school. The main influential factors on the formation of ideas at that time were the global black consciousness movement and the discussions on identity and Caribbean civilisation; the proclamation of the second Vatican Council, particularly the role of culture in evangelization; the mobilisation of Caribbean churches under the umbrella of the Caribbean Conference of Churches (CCC) to address issues of decolonisation, economic and social development, cultural invasion (from North America) and consumerism. According to FRC founding member Didacus Jules, Carib-

bean was at the “vortex of these hot winds”. And in St. Lucia, there was “a sudden awakening to disguised racism and the persistent inequity and iniquity of a post-colonial society”.¹⁴

Additionally, the FRC members studied the works of writers such as Thomas Aquinas, Jean Paul Sartre, Franz Fanon, Paulo Freire, Augusto Boal, Aimé Césaire, Eric Williams, CLR James and JD Elder. And then the St. Omer triptych – Harold Simmons, Dunstan St. Omer, and Derek Walcott – continued to inspire our cultural movement.

Invariably the initiating activities of the members of the FRC included drama and theatre skills, participatory research techniques, audio-visual documentation, studies in faith and religion, study of cultural forms and the Kwéyòl language, community facilitation and literacy. Study led to action which led to further study and more concrete meaningful action.

The journey of the FRC from its inception, operating out of the Catholic parish centre in Castries to its first home at Mount Pleasant has been captured in detail by many founding and newer members including Anthony, Jules, Louisy, Charles¹⁵ in the publication *The Road to Mount Pleasant – Essays in Honour of Msgr Patrick Anthony*, which was published fortuitously as the last major book by the FRC before



The Folk Research Centre, Castries (pictured in the background) was destroyed by fire on 25 March 2018. It housed an extensive library of publications, audio visual recordings and photographs and was the major study centre for work carried out into Saint Lucia's folk culture by both nationals and visiting researchers and students. It is currently reorganizing its educational and research programmes, outreach activities and rebuilding its library while awaiting rebirth. Photo: FRC.

the devastating fire of March 2018. The collection of essays was edited by John Robert Lee and Embert Charles.

In one of his contributions, Anthony notes:

“However the real impact of Folk Research on Development in Saint Lucia goes far beyond what may be superficially judged as archivism. For besides the legitimization of traditional culture, besides the promotion of local cultural values and the affirmation of resilience against cultural invasion and penetration, there are development programmes that face the development issue head on.”¹⁶

It is instructive to note that the FRC facilitated the implementation of community economic projects in its research communities to address the issues related to poverty and alienation. These included a community shop and black belly sheep production project. The first decade of the FRC work therefore was extensive participatory research, the development of the Kwéyòl language and the coordination of micro-economic projects. Perhaps the most significant achievement was the establishment of Mouvman Kwéyòl Sent Lisi a national informal organisation of representatives of grassroots communities, linguists, academics, media practitioners and educators all committed to the promotion and development of Saint Lucian Kwéyòl.

The movement became formalised into the Kwéyòl language programme of the Folk Research Centre. Between 1981 and 1983, the FRC worked with Creole language specialists from the global creolophone community under the framework of Bannzil Kreole (Group of Creole Speaking Islands). The members of Bannzil were Commonwealth of Dominica, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Martinique, Saint Lucia, Mauritius and the Seychelles. Also participating in the discussions were creole language specialists from Louisiana and Cayenne (French Guyana). During that period, the orthography was developed and promoted.

The FRC is a unique institution in the

Caribbean region. It is non-governmental membership based and governed and registered as a not-for-profit company. The programme portfolio on cultural development is as extensive as the portfolio of the national state funded cultural departments.

Following an evaluation of the organisation in 1983, the FRC mandate focused primarily on research and the transformative functions of culture. The specific programme areas were research and documentation of traditional and contemporary forms, the application of popular theatre for the interrogation of development issue; publications; continued development of the Kwéyòl language.

The most significant programmatic achievements of the FRC to date which have major implications for public policy on language, culture and traditional knowledge in particular are:

1. The annual celebration of Jounen Kwéyòl (International Creole Day) from 1983. This event has become the largest public cultural event created in the eastern Caribbean in the post-colonial era.
2. The development of key resources including the publication of two dictionaries and a cadre of trained professionals at the post graduate level in Creole Studies with certification from the University des Antilles et Guyane. Many instructional and creative publications and products are available in Kwéyòl.
3. The five-year popular theatre programme which led to the creation of groups island wide which used traditional folk forms and Kwéyòl in theatrical productions to analyse and propose solutions to community and national development problems. Téryat Pèp La was part of a regional popular theatre project.
4. Extensive research and documentation on all aspects of Saint Lucian culture, which has provided critical information for national level programmes of the Department of culture on the folk festivals including Lawoz and Magwit. One of the major research initiatives was a five-year project with the University of Vienna on traditional technology and folk be-

liefs. The documentation of traditional musical forms was also undertaken in collaboration with ethnomusicologist Dr. Jocelyn Gilbault, with one of the outcomes being a musical collection produced under the Smithsonian Institute Folkways series.

Research and education on contemporary cultural manifestations such as calypso, soca and Rastafari are also part of the FRC programmes. The FRC has trained many teachers in cultural education. A significant associated achievement was the use of the Kwéyòl language in the delivery of the annual throne speech 1997-17 by Governor General Dame Pearlette Louisy. On the contrary, public policy proposals, which have been articulated in recent times, are aimed at enabling the acquisition of other languages including Spanish and French to facilitate our people's preparation for the world.

Intersection between public policy and traditional knowledge

The challenges to the survival of traditional knowledge and resources in today's public policy space have not changed since the establishment of the FRC in 1973. In fact, they have intensified due to the speed and expansion of cultural influences brought about by the World Wide Web and social media usage.

Some countries have considered policies which provide incentives for use of traditional resources. More controversial measures include mandatory quotas on the use of local cultural content in the media. In the past decade, the national tourism policy for Saint Lucia has introduced the idea of making the product reflect the identity of the people. To which identity are we referring if we have not fully understood our people culturally? The measure to use Kwéyòl in the Saint Lucia parliament is a major public statement and a significant step forward.

Notwithstanding these important achievements in building cultural collateral for this small nation state, public policy has not formally embraced Kwéyòl as a dominant language in Saint Lucia and afforded it pride of place alongside

English within the formal education system and in public and private business. The arguments for this exclusion, which have been advanced, are related to the inadequacy of Kwéyòl and the perceived impact of its usage on educational and even economic advancement on individuals and communities.

These arguments have been debunked by many scholars and practitioners. Hazel Simmons-MacDonald for instance, has published reports on her studies done in Saint Lucia and cites other educators to support the role indigenous languages in the acquisition of other languages.¹⁷ In this case the use of Kwéyòl in the adoption of English as second language. Indeed English is a second language for a sizeable number of people in Saint Lucia and also in the Caribbean.

Where traditions have been used in the development of the tourism product, the approach has been commoditisation without regard for the intrinsic function in the daily lives of people. Tourism marketing strategies are built mainly around the products at the destination rather than the intrinsic traditional and cultural qualities of the nation. The result of this approach is a progressive undermining of the role of tradition through a programme of modernisation and the displacement of elements of the tangible and intangible heritage. The application of the traditional knowledge and the Kwéyòl should not be done in a manner where the language is stripped of its everyday usage.

Cultural festivals are packaged to fit into slots and the intangible heritage is often modernised for the comfort of the tourist. The approach of the FRC through its signature event "Jounen Kwéyòl" has been to ensure the authenticity of the presentations of the traditional cultural resources – technology, creative expression, cuisine – by organising events in the community for locals and visitors.

The association with the Kwéyòl language and traditional knowledge is "la mode" today in Saint Lucia. But this popularity, albeit superficial at times is necessary, it is not a sufficient condition for sustainability of the traditional resour-

ces. These actions must be formally documented, discussed and converted into public policy statements and also form legal and institutional frameworks. Kwéyòl must be declared as an official language. The continuation of the FRC as an institution and the creation of other institutions are critical for the sustainability of Kwéyòl and traditional knowledge.

In the absence of legislation as proposed in the Cultural Policy for St. Lucia, It is imperative that support is provided for continued sustainable operation of grass roots institutions like the FRC which continues to undertake concrete work and advocate for policy changes.

In the aftermath of the March 2018 fire the FRC embarked on a set of strategic steps to rebuild, firstly outlining the context and justification and incorporating measures which are inclusive and sustainable.

In the ashes are the records of forty years of work – audio visual documentation of a wide variety of media including half inch and three quarter inch tapes, hard drives and compact discs. There were also thousands of photographs. The FRC also housed many original works of art including paintings by Dunstan St. Omer and Harold Simmonds, traditional and contemporary craft, books and training material published by the Centre as well as titles on culture and Caribbean studies from a wide variety of authors.

Out of the fire, lessons have emerged about the inadequate and archaic archives management. Digitization was slow and incomplete. Collaboration with other government and non-government agencies involved in heritage management must be formalised and intensified. There was also inadequate preparation for the management of natural and human-made disasters. Resilience to disasters must be a focus of the rebuilding.

From the dust FRC will forge a new vision and strategy of resurrection and rebuilding. The three-prong strategy will include programmes of reconnecting with communities while building a strong organisation. The immediate programme activities include the re-establishment of research services and capabilities, intensive digit-

ization and the continuation of the activities under the Harold Simmons Folk Academy. FRC will strengthen the organisation and modernise governance. We will return the base of the original work by establishing research communities. In the first instance the target communities are Piaye, Mon Repos, Anse La Raye and Babonneau.

Another prong of the strategy is the reenergising of the movement of old with new blood and new energies – creating a membership base made of young people, reaching out to the Diasporas and influencing national policy.

The third critical prong of the strategy is the rebuilding of the FRC home at Mount Pleasant with the aim of creating a nature and heritage park in the surrounding lands, to showcase tangible and intangible heritage with authenticity.

The FRC appeal is for volunteerism and material participation in this broad project. Fundraising efforts are aimed at creating a fund for the rebuilding process. The FRC's vision is to broaden the research collateral by inviting all Saint Lucians to become a researcher and contribute to the body of knowledge on culture which can be shared with the world.

Some conclusions

The life story of the FRC to date highlights the inadequacy of the public policy on traditional knowledge and Kwéyòl. But this story also presents the possibilities and outlines the role of the bearers of the tradition in its preservation and promotion.

Would the situation have been different if Lewis was interpreted differently, or if Lewis had specified the role for traditional knowledge? Would our models of development lead us to more sustainable lifestyles based on the relationships which people traditionally had with their surroundings, their natural and intangible resources?

There has been some articulation of new thinking on traditional knowledge in policy formulation in our small nation states. But there is however the need for further research to quantify

this relationship between economic growth and the application of traditional knowledge.

During the past decade there have been intensive actions on addressing climate change. The increasing carbon footprint can be directly related to modernisation and the introduction of technologies and lifestyles which increase emissions and also compromise the natural resources. Is a back to the roots movement of looking at alternatives based on the sustainable lifestyles of the past viable?

Traditional knowledge in particular and cultural analysis has to be mainstreamed in the policy process in the same manner as gender and climate change has risen to the top of the development agenda.

After decades of public policy that failed to aggressively push our traditional resources, is it the right time to start now? My answer is yes. ■

Notes

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10. This slogan was developed by Msgr Patrick Anthony and Joyce Auguste when they presented a series of radio programmes on Culture for school children
11. Saint Lucia National Cultural Policy (page 11 – 12)
12. [National Cultural Policy of St.Lucia](#).
13. The St. Lucia National Trust was established by an Act of Parliament in 1975 and its main mandate includes the management of intangible heritage: <https://slunatrust.org/>

[about](#)

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Petrochallengers, du mur à la rue: La production alternative de l'information en Haïti

Jocelyn Belfort

L'article qui suit se concentre surtout sur le rôle des réseaux sociaux dans la mobilisation des jeunes haïtiens autour des problèmes politiques de la société haïtienne. Ainsi, j'essayerai de montrer que l'initiative du mouvement Petrochallenger est surtout issu de la jeunesse qui est souvent considérée hors-jeu de la crise politique haïtienne. Ensuite, je présenterai le mouvement comme un mouvement sans-leader avant de plancher sur le caractère transnational de ce mouvement qui mobilise des Haïtiens de la diaspora qui hésite pas à prendre les rues dans la diaspora pour demander des explications sur la gestion des fonds alloués à des projets de développement en Haïti.

Le 14 août 2018, le Cinéaste haïtien Gilbert Mirambeau avec une pancarte en main et les yeux bandés a fait un Tweet qui allait devenir viral sur les réseaux sociaux : *kot kòb Petrokaribe ?* (Où est passé l'argent du PetroCaribe ?). Partagée et reprise par des artistes, des jeunes et d'autres personnalités de la vie politique haïtienne à travers des postes sur les réseaux sociaux (Facebook, Twitter et Instagram), cette question à elle-seule allait mobiliser le peuple haïtien en

Haïti et dans la diaspora autour de la gestion des fonds prêtés par le Venezuela depuis 2008 évalués à plus de 3 milliards d'euros, dans le cadre du Programme PetroCaribe basé sur les achats de produits pétroliers à des conditions de paiement préférentielles.

Dans les rues de la capitale haïtienne, des banderoles, des pancartes et des billboards reprenaient le *hashtag* du cinéaste Mirambeau et mobilisaient toute la population haïtienne autour de cette question. Dans un article publié le 25 août 2018 par le journal haïtien en ligne *Alterpresse*, soit 11 jours après le début du mouvement, le rappeur Valckensy Dessin dit K-Libr qui a donné une meilleure visibilité à ce mouvement sur les réseaux sociaux tenait à préciser que ce mouvement ne sera pas récupéré par un secteur de la vie nationale. « La jeunesse, à partir de ce mouvement, décide, désormais, de prendre ses responsabilités dans les affaires du pays, car le mouvement est appelé à grandir pour aborder toutes les questions d'intérêt national. »¹

Dans un entretien accordé à Stéphanie Schuler pour la Radio France Internationale (RFI),² le cinéaste Gilbert Mirambeau est revenu sur son Tweet en soulignant qu'il visait d'abord la jeunesse haïtienne quand il a mis sa photo sur Twitter :

« Je voulais envoyer un message demandant à la justice (d'Haïti, ndlr) qu'elle tranche de manière impartiale sur cette affaire (des fonds dilapidés du programme PetroCaribe). Si on ne fait que continuer ainsi, alors on aura encore des corrompus à l'issue des prochaines élections. Donc je voulais envoyer un clin d'œil, surtout à l'adresse de la jeunesse, pour qu'elle se dise : on ne veut pas continuer comme ça. Ça fait trop longtemps, 20 ans, 30 ans, 50 ans qu'il n'y a que des corrompus. Donc c'était ça l'idée. » (Mirambeau, 8 août 2018, RFI).

Quelle est la place des médias dans la mobilisation aujourd'hui à l'ère des TIC? Comment les médias alternatifs participent-ils à rendre visibles une partie de la population qui était

toujours mis hors-jeu au?

Dans un article en 2015 ayant pour titre « Médias et mouvements sociaux : pratiques de mobilisations collectives », Normand Landry et al. s'intéressent au caractère politique des technologies médiatiques soulignant du cours les usages militants de ces technologies qui offrent des opportunités incommensurables et inédites en matière de mobilisation. Selon ces auteurs :

« Ces usages militants s'insèrent dans une tradition séculaire favorisant la production, la transmission et la diffusion de l'information par-delà les distances, les contrôles politiques et les contraintes temporelles. Ces usages militants, mais aussi l'attention médiatique et scientifique considérable accordée à ces derniers (Shade & Landry, 2012), s'inscrivent dans le contexte de la découverte progressive des opportunités inédites qu'elles offrent en matière de mobilisation collective » (Normand Landry et al 2015 :215).

Ce qu'offre l'Internet pour tous ceux qui veulent mobiliser autour d'une cause commune est l'instantanéité de la mobilisation, l'interaction en temps réel, l'engagement quotidien et affectif Constituent à la fois des atouts et des obstacles susceptibles de peser sur le cours des choses (Daniel Bonvoisin : 2017). Pour le sociologue Dominique Cardon, grâce à Internet, le public s'est émancipé : « Il prend la parole sans qu'on le lui demande. Il s'expose sans vergogne pour créer de nouveaux liens sociaux. Il produit des connaissances sans s'en remettre à d'autres. Il définit lui-même les sujets dont il veut débattre. Il s'organise. » (Cardon, 2010 :111) Cette vision enthousiaste a trouvé dans les mouvements récents des illustrations spectaculaires comme l'a expliqué Bonvoisin dans son article les enjeux liés à l'usage de Facebook pour les mobilisations sociales.

Le professeur de Sociologie à SciencesPo, Dominique Cardon développe, dans son dernier ouvrage *Culture Numérique* (février 2019), les caractéristiques des mouvements sociaux aujourd'hui. Selon lui, les mouvements sociaux au-

jourd'hui sont traversés par trois caractéristiques (singularité des individus, délégitimation de toutes procédures qui pourraient faire émerger des figures de leader et l'absence de programme). Il existe aujourd'hui, selon Cardon (228), « un glissement du NOUS au JE » qui constitue un approfondissement des logiques d'individualisation portés par internet [...] (Cardon, 2019 :228-229). Notre présentation se situe spécifiquement dans cette dernière approche théorique développée par Dominique Cardon, même si on ne va pas oublier les apports des autres auteurs traitant la question des mouvements sociaux à l'ère du numérique.

Venons à l'analyse du mouvement Petrochallengers qui a démarré en août 2018 avec le Tweet du Cinéaste Gilbert Mirambeau. Pour ne pas nous diriger dans toutes les directions, nous allons analyser trois caractéristiques de ce mouvement :

La jeunesse, un contre-public subalterne

La première chose que les Petrochallengers ont montré, c'est qu'ils peuvent organiser un mouvement et mobiliser la population haïtienne sans pour autant démarrer leur lutte par les médias traditionnels pour faire entendre leurs revendications. L'internet, avec sa capacité mobilisatrice à travers ces dispositifs techniques, permet à des jeunes un peu partout dans le pays de se réunir en ligne en formant une communauté virtuelle (Serge Proulx, 2006 :) pour une cause commune. Dans le cas de ce mouvement PetroCaribeChallenge, les Petrochallengers ont su profiter des opportunités qu'offrent comme les dispositifs numériques pour faire entendre leur voix sur les réseaux sociaux (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) qui sont des médias alternatifs pour se faire entendre et pour fixer des rendez-vous à la rue. Aujourd'hui, on commence à identifier les Petrochallengers qui se regroupent au sein du collectif NOUPAPÒMI qui a été formé peu de temps après le début de ce mouvement.³

De cette forme de revendication, on commence à voir émerger certaines têtes qui se présentent de plus en plus dans les médias tradition-

nels pour porter un discours sur les principales revendications des Petrochallengers. Les Petrochallengers alternent aujourd'hui entre les médias traditionnels et les médias alternatifs. Seulement dans le cadre de l'émission de Davidson Saint-Fort sur la télévision Caraïbes (chaîne 22), quatre Petrochallengers parmi les plus visibles dans ce mouvement ont été invités à cette émission.

- * Le 15 Novembre 2018, Armand Joseph (Pourquoi la jeunesse doit-elle nécessairement engager ?)
- * 10 janvier 2019, James Beltis (Comment le mouvement PetroCaribechallengers évoluera-t-il ?)
- * 17 Janvier 2019, Pascal Solage, (diagnostique d'un mal social à juguler)
- * Février 2019, Andy John W. Antoine (L'engagement des jeunes dans les mouvements sociaux : l'enjeu de la manipulation).

A l'ère des réseaux socio-numériques, les jeunes utilisent de plus en plus les outils techniques dans la « la production alternative de l'information » qui débouche selon Granjon et Denouël sur le déplacement de la frontière tout en faisant exister des arènes d'information de com-

mentaires et de discussions qui défient les monopoles de définition et de classement de ce qui doit être connu et débattu. Des jeunes qui étaient pendant longtemps « hors-jeu » de la situation politique du pays se mettent en scène via les réseaux sociaux d'abord pour exiger que la lumière soit faite sur la gestion du fonds PetroCaribe.

Ainsi, les dispositifs numériques comme Twitter, Facebook, Instagram ou autres médias socio-numériques participent, selon Fabien Granjon, aux dynamiques de production de publics, de contenus et de soi dont l'enchevêtrement caractérise les activités de ceux qui, ni professionnels de l'information, ni « militants », se mobilisent afin de rendre visibles et publics des énoncés qu'ils estiment importants (Denouël et Granjon : 167). « De leurs initiatives émergent les espaces publics dont la portée première est peut-être de remettre en cause les cloisonnements sociaux qui cadrent habituellement l'accès aux lieux dominants de l'expression citoyenne » (Idem).

Ce que Remy Rieffel a bien compris lorsqu'il souligne que « les médias numériques permettent ainsi de faire entendre dans l'espace public des voix et des points de vue souvent marginalisés



Septembre 2018
- Des centaines de manifestants pacifiques défilent dans la commune côtière de Léogane, exigeant que tous ceux qui ont participé à la dilapidation des fonds « Petrocaribe » en rendent compte.
Photo: Réseau de presse haïtien.

ou peu audibles dans les médias traditionnels et, dans cette perspective, révèlent les défaillances du système représentatif actuel a véritablement capter les attentes et préoccupations profondes de la population. Ils favorisent l'émergence d'un nouveau format de la parole politique, d'une citoyenneté vécue par les individus eux-mêmes, loin des modes de délégation ordinaire du pouvoir ou des échanges institutionnels habituels » (Rieffel, 2014 :249).

Car, certains jeunes haïtiens qui ont investi l'espace internet et aujourd'hui la rue pour porter une parole politique n'ont pas l'habitude de s'exprimer dans les médias traditionnels, parce qu'ils étaient effectivement marginalisés et parce que leur parole n'avait jusque-là aucune valeur. Avec ce mouvement, on a une jeunesse qui est plus écoutée et qui participe à une multiplication de l'expression citoyenne à la fois dans les médias traditionnels et dans les médias alternatifs.

C'est ce projet que la jeunesse haïtienne tente de porter dans le cadre de ce mouvement qui est devenu aujourd'hui plus structuré par cette jeunesse qui trouve un moyen de faire entendre leur voix via les médias alternatifs qui deviennent un contre-public subalterne dans le sens de Nancy Fraser. Ces jeunes utilisent un discours non formalisés et plus satirique lorsqu'on regarde la page personnel de certains Petrochallengers qui se mettent en scène lorsqu'ils participent à des manifestations dans le pays ou lorsqu'ils veulent faire passer un message concernant ce mouvement qui montre qu'on est en présence d'une jeunesse consciente des enjeux qui pèsent sur leur tête. Cette idée de contre-public subalterne favorise du coup cette forme de communication horizontale qui consiste à dire que c'est un mouvement sans leader.

Petrochallengers, un mouvement sans leader

Dans son intervention sur une télévision haïtienne, chaîne 20 en février 2019, l'une des figures du mouvement PetroCaribeChallenge, Emmanuela Douyon, tenait à préciser que le mouvement Petrochallengers n'a pas de leader et que ce mouvement est basé, dit-elle, *sur une structure*

horizontale. Selon elle, le mouvement n'est pas réservé à un groupe particulier, mais il y a des principes à respecter pour être reconnu par les petrochallengers et pour prendre la parole au nom des Petrochallengers. La force de ce mouvement réside comme on peut bien le comprendre dans l'euphémisation (voire l'abandon) des hiérarchies formelles (délégation limitée, minoration du leadership, etc). Il n'y a pas de porte-parole désigné. Tous les manifestants sont des porte-paroles et portent tous un discours commun à savoir exiger que tous ceux qui ont participé à la dilapidation des fonds « Petrocaribe » puissent en rendre compte.

Selon Cardon, « le refus de désigner un porte-parole qui parlerait au nom du groupe et la méfiance vis-à-vis de tout effet de notoriété est une constante de ces mouvements (Cardon, 2019 :230). La page Facebook NouPapDòmi créée peu de temps après le début de ce mouvement s'inscrit dans logique de ces nouvelles formes de mobilisation à l'ère du numérique. Les initiateurs de cette page décident de rester dans l'anonymat préférant s'effacer derrière la coordination numérique.

Dans une vidéo partagée le 23 février 2019 sur la page Facebook de NOUPAPÒMI, le Petrochallenger James Beltis explique qu'il n'existe aucuns principes stricts régissant l'affiliation ou non des jeunes du pays et de la diaspora à ce mouvement. Dans cette vidéo de moins d'une minute où l'on interroge ce « sociologue militant » sur les critères à remplir pour être petrochallengers, il a déclaré :

« Les Petrochallengers sont tous ceux qui participent à des mouvements sociaux et à des sit-in pour demander des comptes sur la gestion du fonds PetroCaribe. Un petrochallengers c'est quelqu'un qui écrit et qui partage ces commentaires sur le fonds Petrocaribe. C'est quelqu'un qui challenge le pouvoir, le système pour que la lumière soit faite sur la gestion de cet argent » (Beltis, 23 février 2019).

Fabian Granjon (2017) explique de son



Vue aérienne de la capitale haïtienne, Port-au-Prince. Photo: UN News.

côté qu'il existe aujourd'hui une nouvelle culture politique permettant « d'acculturer une frange de la jeunesse non politisée à l'engagement et à un militantisme en réseau dont l'internet a porté les formes organisationnelles de façon assez naturelles (idem). Il eut à dire que « Cette modalité contestataire relativement inédite s'est notamment construite sur le désir d'une jeunesse cultivée à la recherche de territoires culturels dont les accès leur étaient rendus difficiles, voire parfois impossibles » (Granjon : 2017).

S'il est vrai que la mobilisation en ligne qui a favorisé cette révolte citoyenne n'a pas pris naissance dans un espace physique, elle a toutefois permis la construction d'un espace public fait de représentations symboliques en ligne et d'engagements sur le terrain là où la jeunesse connectée a pu rencontrer les gros des classes populaires qui ne se trouvaient pas sur Facebook et sur Twitter. Entre les sit-in et manifestation des rues dans tout le pays et l'indexation de Jovenel Moïse, chef de l'État dans le rapport du PetroCaribe de la CSC/CA, la jeunesse haïtienne et les autres militants politiques trouvent d'autres raisons pour maintenir la mobilisation et exiger que lumière soit faite

sur la gestion du fonds PetroCaribe.

A côté des médias traditionnels qui deviennent de plus ouverts à cette parole portée par une jeunesse mobilisée et connectée, les médias numériques favorisent du coup une *pluralisation de l'expression citoyenne dans la sphère publique*. Pour Cardon, la nouveauté de ces mouvements sans-leader fait apparaître un autre caractère des mouvements qui ont pour point de départ les réseaux sociaux numériques. Selon lui, « se cacher tous derrière le même masque, c'est manifester l'Égalité de tous et c'est renouer avec la culture politique des hackers » (cardon, 2019-231). Avec l'Internet, les mouvements sociaux passent à une autre échelle. Ces mouvements offrent la possibilité à des gens vivant en dehors de leur pays d'origine de se mobiliser dans la diaspora pour porter une revendication qu'ils jugent justes.

Challenge Petrocaribe, une mobilisation transnationale

L'autre particularité du mouvement PetroCaribe, contrairement aux autres mouvements traditionnels, c'est qu'il s'agit d'une mobilisation qui a bé-

néficié d'une solidarité au-delà des frontières nationales. Grâce à l'Internet et à l'immédiateté de la diffusion et de la réception de l'information, les Haïtiens de la diaspora sont au courant de tout ce qui se passe en Haïti en temps réel. On assiste aujourd'hui à *un élargissement de l'empathie des publics susceptibles de se mobiliser pour cette cause* via des événements comme PetroCaribeChallenge.

Dans le cadre du mouvement PetroCaribeChallenge, l'usage des réseaux sociaux numériques a -je dirais- un double effet au niveau de la réception :

- * Dans un premier temps, la mobilisation des petrochallengers touche un public plus large qui investit les réseaux socio-numériques dans les dix départements du pays. Il se crée depuis le début de ce mouvement, pour paraphraser le sociologue des médias, Serge Proulx, une communauté virtuelle qui se fait prendre en photo dans tout le pays avec une pancarte avec le Hastag *Où est l'argent du PetroCaribe ?*
- * Deuxième effet de ce mouvement PetroCaribechallengers est sa diffusion au niveau international. On assiste depuis environ deux décennies « à la construction d'un espace discursif symbolique et revendicatif transnational (Carlos Agudelo, 2006) qui permet à des migrants de tous les coins du monde de participer à la vie politique de leur pays d'origine. Les Haïtiens de la diaspora ne sont pas en reste. En effet, le mouvement PetroCaribeChallenge est un mouvement à caractère transnational dans la mesure où des Haïtiens se trouvant un peu partout à travers le monde se mobilisent sur les réseaux sociaux et dans les rues autour d'une cause qu'ils embrassent comme tous les autres petrochallengers qui sont en Haïti.

Une fois que ce mouvement ait pris son envol, des jeunes haïtiens de tous les pays du monde dont le Canada, les États-Unis ou encore la France voulaient participer à ce challenge et décidaient de suivre les différentes phases de cette lutte pour que la lumière soit faite sur l'utilisation de cet argent qui était censé utilisé pour

la réalisation des projets de développement dans tout le pays.

En France par exemple, cette prise de conscience a été l'initiative de certains Haïtiens de France qui ont décidé de créer une page Facebook pour lancer une première manifestation. Une idée qui a vite été appropriée par des dizaines d'Haïtiens vivant en Europe qui ont voulu participer à cette première manifestation à Paris dans le cadre de ce mouvement PetroCaribe. Si en Haïti, la première grande manifestation a eu lieu le 17 octobre qui est un jour férié ici, les Petrochallengers d'Europe avaient organisé leur manifestation à Paris un dimanche 14 octobre avec la participation des Haïtiens venus de Londres et d'autres villes de France. Ils ont récidivé en organisant une deuxième manifestation à Paris en suivant les mots d'ordre donnés par les autres Petrochallengers depuis Haïti. Cette fois-ci devant le Consulat d'Haïti à Paris. La manifestation de ce mouvement transnational à Paris n'était pas différente de ce qui s'est passé au Canada et aux États-Unis.

La question des mouvements sociaux à l'échelle globale a été traitée par Arjun Appadurai (2005) quand il a montré que des migrants jouent aujourd'hui un rôle important à l'ère des médias électroniques dans le devenir de leur pays d'origine. Le mediascape qu'il a développé dans son ouvrage « *Après le colonialisme : 2005* » en reprenant les écrits de Benedict Anderson sur la communauté imaginée permet de mieux analyser « les phénomènes de cristallisation et de réfraction des luttes à l'échelon global » (Olivier Blondeau : 241). Dans son effort de comprendre l'importance du public diasporique dans la mobilisation transnationale à l'ère des TIC, Appadurai avait pris l'exemple de plusieurs pays qui s'ouvrent dorénavant leur espace sur un « discours transnational » où des individus se trouvant à divers endroits de la planète peuvent prendre position ou même participer à distance sur des sujets qui concernent leur pays d'origine grâce des « connexions multiples au sein d'une sphère publique plus large de la diaspora » (Appadurai, 2005 :59).

Ainsi, il explique que face à un État-moderne qui cherche constamment à redéfinir l'ensemble des règles de voisinage sous le signe de ses formes d'allégeance ou d'affiliation, apparaissent de nouvelles formes de voisinages virtuels électroniques qui produisent de nouvelles formes de localité » (Appadurai :246-273). « Ces voisinages sont alors des communautés ou des groupes identifiés qui se caractérisent par leur actualité spatiale ou virtuelle et leur potentiel de de reproduction sociale (Blondeau : 242).

Quelques réserves sur le rôle de l'Internet dans la publicisation de ces mouvements

Loin de toute forme de déterminisme technologique, je veux surtout signaler que l'affaire PetroCaribe n'est pas le produit des réseaux sociaux. S'il est vrai que les dispositifs techniques ont participé à produire un pluralisme d'expression sur cette affaire en mobilisant la jeunesse du pays et les Haïtiens de la diaspora à se mobiliser pour réclamer une explication sur la gestion de cet argent, le mouvement lancé en août 2018 par les Petrochallengers est l'aboutissement d'une situation difficile que connaissait le pays depuis juillet avec d'abord l'augmentation du prix de l'essence et d'autres faits comme la dépréciation de la gourde, la vie chère et la faiblesse du pouvoir d'achat de la masse qui s'affaiblit au jour le jour.

En ce sens, je dirais que le mouvement des Petrochallengers est la goutte d'eau qui a fait renverser la vase dans un pays où la jeunesse du pays s'est livrée à elle-même. Le mouvement PetroCaribe a fait émerger un autre public avec l'engagement politique de cette jeunesse qui a toujours été mis hors-jeu dans le débat public. Avec l'internet, la jeunesse haïtienne trouve en les réseaux sociaux un espace qui est d'abord virtuel où leur « Je » compte avant de se donner rendez-vous dans les rues pour la matérialisation de leur engagement citoyen.

Un enjeu majeur de ce mouvement est son accaparement par des politiciens traditionnels qui, profitant du mouvement de la jeunesse haïtienne pour faire leur ce mouvement de protestation avec d'autres visés que ceux exprimés par cette

jeunesse haïtienne non politisée au départ. Car, durant les tous premiers mois de ce mouvement, la jeunesse haïtienne était claire par rapport aux objectifs de ce mouvement : les jeunes du pays voulaient une meilleure explication de la gestion de ce fonds. Cependant, les politiciens et certains militants politiques qui voulaient accaparer ce mouvement demandaient la tête du président Jovenel Moïse.

Cependant, si les petrochallengers ne sont pas tous appartenus à des partis politiques, il ne faut pas être dupe de penser que ce sont des jeunes qui n'ont aucun ancrage politique qui se lance dans ce mouvement PetroCaribeChallenge. À côté de certains qui sont déjà impliqués directement dans certains partis politiques, les Petrochallengers sont pour la grande majorité des jeunes qui remplissent un ensemble de conditions pour devenir des acteurs politiques en Haïti. C'est le constat de Dominique Cardon (2013) dans un article publié en 2013 lorsqu'il a souligné que « les acteurs de ces nouvelles formes de mobilisation ne sortent pas de nulle part et ont acquis des savoir-faire en participant à certains collectifs militants » (Cardon, 2013). Il argumente en disant que :

« Toute montre, par exemple, le rôle décisif du capital culturel et des expériences internationales dans la socialisation des acteurs engagés dans ces mobilisations. Aussi, individualisée soit-elles, les mobilisations éclair sur internet, à partir des pages Facebook, font, elles aussi, apparaître la place décisive parmi les participants des étudiants, des diplômés, et des populations d'intermittents et d'intérimaires subissant les effets du décalage entre leur situation professionnelle et les aspirations que leur ont conférées leurs titres scolaires » (ibidem).

Certains des Petrochallengers qui ont pris la parole sur la toile ou dans les médias, ils se font appeler « militant », « sociologue militant » ou encore « petrochallengers engagés ». Et parmi eux, certains avaient l'habitude de prendre part à des mouvements politiques ou d'autres

formes de protestation dans le pays lorsqu'ils étaient étudiants. Ce sont souvent des étudiants ou diplômés qui, subissant les effets du décalage entre leur situation professionnelle et les aspirations qui se présentent comme Petrochallengers. D'autres, s'ils travaillent, ne se sentent pas surtout capables de bien planifier leur avenir dans un pays comme Haïti. Ne voulant pas quitter le pays pour aller s'installer ailleurs, ces jeunes se sentent davantage concernés par le destin de leur pays. Ainsi, il serait un peu imprudent de penser que les petrochallengers viennent de nulle part.

Dans le cadre du mouvement PetroCaribeChallenge, on se retrouve face à « la production alternative de l'information » qui débouche selon Granjon et Denouël sur le déplacement de la frontière tout en faisant exister des arènes d'information de commentaires et de discussions qui défient les monopoles de définition et de classement de ce qui doit être connu et débattu. Des jeunes qui étaient pendant longtemps « hors-jeu » de la situation politique du pays se mettent en scène via les réseaux sociaux d'abord pour exiger que la lumière soit faite sur la gestion du fonds PetroCaribe.

Ainsi, les dispositifs numériques comme Twitter, Facebook, Instagram ou autres médias socio-numériques participent, selon Fabien Granjon, au dynamiques de production de publics, de contenus et de soi dont l'enchevêtrement caractérise les activités de ceux qui, ni professionnels de l'information ni « militants », se mobilisent afin de rendre visibles et publics des énoncés qu'ils estiment importants. « De leurs initiatives émergent les espaces publics dont la portée première est peut-être de remettre en cause les cloisonnements sociaux qui cadrent habituellement l'accès aux lieux dominants de l'expression citoyenne » (Denouël et Granjon : 167).

Notes

1. Emmanuel Marino Bruno, Le mouvement citoyen né du hashtag #PetroCaribeChallenge, une première en Haïti, <http://www.alterpresse.org/spip.php?article23468#XIECHqAXe-8>, publié le 25 août 2018 et consulté le 15 février 2019.
2. Stéphanie Schuller, <http://www.rfi.fr/ameriques/20180824-initiative-anticorruption-petrocaribechallenge-toile-rue>, L'initiative anticorruption #PetroCaribeChallenge: de la

Toile à la rue?, consulté le 12 février 2019.

3. <https://www.facebook.com/noupapdomi/>, la page Facebook des Petrochallengers créée il y a plusieurs mois pour faire passer des messages sur les différentes activités des jeunes impliqués dans ce mouvement. Les Petrochallengers ont organisé un sondage sur cette page Facebook en février 2019 où plus de 6 000 haïtiens de partout ont répondu à un questionnaire administré en ligne sur les prochaines étapes du mouvement PetroCaribeChallenge.

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- Kamel Daoud, « Le mur de la peur a été cassé », <https://www.lanouvellerepublique.fr/a-la-une/kamel-daoud-le-mur-de-la-peur-a-ete-casse>, consulté le 2 mars 2019.

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Film: Women in charge?

Kristine Greenaway

The role of women in the film industry has been the focus of discussion in the media since allegations of sexual harassment rocked Hollywood two years ago, eventually spreading to other filmmaking centres and beyond. But the lack of opportunity for women directors and for women in senior decision-making positions in the industry has long been the focus of attention of women filmmakers and advocacy groups. Things now appear to be changing. This article looks at recent high-profile appointments and the increasing visibility of films directed by women.

In the past year, two women have been appointed to head major film festivals. The Berlinale named Mariette Rissenbeek as managing director and the Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF) selected Joana Vicente as executive director. Both share the senior role with men. Rissenbeek is joined by Carlo Chatrian as artistic director of the Berlinale and Cameron Bailey takes that role next to Vicente at the TIFF.

The two festivals have also selected record numbers of films directed by women to be screened in their highest profile programme sections: seven of the seventeen films in the running for the Berlinale's top award, the Golden Bear, were directed by women; and at the TIFF in 2018, thirty-five percent of the films screened at the festival were directed or co-directed by women.

In May, the Cannes Film Festival posted the highest number of films directed by women in running for the Palme d'Or since 2011. Four

of the nineteen films (twenty-one percent) were directed by women. But the big news out of Cannes was the award of the Caméra d'or to Mati Diop for her film *Transatlantique*. The award is considered the silver medal of the festival and is a highly coveted honour. Diop, who is Franco-Senegalese, is the first woman of colour to have received the award.

Only one woman has ever won the festival's top prize, the Palme d'Or, a feat accomplished by New Zealand's Jane Campion in 1993 with her film *The Piano*. In the 71-year history of the festival, 1600 male directors have had films in competition at Cannes whereas only eighty-two films directed by women have been selected for the competition.

The recent spate of appointments, visibility, and awards are signs of hope that an industry long known for ignoring women's creative and management abilities is finally starting to respond to pressure from advocates such as the American actress Geena Davis who founded *The Geena Davis Institute of Gender in Media* and has appeared at TIFF to support the festival's *Share her Story* campaign that promotes the inclusion of women in key creative roles.

Berlinale break through

Dieter Kosslick, who headed his final Berlinale in February 2019, had clearly made it a priority during his tenure to open doors to women directors, decision-makers and programmers. In comments made at the time of the Berlinale, Kosslick, noted that it had been important to have women on the festival's selection committees – eighty-one per cent of people selecting films for the festival this year were female. As well, the festival's main jury was headed by France's Juliette Binoche and there was a fifty-fifty balance of men and women on the jury.

As a member of the ecumenical jury at this year's Berlinale, I saw firsthand the impact of decisions by festival programmers to feature more films directed by women. The opening night film was directed by Denmark's Lone Scherfig. One of the Silver Bear awards went to Nora Fingsche-

idt's *System Crasher* and the directing award went to Angela Schanelec. Both directors are German.

The Ecumenical Jury prize went to *God exists. Her name is Petrunya* by the Macedonian filmmaker, Teona Strugar Mitevska, for her story of a young woman's inadvertent but transformative confrontation with church traditions, political forces, and police authorities. The film's star, director, and producers were women.

Francine Raveney, a project manager with Eurimages which supported development of the film, was delighted to learn about WACC's Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) during a discussion we had at the screening. The film was also awarded the prize by the art house association of Germany, which has opened the door to it being picked up for distribution in Switzerland, France and Canada.

You've come a long way *back*, baby

A popular American ad campaign in the 1970s showed women smoking in public and proclaimed, "You've come a long way baby". Indeed, the sight of women smoking did represent a form of social emancipation (and equal access to a deadly recreational poison). While the same slogan could be used in ads about progress made by women in the film industry, it would be important to modify it to read, "You've come a long way *back* baby".

In the very early days of film making, women created major films and were a significant creative force in this emerging new art form. A massive documentary project currently in development, focuses on the successes of this early group of female filmmakers. Filmmaker and historian Mark Cousins, has completed the first four hours of a projected sixteen-hour anthology that will use almost a thousand film extracts, spanning thirteen decades and five continents – all of the work directed by women. <https://www.womenmakefilm.com>

Cousins is not alone in his interest in the history of women in the film industry. A film series distributed by the American art-house and international film distributor Kino Lorber

highlights the work of women behind the camera in the early days of cinema. The anthology curated by Shelley Stamp and produced by Brett Wood brings together the work of female writers, directors and producers who helped create cinematic language. As Hollywood morphed into a film industry run by an old boys' club, women artists were pushed aside. The anthology aims to show what was lost in the process. <https://www.kinolorber.com/film/view/id/3222>

The online digital archive The Women Film Pioneers Project (WFPP) is a freely accessible digital showcase of the hundreds of women who worked in the silent film industry as directors, producers, editors, and more. The archive includes career profiles, overview essays on national cinemas, photos and film, as well as bibliographic resource materials. Started as a publishing project in 1993 when Jane Gaines was a visiting professor at Vassar College, the initiative became a pilot project for the new Columbia University Center for Digital Research and Scholarship and was eventually launched in September 2013 as an online resource. <https://wfpp.cdrs.columbia.edu/about/> Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SfonigTczQ0>

As film grew in importance and became a major cultural industry, women lost their place behind the camera and were more and more objectified as on-screen objects of desire or infamy. For nearly a century, they have had difficulty getting access to the creative and decision-making aspects of film making. However, women continued to make movies with directors such as France's Agnes Varda, New Zealand's Jane Campion, and Iran's Samira Makhmalbaf gaining recognition, especially in art house circles.

An international wave of women filmmakers

Today, the number of women directors whose work is being screened in major festivals and getting international distribution is on the rise and these filmmakers come from around the world.

There is a wave of women from the Arabic world – North Africa and the Middle East – catching public attention. In 2018, the Saudi

Arabian director, Haifaa al Mansour, made headlines with her film *Mary Shelley*. In that same year, Lebanon's Nadine Labaki was nominated for a foreign-language for her film *Capernaum* (poster right). The Ecumenical Jury at the Cannes Film Festival in 2018, awarded the film its prize. This followed the success of Labaki's film *Where do we go from here?* which won the TIFF People's Choice award in 2011. In 2018, TIFF highlighted the work of Arabic women directors since 2000 in its perspective series "Here and Now: Contemporary Arab Women Filmmakers". [Contemporary Arab Women filmmakers \(TIFF\)](#)

Fresh from her win at the Cannes Film Festival this year, Marti Diop is undoubtedly Africa's best-known female director. However, there are others. Kenya's Wanuri Kahiu directed the coming-of-age film *Rafiki* that premiered at Cannes in 2018 and *Flatland* by South Africa's Jenna Bass was screened at the 2019 Berlinale. In Toronto, a collective for Black female filmmakers launched in 2017 called *Black Women Film!* aims to expand the number of trained and experienced women filmmakers in the Canadian African diaspora. <http://www.blackwomenfilm.ca>

Is it far enough?

At last the skills of women are becoming increasingly visible on the big screens and behind the scenes of global festivals. Now the debate begins about the extent, depth, duration and impact of this increased visibility.

In the case of the appointment of women to key artistic roles in Berlin and Toronto, both were named as co-heads with a man. Neither woman assumed full responsibility for the festival. It is even more revealing that in both cases, it is the man who will have the role of curating the selection of the films. Carlo Chatrian and Cameron Bailey will handle the very public role of "artistic director" while Mariette Rissenbeck and Joana Vicente will manage the festivals. As has been noted in the press, the men will be making the creative decisions which is the more visible and prestigious of the two roles. In effect, the men will lead, and the women will manage.



One could argue that the women have simply moved up the ladder that starts with being a secretary/assistant and leads on to senior administration positions. This reproduces a well-known scenario – a woman behind a man who makes sure things run smoothly so that he can shine. Perhaps the true litmus test that women have reached the top will be when a woman is appointed to head a festival on her own and with full curatorial responsibility.

WACC, Women and film

I have served on six Ecumenical Juries with the support of WACC and two of those six jury prizes have gone to films directed by women. These represent two of the six women directors to have received the prize from Ecumenical Juries in Montreal, Locarno, Venice, Berlin and Cannes in the years 2007-2017. One of the six women was a co-director with a man. Fifty-two prizes were awarded in that period.

Why is it that more films directed by women

Nyon (Switzerland) 2019

Since 2005, an Interreligious Jury appointed by SIGNIS (World Association for Catholic Communication) and INTERFILM (International Inter-Church Film Organisation) has taken part in the Festival Visions du Réel in Nyon (Switzerland). The jury includes a representative of a member of INTERFILM and SIGNIS and a member of Jewish and Muslim faith.

The jury awards a prize, and possibly a commendation, to a feature-length film of the international competition that sheds light on existential, social or spiritual questions as well as human values. The prize of CHF 5'000 is donated by both the Swiss Catholic Church and Médias-pro, the Media Department of Reformed Churches in the French-speaking part Switzerland (CER), and the Swiss Federation of Jewish Communities.

The Interreligious Jury awarded its Prize endowed with CHF 5000 to the film *When Persimmons Grew* directed by Hilal Baydarov (Azerbaijan, Austria, 2019). A cinematic soulscape – in poetic and still-life images we get to know a mother who has the ability to remember what really counts. During the persimmon harvest she philosophises with her son about the fruits of life. With a penetrating eye, the Azerbaijani director succeeds in interweaving linear time with the moment, capturing for eternity the joys of everyday life.

The jury gave a Commendation to the film *Norie* directed by Yuki Kawamura (Luxembourg, Japan, 2019). The filmmaker accompanies his father on a journey to the core of the pain caused by the death of his young wife Norie, allowing the viewers to participate in a deeply human process of mourning.

The members of the Interreligious Jury 2019 were Brigitte Affolter, Biel (Switzerland);

were not recognized by the juries? Were there so few films by women that choice was limited? Are jury members unconsciously screening out films with a female perspective? This might be a subject for study by WACC under the direction of its women's desk.

WACC's high profile *Global Media Monitoring Project*, has been monitoring the role of women in the media since it was launched in 1995. While the project focuses on women the news media, statistics about women in decision-making positions in the news industry paint a similar picture as that for the film industry.

Men are in the key editorial decision-making roles which means stories are selected and told principally by men; women continue to be talked about rather than being spoken with; and "important" stories about politics and economics do not include many, if any, female experts.

The same control of story and voice has long applied in movie production houses. The roles of women as filmmakers, cinema festival decision-makers, and producers is an important element of the visual story telling landscape to study.

As film is ever more widely available beyond the big screen, the urgency of seeing and hearing stories told by women is ever more important. The voices, images, dreams, and wisdom of half the world's people are rich with insight, amusement, and inspiration. Overcoming structural barriers based on stereotypes and lack of knowledge and reference points must be a key component in analysis of women's presence in the media. ■

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Of his film *When Persimmons Grew* (still above), director Hilal Baydarov says: “When the primroses were turning red, and the white cherries were in bloom” — that is when my grandmother says the war ended. She talks about time the way people did in olden days, before the calendar divided it up into days, months, and years. When time had no name and was not measured in numbers, it was marked by the rhythms of nature. My father was born “when the rivers overflowed and the grass was harvested,” says my grandmother, meaning my father was born in June. Exact dates mattered less than durations which nature filled with meaning. Time was not a line. It ebbed and flowed with the seasons, was shaped by the lifecycles of the flora and fauna. The title of my film, *When Persimmons Grew*, pays homage to this traditional way of denoting time. People were coming and going from my family back then. We gathered together, and we broke apart. We grew up, and set about living our own lives. Everything was changing and becoming more colorfull, for all except my mother, whom time left alone. I left home then and returned eight years later — when persimmons grew.

Carlos Aguilera Albesa, Almeria (Spain); Sascha Lara Bleuler, Zürich (Switzerland) – President; Behrang Samsami, Berlin (Germany).

Oberhausen (Germany) 2019

The Ecumenical Jury at the International Short Film Festival Oberhausen 2019 awarded its Prize of €1500 donated by the Catholic Church in Germany and the Protestant Church in Oberhausen, to the film *NoirBLUE – Deslocamentos de uma dança* (*NoirBLUE – Displacements of a Dance*) directed by Ana Pi (France, Brazil, 2018).

In addition, the jury awarded a Commendation to *amelina* directed by Rubén Guzmán (Argentina, 2018).

Furthermore, the Ecumenical Jury made a recommendation to the German church film distribution companies Katholisches Filmwerk (kfw) and Matthias-Film to buy the non-commercial distribution rights of a film from the Competition for Children and Youth Films called *La gita* (*The School Trip*) directed by Salvatore Allocca (Italy, 2018).

The members of the 2019 Jury were: Alexander Bothe, Germany (President of the Jury); Friedrich Brandi-Hinrichs, Germany; Dénes Nagy, Hungary; Christine Ris, Switzerland.