Media Development

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Rethinking Media and Gender Justice

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IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The 2/2010 issue of *Media Development* will take a leap into the unknown by exploring the notion that there might be such a thing as a 'right to memory'. Articles will discuss the concept and focus on countries and situations where restoring public or collective memory lies at the heart of coming to terms with the past, challenging political amnesty or impunity, and advancing processes of truth-telling and reconciliation.

WACC

taking sides

EDITORIAL

In September 1995 representatives from over 180 countries gathered in Beijing, China, for the Fourth World Conference on Women. It was the culmination of decades of action, preparation, and meetings whose ultimate aim was the attainment of equality, sustainable development, and peace.

For ten days, participants worked on refining a document that would reflect the concerns of the world's women towards the end of the 20th century. It was called the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and it set the agenda for women's empowerment.

The Platform established 12 critical areas of concern that needed to be addressed in order to achieve political, social, economic, cultural, and environmental security for all people. These areas were poverty; education; health; violence; armed conflict; the economy; power and decision-making; mechanisms for women's advancement; women's human rights; mass media; the environment; and the girl child.

The Platform's *Section J on Women and Media* had two strategic objectives: (1) Increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new technologies of communication; (2) Promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media.

Fifteen years on, in March 2010, the UN's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will be undertaking a review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Emphasis will be placed on the sharing of experiences and good practices, with a view to overcoming remaining obstacles and addressing new challenges, including those related to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The CSW is facing a difficult task. Since 1995 the global communication scene has changed dramatically. At the World Summit on the Information Society (2003), information and communication technologies (ICTs) – largely overlooked in Beijing – were identified as a critical component in enabling women's empowerment. There are calls for Beijing+15 to take into account the emancipatory potential of ICTs.

There has also been strong criticism about the attainability of the MDGs. Goal 3 is 'Promote gender equality and empower women' and its target 'Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education preferably by 2005 and in all levels of education no later than 2015.' This goal is remarkably broad in scope, and yet tightly focused on sex parity in schools.

Women's rights activist and scholar Peggy Antrobus has commented, 'I do not believe in the MDGs. I think of them as a Major Distracting Gimmick – a distraction from the much more important Beijing Platform for Action with its 12 priority areas of concern.'[1] Her view underlines the fact that gender equality is deeply cross-cutting.

The United Nations General Assembly may just have woken up to this fact. In September 2009, it adopted a resolution to establish a new UN entity focused on the rights of women.

The UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the UN Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) will be amalgamated to create a single entity to work towards gender justice.

Let's hope the new organization will take seriously the role of the mass media in promoting and strengthening women's rights. At WACC's Congress 2008, UNIFEM's deputy executive-director of program, Joanne Sandler, said that fundamental institutional transformation in the media is imperative if they are actively to promote gender justice.[2] She identified four crucial areas of work:

1. Strengthening media monitoring to build media literacy.

2. Producing gender and social justice content with high production values.

3. Linking media with action and solutions.

4. Building partnerships. ■

Notes

1. 'Presentation to the Working Group on the MDGs and Gender Equality.' UNDP Caribbean Regional Millennium Development Goals Conference. Barbados, 7-9 July 2003.
2. 'Imagine media that promote gender justice', in *Media Development* 4/2008, pp. 14-20.

Women's human and communica- tion rights[1]

Margaret Gallagher

'Now we are seen as real human beings.' This was how village women in south eastern Kenya summed up their experience of running a community radio station. Asked about the impact of the radio station on their lives, they said, 'The status of women both at household and community levels has improved a lot. Men used to despise us, saying that there is nothing big that we can do. … Now we are seen as real human beings'.[2]

These women's sense of achievement at being seen as 'real' human beings – a state that apparently they had not experienced previously – shows that there is a deep hole in any discussion of human rights that does not explicitly – and I stress, explicitly – acknowledge and elucidate the specific position of women within the human community. Analysis that claims to include both women and men in a general rights framework hides the deeply gendered division of power and rights within communities everywhere. The result is a disaster for women's human rights.

Those women in Kenya were fortunate. Through their community radio station they not only gained respect and entered public life within the village, but they found a way of speaking out about deeply degrading issues – rape, sexual assault, physical violence, alcoholism – that from childhood they had been taught to keep quiet about and to accept. For millions of women around the world this never happens. They live out their lives not as 'real' human beings, but in a state of fear and silence that arises spe-

cifically from the fact of having been born female.

Pre-natal sex selection, female infanticide, so-called 'honour killings', femicide – these are among the most brutal means of ensuring that women are never heard, indeed sometimes never born. They are all forms of gender-based violence against women, defined in 1992 by the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as 'violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately.'[3]

In 1993 the parallel term 'gender-based censorship' was coined by the Filipina feminist writer, journalist and human rights activist Ninotchka Rosca.[4] At first glance, the expression 'gender-based censorship' may seem an exaggerated or emotive way of describing how women's communication rights are curtailed. But if we think of it in terms of the suppression of women's voices *because* they are women, or in ways that affect women *disproportionately*, echoing the CEDAW definition, it helps us to analyse women's invisibility – or sometimes their hyper- visibility – in communication processes, not as something particular to this or that media system or media genre, but as a quite fundamental aspect of social, economic and political relations.

Of course censorship exists in different forms in all States. And women – whether as citizens or as journalists – who criticise aspects of state politics, corruption and so on can be silenced in the same ways used to silence men who speak out – though, in practice, even these forms of censorship may be affected by gender. For instance, Article 19 has documented that rape, gang-rape, and sexual smear campaigns are common forms of punishment used against women activists and journalists.[5]

But gender-based censorship is much broader, moe pervasive and usually more subtle than official, organized suppression. It is embedded in a range of social mechanisms that silence women's voices, deny the validity of their experience, and exclude them from political discourse. Its effect is to obscure the real conditions of women's lives and the inequity of gender relations that prevents women from exercising their human rights.

Media's role in silencing women
Not surprisingly, the social and cultural practices that result in the silencing of women are echoed,

and sometimes amplified, by the media. This has been well documented by research. For instance, every five years since 1995, the Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) has provided a one-day snapshot of 'who makes the news' in the newspapers, radio, and television of more than 70 countries. The 1995 study found that women were only 17% of the world's news subjects – the people who are interviewed or whom the news is about.[6] Ten years later, the figure was 21%.[7]

Regional differences are slight: in 2005 they ranged from a high of 26% in North America to a low of 15% in the Middle East. Everywhere, expert opinion in the news is overwhelmingly male; men are 83% of experts and 86% of spokespersons. Perhaps even more disturbing is that only 34% of so-called 'popular opinion' is provided by women. It is quite extraordinary that the selection of voices to represent ordinary citizens is so radically skewed. There is not a single major news topic in which women outnumber men as newsmakers. Even in stories that affect women profoundly, such as gender-based violence, it is the male voice that prevails. In 2005 64% of news subjects in these stories were men.

The results across the three studies (1995–2005) are strikingly consistent, and they have been replicated in research carried out over longer time frames. For instance, a one-month study in 12 Southern African countries in 2002 found that 17% of news subjects were women.[8] Of course, the numbers tell only a tiny part of the story. Behind them lies the power structure – social, political, and economic – that itself silences women. News values intertwine with political priorities to portray a particular view of what is important. Issues that are central in women's lives come low down in the scale of what is regarded as newsworthy. The 2005 GMMP found that only 4% of news stories dealt in any way with issues of gender equality or inequality.

While figures like these are important in documenting the systematic silencing of women, it is crucial to look at them in terms of what they tell us about what it means to be a woman, and about women's experience of the world. To take just one example, one of the most pernicious forms of discrimination is the denial of women's authority and leadership. The 2005 GMMP found a gross under-representation of female politicians in the news of almost all the 76 countries studied. Even in New

Zealand, where there was a female Prime Minister and where women accounted for 32% of politicians, only 18% of politicians in the news were women.

And when they *are* given space, women in public life are frequently undermined or muted by sexist comment or questioning. No-one who followed the 2008 American presidential campaign will forget the depths of misogyny that welled up against Hillary Clinton.[9] A few years earlier, in Germany we had seen the extraordinary television spectacle of Angela Merkel and Gerhard Schröder – at the time, the leaders of the country's two main political parties – being questioned by a well-known talk-show host about their political lives. But while Schröder was asked about his relationships with Presidents Putin and Bush, Merkel was asked if she found Brad Pitt attractive and whether her husband helped her to understand men.[10]

And if that seems hard to believe, consider what happened in Israel after the 2009 national elections, when two ultra-Orthodox Jewish newspapers actually altered a photograph of the new Israeli cabinet so as to remove two female ministers. One of the newspapers simply blacked the women out; the other one digitally replaced the women with images of men.[11] It might seem funny if it were not so completely tragic.

We need to understand these different expressions of unwillingness to accept women as autonomous political subjects, and the pervasive definition of women as deviant objects within a masculinist world, as a very specific, gender-based barrier to women's exercise of their communication rights.

There are numerous ways in which gender-based censorship obscures the real conditions of women's lives. One of them is by making it difficult, dangerous or impossible to voice issues that threaten to reveal the extent to which women are devalued by the State. Again, the 2005 GMMP found that only 1% of news stories dealt with human rights and women's rights, and only 1% with gender-based violence. Why is there such silence on these issues?

For instance, UNICEF estimates that every minute a woman dies from complications in pregnancy and childbirth.[12] Yet in July 2009, Chansa Kabwela, news editor of Zambia's biggest-selling newspaper *The Post*, was arrested after she distributed pictures of a woman giving birth without medical assistance, during a strike by health workers. The pictures were not published. They

were simply sent to a small group of government ministers and NGOs. In a case brought against her by the State, Kabwela was accused of circulating obscene material and pornography.[13]

Women are in 'double jeopardy'
When it comes to exposing the State's complicity in real pornography, however, journalists risk even greater consequences. The case of Lydia Cacho who, because of her work in uncovering prostitution and child pornography networks in Mexico, was illegally arrested and has been the target of death threats, defamation suits, and police harassment, is well known internationally. The widespread abduction, rape and murder of women – notorious in countries such as Mexico, Guatemala and Chechnya – go uninvestigated by the police and unreported by the media. Human rights journalists and activists who dare to expose these crimes risk the ultimate penalty – death. That was the fate of Natalya Estemirova in Chechnya in July 2009.

Inevitably, activists and journalists who publicly question the conditions of women or who promote women's rights in repressive regimes are particularly threatening to the status quo. For example, when last year the Iranian women's magazine *Zanan* (Woman) was shut down after many years of publication, the reason given was that it was 'publishing information detrimental to society's psychological tranquility'.[14]

With respect to human rights, Amnesty International describes women as being in 'double jeopardy'. It says: 'Discriminated against as women, they are also as likely as men, if not more so, to become victims of human rights violations'.[15] In the same way, we can see women as being in double jeopardy when it comes to communication rights – women's right to information, to speak, to be heard, are violated in quite specific ways *because* they are women.

So any grounded discussion of communication rights that does not speak explicitly – and again, I stress explicitly – about women's communication rights will result in a quite inadequate analysis of the issues at stake. But we still face an uphill task in bringing feminist analysis, which does speak of women's rights, together with other strands of work and writing on communication rights. In this, as in many other areas of media research, we seem to have two parallel bodies of work in progress. I first wrote about this 25 years ago, in relation to

the debates around the New World Information and Communication Order.[16] Today, as far I can see, the situation is not fundamentally different.

I think this is partly due to a lack of familiarity with feminist literature, and a consequent misunderstanding of what feminist media scholarship is actually about. To take just one example: the introduction to an edited collection of papers on international communication published in 2009 – which will certainly be widely read – suggests that what it describes as the 'feminization' of media studies is associated with research into so-called 'softer' topics.[17] No feminist work is included in the collection. However, this is a serious oversight.

For many years feminist media scholarship has been concerned with issues of power, rights, democracy, information flows, policy, technology, political economy and so on, all of which are at the core of international communication studies.[18] Feminist analysis may focus on these issues in a slightly different, perhaps less familiar way. But because of this different focus, feminist scholarship has the potential to expand our critiques and our understanding of the issues that media and communication research tries to explain, and the world that many of us would like to change. As such, it deserves the attention of all critical media scholars, across all disciplines.

Taking women's lives seriously
Observations from two very different but equally thoughtful and thought-provoking feminist scholars should illustrate my point. Though neither of them works specifically in the field of media and communication, each can contribute to the way we might think about framing our research.

Cynthia Enloe writes on international politics and security. In her book *Globalization and Militarism* she urges us to 'take women's lives seriously'. Unless one does this, she says, one cannot reliably explain why the international system and what she calls globalized militarism work the way they do.[19] 'Taking women's lives seriously' may seem deceptively simple and obvious. In fact it requires a radical re-think in the way many of us approach problems and formulate research questions.

Catharine MacKinnon is a lawyer whose work focuses on pornography, violence against women, and international law. In her essay 'Are Women Human?', published in 1999 as part of a collection to

mark the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, she analyses the failure of the Declaration to address the distinctive ways in which women are deprived of human rights, and its failure to understand these as a deprivation of humanity.

She goes on: 'It is hard to see, in [the Declaration's] vision of humanity, a woman's face. The world needs to see women as human.'[20] Her assertion may seem over-charged, or provocative. But is not the sentiment exactly that of the Kenyan village women whose lives were changed by their community radio station?

To be seen as real human beings, women's lives need to be taken seriously. If we remember this in our research I believe we will bring a sharper spotlight onto the specific, gender-based obstacles that must be attended to if women are to exercise their human and communication rights. ■

Notes

1. This paper is based on the author's presentation at the International Association for Media and Communication Research (IAMCR) conference, *Human Rights and Communication*, Mexico City, 21-24 July 2009.
2. Birgitte Jallov. *Impact assessment of East African Community Project 2000-2006. Report from Radio Mang'elete, Kenya, and selected communities*. Stockholm: SIDA, 2007.
3. See United Nations. *In-depth study on all forms of violence against women*. Report of the Secretary General. A/61/122/ Add. 1 , 2006; para. 33.
4. Meredith Tax et al. *The Power of the Word: Culture, Censorship and Voice*. New York: Women's WORLD (Women's World Organization for Rights, Literature and Development), 1995; p. 23.
5. See for example Article 19. *Yemen: Freedom of Expression in Peril*. London: Article 19, 2008; pp. 28-30.
6. MediaWatch. *Women's Participation in the News: Global Media Monitoring Project*. Toronto: MediaWatch, 1995.
7. Margaret Gallagher. *Who Makes the News? Global Media Monitoring Project 2005*. London: World Association for Christian Communication, 2006.
8. *Gender and Media Baseline Study*. Windhoek/Johannesburg: Media Institute of Southern Africa/Gender Links, 2003.
9. See Amanda Fortini. 'The Feminist Reawakening: Hillary Clinton and the fourth wave', *New York Magazine*, 13 April 2008. http://nymag.com/news/features/46011/. Also the video *Sexism Sells*. New York: Women's Media Center, May 2008. http://www.womensmediacenter.com/sexism_sells.html
10. Video extracts included in *Portraying Politics: A Toolkit on Gender and Television*, chapter 5 'Framing the Message'. Portraying Politics Project Partners, 2006. http://www.portrayingpolitics.net/
11. 'Papers Alter Israel cabinet photo' BBC online news, 3 April 2009. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/7982146.stm
12. UNICEF. *Progress for Children: A Report Card on Maternal Mortality*. 2008. http://www.childinfo.org/files/progress_for_children_maternalmortality.pdf
13. 'Zambia prosecutes editor of Post'. BBC online news, 15 July 2009. http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/8153003.stm
Four months later, the officiating magistrate ruled that the prosecution had failed to establish that the photographs were obscene, and that Kabwela had no case to answer. See 'Court throws out Chansa Kabwela obscenity case'. IFEX Alert, 17 November 2009. http://www.ifex.org/zambia/2009/11/17/kabwela_vindicated/
14. 'Iran: Leading Women's Magazine Shut Down'. Index on Censorship, 31 January 2008. http://www.indexoncensorship.org/2008/01/iran-leading-women%e2%80%99s-magazine-shut-down/
15. Quoted in Amnesty International. *Women's Human Rights: A Fact Sheet*, 2005.
16. Margaret Gallagher 'Women and NWICO', pp. 33-56 in *Communication for All: New World Information and Communication Order,* edited by Philip Lee. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1986; and Margaret Gallagher 'A Feminist Paradigm for Communication Research', pp. 75-87 in *Rethinking Communication. Volume 2: Paradigm Exemplars*, edited by Brenda Dervin et al. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1989.
17. Daya Kishan Thussu 'Introduction' in *Internationalizing Media Studies*, edited by Daya Kishan Thussu. London: Routledge, 2009, p. 2.
18. References to, and examples of, much of this work can be found in *Feminist Interventions in International Communication*, edited by Katharine Sarikakis and Leslie Regan Shade. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2008.
19. Cynthia Enloe. *Globalization and Militarism: Feminists Make the Link*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007.
20. Catharine MacKinnon. 'Are Women Human?' In *Reflections on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, edited by Barend van der Heijden & Bahia Tahzib-Lie. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1999. Reprinted in Catharine A. MacKinnon *Are Women Human? And Other International Dialogues*. Harvard: Belknap Press, 2006.

Margaret Gallagher (Ireland) is an independent researcher and writer specialising in gender and media. She started her career at the BBC (London), before moving to the Open University where she was Deputy Head of the Audiovisual Media Research Group. For the past thirty years she has been a free-lance consultant, and has carried out research, training and evaluation projects for the United Nations and its agencies, the European Commission, international development agencies and broadcasting organisations. Widely published on women, media and development, recent works include *Gender Setting: New Agendas for Media Monitoring and Advocacy* (Zed Books, 2001) and *Who Makes the News? Global Media Monitoring Project 2005* (WACC, 2006).

Gender and the Millennium Development Goals

ODI Briefing Paper

Gender inequality causes and perpetuates poverty and vulnerability. But greater gender equality can help to reduce the root causes of poverty and vulnerability and contribute to sustainable pro-poor growth. Consequently, a gender lens is vital for pro-poor results

Given that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) address key development challenges, one would expect a gender focus throughout the Goals. The fact is that experiences of poverty differ according to sex, age, ethnicity and location. However, gender is only explicit in MDGs 3 and 5. MDG3 measures gender parity in education; the share of women in wage employment; and the proportion of seats held by women in national legislatures. MDG5 focuses on maternal mortality and, since 2005, on universal access to reproductive health.

This explicit inclusion in just two MDGs is too narrow, and sidelines other gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities, roles and responsibilities, and power relations. It is unlikely to lead to gender equality and the empowerment of girls and women, or tackle the development challenges that must be overcome for sustainable poverty reduction.

These limitations are compounded by the gender-blindness of other MDG indicators, and the fact that the gender dynamics that cut across the goals are relatively invisible in policy dialogues. This Briefing Paper discusses how gender relations underpin four clusters of Goals: those on poverty and sustainable development; service access; care and care-giving; and voice and agency. It looks at ways to promote an interlinked gender-sensitive approach to the MDG achievement.

Poverty and sustainable development

Up to 443 million people live in chronic poverty (CPRC, 2008). However, progress on MDG1 (the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger) and MDG7 (ensuring environmental sustainability) has lagged behind that made on some other goals. A lack of sex-disaggregated data masks the gender dynamics of poverty and food insecurity, concealing inequalities between the sexes, and ignoring relations of power and responsibility.

Livelihoods are influenced by household and intra-household capabilities and resources that, in turn, influence household responses to external opportunities or threats. In many parts of the world, women account for a large and growing proportion of agricultural workers. In most countries, women are also responsible for household food production and consumption. In a changing development context, including globalisation and climate change, the links between women's empowerment, natural resource management and food security are vital, yet often overlooked.

When women have ownership and control of resources and have higher education levels, it leads to greater productivity (World Bank 2001, 2007). Yet many face barriers to ownership and education as a result of prevailing attitudes and discriminatory laws and institutions. While globalisation has meant new labour opportunities for women, they continue to earn less than men, even in similar jobs (*ibid*). Moreover, their employment is often informal, with no access to social security or predictable income.

Access to services

Around 64% of the MDG targets for service-related goals (2, 3, 6 and 7) are 'off track'.[1] Viewing these through a gender lens highlights the importance of understanding the very different challenges that face men and women, girls and boys, in accessing quality services. Some relate to biological differences (including divergent disease burdens) that receive too little attention in policy design, such as the greater susceptibility of pregnant women to malaria. Others relate to a combination of biological and

social factors that may be overlooked because of narrow sectoral approaches to service delivery.

A telling example is the growing 'feminisation' of HIV/AIDS – a result of women's greater biological susceptibility to infection and their relative lack of power, which constrains the ability of particularly young women to negotiate safe sex. Additional challenges are linked to socially constructed gender roles, including the dual roles of care and production shouldered by women. Time poverty is a critical variable, affecting women disproportionately.

In Brazil, 90% of women spend an average of 20 hours a week on unpaid domestic chores, in contrast to only 45% of men for an average of 7 hours a week (Jones and Baker, 2008). This highlights the socially ascribed burdens on women and the ways in which socio-cultural dynamics limit female education and opportunities. Time poverty affects both MDG6 (combat killer diseases), and MDG7 (environmental sustainability). It can prevent women accessing health care, if clinics are far away, and affordable childcare is unavailable. Similarly, environmental degradation can exacerbate time poverty, if women and girls travel long distances to find supplies of firewood and water.

Another constraint to equitable service delivery is the limited routine use of gender-sensitive indicators. While the goal of universal primary education (MDG2) has been heralded as highly attainable, relative to other MDGs, indicators to measure progress do not acknowledge the links between gender and quality of education, i.e. that enrolment does not necessarily reflect consistent attendance or completion. This is particularly relevant for an assessment of sexual parity in education (MDG3). Girls – especially adolescents – often face gender-specific barriers to school attendance. These include the demands of household chores and caring for younger siblings; parental preference for sons' education; and the fear of sexual violence en route to, or in, schools.

Care and care-giving
Feminist thought and discourse has raised the visibility and value of care and care-giving in development. This requires a shift in thinking, with care across the life-cycle seen as the joint responsibility of society and the state, rather than women alone. Despite slow progress on MDGs

4 (child mortality) and 5 (maternal mortality), discussions linking the MDGs to the need for gender-sensitive systems of care have been limited. Taking a gender and care perspective, however, moves us beyond a sole reliance on technology (such as vaccines) and infrastructure (such as new health clinics) to policies and programmes that are informed by a clear analysis of underlying social determinants, including gender.

Recent research commissioned by the GAVI Alliance found that, contrary to previous assumptions about the gender neutrality of immunisation services against childhood diseases, there are gender differences in coverage. While many girls miss out on immunisation in South Asia as a result of son preference, some boys are not being immunised in parts of Africa as a result of sterility fears. Reaching the poorest children, in particular, necessitates a strong focus on gender-related barriers that are often exacerbated by resource constraints, low education levels and spatial poverty (Jones et al., 2008).

Equitable access to quality maternal and reproductive health care requires a comprehensive approach to strengthening health systems, including measures to address gendered power relations and resource constraints. Research suggests that comprehensive change is also needed to address child mortality. Recent WHO reviews have demonstrated that programmes encouraging men to take an active role in the support and care of their children lead to significantly better child and maternal health outcomes. However, such efforts require great sensitivity around prevailing notions of masculinity that are often incompatible with caring roles (WHO, 2007).

At the macro level, holding governments and development partners accountable for progress in supporting care services and care-givers, is a vital but neglected area. Efforts to collect, analyse and regularly report on sex-disaggregated data are essential, as are scaling up and institutionalising pro-poor and gender-responsive budget analysis and monitoring approaches.

Women as agents of change
Promoting the ability of women to articulate their views in a meaningful way (voice) and to become the agents of their own empowerment (agency) is vital

to overcome engrained socio-cultural conditioning and the gendered division of labour. MDG3 deals with two aspects of empowerment – education and national political representation. However, as experience in Latin America shows, with widespread quotas for women in legislatures and rates of higher education for women often outstripping those for men, empowerment requires a more comprehensive approach. This includes efforts to improve women's access to resources (e.g. credit, training, inheritance and land rights) and their capacity to use them (e.g. through anti-discrimination and gender-based violence legislation, gender-aware justice systems, and government mechanisms to improve gender inequality).

MDG8, which focuses on improved international aid and cooperation, could be an important opportunity to create an international environment that is more supportive of women's voice and agency. While MDG8 has been criticised for setting few indicators to measure the North's contribution to the MDGs, and for the absence of a gender perspective, it is only by recognising the ways in which global macro-economic and political issues are gendered that it is possible to find effective, sustainable ways to achieve other goals. Recent Free Trade Agreements in Latin America, for example, included commitments to gender issues, but concerted action by governmental and non-governmental actors in North and South is needed to put them into practice.

On aid, the recognition of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in the Paris Declaration,[2] and the Development Assistance Committee's creation of a gender marker to assess the contribution of overseas development assistance to gender equality goals, are important first steps. However, in the context of the move to General Budget Support, there is a growing consensus that more proactive measures are needed to combat policy evaporation – the dilution of gender equality commitments during policy implementation – and to ensure that a gender lens is used by all sector working groups.

New modalities are also needed to give civil society groups working on gender equality adequate resources and capacity strengthening support to facilitate their representation in policy dialogues. With a growing number of public-private partnerships, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, delivering international development 'goods', innovative approaches are also needed to raise the awareness of the private sector on gender issues.

Maximising synergies across the MDGs
An understanding of how improvements in gender equality link to poverty reduction and natural resource management needs to resonate across the MDGs. Calls for strengthened global partnerships in international development should be complemented by a renewed commitment to existing gender-related frameworks, including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Platform for Action.

These spotlight gender-specific issues that are largely invisible in the MDGs, but critical to their achievement, such as gender-based violence, harmful traditional practices (e.g. female genital mutilation and child marriage), and the challenges female youth face in finding decent work. They underscore the accountability of national governments and the international community in putting resources and institutional mechanisms in place to achieve gender-based rights.

MDGs and gender-sensitive social protection
Social protection policies could help to achieve the MDGs in a synergistic and gender-sensitive manner. Aiming to reduce household vulnerability and chronic deprivation, social protection strategies are being put in place across the world to cushion the impact of shocks and help poor households take advantage of opportunities presented by globalisation and economic growth.

Social protection could maximise synergies across the MDGs by: reducing poverty and inequality through strengthening access to, and demand for, quality basic and social services; supporting economic productivity; and facilitating a better balance between care-giving and productive work responsibilities. Many of the social protection programmes attracting international attention incorporate gender issues. Cash transfer schemes in Brazil and Mexico, for instance, have resulted in improved education, health, and nutrition for millions of extremely poor households, by targeting cash payments at the care-giver (typically the

mother). Evaluations suggest that these programmes support women's empowerment by increasing their control of resources and decisions within the household.

Some gender analysts, however, caution that current programmes reinforce women's traditional caring role and underestimate their time constraints, while making only limited contributions to such strategic gender approaches as the egalitarian division of labour between men and women. Few programmes to date have answered the call for 'transformative' social protection that would address gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities, including discrimination and social exclusion, violence and time poverty.

A gender-sensitive approach to social protection means re-focusing programme design and encouraging agencies responsible for livelihood promotion and protection, basic and social services, and the enforcement of anti-discrimination legislation, to work together to achieve gender equality and the MDGs.

This will require an institutional – rather than piecemeal – approach, including the strengthening of local institutions, committed long-term funding, and a strategy to scale up interventions to address equity concerns. A re-focused social protection agenda will need to recognise intra-household inequalities, especially: decision-making power and the ownership of resources; the importance of social reproduction, including unpaid care-giving and household management; the diversity of family arrangements; and the distinct experiences of men and women in the labour market.

Concrete policy and programme measures could include:
• Community childcare to give women equal access to income generation, and to free girls from extra domestic responsibilities;
• Care-giver allowances that recognise the costs of care (e.g. South African child/disability grants);
• Education stipends for girls (e.g. Bangladesh's Girls Education Stipend scheme);
• Awareness-raising programmes about gender-based violence, and other preventive and protective measures, including financial support for women and children escaping abusive environments (e.g. NGO pilot initiatives in Ghana);
• Opportunities for programme participants

(women and men) to design and evaluate social protection programmes;
• Gender-awareness and analysis training for programme staff to help them identify the gender-specific risks and vulnerabilities to be tackled by their programme;
• A centralised database that facilitates coordinated care and service access for programme participants and provides links to complementary services (e.g. access to micro-credit and micro-entrepreneurial training for women); and
• A rigorous monitoring and evaluation system, underpinned by a baseline with sex-disaggregated data. ∎

This briefing paper was prepared by Nicola Jones, Rebecca Holmes and Jessica Espey and published by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), London, United Kingdom (2008).

Notes
1. MDG monitor website, as of 18 August 2008: www.mdgmonitor.org
2. The *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (March 2005) marked an unprecedented level of consensus and resolve to reform aid to make it more effective in combating global poverty and inequality, increasing growth, building capacity and accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It lays down practical, action-oriented commitments for both donors and partner countries who have agreed to jointly monitor progress against a set of indicators and targets for 2010.

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Strengthening women's media networks for peace

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

Women have long recognized that while in the past decades there has been an increase in the number of newspapers and publications, commercial radio and television and digital media, women's representation in the media has been minimal. And in order to play a key role in the society and in their development, women need to be informed about what was going around them and also have a means to speak about what was happening and have their voices heard. This can only be successful if they have their own networks.

It was this notion of empowerment which gave birth to femLINKPACIFIC: Media Initiatives for Women in 2000. The founders of femLINKPACIFIC had realized during the Blue Ribbon Peace Vigil throughout the May 2000 crisis, that women's peace efforts continued to be marginalized from the mainstream of decision making, and that in order to create greater visibility and understanding of women's peace efforts, there was a need to provide alternative and additional viewpoints and analysis to the mainstream media coverage.

femLINKPACIFIC's work to implement Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action is grounded in work to aadvance implementation of UNSCR 1325, as part of our desire for peace and security for women, not only in their homes and communities, but also ensuring that they are visible and heard in dialogue and peace processes. It gives life to our values of non violence, including in communication, and feminist practices, including through the sharing of technology from tape recorders to access to the internet as well as though the establishment of a women's community radio network.

Security Council (SC) Resolution 1325, passed unanimously in 2000, was the first resolution by the SC specifically addressing the impact of war on women and recognizing women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. It calls for involving greater numbers of women in both peace-making and peace-building activities, and UN work to implement this resolution is a focus of both OSAGI and UNIFEM, as well as of other UN entities.

In 2008, SC Resolution 1820 on sexual violence in conflict sought to follow up 1325 and the growing UN concern with violence against women (VAW) by calling for greater UN reporting and attention to this issue. In 2009, two additional Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security are also enabling the strengthening of institutional arrangements and in particularly reporting systems by UN members states, to hold them more accountable to these resolutions.

Since we discovered UNSCR1325, soon after its adoption in 2000, femLINKPACIFIC: Media Initiatives for Women (www.femlinkpacific.org.fj) has sought to bring the voices of the marginalized and unrepresented into the political arena, particularly from grassroots communities and to link Pacific Peacewomen's notion of peace, to advocate for a peace and security framework defined not just in military security and political terms, but also in terms of human security rooted in a combination of political, economic, personal, community and environmental factors.

femLINKPACIFIC recognized that women's media also has a role to play to advocate for women's participation in peacebuilding and conflict transformation, while also providing coverage of a range of women's peace initiatives.

femLINKPACIFIC believes this is one way to challenge the political status quo, where women, too often as relegated as victims. By offering a 'safe women's media space' for women from different communities to speak, femLINKPACIFIC is also able to repackage and deliver this information to the national, regional and even international level,

to advocate for women's participation in all levels of peacebuilding.

This work has continued since the Fijian military coup of December 5, 2006 and the purported abrogation of the Constitution in April 2009 and the imposition of a Public Emergency Decree, with media censorship which extends into the community media domain, as well as increasing control and limitations on expression and participation in public activities.

Why do women's media and communication systems matter?

As Virginia Woolf alluded to in her essay *A Room of One's Own* (1929) there is a need to ensure that the necessary resources are mobilized so that women have the opportunity to write their stories, have their voices heard, and their identities represented, particularly when it comes to the peace and security sector.

FemLINKPACIFIC is therefore committed to not only work to mobilize resources to support our community media centre based activities, but to continue to mobilize resources for women in their communities as well in order to ensure in a very practical way women are supported to define and implement their peace and human security priorities.

Drawn from the development and coordination of a women's media network on UNSCR 1325 which has resulted in the development and production of a series of communication media and policy initiatives to engage with policy makers; this has involved the production of media initiatives and translations; networking with relevant inter-governmental agencies and collaborating with official 'friends'.

From documentation within communities – to strengthening local networking and partnerships – and to serve as a channel of communication to policy makers as well as the mainstream media and other women and peace networks, we have been able to increase the visibility of Pacific women's experiences from national to international level by being an available women's, peace-based media outlet or clearing house.

In order for National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 to be successful, women need to be in the centre of decision making for peace and security. And so

while national action plans and strategies provide a catalyst for ensuring that a gender perspective and women's participation in peacebuilding and security are effectively addressed within domestic and foreign policies, this must be informed by local realities.

In Fiji, despite the current media regulations and pressures to operate within the Public Emergency Decree, members of our rural women's media network have called for a strengthening of our women's media network – which offers them an alternative channel to access genuine information, as well as to develop a women's community radio network.

At a regional level, our regional women's media network on Women, Peace and Human Security link women in local communities of Bougainville, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Fiji, with national and regional policy makers through the production of media and policy initiatives.

We have further recognised that our media initiatives also have the potential to inform and enable gender inclusive reconciliation programmes, while also serving as an information and communication network for initiatives as well as for the early detection of conflict indicators; community radio, can be safe, trusted or respected channels of information for a range of stakeholders, especially women, who remain sidelined from mainstream media content.

Without consistent and progressive media initiatives and little participatory radio production initiatives, women, and their issues, remain relegated to the patriarchal context of recipes, entertainment news, and nothing too radical which may challenge the status quo. This merely serves to reinforce the patriarchy of traditional decision-making structures which have continued to impede rather than assist women and young women, especially from the rural population and the poor, from communicating publicly on matters of concern to them.

How have we made UNSCR 1325 relevant to women in our rural communities?

It has been done through the use of community media principles which have resulted in our organisation establishing a network of relevant information and communication channels between women and their communities, especially those in rural communities,

as well as with our policy level partners.

It has also been by recognizing and utilizing the valuable potential of community radio as a tool of community empowerment, not only to offer women in their communities an opportunity to address their realities and identify their development needs, which are inextricably linked to their human security needs, while at the same time offering them a channel to communicate with political and policy leaders, through the development and production of community media initiatives, as well as entrusting femLINKPACIFIC with a critical role of policy advocacy.

femLINKPACIFIC has established a small mobile radio station, femTALK 89.2FM. This 'radio in a suitcase' travels out to women and their communities, offering women a 'safe space' to articulate and exchange their viewpoints. Using a low-power transmitter, femLINKPACIFIC encourages women to speak to each other and with their communities. As a way to implement the station's slogan, 'Women speaking to women for peace' the mobile broadcasts feature pre-produced audio reports and interviews recorded as live in local language and featuring an English translation. The stories and interviews travel from one community to the next, sharing views and opinions rarely heard on mainstream radio.

femTALK 89.2FM is about community empowerment; it is about taking radio to women in their local communities; it is about enabling women and young women to have a voice share an opinion about a range of social, economic and political issues that will help bring about sustainable development and peace.

Each broadcast is an opportunity to promote the potential that exists within women leaders in local communities to identify critical development priorities as well as advise development programmes. The women who participate in each broadcast are free to express their opinion and beliefs, in a peaceful and inclusive manner. The radio broadcasts, are an opportunity of the women to be heard by local leaders from those in local government to the leadership of district and provincial councils, who remain predominantly men. During the broadcasts in the capital city, the broadcast of these interviews, also reaffirm the need for national decision making to be inclusive of rural women's realities.

The suitcase radio has also been the basis from which we can continue to advocate for the use of *appropriate and accessible information* and communication technology, for the role of women's media as a platform for policy advocacy and bringing about peaceful change for all. When people in our country able to share their opinion freely and safely, then we can say we are truly experiencing democracy.

These strategies have combined the use of the still important interpersonal communication, including community meetings and consultations, and compliment other empowerment programmes delivered by other members of civil society, and take into account the need to ensure that our approach at the community level is:

- in the language of the community;
- enable the discussion of topics that are of interest and concern to the community;
- is undertaken in a culturally appropriate way; and
- Is framed in a way that is clear and understandable to members of that community.

Despite all the work we have been able to accomplish, it is still clear that:

(1) Greater recognition is needed of the role of women's information and communication/media networks as critical support mechanisms of women's peace initiatives, including communication of early warning indicators.

(2) Women's information and communication processes are also a way to empower women in local communities and to ensure that we do not perpetuate the information-communication divide between women. This will also ensure that national and international strategies and action plans are more accountable to local realities.

(3) We need to recognize that investing in local level decision-making is also about the availability of appropriate technology and ensuring that information is accessible to all women, including women with disabilities.

(4) Consideration must be given to strengthening collaboration to enhance South-South learning and cooperation, particularly within the Asia Pacific region, especially to transform current regulatory practices which will not be legitimate until they are accountable to the women of our communities.

Conclusion

Since 2000 femLINKPACIFIC has worked to operationalize UN Security Council Resolution 1325, to demonstrate the opportunities that exist at policy level, community level, as well as within our own women's networks, with the benefit of transnational links and support.

This is what Section J represents to us. It is about giving voice to the voiceless, being a communication channel for the marginalized and demonstrating the possibility of the democratization of information and communication channels within societies.

femLINKPACIFIC's work has been able to demonstrate that women's media networks can ensure that: policy-makers, mainstream media, broader civil society are more informed of women's positive influence in communities, and which women can be strong advocates for peace and security issues. In addition, it enables women's civil society / movement to be supported by anecdotal evidence from women in communities to lobby for improved policy implementation of gender equality goals. Finally, it ensures that women in target communities are more informed of gender equality commitments, are able to utilize this information in their own communities, and have stronger communication/information channels.

Ultimately, Section J has provided us with a broad framework to 'localize' in order to empower more women in target communities to articulate their visions for equality, development and peace from local to national level and beyond, using appropriate information-communication technology. ∎

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Le langage sexiste des médias français

Natacha Henry

De l'emploi du masculin aux articles sur les violences sexistes et sexuelles, la presse française est loin d'agir en faveur de l'égalité des sexes.

5 octobre 2009 : les informations à la radio annoncent que « *le Prix Nobel de médecine a été attribué à trois chercheurs américains.* » En français, il y a un masculin et un féminin. Le neutre n'existe pas. Mais qui visualise-t-on en apprenant cette nouvelle ? Trois hommes. Mais en réalité, il s'agit de deux chercheuses et un chercheur. Qu'est-ce qui empêche les journalistes de préciser le genre des sujets ? Une histoire ancienne.

1647 : le grammairien Claude Favre de Vaugelas publie ses *Remarques sur la langue française. Utiles à ceux qui veulent bien parler et bien écrire.* Son livre pose une pierre tombale sur l'égalité des sexes par le langage : « *Le genre masculin, étant le plus noble, doit prédominer toutes les fois que le masculin et le féminin se trouvent ensemble.* » Depuis, les élèves enregistrent consciencieusement que « *le masculin l'emporte sur le féminin* ». Alors sans réfléchir, sans prendre le temps de détailler, on lance « *trois chercheurs* ». L'on ne montre pas que les laboratoires scientifiques sont mixtes. Et l'on n'offre pas aux filles de solides *role-models*. Souci, donc.

1984 : Yvette Roudy, ministre des Droits de la femme – à l'époque, c'est au singulier –, met en place une commission de terminologie chargée d'étudier la féminisation des noms de métier, fonction, grade ou titre. En effet, l'emploi universel du masculin n'a que trop duré. On le sait : l'identité se construit par la langue. Ce n'est pas innocent. C'est même lourd de conséquences : si le langage ne marque pas l'égalité, s'il continue de masquer les femmes,

les mentalités ne risquent pas de bouger. Car le masculin « *étant le plus noble,* » certaines femmes elles-mêmes résistent à la féminisation de leur titre professionnel.

Nombre de directrices de marketing ou de banques font imprimer sur leur carte de visite, « *Madame le directeur.* » Curieusement, pas une directrice d'école maternelle ou primaire, ne formule cette exigence ! Les préfètes sont moins nombreuses que « *Madame le préfet* » et les ambassadrices, que « *Madame l'ambassadeur* ». Beau paradoxe : porter un titre au masculin symbolise l'égalité ! Et être nommée en tant que femme, symbole d'infériorité ! De dévalorisation de la fonction.

Yvette Roudy l'a compris. Justement, elle nomme à la tête de cette commission, une grande écrivaine féministe, Benoîte Groult. L'Académie française, officiellement gardienne de la langue française, et dont Vaugelas fut un des premiers membres, montre son désaccord. Pour les Académiciens George Dumézil et Claude Lévi-Strauss, le masculin doit rester universel tandis que le féminin est « *marqué.* » Ils refusent de travailler avec la commission de Benoîte Groult. La presse les soutient : le *Figaro Magazine* parle de « *clitocratie* », le *Quotidien de Paris* raille « *la cheftaine Roudy* » et son « *assemblée de précieuses ridicules.* »

Après deux ans de travaux, la commission rend ses recommandations, le 11 mars 1986. C'est la circulaire Fabius, du nom du Premier ministre de l'époque. Elle commence avec ce constat : « *L'accession des femmes, de plus en plus nombreuses, à des fonctions de plus en plus diverses, est une réalité qui doit trouver sa traduction dans le vocabulaire.* » Comme c'est une circulaire, il n'est pas obligatoire de s'y référer. D'ailleurs, elle tombe dans les oubliettes.

1998 : les femmes ministres du gouvernement Jospin exigent de se faire appeler « *Madame la ministre* » au lieu de « *Madame le ministre.* » Que n'ont-elles pas demandé là ! L'Académie française, qui a mis trois cent quarante-six ans à devenir mixte, crie à nouveau sa désapprobation. Hélène Carrère d'Encausse se vante d'en être « *le directeur* » et ne voudrait pour rien au monde, qu'on la désigne comme « *la directrice* ». Dans les colonnes des journaux et dans les dîners en ville, les débats font rage. Certains argumentent qu'il est impossible de féminiser « *policier* » en « *policière* »,

« *pompier* » en « *pompière* », ou de mettre un « e » à « *professeur* » ou « *auteur* ».

D'autres, comme le président de la radio RTL, optent pour la galanterie : « *Par pure courtoisie, je veux bien que l'on puisse dire "madame la ministre" en s'adressant à ces dames. Mais pas à l'antenne.* » Seulement, le conservatisme a fait long feu. L'Unesco a adopté une résolution contre le langage sexiste dès 1987 ! La Suisse en 1992 ! En 1998, Amnesty international élabore un document : « *Droits de l'homme* » : *qu'y a t'il dans un mot ? Pour un langage non sexiste des droits humains*. La France sera-t-elle en retard ?

Non. Car à Paris, la commission nommée par le Premier ministre Lionel Jospin, publie ses recommandations le 6 mars 1998, puis un ouvrage : *Femme, j'écris ton nom… Guide d'aide à la féminisation des noms de métiers, titres, grades et fonctions*, avec une préface de Lionel Jospin. Ce guide donne toutes les correspondances féminines. Même si « *entraîneur* » et « *entraîneuse* » signifient « *coach sportif* », « *entraîneuse* » sous-entendra encore pendant quelques temps, prostituée – comme « *coureuse* » qui peinera à devenir l'équivalent de « *coureur.* »

Puis, peu à peu, la presse s'est adaptée à ce nouvel état de fait. On y trouve aujourd'hui aisément « *la procureure* », « *la professeure* » et « *la policière.* » Et des maladresses : dans un même article, on lit « *le juge Laurence Rittenband* » et « *la magistrate* » alors qu'il s'agit de la même personne. En outre, certains journaux conservateurs comme *Le Figaro* continuent

Où sont les femmes ?
Si l'on prend un article quelconque, un jour ordinaire, on constate ceci : 1 femme sur 6 est anonyme – pour un homme sur 33. Par exemple : « la joggeuse assassinée » fait la Une de la presse au début de l'automne 2009 mais peu de journaux donnent son nom : Marie-Christine Hodeau. D'ailleurs, près de 8% des femmes sont présentées comme des victimes (5% des hommes). 1 femme sur 5 est présentée avec un lien familial, pour seulement 1 homme sur 16 : « la mère de, l'épouse de… » Enfin, un cinquième des femmes est cité sans sa profession (pour 1 homme sur 20).

de respecter les consignes de l'Académie française.

Enfin, la presse française n'utilise presque jamais « *les droits humains* ». Elle en reste à « *les droits de l'Homme,* » oubliant le plus souvent, la majuscule du H.

Le paternalisme lubrique

Si le masculin cache le féminin, c'est parce que la presse, en général, est pensée pour les hommes. Centrée sur un public masculin qui lui ressemble, et à qui elle s'adresse. Prenons le journal gratuit *Direct Soir* et ses 20 pages de sports. Dans ce numéro pris au hasard (2 octobre 2009), pas une femme. Et puis une rubrique « *3ème mi-temps* » : le portrait d'une mannequin. Son CV avec ses mensurations ; deux photos noir et blanc où elle pose en lingerie ; sa gloire : « *plus de cinq ans d'antenne sans jamais ouvrir la bouche.* »

Autre exemple, ce papier dans *Le Monde* (15 décembre 2007) : à Bali, où il se trouve pour une conférence internationale sur le climat, le ministre de l'Écologie a plongé dans la mer. « *Dieu merci,* écrit le journaliste, *sa charmante secrétaire d'Etat, Nathalie Kosciusko-Morizet, était restée dans la salle de conférences, évitant de faire rougir les photographes.* »

Ailleurs… Les hebdomadaires politiques comme *Le Nouvel observateur* ou *Le Point* oublient de citer des femmes dans leurs dossiers sur « *les intellectuels en 2008,* » « *la pensée en 2009* ». Au *Figaro*, le critique gastronomique conseille de convier à tel restaurant, « *une étudiante des Beaux-Arts* », « *une jolie figurante* ». Griffonnant un commentaire sur le décor, il voit « *de beaux petits plats sous influence thaïe et de très jolies personnes à dévorer des yeux.* » La presse, univers d'homme !

Univers vivace du paternalisme lubrique ! Le paternalisme lubrique désigne le comportement d'un (ou plusieurs) hommes/s vis-à-vis d'une femme qui est plus jeune, ou en situation vulnérable ou précaire. Ainsi, tel rédacteur en chef ou chef de rubrique se permet des remarques déplacées à sa jeune stagiaire.[1] En France, le harcèlement sexuel vise « *le but d'obtenir des faveurs sexuelles* » ; alors si l'interlocuteur prône « l'humour » ou « la galanterie », la fille ne peut que se taire.[1]

Sur les plateaux de télévision aussi. Pour exemple, cette réflexion de l'animateur Jean-Luc Delarue qui va remettre un prix, un Globe de cristal, à la

réalisatrice Yasmina Benguigui, début février 2009, et lui dit, regardant ses seins : « *Vous voulez que je vous tienne votre globe… ou vos globes ?* » Restée sans voix, elle déclarera par la suite : « *C'est un geste trop grave et discriminant pour ne pas demander des explications et des excuses publiques.* »

Car là se cache un problème récurrent : les femmes doivent être belles, ou intelligentes ; les deux, c'est trop ! Combien de publicités utilisent ce message : c'est si simple que même « une blonde » peut comprendre (comment réchauffer ce plat, changer de voiture…). Si l'on peut comparer la discrimination sexiste au racisme, c'est bien dans des cas comme celui-là !

Dans le même ordre d'idées, on a déploré l'étalement de vie privée et de questions personnelles qui touchent les femmes politiques (et finissent par timidement s'étendre aux hommes). « *Comment gérez-vous à la fois le temps familial et les meetings ?* » Et les looks de ces mêmes femmes

politiques ! Tailleur, jupe, pantalon ? Allons ! Que leurs idées passent après !

Dévalorisation des violences

En juin 2009, le mensuel *Technik Art* fait sa Une sur Orelsan, un chanteur de rap aux paroles violemment sexistes, déprogrammé à cause de cela de plusieurs festivals. Paroles : « *Ferme ta gueule, ou tu vas te faire marie-trintigner* » (Note : la mort de l'actrice Marie Trintignant, sous les coups de son compagnon en 2003, a défrayé la chronique), « *J'vais te mettre en cloque sale pute et t'avorter à l'Opinel* », « *Petite essaie pas de me fréquenter ou tu vas perdre ton pucelage avant d'avoir perdu tes dents de lait.* » Les associations féministes ont bien évidemment protesté devant cette incitation au délit, et sa légitimation par un « artiste ». En face, on brandit la suprématie de l'art !

Autre cas quelques semaines plus tard : le réalisateur Roman Polanski est arrêté en Suisse pour le viol d'une fille de 13 ans en 1977. En France, où vit le réalisateur, le ministre de la Culture déplore cette arrestation « *absolument épouvantable* » « *pour une histoire ancienne qui n'a pas vraiment de sens.* » Ce même ministre qui compare Orelsan au poète Rimbaud ! Et qui, peu après, se retrouve lui-même dans un scandale quand une de ses opposantes politiques exhume un livre dans lequel il raconte ses expériences de tourisme sexuel en Thaïlande. Dans la presse, colonne après colonne, se joue la défense du ministre. Qui ne démissionne pas. Car il est, pour les rédactions de ce pays, du bon côté.

La presse en effet, de gauche comme de droite, a peur d'être stigmatisée « ordre moral ». Manquant cruellement d'analyse politique, ou de sensibilité, ou des deux, ils confondent donc liberté sexuelle (on est pour) et domination ou abus (on est contre). Aisés, intouchables et surtout solidaires, ils n'y comprennent donc rien ! Pourtant, l'expression artistique vaut-elle plus que l'expression féministe ?

Une partie de la presse va jusqu'à légitimer les violences. Inconsciemment le plus souvent, elle agit à l'encontre des droits humains et des grandes recommandations internationales. Ainsi, dans les comptes-rendus de faits divers, de meurtres, les procès pour viols, c'est la réputation de la victime qui est mise en avant : plus « *c'était une femme sans histoire, appréciée de tous* » plus on la croit pure et innocente ; mais si « *elle avait trois enfants de pères différents,* » alors « *c'était une femme un peu trop libre.* » « *Une adolescente de 16 ans est enlevée puis tuée par son amoureux éconduit* » titre *Le Monde* (26 octobre 2004). Elle avait 16 ans, il en avait 43 ; elle l'avait rencontré par hasard et bientôt il est devenu violent. La jeune fille a pris peur et sa mère a prévenu les gendarmes. En vain. Il avait déjà fait l'objet de plaintes pour agressions sexuelles. Alors, un « *amoureux éconduit ?* » Non !

Le Parisien du 11 juin 2005 : « *Amoureux disparus : Mélodie a été tuée.* » *Le Parisien* du 26 mars 2009 : « *Amoureux d'une prostituée, il la tue pour ne plus la quitter.* » Encore un qui, « *en 2006, avait purgé une peine de onze mois de prison pour agressions sexuelles sur mineur.* » Et ainsi de suite. Tandis que les associations, la police et les foyers secourent les femmes victimes de violence, tandis que se pose régulièrement la question de la récidive, la presse continue de confondre amour et violence. Comment peuvent-ils prendre pour de la passion ces coups, ces blessures et ces assassinats ?

L'usage du masculin symbolise le sexe des médias : du côté des hommes, et d'une certaine morale qui oublie les femmes. Il y a encore un long chemin à parcourir pour que l'ensemble de la presse prenne conscience de ses responsabilités. ∎

Notes
1. Tous secteurs confondus, il y a en France, 37 307 journalistes dont 16 362 femmes et 20 945 hommes (source : Commission de la carte d'identité des journalistes professionnels. Ces chiffres n'incluent pas les pigistes irréguliers et précaires parmi lesquels un grand nombre de femmes).
2. Enquête Gender Company pour l'Association des femmes journalistes, 2006.

Historienne et journaliste, Natacha Henry vit à Paris où elle travaille sur les questions de genre. Derniers livres : *Les Filles faciles n'existent pas* (Michalon, 2008), *Ces femmes qui ont fait la France* (City, 2009). Voir : www.gendercompany.com

Los medios: Entre la deuda y el compromiso

Ana Silvia Monzón

En el amanecer de la humanidad, las mujeres articularon y crearon el lenguaje. Ellas son, como dicen los y las Radialistas Apasionadas,[1] las señoras de la palabra, quienes desde siempre han heredado, a cada nueva generación, la lengua, y junto con ésta un legado que incluye visiones de mundo, imaginarios, símbolos y cultura.

Sin embargo, dada la hegemonía del orden patriarcal que descalifica la palabra de las mujeres, ellas permanecen invisibilizadas y desvalorizadas, porque los idiomas reproducen relaciones de poder que sobrevaloran lo masculino y desvalorizan lo femenino.

> *'Promover la participación plena y equitativa de las mujeres en los medios, en las áreas de gestión, producción e investigación.'*
> Apartado J, Plataforma de Acción de Beijing, 1995.

La desigualdad en el uso de la palabra y de la expresión de las mujeres se evidencia en su ausencia de la literatura, la filosofía y las ciencias, en su exclusión de los procesos de construcción del conocimiento, y de los medios de comunicación que constituyen, en los albores del siglo veintiuno, un espacio de poder fundamental en la definición de las identidades, en la denuncia, la difusión de pensamientos y la elaboración de agendas públicas.

Los medios de comunicación reproducen jerarquías de género y etnia que aún limitan la presencia de las mujeres como fuente de información o de opinión, más aún cuando pertenecen a pueblos subordinados y discriminados. A pesar de los esfuerzos que se han plasmado en varias reuniones internacionales, y en la misma Plataforma de Acción de la IV Conferencia Internacional de la Mujer (Beijing, 1995), aún no se alcanza la equidad entre mujeres y hombres en los medios, sean estos escritos, radiofónicos, televisivos o cibernéticos.

En las líneas que siguen planteo un panorama general respecto a la deuda que tienen los medios con la igualdad de género y con la promoción de las mujeres como sujetas políticas, con derecho a ejercer la ciudadanía comunicativa, dado que el derecho a la expresión es fundamental para el ejercicio de sus derechos como humanas.

En un primer apartado presento una breve relación del papel actual de los medios de comunicación, planteando algunos rasgos específicos del medio guatemalteco. Enseguida, un recorrido en clave histórica contemporánea, de las iniciativas de comunicación que las mujeres han creado para irrumpir en los medios en Guatemala. Y finalmente, una reflexión sobre el camino que falta por recorrer para el logro de la ciudadanía comunicativa con igualdad de género y etnia.

Los medios y la globalización: El signo de los tiempos

Los medios de comunicación hacen viable el intercambio de mensajes entre los seres humanos, un proceso cada vez más acelerado por el avance de las tecnologías. Hasta hace un siglo, la oralidad y la palabra escrita eran los medios de comunicación por excelencia. Apenas en 1895 la 'telefonía sin hilos' dio origen a la radio, y en los años veinte del siglo pasado se inició el desarrollo de la televisión.

Actualmente esos medios, ampliados al cine, los videos, discos compactos, el teléfono móvil y el *internet* constituyen los llamados medios masivos de comunicación, y han llegado a ocupar, especialmente en las últimas tres décadas, un papel preponderante y complejo en las sociedades. Es innegable su influencia en la construcción y difusión de las identidades: étnico-culturales, de género, políticas y sociales; y en los sistemas de representación social.

A esto hay que agregar que los medios de comunicación han experimentado la más grande de las revoluciones tecnológicas en los últimos tiempos, caracterizada por la integración entre informática, telecomunicaciones y redes. La comunicación constituye uno de los espacios culturales, laborales, económicos y políti-

cos, más globalizado; tanto en las formas de producción como en los recursos para la difusión.

No obstante, como plantea Galeano (1995) '*este mundo comunicadísimo se parece cada vez más a un reino de mudos. La propiedad de los medios de comunicación se concentra cada vez en menos manos, los medios dominantes están monopolizados por los pocos que pueden llegar a todos... Cada vez son más lo que tienen el derecho de escuchar y de mirar, pero cada vez son menos los que tienen el privilegio de informar, opinar y crear*.' En el caso de las mujeres esta situación es más grave, porque aún existe una marcada disparidad por género en el acceso a la propiedad de los medios.

Esta tendencia a la concentración del poder en los medios se da tanto en sentido vertical como horizontal. Con relación a la primera, Clemencia Rodríguez (1999) ejemplifica: 'una compañía de cine compra una compañía de teatros de cine, luego compra una compañía disquera que vende los discos con la música de la película, luego compra una compañía que transforma la película en video, luego compra una compañía que distribuye los videos, luego compra una compañía de canales de TV donde se muestra la película por TV, luego compra una compañía de TV por cable.'

Por otro lado, la concentración horizontal se caracteriza porque 'una compañía de TV por cable, los periódicos, las revistas, las compañías de cine, empiezan a comprar una tras otra todas las otras compañías que le hacen competencia.' Al final, lo que existe es una compañía gigantesca que controla cientos de medios de comunicación ¿Y quién está a la cabeza de tal compañía? Generalmente un hombre blanco, europeo o norteamericano.

Esta concentración de poder en los medios incide también en la tendencia a la homogeneización y estandarización de los mensajes, en la forma de presentar las noticias, el tipo y la forma de las imágenes que se presentan, las estéticas corporales que se difunden y que marcan e imponen ideales de belleza, modos de vestir y de lucir.

Se está asistiendo a un fenómeno sin precedentes de imposición de 'una cultura mundial' y, aunque es innegable que la difusión de ideas y de imágenes enriquece al mundo, muchas veces los intereses culturales se reducen a la compra-venta de mercancías, 'dejando de lado la comunidad, la costumbre y la tradición'. Asimismo cabe señalar que 'actualmente

la corriente de cultura y de productos culturales está muy desequilibrada en un solo sentido, de los países ricos a los países pobres' (IDH, 1999).

Un perfil de los medios en Guatemala

En Guatemala, según opinión de expertas y expertos,[2] los medios de comunicación, sobre todo en las últimas dos décadas, se han actualizado y ampliado; hay un mayor número de medios escritos, radiofónicos[3] y televisivos que llegan a más personas. Por otro lado, han surgido medios escritos y radiofónicos, particularmente de carácter comunitario y alternativo, que intentan comunicar en diversos idiomas,[4] atendiendo al carácter multicultural y multilingüe de nuestro país.

Sin embargo, los medios en Guatemala como sucede a nivel mundial, presentan rasgos de concentración y monopolización. La mayoría de los canales de televisión abierta pertenecen a un mismo propietario y solamente dos, al Estado.[5] Asimismo, existe concentración en la propiedad de salas de cine y en la distribución de señal de cable, medio este muy extendido en todos los municipios en Guatemala. A pesar del avance tecnológico del medio audiovisual, se observa escaso desarrollo en la producción local ya que muchos de los programas que se transmiten son 'enlatados'.

Los medios escritos con cobertura nacional apenas son cuatro: *Prensa Libre, Siglo Veintiuno, Al Día, Nuestro Diario*; *El Periódico* es un matutino con proyección más restringida en la ciudad capital y dirigido a un público de élite. Existe un diario vespertino, *La Hora*, y uno estatal, el *Diario de Centroamérica*.

Con relación a la radio, existen seis cadenas radiales propietarias de la mayoría de las frecuencias radiofónicas en el país; de estas, dos pertenecen al mismo dueño. Y aunque operan unas 350 estaciones de radio, la mayoría son comerciales, muy pocas son educativas, culturales, estatales o comunitarias. Ha tenido auge la programación religiosa pues muchas de las emisoras que operan en territorio guatemalteco están vinculadas con la radiofonía religiosa.

Se han planteado críticas en cuanto a los contenidos difundidos por algunas de estas radios y programas, particularmente las radios evangélicas, en el sentido de que en su mayoría, son 'mensajes de individualismo que van en contra del espíritu de las comunidades mayas', pero también porque resultan excluy-

entes de las experiencias y derechos de las mujeres.

En términos generales existe, en Guatemala, asimetría con relación a la propiedad, acceso y uso de los medios, en términos de género, pertenencia étnico-cultural y lingüística, área de residencia, edad y, obviamente, de recursos económicos. Es decir, más hombres que mujeres, *mestizos* que indígenas, del área urbana que rural, adultos que jóvenes y ricos que pobres, tienen acceso, presencia y opinión en los medios.

En Guatemala, a estas condiciones de desigualdad, marginación y exclusión por género, etnia y clase, se suma el legado de una historia de censura sistemática al ejercicio de la libertad de expresión, de emisión del pensamiento y de acceso a la información a quienes piensan diferente de los poderes establecidos, y que por eso han padecido represión, exilio y muerte, sobre todo en las décadas del conflicto armado interno (1954-1996) como lo revela este testimonio:

> 'El precio que se pagó no fue exclusivo del sector prensa, fue la mayoría de la población, Guatemala es un país silenciado, es un país incomunicado, no hemos tenido un acercamiento entre seres humanos porque el derecho a la comunicación" nos ha sido vetado toda la vida.'[6]

Las mujeres en los medios

La relación de las mujeres con los medios se da al menos en tres dimensiones: 1) las imágenes de las mujeres, que tienden a estereotiparlas como consumidoras, objetos sexuales o víctimas pasivas; 2) la disparidad, con relación a los hombres, en el rol de formadoras de opinión y/o fuentes de información; y 3) su escaso acceso a los lugares donde se toman las decisiones, se definen las políticas editoriales, donde se prioriza lo importante, lo que es noticia.

Los datos muestran que si bien ha aumentado el número de mujeres periodistas y comunicadoras en todo el mundo, y Guatemala no escapa a ello,[7] continúan siendo excepcionales las mujeres que ocupan puestos de dirección en los periódicos, revistas, canales de televisión, estaciones de radio, el cine y, también en las editoriales. Los espacios donde se concentra el poder que impone ideas, discursos y costumbres son básicamente masculinos.

También es una realidad que las periodistas y comunicadoras enfrentan, al igual que en otras disciplinas, varios obstáculos en su desempeño profesional: desigualdad en la remuneración, escasas oportunidades de formación permanente, pocas posibilidades de ascenso [especialmente a puestos de dirección], acoso sexual, límite de edad, discriminación laboral. Así como conflictos entre las exigencias familiares y las profesionales y la ausencia de infraestructura de apoyo maternal.

Todos estos factores constituyen *barreras invisibles* de las que ni siquiera todas las comunicadoras están conscientes, pero que de hecho dificultan su desarrollo, lo cual ha sido reconocido y discutido en varios encuentros internacionales sobre la situación de las mujeres en los medios y recogido específicamente en la IV Conferencia Mundial de la Mujer, 1995.[8]

Pero se ha hecho camino al andar

Las huellas de las mujeres que han hablado y escrito en nombre propio, que han transgredido la norma del silencio impuesto, se pierden en la noche patriarcal. En las últimas décadas, historiadoras y escritoras se han dado a la tarea de 'releer el pasado' para ir construyendo una memoria colectiva como legado para las mujeres de hoy.

En Guatemala, son escasos aún los nombres rescatados del olvido. Luz Méndez De la Vega, escritora y periodista, ha realizado varios estudios que develan por ejemplo, a Sor Juana de Maldonado y Paz (1598-1666) y a María Josefa García Granados quien, en la primera mitad del siglo XIX, fue una de las primeras mujeres en escribir con desenfado tanto de sexo como de política.

En la segunda mitad de ese siglo surgieron: en 1885 *La Voz de la Mujer* y en 1887, *El Idea:. Órgano de los intereses de las mujeres*. Ambos escritos por mujeres ilustradas, ciertamente del área urbana, quienes a tono con los aires de modernidad de la época, decidieron expresar públicamente sus ideas.

El semanario *El Ideal* hacía gala de reclamar igualdad para la mujer, pedir para ella instrucción más allá de la básica, el derecho a la vida artística e intelectual y la democratización de las relaciones conyugales (Cruz, 2000). Una agenda que aún sigue pendiente para la mayoría de las mujeres guatemaltecas en los inicios del siglo XXI.

La vida de estas publicaciones fue efímera ya que se enfrentaron a la falta de recursos, la indiferencia y aún la burla de quienes no consideraban

'apropiada' esa iniciativa de las mujeres. No obstante, algunas continuaron escribiendo en periódicos y otras fundaron revistas culturales y literarias como *Azul* (Gloria Menéndez) o *Nosotras* (Luz Valle), en los años treinta y cuarenta del siglo XX.

Salvo alguna iniciativa esporádica y breve, fue hasta 1998 cuando surgió un periódico con perspectiva feminista: *La Cuerda*, cuyo impacto es innegable y que ha mantenido una circulación mensual ininterrumpida durante once años.

En la última década se han sumado nombres de mujeres como columnistas de opinión, entre otras: Margarita Carrera, Carolina Escobar Sarti, Ana Cofiño, Marielos Monzón, Irma Alicia Velásquez, Olga Villalta e Ileana Alamilla.

En radio las mujeres incursionaron originalmente en el radioteatro y, hacia finales de los años cuarenta, Victoria Moraga y Carmen Morán fueron pioneras al producir el radioperiódico *Síntesis*. Varias décadas después, en 1993, surgió *Voces de Mujeres,* programa feminista que se ha mantenido 16 años al aire, con el aporte de más de 40 mujeres universitarias. En el 2002, surgió la Red Mujeres al Aire que convoca a mujeres radialistas, productoras y videastas comunitarias.

Algunas de estas propuestas comunicativas, sin embargo, enfrentan dificultades para su permanencia y para difundir sus mensajes, dada la precariedad con la que trabajan. Los grandes medios aún están en deuda con las mujeres, deben comprometerse más con la causa de la igualdad de género que implica impulsar, no sólo que más mujeres hablen, escriban y produzcan, sino que haya cambios en el enfoque de las noticias, en las imágenes y en los discursos que se reproducen cotidianamente.

Reflexión final

El panorama esbozado es un breve intento por ubicar el papel de los medios en la promoción de la igualdad de género. Asimismo, es un mínimo reconocimiento a las voces, escritos y producciones de las mujeres que han roto el silencio, y que se han empeñado en ejercer un derecho negado históricamente, en construir una ciudadanía comunicativa que requiere la definición de las mujeres como sujetas políticas, autónomas, con capacidades para defender el acceso a la información, la investigación, la expresión y la difusión de sus ideas.

Aunque algunas mujeres han tomado la palabra, aún falta mucho camino por recorrer para alcanzar la equidad mediática, entendida como la apertura de los medios al pensamiento de las mujeres, al reconocimiento de sus aportes, su historia, y sus experiencias diversas. El potencial de los medios debe ser aprovechado para construir relaciones equitativas, renovar las ideas y para democratizar la palabra. ∎

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Notas
1. Radialistas Apasionadas es una iniciativa que, desde el Ecuador, produce materiales radiofónicos que son difundidos ampliamente por internet.
2. Iduvina Hernández, periodista, Consultora en Derechos Humanos. Ileana Alamilla, directora de CERIGUA; Carlos Zipfel, productor de radio; María Cristina Rosales, productora de TV.
3. Dado el auge de la red, los periódicos y algunas estaciones de radio, pueden ser contactadas a través de internet.
4. Esto es mínimo todavía. En el caso de la radio, si bien los Acuerdos de Paz comprometen al Estado a brindar apoyo a las radios comunitarias con el propósito de rescatar y fortalecer expresiones culturales específicas (la idiomática entre ellas), éstas enfrentan dificultades por las nuevas disposiciones de la Ley de Telecomunicaciones que hacen oneroso el uso de las frecuencias.
5. Uno adjudicado a la Academia de Lenguas Mayas, y otro a la Universidad de San Carlos, de carácter estatal.
6. Testimonio de un periodista presentado ante la Comisión del Esclarecimiento Histórico.En: CERIGUA s.f. La prensa en Guatemala. El Observatorio de los Periodistas. http://www.cerigua.org/portal/observatorio/La_prensa_en_Guatemala.pdf
7. En Guatemala, por ejemplo, la matrícula femenina en la Escuela de Ciencias de la Comunicación de la USAC (estatal), está alcanzando a la masculina: 2,248 mujeres y 2,587 hombres en el 2001 (IDH: 2002). Asimismo, es significativo que en los últimos años varias jóvenes periodistas han merecido premios que dan cuenta de su calidad profesional.
8. Ver Apartado J de la Plataforma de Acción Mundial, Beijing, 1995.

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Equilibrando las voces de las mujeres indígenas y afro-descendientes

Luz Aída Ruíz M

A lo largo de la región Mesoamericana, organizaciones populares e indígenas vienen trabajando en hacer real el ejercicio de sus derechos humanos, incluyendo el derecho a la comunicación. Es así que se han ido sembrando radios comunitarias con organizaciones indígenas y campesinas en México, Guatemala y Honduras, con el acompañamiento de COMPPA.

Nunca más ningún medio a medias,
siempre con nuestra voz,
con nuestra palabra,
con nuestra cultura,
con nuestra razón
pero sobre todo con nuestro corazón
Bety Cariño, mujer Ñusavi-Mixteca

Paralelamente, uno de los ejes de trabajo de gran importancia para las organizaciones hermanas de COMPPA[1] es la de la participación y organización de las mujeres, así como ir generando información y conciencia acerca de los roles de género y cómo impactan nuestras vidas. Particularmente los grupos de mujeres al interior de las organizaciones han identificado a la radio como una herramienta valiosa para enriquecer y fortalecer su trabajo en el tema de género y su lucha como mujeres.

Pati Galicia, comunicadora social integrante de la Red de Mujeres al Aire en Guatemala habla de cómo el derecho a la comunicación es vital para que las mujeres podamos ejercer una ciudadanía y participación plena. El contar con capacidad e infraestructura para la búsqueda y acceso a la información, así como las condiciones y la capacidad de expresarse, opinar y debatir, aumenta las posibilidades para que las mujeres participemos y seamos sujetas políticas.

En el caso de las mujeres Indígenas y Afrodescendientes, quienes se enfrentan en un contexto con desigualdades históricas donde prevalece la exclusión, discriminación, y pobreza hacia sus pueblos de origen, las condiciones para una participación plena son estrechas.

Ya hace casi diez años, durante su discurso frente al Congreso de la Unión en México en el 2001, la comandanta Esther, mujer indígena Tzeltal integrante de la Comandancia General del Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional, dio a conocer que las mujeres indígenas viven una triple opresión por ser mujeres, ser indígenas y ser pobres.

Sin embargo y haciendo frente a esta dura realidad, mujeres indígenas y afrodescendientes se han venido organizando para conocer y reclamar sus derechos, mejorar sus condiciones de vida, y articularse para la defensa de sus tierras, recursos naturales y su cultura. Estos esfuerzos han incluido hacerle frente al racismo y machismo prevaleciente tanto fuera como dentro de sus pueblos, ya que como han compartido compañeras indígenas en diferentes foros, encuentros y asambleas, han tenido que abrir la discusión sobre la situación marginal que viven como mujeres y los roles de género al interior de sus comunidades y organizaciones, muchas veces con grandes resistencias.

A pesar de esto, se han logrado avances significativos en donde organizaciones campesinas e indígenas mixtas han tomado el tema del género y lo han abordado desde su cosmovisión como pueblos originarios.

Como explica Bety Cariño, mujer Ñusavi (Mixteca):

'Las mujeres necias, rebeldes estamos aquí diciendo que ya no queremos seguir así. Que queremos que nuestra palabra se escuche, que queremos que nuestras hijas tengan otro futuro donde ellas sean tomadas en cuenta,

Mujeres indígenas se expresan por medio de la radio comunitaria.

donde ellas sean autoridades, donde ellas tomen decisiones, donde a ellas no se les pisoteen sus derechos, donde ellas levanten la voz de una manera normal.'

Ella es integrante del Centro de Apoyo Comunitario Trabajando Unidos (CACTUS), quien ha participado en procesos de comunicación y radio comunitaria de la región Mixteca- Triqui en México.

En el caso de la Unión Verapacense de Organizaciones Campesinas (UVOC), ubicados en Guatemala y quienes se han estructurado de acuerdo a la cosmovisión Maya, han hecho sesiones de reflexión para discutir lo que llaman 'Equilibrio Hombre-Mujer'. Partiendo de los conceptos de *complementariedad, dualidad y equilibrio,* como elementos que orientan tanto el pensamiento como la práctica, los compañeros y compañeras de UVOC analizaron la situación actual que viven en su interacción como hombres y mujeres, concluyendo que hay un desequilibrio y que es necesario y urgente restaurar el orden.

Al tener este espacio para identificar las relaciones desiguales que se han generado entre hombres y mujeres, incluyendo la organización y la comunidad, se ha abierto la oportunidad para construir relaciones más equitativas entre ambos sexos. En el caso de UVOC, asegurando que las mujeres comiencen a participar en asambleas comunitarias y cargos comunitarios, así como asegurando que tengan las capacidades y conocimientos necesarios para participar en diversos proyectos, incluyendo su radio comunitaria 'Radio Kamolb´e Chamtaq´a'.

De manera similar, Berta Cáceres del Consejo Cívico de Organizaciones Populares e Indígenas de Honduras (COPINH), quien aglutina a hombres y

mujeres Lencas del occidente de Honduras, comenta que 'está claro que sin el aporte de la mujer no hay lucha anticolonialista, ni antipatriarcal,' ya que la participación de las mujeres indígenas y negras es fundamental para avanzar sus luchas como pueblos originarios, en contra de la opresión y discriminación.

Comunicación con identidad

Parte de estos esfuerzos por reforzar la autonomía de los pueblos originarios incluye la creación de medios de comunicación propios. En particular la radio comunitaria ha sido valorada como una de las herramientas más accesibles, debido a su relativa infraestructura mínima, a su potencial de alcanzar un gran número de personas y sobre todo, que permite su uso a toda persona con la disposición y capacidad de hablar, independientemente de si sabe leer o escribir. A su vez, las radios comunitarias han sido utilizadas por los pueblos originarios como herramientas organizativas, educativas y de preservación y fortalecimiento de su cultura e identidad.

'A través de nuestra radio concientizamos y damos a conocer noticias nacionales e internacionales del movimiento popular, así como información de políticas y proyectos que nos afectan como población indígena,' comenta Juan Vázquez, coordinador de la Radio La Voz Lenca. También se transmiten denuncias, se comparten alternativas comunitarias y se dan a conocer temas que tienen que ver con sus demandas como pueblos y la defensa de sus derechos.

Esto es sumamente importante en un contexto en que los medios comerciales diseminan imágenes estereotipadas o distorsionadas e invisibilizan a los pueblos originarios, además de contar con legislaciones, recursos económicos y tecnológicos que les benefician y posicionan en una situación cómoda y privilegiada.

La comunicación 'es una demanda y un derecho de los pueblos zapatistas porque nos hemos dado cuenta de que todos los medios de comunicación que controlan el mal gobierno y las grandes empresas nacionales y extranjeras, como la televisión, la radio, los periódicos, las revistas y otros más, no están al servicio de los pueblos,' fue lo que expuso un compañero zapatista en una mesa sobre las experiencias que han tenido los pueblos zapatistas

en Chiapas, México, en materia de comunicación y cultura (Bellinghausen y Mariscal, 2007).

Esta situación, además genera un ambiente hostil particularmente para las radios comunitarias, ya que las regulaciones se inclinan a favor de los empresarios de la comunicación, sobre las iniciativas de interés social, cultural o educativo, haciendo caso omiso a convenciones y acuerdos internacionales que sostienen que los pueblos indígenas tienen derecho a sus propios medios de comunicación (Gumucio, 2009).

A pesar de esto, las iniciativas de comunicación indígena siguen floreciendo a lo largo de la región, gracias a la movilización, organización y esfuerzos de los pueblos para ejercer y reclamar su derecho a la comunicación. Así hemos visto desde el nacimiento de radios comunitarias y proyectos de video indígena, hasta otros logros históricos, tal como la recién aprobada Ley de Servicios de Comunicación Audiovisual Argentina, que incluye legislación garantizando la propiedad, administración y gestión de medios de comunicación por parte de los pueblos originarios (Melillan, 2009).

Estas iniciativas demuestran que el tener medios de comunicación propios, con identidad como pueblos originarios, genera un proceso que restaura la dignidad y apoya la defensa, articulación y sobrevivencia cultural, al mismo tiempo que va transformando la situación de injusticia y silenciamiento a la que han sido sometidos los pueblos.

Como veremos a continuación, aún hay bastantes desafíos al interior de los proyectos de comunicación comunitaria e indígena. Uno de ellos tiene que ver con la participación desigual de las mujeres, para lo cual me enfocaré en la experiencia que hemos tenido en nuestro trabajo acompañando a diversas radios comunitarias e indígenas en México, Guatemala y Honduras.

En busca del equilibrio al interior de las radios comunitarias

'Ya es tiempo que nosotras las mujeres
levantemos nuestras voces,
la voz del pueblo, la voz de Lempira.'[2]

Durante una de la sesiones de trabajo en un taller de Mujeres y Radio, una compañera Lenca compartió

esta frase tan poderosa. La retomo aquí porque me parece que representa lo que muchas de las mujeres que participan en las radios de sus organizaciones consideran como el corazón de su lucha: el reconocimiento de sus derechos como pueblos indígenas y particularmente su derecho a expresarse, a expresar su cultura, su historia y su cosmovisión, frente a un contexto que sistemáticamente ha negado la identidad étnica de los pueblos indígenas.

En el transcurso de nuestro trabajo de comunicación popular, hemos realizado actividades y talleres en los cuales los y las integrantes de las radios y organizaciones han reflexionado y analizado cómo los medios de comunicación a su alcance, que en su mayoría son medios comerciales (prensa, televisión, radio, publicidad), manejan las representaciones de hombres y mujeres, y cuáles valores y roles promueven.

Los resultados han sido un claro vacío informativo respecto a los derechos de las mujeres y otros temas que son de importancia para mujeres y hombres de las comunidades a los que las radios tienen alcance.

Las propuestas y aportaciones que han surgido a partir de ejercicios de reflexión acerca de cómo la comunicación y la radio puede ser utilizada para hacer frente a esta situación, han sido constantes entre las organizaciones con las que trabajamos:

- Mayor capacitación al interior de las radios sobre la visión con enfoque de género para no fomentar denigración ni abuso contra las mujeres, por ejemplo a través de canciones, como lo hacen las radios comerciales y en ocasiones las radios comunitarias.
- Capacitación para más mujeres en operación y conducción de la radio, para que exista un balance y sean las mujeres que hablen por ellas mismas; y una mayor cobertura y debate acerca de las demandas, problemas y propuestas de las mujeres, para llenar el vacío informativo y presentar información alternativa propia.

La experiencia de los últimos años nos mostró que la participación de las compañeras en las radios se ha vuelto más comprometida y constante, a pesar de no contar con el mismo respaldo (educativo, de valorización y de posición social) que los compañeros. Y que a través de la radio las mujeres también han logrado mayor soltura y formación, llegando en algunos casos, como en el COPINH, a

convertirse en líderes y a ser seleccionadas por sus bases para cargos importantes en sus organizaciones.

Es por esto que este año impulsamos como COMPPA y junto a las organizaciones hermanas, una serie de cuatro talleres de Comunicación Popular, Radio Comunitaria y Género. En estos talleres participaron 80 compañeras de 11 pueblos originarios de México, Guatemala y Honduras: Triqui, Mixteco, Huave, Mixe, Nahua, Ixil, Quiché, Queq'chí, Pocomchí, Lenca y Garífuna.

Cada taller se realizó en la sede de una de las radios u organizaciones, por lo tanto el resto de compañeras tenían que viajar, a veces de muy lejos, para participar en la capacitación. Esto ha propiciado que, a la par de la capacitación en género, radio y comunicación popular, las compañeras hayan podido conocer otras realidades y compartir con otras mujeres comunicadoras parte de su cultura, sus costumbres y tradiciones, en un intercambio que ha sido muy rico para las participantes y que ha ido fortaleciendo el tejido de una red regional de comunicadoras populares.

Los temas que se trabajaron a lo largo de los cuatro talleres tocaron aspectos que tienen que ver con el género y sus realidades como mujeres, la comunicación popular y su importancia para las comunidades organizadas y la radio comunitaria. Así, las compañeras han aprendido a usar la grabadora digital y la mezcladora, cómo hacer noticias, cuñas radiofónicas y entrevistas, a la par de discutir acerca de los roles impuestos desde niñas por el hecho de ser mujeres, cuáles son nuestros derechos y qué tipo de opresiones viven por ser mujeres, pobres e indígenas.

A lo largo del año, cada grupo de compañeras fue pensando y formulando cómo iba a ser su programa radiofónico de mujeres. Resultando así programas como 'Mujer, Lucha por tu Vida' transmitido en Radio Libertad en el departamento de Petén y 'Educativos y Alegrías Comunitarias' de Radio Unión, en el Quiché, Guatemala; Ntusu Na'a (Palabra o Voz de Mujer) elaborado por las compañeras de la Radio La Voz de las Nubes en la región Mixteca de Oaxaca y 'Simplemente Mujer' transmitido en Radio Aamay-Iyoltokniwan en una comunidad Nahua del Sur de Veracruz en México; y en Honduras, el programa 'Canasto de Palabras' transmitido por las mujeres del COPINH en su radio comunitaria La Voz Lenca.

Esto es el resultado de un proceso en que las compañeras han visto fortalecidas sus habilidades y conocimientos como comunicadoras a través de las actividades realizadas durante las capacitaciones y las tareas y ejercicios practicados entre un taller y otro.

Romper el silencio y ampliar sus voces a través de sus radios comunitarias y proyectos de comunicación ha convertido en un espacio fortalecedor y transformativo, ya que a la par de generarse las condiciones concretas (formación, habilidades y cantidad) para que más mujeres participen en todos los niveles de la radio, y se vaya apropiando una perspectiva de género en todo el proyecto radiofónico y comunicativo, se ha generado un espacio de participación propio para las mujeres, abriendo un canal más por el cuál pueden fortalecer sus procesos organizativos, de formación, de autoestima y empoderamiento. ■

Notas
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Feminising reporting of the war in Afghanistan

Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick with additional research by Indra Adnan

A cricketing joke from the 1980s saw Mark Waugh, the Australian batsman, nicknamed 'Afghan'. Struggling to emerge from the shadows of brother Steve, he was always in danger of being overlooked: 'the forgotten Waugh'. The war in Afghanistan is a canvas on to which powerful intervening nations project their own preoccupations; one that goes through alternate periods of attracting attention and being forgotten.

International media scrutiny suddenly focused on the Taliban early in 2001, over their plan to blow up a treasure from antiquity: the giant Buddhist statues at Bamiyan, on the old Silk Road in the Hindu Kush mountains. Dating from the sixth century, the images were condemned, by Taliban leader Mullah Mohammed Omar, as idols – forbidden under sharia law – and duly dynamited.

Notable among the interventions to avert their destruction was an offer from the Metropolitan Museum of Art, in New York, to dismantle the two statues and move them to Manhattan.

Indeed, some attributed the decision to anger among clerical rulers at the comparative indifference of the outside world to the suffering of Afghans in daily life. The then Taliban ambassador-at-large, Sayed Rahmatullah Hashemi, said the destruction was ordered by the Head Council of Scholars after a Swedish monuments expert proposed to restore the statues' heads.

Hashemi said: 'When the Afghan head council asked them to provide the money to feed the children instead of fixing the statues, they refused and said, 'No, the money is just for the statues, not for the children'. Herein, they made the decision to destroy the statues'.[1]

What children? This flurry of attention followed a display of indifference. January 2000 saw the latest in a series of major earthquakes in the region, which left tens of thousands living under canvas through the harsh winters. In vain did the UN rattle the collecting tin for relief contributions from donor countries, and according to a rare report on BBC Television News, in February, children were dying of cold owing to a shortage of blankets.

Terence Wright recalls this piece, by reporter Matt Frei: 'The refugee Sirijillin, who shows us his son's grave, explains that the lack of blankets was responsible for the death. Secondly, seven-month-old motherless child Marjula. And finally the Mohammed family who have just lost two children and a third is dying. The viewer is reminded that nightfall is looming, temperatures will drop, there is overcrowding in the available shelter and that more refugees are on their way'.[2]

At UN Headquarters, there was not enough money to pay for blankets to keep children alive. A Taliban representative spoke to the BBC because, he explained, the situation was so grave as to justify breaking the general ban on creating images by giving television interviews. Meanwhile, a few dozen streets uptown, on the edge of Central Park, the Met stood ready to raise the millions needed, at short notice, to remove the Buddhas from their niches in the sandstone of Bamiyan and transport them thousands of miles to the west.

The vandalism of the statues served to anathematise the Taliban, with even the few countries that recognised the legality of their regime – such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates – condemning the act as 'savage'.[3] What followed, months later, was an intense outburst of propaganda against Afghanistan, over its alleged complicity in the '9/11' attacks (although, as Robert Entman pointed out, it required a huge and programmatic campaign of 'cascading activation', through layers of representational networks, to deflect attention from the fact that most of the known hijackers were Saudis).[4]

Heikki Luostarinen produces a formalist model of war propaganda, a narrative form distinctive, she suggests, for being rich in polarising references to positive and negative identification and socialization.[5] Terence Wright goes on to contrast the initial BBC report on the refugees with another, by the same journalist, in November of that year, after the US had allied its air power to the Northern Alliance forces to rout the Taliban out of Kabul. Now, 'the Taliban are no longer treated as reluctant informants, but more as if a strange tribe. … the friendly Talib, who was prepared to break his code of conduct to speak to the camera, is replaced by a shadowy figure carrying a Kalashnikov and adorned with confiscated audiotape'.[6]

These are elements of a group of representational conventions identified, initially by Johan Galtung, as 'war journalism':

- War/violence-orientated
- Elite-orientated
- Propaganda-orientated
- Victory-orientated.[7]

These elements are mutually reinforcing. 'War or violence-orientation', dominant in mainstream journalism by corporate media, sees conflict represented as a zero-sum game of two parties, contesting the single goal of victory. The present authors describe the picture thus constructed as a 'tug-of-war', in which 'anything that is not, unequivocally, winning, risks being interpreted – and reported – as losing'.[8]

Each party thus acquires a readymade interest in escalating the conflict – trying harder to win – since the only alternative is defeat. Escalation is justified by recourse to propaganda, demonising and dehumanising the 'other'. War journalism focuses on 'the suffering of 'our' side, [especially] able-bodied white males', Galtung continues, at the expense of hiding the human cost of organised violence, both physical and psychological.

Humanitarian controversy
The latter has been a site of particular contestation in the wars during this decade, in Iraq and Afghanistan. Philip Hammond identifies 'humanitarian spectacle' as the visionary objective of conflict involving the US and its allies, to replace the previous crusade of anti-communism: 'American military

Area	1990 population (millions)	2000 population (millions)	Increase % 1990-2000	2010 population (millions, projected)	Increase % 2000-2010
Afghanistan	12,580	20,536	63.2%	29,117	41.8%
Least developed countries	524,764	676,929	29.0%	854,696	26.3%
South Central Asia	1,250,453	1,518,322	21.4%	1,780,473	17.3%

Table 1: Changes in population, Afghanistan by comparison with Least Developed Countries and South Central Asian countries.[10]

muscle was thus to be given new meaning in the post-Cold War era, no longer as a guarantor of the West's freedoms against the menace of communism but as the steel fist inside a humanitarian velvet glove'.[9] The Taliban had 'dreadfully misruled' Afghanistan, Matt Frei reflects, in the second, more propagandistic of the two BBC reports considered by Wright, 'but removing them from power – cut to a medium shot of another soldier with wind-strewn refugees in middle distance – "also has its price".'

It foregrounds an implicit 'balance of humanitarian advantage' in debates over any decision to go to war in the first place, and its authors typically seek, in representing such a decision and its consequences, to minimize assessments of its impact, in particular in terms of the cost in human lives and displacement of people.

As NATO members met to discuss deploying more troops to Afghanistan, the British Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, told reporters: 'We all know that in the 1990s, Afghanistan was the incubator of international terrorism, the incubator of choice for global jihad'. Leaving aside the point made by Entman and others, that there is no evidence of any connection between Afghanistan and the '9/11' attacks, it appears, from UN figures, that Afghanistan's population grew in the 1990s far more than in the present decade. Those years were, to be sure, troubled, with the infamous 'battle of Kabul' of 1994-96 being settled only when the Taliban drove out the warlords carving out their turf, but it was not marked by the systematic aerial bombardment and massive deployment of foreign troops that followed the US intervention of October 2001.

According to calculations derived from fig-ures published by the Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, there 'should' be millions more Afghans alive today, based on extrapolating the 1990s figure for population growth, than there actually are.

In the two categories of which Afghanistan is a member, the Least Developed Countries and South Central Asia, the rate of population growth edged downward by a few percentage points in the 'Noughties' as compared with the 'Nineties'. But it slowed in Afghanistan to a much greater extent. Nine years after the US-led invasion and occupation of the country, several million people appear to have gone 'missing'. Had the growth rate remained the same, over the two decades, the population projection for 2010 would be over 33 million, compared with the actual 29 million.

Because there has been no professionally conducted epidemiological study of Afghanistan, since the US intervention in 2001, there is no way of knowing what has 'happened' to them. The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan recorded 1798 civilian casualties between January and the end of October 2008, 695 of which were attributable to the US and allies, but the figures reaching the outside world for deaths caused by air strikes and in crossfire cannot, by themselves, account for the disparity. The mystery is deeper still when you consider that, since 2002, the UN High Commission for Refugees has repatriated some five million Afghans who fled the country in earlier wars, so they are included in the 2010 figure.

For much of the period in question, the war in Afghanistan was obscured, in the media of troop-contributing countries, by news from Iraq,[11] to the

extent that it became, once again, 'the forgotten war'.[12] Those assessments came on the basis of reporting in 2006, since when Afghanistan has grown in salience, but the vast majority of reports, in those same media, deal with the lives and deaths of the occupying soldiery, and/or statements from senior politicians about why they are determined to 'stay the course'.

This record testifies to the enduring predominance of war journalism. Robert Hackett and Birgitta Schroeder[13] analyse the content of 522 articles in the Canadian, Israeli and US press as well as Al Jazeera Online, covering the war in Afghanistan and the simultaneous war in Lebanon, in 2006. Ten specific war journalism criteria, derived from the Galtung model, are found to be present in 51.9% of the articles on average, whereas the equivalent score for peace journalism criteria is just 31.6%.

Downplaying the human cost of war
It suggests the human cost of the war in Afghanistan is being systematically downplayed, according with impressions, from countless stories in western corporate media over the years, that the voices of Afghan people themselves are nearly always excluded. In Australia, for instance, every time there is news of a further troop deployment or diplomatic development, the sourcing, in the vast majority of local news coverage, is confined to military and/or political leaders.

Opinion polls consistently suggest Australians would rather see their troops called home, but there is little or no political traction to that idea since the front benches of both major parties take the opposite view; and it almost never surfaces in the media. So there is little or no perception of urgency, to promote what William Crano called the 'salience' of the issue.[14]

Because there is no familiar human face to the suffering caused by the war – and perhaps inscribed in the population figures – publics in the belligerent countries may – to lend a metaphor to Crano's concept – feel it as an itch, requiring an occasional scratch, but not such an irritant that a salve has to be applied in the form of a change in policy.

This pattern has allowed political leaders and policy-makers in the age of Obama – a period preceding his actual inauguration and probably dating from his successful campaign for the Democratic nomination – to portray Afghanistan as the 'good war', even if Iraq was the 'bad war'. From before the first night of 'shock and awe' over Baghdad, in 2003, numerous correspondents in the city were sending reports to influential western media, in which 'humanising the enemy' – telling the stories of ordinary Iraqi citizens – was a keynote. One prominent exponent was Suzanne Goldenberg, star reporter of Britain's *Guardian* newspaper, whose editor, Alan Rusbridger, told a high-ranking London conference:

> 'In every war you try and depersonalise the enemy and dehumanise them but I think having someone like Suzanne Goldenberg's quality inside Baghdad talking to ordinary Iraqis and making them terribly human I think is a new element in war, and you can see why politicians don't like it but it also makes it extremely difficult to go to war on a nation when you are getting that kind of image and I think the humanity of her reporting and Lindsey's (Hilsum, *Channel Four News*) was just of a different calibre and texture from the reporting we'd seen before and I think that will in some way made fundamental changes in how war is seen'.[15]

Is it coincidental that the two reporters Rusbridger picked out were women? Before 1970, only 6% of foreign correspondents were women. Today, the Brookings Institution estimates that more than one third are female and they are, according to Sheila Gibbons, having an increasing influence on the content and tone of war coverage:

> 'As the number of women war correspondents approaches critical mass, they appear to be focusing more clearly on the toll that today's wars take on the civilian population – the women and children – who have little or no say in the decisions that lead to mass killing and wounding'.[16]

'Feminising' news coverage
Coverage of the war in Afghanistan has remained largely, up to now, 'unfeminised', at least in western corporate media. The deployments of such reporters as Goldenberg and Hilsum to Baghdad has not

been emulated, for a variety of reasons. There is not one identifiable 'centre' of direct violence, and for western-employed correspondents, setting out to talk to 'ordinary Afghans' has been fraught with dangers and difficulties.

Gibbons' comment about traditional, male-dominated war reporting rings true: 'dominated by tactical questions, political infighting and policy disputes, [it] can obscure the trauma experienced by women who live in areas targeted for attacks', especially since, according to international estimates, women, along with children under 15, between them comprise 70% of Afghanistan's population.

Observing that peace journalism may be a more 'feminised' mode of reporting need not essentialise gender characteristics. A useful perspective can be read across from sociolinguistics, in which the focus is 'not on biological sex, nor even on the culturally constructed category of gender, but rather on the diverse realizations of the dynamic dimensions of masculinity and femininity'.

Janet Holmes finds that 'stylistic variability is often greater in women's speech than men's', and relates that to 'the ways in which women are often required to use language to construct a much wider range of social identities and express a wider range of social roles than men'.[17] A peace journalist will have to give voice to people far outside the narrow circle of 'official sources': a task that may therefore come more readily, in general, to women than men.

It echoes debates about gender in the context of political discourses and styles, notably over the notion of 'soft power'. Indra Adnan, Director of the Soft Power Network, explains: 'hard power is the use of force whereas soft power is the use of attraction – two ways to get results in any field of endeavour'. Peace journalism 'is both a tool and a vehicle for soft power', she adds, 'as it enables and models those more open, reciprocal relationships between countries or actors of any kind'.

Joseph Nye, who has popularised the term, sees 'female skills' of empathising, mediating and seeing the bigger picture as vital to its effectiveness. Simon Baron-Cohen[18] calls these characteristics biological and neurological, whereas Susan Pinker[19] prefers to see them as cultural, arising from the different roles that women traditionally and still occupy in order to bring up children within a community of support.

The now longstanding 'disconnect' between public and political opinion on the war in Afghanistan is attributable to 'the brute unresponsiveness of institutional frameworks'.[20] Media have often presented the same blandly indifferent face, both to the suffering of the Afghan people and to calls, in belligerent countries, for troops to be pulled out. A bit more peace journalism, and a bit more feminisation, is long overdue. ■

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The three produced the first Peace Journalism Summer School, in 1997, with Johan Galtung, that launched the worldwide movement for peace journalism among journalists civil society activists and academic researchers.

Iconic masculinities, popular cinema and globalization

David Hansen-Miller

Popular action cinema has become an increasingly transnational product. Formerly, regional industries built on their own successes and sought to incorporate those of others in an effort to produce films with genuinely global audience appeal. Within this the masculinity of the action cinema hero has undergone significant transformations so that it might resonate with a global audience.

It is commonplace within Film Studies that popular narrative film appeals to its audiences largely through psychological and social processes of fantasy and identification. We generally watch a story unfold through a central protagonist and find ourselves affected through our identification with that character. For the duration of the narrative we get the pleasure of experiencing the world as someone else – someone who often embodies idealized aspects of our own personalities. As that protagonist is so consistently male, the pleasure we are implicated within is our temporary psychic assumption of socially idealized masculine personas (Metz 1986, Mulvey, 1992).

It follows that masculinities that successfully appeal to audiences would be symptomatic of our collective aspirations for masculinity. They can also be understood as performative or productive – in being proffered to the audience as an ideal, the audience is compelled to recognize and accept them as such. This means that to achieve successful identifications and pleasurable spectatorship

the film industry must at least intuit a version of masculinity that is both familiar enough to resonate socially with who we think we are, and new enough to resonate with our aspirations.

While there is a long tradition of film that has played well outside of its own national borders, it is only in recent decades that we have begun to see what we might call a distinctly global form of cinema in the action 'blockbusters' that so dominate popular culture. Undoubtedly, Hollywood has pioneered the form, but as Hollywood has learned from other global cinematic success stories we have also begun to see a more global version of masculinity.

Prominently, the exaggerated masculinity of the Hollywood action hero in the eighties and nineties has given way to somewhat more complicated characters. Through these we can gain insight into emerging global idealizations of gender that are disembedded from specific national or cultural traditions. While such masculinities may only be abstractions, their success is at least partially dependent upon their resonance.

Hollywood's culturally particular masculinities

Hollywood had glimpsed the economic potential in globally successful 'blockbuster' action films as early as the mid seventies. Names that we now consider synonymous with the form, such as Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, and Ridley Scott, had major commercial success before the end of the decade with *Jaws* (1975), *Star Wars* (1977), and *Alien* (1979).

Notably, all of these films narrate the story of an 'everyman' (or 'everywoman') character who is thrust into the centre of the action by extraordinary circumstances. None of them have any particular skills or abilities that extend beyond those we could expect from normal people in their particular situation. Even Luke Skywalker struggled to use 'the force' effectively. While not uncomplicated, such films, where normal people prove capable of extraordinary things, seem to reflect the ideals of America's similarly complicated democratic resurgence in the sixties.

However, this everyman character gradually morphed into a physically and emotionally impervious masculinity. While the icons that would come to dominate American action cinema in the eighties would consistently play 'working class' and therefore populist figures, Reagan's America was seemingly gripped by an examination of its defeat in Vietnam (Hoberman, 1989). While critically acclaimed productions struggled directly with the subject of the war, popular action cinema came to be dominated by figures like Clint Eastwood, Sylvester Stallone, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Bruce Willis. Stoical under fire and then unwavering and unflinching in their violent retribution towards enemies, such icons seemed purpose built to restore, at least in imaginative terms, a wounded national masculinity.

Often armed to extremes, or simply capable of turning anything into a deadly weapon through brute strength, the films fetishize the industrial heft of the male body. The Hollywood action hero offered audiences an overstated masculinity that not only conquered but also gloated over its victims with amusing one-liners. By framing the pleasures of spectatorship in terms of identification, it is not hard to see the limitations of audience appeal.

Further, while the legacy of Vietnam may have constituted such exaggerated gender performances, as the eighties wore on other culturally particular anxieties could be discerned within Hollywood's production. Arnold Schwarzenegger offers an instructive example where 'hypermuscularity' becomes both masculine and grotesque. As Ken MacKinnon writes, Schwarzenegger seems to be 'a parody of a lost ideal, or else a warning of an android future' (MacKinnon, 1997: 87).

In an era where labour was rapidly shifting away from heavy industry and towards 'feminized' administrative work these films prominently feature the shirtless muscular torsos of their stars and strive to restore a link between the male body and masculine power and are therefore suggestive of the everyday life anxieties that faced American men (Tasker, 1993).

Alternatively, we can view such overstated masculinities, and their triumphalism as suggestive of the unparalleled power held by a newly unilateral superpower. In different ways the idealizations cannot help but instantiate a certain dissonance for audiences not well within the American fold.

The case of Jackie Chan

Such culturally bound American masculinities provided fertile ground for alternative

representations to take their place on the world stage. In a manner of speaking, the Hong Kong action cinema industry, led by the star persona of Jackie Chan, filled a void during the eighties and well into the nineties. While East Asia's late 20th century rise to economic prominence provided an obvious basis for the global flow of Asian cinema, the reach and influence of the Hong Kong film industry can also be attributed to Hong Kong's disposition towards cultural hybridity.

Late colonial Hong Kong served as a geographic and economic intermediary between Asia and 'the West', communism and capitalism, as well as different Chinese cultural traditions. As Esther Yau explains such a situation meant that 'the political identity of Hong Kong' was 'the product of a pragmatic kind of complicity conducive to ideological ambivalence or dubiety' (Yau, 1994: 183-184). Such ambivalence meant that an industry based in Hong Kong was well placed to produce forms of Chinese culture that could travel and potentially appeal to everyone.

Jackie Chan's own biography mimes that transnational orientation and thus adds another subjective dimension to success. Chan was born in Hong Kong and his parents worked in the French embassy. When they moved to the French embassy in Canberra, Australia, Chan was sent to performing arts school where he studied in the Peking opera tradition. After initial film work dried up with Bruce Lee's early death in 1973, Chan joined his parents. In Australia he worked in construction where he reportedly picked up the diminutive nickname 'Jackie' on site (BBC, 2001).

When he returned to the Hong Kong film industry he would set about the construction of a screen persona that fit within the tradition at the same time that it drew on the physical comedy of silent film era stars like Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin (Fore, 2001). His extravagantly choreographed fight scenes are replete with minor self-inflicted injuries. These amusingly serve to emphasize his fighting skills as he, rather than his opponent, is the source of his pain. At the same time such 'mistakes' allow him to pull faces for comedic effect. Famous for doing his own stunts, Chan's action hero character is brought down to earth through an admittedly strained realism that also crosses through the fourth wall.

Further, Chan's romantic leading man persona, when it does appear, is comparatively tentative and reserved – more Clark Kent than Superman – and reminiscent of the sentimentality of silent era heroes. As Steve Fore explains, Chan's persona contrasts with Bruce Lee's sombre defence of a 'nostalgia infused cultural China' in favour of an 'unassuming and self effacing comedy.' (Fore, 2001: 119)

His persona obviously ran counter to the idealization that occupied most American cinema audiences. As Fore explains, within the martial arts tradition, he was 'never the aggressor, he fights in defense of his body, in defense of the social community of which he is a member, and, frequently, in order to demonstrate the superiority of his community's value structure.' He 'never gloats over a fallen opponent and may even offer his opponent an opportunity to redeem himself.' (Fore, 1997: 255).

Similarly, Chan's male body is not offered as the natural source of his abilities – instead, martial arts training suggests a set of skills that can be acquired with hard work and concentrated study. This is a potential that has been widely taken up in films to provide audiences with female action heroines who are equal to their male counterparts [e.g. *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) and *The House of Flying Daggers* (2004)]. This suggests that

we can understand the appeal of martial arts action within popular film as a metaphor of the advanced intellectual and technological ability increasingly required by information based industries.

The likely dissonance between American hypermasculine icons and the potential identifications of wider film audiences can even be marked by Chan's breakthrough into the US film industry. The Hong Kong film industry's foothold in America was achieved and maintained in large part through diasporic Chinese audiences as well as an African-American fan base that dates back to Bruce Lee's popularity.

As David Desser explains, Hong Kong cinema offered non-white underdog heroes. 'The lone, often unarmed combatant fighting a foe with greater economic clout who represented the status quo' provided 'an obvious but nonetheless real' associative link between Hong Kong output and some American black audiences (in Marchetti, 2001: 139-140).

Gina Marchetti (2001) explains that Hong Kong production similarly crossed over from 'Chinatown' to other 'ghetto' theatres in the United States in need of cheap programming. With the advent of home video and DVD such links could be maintained, passed down and extended.

This was the vehicle for Chan's cult audience and growing name recognition in the United States through the eighties and into the nineties. Despite some failed early efforts, and the rejection of predictable Asian villain roles offered to Chan by Hollywood, this would allow him to enter the US market on his own terms with *Rumble in the Bronx* (1995).

With Chan's star appeal established in the States and Europe he emerged as perhaps the first truly global superstar. Not surprisingly Hollywood took notice and sought to appropriate what it could from the Hong Kong industry's success therefore producing what Christina Klein (2004) identifies as the 'Asianization of Hollywood'.

While the eighties rounded out with Bruce Willis' muscular John McClane destroying terrorists in *Die Hard* (1988), the nineties rounded out with Keanu Reeves lithe 'Neo' kung fu fighting his way through *The Matrix* (1999). The Hollywood action cinema that we are now accustomed to is virtually transformed by the exchange and has taken on everything from editing styles to narrative traditions. Notably, Bruce Willis rejuvenated his career with a transition to playing a depressive psychologist in *The Six Sense* (1999), Schwarzenegger would famously enter politics, and Eastwood would go

Somewhere, somehow, someone's going to pay.

SCHWARZENEGGER
COMMANDO

on to play various characters traumatized by their violent pasts.

The trouble with masculinity

Hollywood's effort to incorporate masculinities with broader cultural appeal has not resulted in a simple duplication of Chan's style and persona. Instead, the contemporary action hero manifests the conflict between the formerly confident and effectively imperial version of masculinity and the social political erosion of any such ideal. The emergent style of the hero echoes the superhuman abilities of familiar Hollywood icons but is also marked by psychic conflicts about roles and responsibility.

Tom Cruise characters, like Ethan Hunt in the *Mission Impossible* films (1996, 2000, 2006) or John Anderton in *Minority Report (2002)* – Matt Damon in the Bourne films (2002, 2004 2007) – as well as various characters played by Will Smith, are all in battle with the organizations that made them who they are. Such narratives seem to both have their cake and eat it, relying on the pleasures of familiar idealizations while introducing sympathetic elements of alienation and dissonance.

The Bourne films are arguably the most direct in their representation of such conflicts. The narrative centres on the amnesiac Bourne's attempt to uncover the past and then destroy the CIA's Treadstone training program that produced him. His amnesia results from the horrors he has carried out in the name of his country, such as coldly killing innocents. By destroying Treadstone he hopes to extract himself from the endless and pointless intrigue that has become divorced from any valuable social mission.

The corruption of a once noble project returns again and again in these films. In the less overtly political narrative of *I, Robot* (2004) Will Smith battles robots made of the same technology that composes his bionic arm. The sympathetic scientist who originally designed the technology is now dead and the robots have followed their mission of serving humanity to a perverse and destructive conclusion.

Such characters mark movement away from the idea that men naturally hold superhuman capacities by nature of their sex. The hero is not an everyman but is likely to be police, military, or a scientific professional who is intended to work in extreme circumstances. If robotic arms or extreme and nefarious training programs are not at work there is a heavy reliance on technical prowess in the martial arts. Further, violent stoicism and gloating has given away to deep emotional investments. Exceptional abilities are a source of psychic isolation and emotional pain.

In *I Am Legend* (2007), Will Smith's isolated scientist, the only survivor of a Manhattan overtaken by zombies, has a touchingly overwrought attachment to his dog and makes desperate efforts to maintain his sanity by simulating social interaction. Unlike the heroes of Hollywood's recent past these men are responsible to, but disassociated from, the forms of social and political power that have historically underwritten American masculinity. Struggles within and against such institutions suggest a desire to retrieve what was valuable in an effort to carve out new and sustainable identities.

Such narratives also resonate with the declining loyalty that neo-liberal institutions demonstrate towards their employees. While status and power within such institutions may still play a part in masculine self-definition, the tendency towards outsourcing, contract work, and chronic layoffs would suggest the need to find alternate grounds upon which to build a secure gender identity (Castells, 2004).

Further, the integration of women within such institutions has served to erode the homosocial value structures that once governed, and rewarded, institutional allegiance and respect for the hierarchy. It is possible that as more and more privileged men are faced with the same forms of social precarity that have for so long defined the lives of more marginal subjects, that even aspirational identifications with idealized masculinity become alienating.

Finally, as the moral authority invested in institutions turns out to be empty, the moral basis for action has noticeably shifted to the family. The staging ground for the hero's assault on the traditions that made him is the safety and comfort of romantic and familial attachments. Bourne tries to escape with his girlfriend to a beach in Goa and leave all the intrigue behind, but her murder draws him back.

Similarly, Ethan Hunt tries to retire to a quiet life with his girlfriend, but is drawn back in by the kidnapping of his young female protégé. In *I*

Am Legend, Will Smith's character stays in New York to fight the zombie apocalypse so that his wife and daughter might live. While the hero can be traumatized by the burden of their abilities and the sources of their power they are ultimately heroic and justified by reassigning those abilities to a fight for heterosexual love and family.

'Reproductive futurism'
In general, the cultural prospects for masculinity are complicated. With some appealing exceptions the contemporary blockbuster still features male subjectivity and agency over that of women. On the other hand, the attempt to reconstruct masculinity outside of historically homosocial value systems indicates recognition of female audiences and agency.

Further, the heroes' alienation from historically imperial modes of American power reflects problems within and cultural resistance to imperial projects, but they also suggest a new form of individualized masculinity with little social relevance. While reassignment to the mission of romantic love and the family may at first glance appear to be some kind of progress towards egalitarian gender or more communitarian values it can also be understood as an empty form of sentimentality.

The psychoanalytic cultural theorist Lee Edelman (2004) has broadly identified such prominent narrative tendencies as 'reproductive futurism'. In contemporary action cinema, romantic comedy and elsewhere, narrative is organized around a future that is safe and secure for the reproduction of children. Happy or satisfying conclusions imply the restoration of, or beginnings for, a peaceful domesticated family life. If the action blockbuster is our guide, then new forms of social organization do not replace critiques and attacks on the corruption of the old system. Instead, the hero retreats from the social into an isolated apolitical existence.

Further, 'reproductive futurism' subjects all social and political considerations to endless deferral, therefore rendering them meaningless. If subjectivity and social responsibility are to be put in the service of the safe rearing of children then no one ever realizes the fruits of such a labour. As each child matures and ventures toward adulthood, their own subjectivity must be subjugated to the interests of the children that come after them. The danger is that no one gets to live, not even in fantasy, the safe future that our heroes were fighting for. ∎

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HIV communication in India: Re-imaging gender

Nirupama Sarma

On prime-time television in India, an animated sequence shows a lustful husband relenting and agreeing to a game of Ludo thanks to his wife's insistence on using a condom (which is unavailable); a 40-second spot portrays a pregnant woman and her loving husband going for an HIV test to protect their unborn baby; while a multi-media blitzkrieg anoints as Sikandar (The Great One) the man who is smart enough to discuss condoms.

Juxtapose these public service announcements (PSAs) produced under the aegis of the HIV prevention programme with the fact that India was recently placed 114 out of 134 nations on the Global Gender Gap Index,[1] and the disconnect is hard to ignore.

For the most part, the Indian woman is a picture of disempowerment. Only 37% participate in basic household decisions; only 14% have a bank account that they operate themselves; more than half (54%) believe it is justifiable for men to beat their wives; and only 12% of those who experienced sexual violence have talked about it or sought help.[2]

Communication theory and evidence reiterate the role of mass media in defining not only *what* people think about but also *how* they are thought about.[3] In this context, the centrality of media in unfolding the HIV narrative within India, and in establishing the salience of the issue in the public consciousness, is indisputable, as is the importance of communication campaigns aimed at influencing norms and behaviours for HIV prevention.

What is of interest here is the construction of gender within these communication campaigns, and the realities that intervene in a normative world of socially-modeled behaviours. The country's two-decade history of HIV mass communication campaigns includes long-running infotainment serials, contest-driven condom promotions, and celebrity-centric messages. However, this article only looks at select (but by no means comprehensive) PSA campaigns over the last five years.

The term gender is used here in an inclusive sense, beyond its common and limited usage as a synonym for women. The gendered face of HIV requires that, equally, the term must include constructs of masculinity, with its associations of male power, violence and assumed heterosexuality, as it must the many men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender (TG) populations who identify as women, and by extension, with the attendant vulnerabilities of being women.

Gender and HIV in India

It is well known that gender is at the heart of the epidemic, while further entrenching it. The number of women with HIV has steadily increased, now constituting almost 40% of the total 2.9 million infections in the country.

Not only are women more vulnerable to HIV, they also bear a greater burden of its multiple impacts. More than 90% of women with HIV have acquired the infection from their husbands or intimate sexual partners;[4] most of them have little choice but to bear the burden of care-giving when their husbands fall ill; and yet, when widowed and most in need of care-giving themselves, they are forcibly evicted from their homes (a UNDP study indicates that 90% of HIV-affected widows were no longer living in their marital homes).

Yet, more than 20 years into the epidemic, with over $125 million spent on communication campaigns by the national programme alone, almost 40% of women in India have, quite simply, never heard of HIV/AIDS,[5] nor do they – especially married women – perceive themselves at risk.

Coupled with the vulnerability of women is the continued sexual risk-taking among men. Data suggest that less than 40% of men used condoms during 'higher-risk' intercourse.[6]

The text on the condom translates as 'Yes to Condoms, No to AIDS'. The logos of the three collaborating partners are at the bottom: Doordarshan, BBC World Service Trust, and the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO).

In addition, the criminalisation and marginalisation of sex work and homosexuality (in part because they fall outside traditional constructs of acceptable feminine or masculine behaviour) contribute to increasing vulnerability and risk among these groups, with high HIV prevalence rates of 5.2% and 7.4% respectively.

Gender representations: Some snapshots
A scan of about 40 PSAs aired since 2004 reflects a host of thematic areas ranging from spousal communication on condom use; 'talking tips' on safe sex; abstinence and fidelity; and increasingly, a focus on HIV-related services[7].

Within this very mixed montage, a few early representations stand out: the firebrand women elected leaders (Jamuna Devi) who mobilise and exhort village women to vote, maintain their 'identity' and protect themselves from HIV. 'It is your duty and your right,' they state, 'to question your husband about his fidelity, and demand that he use a condom.'

These explicit, rights-based messages, prompted by the World AIDS Day theme on women and girls in 2004 have given way to an increasing focus on HIV-related services, and representations which, while somewhat nuanced, still remain very much in the traditional framework.

Note, for example, the portrayals of 'spousal communication' on condom use. Earlier representations of the notion of 'togetherness' and joint decision-making between husband and wife have evolved to a more explicit representation of conjugal intimacy, with the archetypal sexually-demanding husband and the wife who is ostensibly empowered enough to not only ask him to use a condom (though it is only through *coaxing* and *cajoling*), but also insist on a 'no condom, no sex'

policy. (There is, of course, no acknowledging the concerns that prompt her to ask for condom use in the first place).

Similarly, the trauma confronting pregnant women diagnosed with HIV is sacrificed to the stereotype of the Mother-Nurturer, blithe with the knowledge that she can now protect her baby from HIV thanks to Nevirapine (announced with a jubilant tagline of 'Good News!'); while the HIV-positive widow (Archana) must necessarily subsume anger and bitterness to stoicism and acceptance. 'I loved and trusted him very much,' she says, adding, 'I don't blame anyone.'

Framed within the construct of home and care-giving, she resolves to live her life with courage and take care of her daughter ('aren't all mothers the same?'). Contrast this with a PSA of the HIV-positive man – set within a public space, happy to disclose his HIV status, living, as he says, his life 'to the fullest' – and the contrasts are hard to ignore.

Even the *Buladi* campaign (West Bengal, 2004-07), which aimed to increase risk perception among married women, actively avoids addressing the difficult issues. The rag-doll mascot representing a wise, non-threatening, middle-aged aunt responds to questions that explicitly indicate the chinks within the Great Indian Marriage. Questions such as, 'How can I be infected? My husband is a gentleman,' or 'I have only one partner,' set the stage for an important and intimate personal space where partner infidelity and irresponsibility must be confronted, and the unequal relations between men and women questioned.

Yet, these issues are quickly glossed over and 'resolved' with sanitised, programme-prescribed solutions – use a condom, get an HIV test, seek STI treatment. Very real emotions of anger and violation that may accompany such experiences are subsumed in easy stereotypes, underlying norms of masculinity, sexual risk-taking and male control remain unchallenged.

Representations of masculinity

Representations of men and masculinity similarly continue to build on existing gender roles and privileges. Note, for example, some earlier campaigns featuring furtive men hiding tell-tale signs of an 'illicit' sexual encounter. The tagline announces, 'This evidence can be removed, but AIDS cannot.' Sexual fidelity is endorsed, not for itself or to reconstruct notions of masculinity, but for fear of HIV. Exceptions exist in the form of blips – the young man extolling the virtues of abstinence amidst peer pressure to 'do something… be a man' – but are lost within larger and more overpowering narratives.

Recent 'condom normalisation' campaigns push the boundaries a little, shifting the representation of masculinity within condom advertising from the testosterone-driven sexual predator (the Real Man) to that of the guy-next-door: the bespectacled geek who outfoxes his opponents; the policeman who struggles to utter the word 'condom' while being cheered on by his buddies; the bombastic middle-aged man who exhorts, 'Just do it!' at every instance but fumbles when he needs to buy a condom.

Mainstream media: A twist in the tale?

Mainstream media have, in their own ways, started to change representations of gender and sexuality, with some films even paying token obeisance to the rhetoric of sex worker rights. Note for example, the sex worker's response to her landlady's disapproval of her profession in *Saawariya* ('You have a house and you rent it out for money; how is that any different from my renting out my body?') or the kitsch representation of gay men in *Dostana*.

Despite the stereotypical resolution of an old-fashioned morality play (the Whore loses her sweetheart to the Madonna, and homosexuality is only an impersonation by heterosexual men), these and other films have started to represent the changing landscape of gender and sexuality in India.

Within news and entertainment media, sex workers, once described as 'desecrators of society' are now quoted demanding 'respect and dignity';[8] Rose, a transgender person, hosts a popular weekly TV show (*Ippadikku)* in Chennai; a prime-time documentary highlights the difficulties of being a closet MSM, the pressure to marry and procreate, the increased risk of HIV.

In all, there is a gradual nuancing of gender and sexuality which are starting to find space within the larger media landscape, but remain beyond the confines of HIV communication.

Significant by absence in these campaigns is the link between HIV and gender-based violence. Research has consistently shown that women who ex-

perience gender-based violence and inequality are at a higher risk of HIV, that raising questions about a partner's fidelity, or asking for condom use can often trigger violence. Given a choice between the immediate threat of violence and the relatively hypothetical spectre of HIV, most women resign themselves to sexual demands that may increase their risk of HIV.[9,10] Yet, to date, not a single campaign under the aegis of the national HIV communication programme has attempted to even acknowledge this (though examples exist of smaller NGO campaigns that need to be scaled up and sustained).

A fundamental challenge is the intrinsic tension between the exigencies of HIV communication to promote service utilisation, and the long-standing argument for addressing the underlying causes that make these behaviours less than attainable.

It may be argued that normative representations within communication campaigns (such as the portrayal of women negotiating condom use, or of men conceding to a no-condoms, no-sex norm) are crucial within the theoretical framework of social modeling, and help in creating enabling environments for such behaviours to take root.

However, inherent to this framework is the criticality of personal motivation, ability and self-efficacy in order to undertake prescribed behaviours – factors not dissimilar to the argument for addressing the underlying social drivers of the epidemic, such as gender, poverty and social exclusion.[11]

Do women have the agency to negotiate condom use without the risk of violence? Do they have the economic and social support to refuse sex or abandon marriage when confronted with the possibility that their partners have been unfaithful, or carry STI or HIV? Can men choose monogamy without compromising their sense of masculinity? And, equally, can MSM/TG exercise their sexual preferences without the risk of stigma and criminalisation?

In short, do we have any options, other than those that are programme-prescribed, which respond to our realities in ways that are more realistic, empowering and enduring?

In raising these questions one recognizes the huge gains stemming from the collectivisation of sex worker communities (such as the iconic Sonagachi project, Kolkata), and its impact on increasing their overall sense of empowerment, including their ability to negotiate condom use, and initiate legal and health services necessary for themselves.

Looking forward

Critical questions remain: must a gender focus in HIV mass communication translate to a greater outreach to those who bear the burden of gender disparities, or the recasting of gender constructs, or, as many would argue, gender-transformative work with men? Must HIV communication necessarily build on existing constructs, rather than subvert them through explicit, gender and rights-based approaches? And finally, how can these efforts garner the visibility and marketability required in a competitive, profit-driven media environment?

Beyond being merely rhetorical, these questions point to a larger communication landscape, a multiplicity of images and narratives within which context the story of HIV is to be told, interpreted, and acted upon. Narratives that speak of young women lost in honour killings as much as they do of metrosexual men who fix dinners for their wives.

If gender is to be integrated into the HIV narrative, it will have to be fore-grounded, re-imaged and recast with an intensity and rigor that extend beyond sporadic theme-centred events, and beyond blips on prevention behaviours alone.

HIV campaign evaluations indicate some successes in terms of reach, increases in knowledge and calls to helplines, however, less is known about their impact on changing notions of gender, or conversely, on gender barriers that have inhibited the behaviours being promoted. In most cases, gender has been, very simply, outside the campaign remit.

Edutainment campaigns (such as the 15-year-running *Soul City* in South Africa) have, over a period of time, "modelled" HIV prevention behaviours, including those relating to violence. Critical to such approaches is the representation of a realistic and broader spectrum of underlying causes, experiences and choices that need to be made before 'resolution' in the form of HIV preventive behaviours are reached. India will need to learn from such examples.

In addition, HIV communication will need to expand beyond the 'gender equals women' mindset

to an equal focus on masculinity. In the process, it must also make visible 'the Other' – those who fall outside traditional gender constructs such as sex workers and MSM/TG. Despite the stigma and discrimination, despite the human rights violations, and despite their vulnerability and risk to HIV, they remain invisible within communication campaigns. If gender is to be addressed, they must necessarily be made visible, included, 'normalised' within the communication discourse.

This might seem like a bold proposition, one that requires some leap of faith. But it is no less possible than the leap made a few years ago when the first images of people living with HIV started to appear in our living rooms. HIV communication must set this agenda and move us to the tipping point. ∎

Notes
1. Initiated by the World Economic Forum, the index is developed based on four key indicators: economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, political empowerment, health and survival.
2. *National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3), 2005-06, India: Key Findings*. International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) and Macro International, Mumbai.
3. James W Dearing, Everett M Rogers, *Communication Concepts, 6: Agenda Setting*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications. 1996.
4. *HIV Transmission in Intimate Partner Relationships in India*. Population Council and UNAIDS, New Delhi. 2009.
5. *Ibid* 2.
6. *Ibid* 2.
7. Produced for the National AIDS Control Organisation (NACO) by a range of communication partners.
8. *Maharashtra Times*, July 2006; *Sakal* , March 2008.
9. Kristin L Dunkle, Rachel Jewkes. *'Effective HIV Prevention Requires Gender-Transformative Work With Men.' Sexually Transmitted Infections*. 83, 2007.
10. Vivian F. Go et al. *'When HIV-Prevention Messages and Gender Norms Clash: The Impact of Domestic Violence on Women's HIV Risk in Slums of Chennai, India.' AIDS and Behaviour*. Vol. 7, No. 3, September 2003.
11. Practical Guidelines for Intensifying HIV Prevention. UNAIDS, Geneva. 2007.

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HIV/AIDS prevention in the US: What's in it for women?

Patchanee Malikhao

HIV/AIDS prevention strategies supported by UN agencies aim largely at developing countries. Currently, an estimated 2.1 million new cases of HIV infections are diagnosed annually and most live in developing countries (UNAIDS & WHO 2007: 1). Research results reveal that poverty, lack of HIV/AIDS education, and lack of quality health care have impacted on the infection rate.[1]

However, it is obvious that inequality of development also exists within the USA. Under the Bush administration, the United States emphasized the abstinence only program to fight HIV infection.[2] Another recent study involving nearly 16,000 youth, however, has found that abstinence programs are not effective in preventing HIV infection (*The Weekend Australian*, August 4-5, 2007).

The major global financing bodies of HIV/AIDS programming are the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief program (PEPFAR), the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and the World Bank. Recent reviews of US policies and programs on abstinence and abstinence-only education came to the conclusion that they are 'morally problematic … and threaten fundamental human rights to health, information, and life' (Santelli et al., 2006; Kirby, 2002).

AVERT, an International HIV and AIDS charity based in the UK, states that HIV/AIDS prevention programs in the US have been influenced heavily

by Protestant values and morality. To support this claim, AVERT noted that in 1981 the United States Congress passed the Family Life Act to fund educational programs. These programs were based on values, such as emphasizing sexual abstinence until marriage, and, from 1996 onwards, about $770 million was provided by the Federal government via Congress on abstinence-only sex education.

Other prevention strategies considered acceptable were blood screening, prenatal screening to prevent mother-to-child HIV transmission, and providing knowledge on HIV transmission and correct and consistent condom use. However, condom use received less emphasis than abstinence and the US does not promote harm reduction schemes that support sterile needle exchange services for fear of condoning illegal drug use (Noble, 2009).

The Centers for Disease Control (CSC) claim to utilize a comprehensive approach to HIV prevention that includes surveillance, research, interventions, capacity building, and evaluation. The CDC supports 65 state, territorial, and local health departments and over 100 community-based organizations to conduct HIV prevention programs. Programs are designed to meet the cultural needs, expectations, and values of the populations they serve, and the CDC involves affected communities in the HIV prevention community planning process to ensure that funding goes to those who need it most (Massachusetts Department of Public Health, 2009).

Santelli et al (2005: 78-79) reviewed the U.S. policies and programs on abstinence and abstinence-only education and concluded that abstinence-only programs and policies appear to undermine more comprehensive sexuality education and other government-sponsored programs. Moreover, the research team questioned the ethical stance of the promoters of the abstinence-only education programs because they withhold information or provide misinformation about sexual health and promote questionable and inaccurate opinions about contraception to induce sexually active teens to become abstinent.

It is the case that not only do poor countries suffer from HIV/AIDS, but the USA faces a rising number of new HIV infections. In 2008 *the New York Times* reported that the true number of people with new HIV infection status in 2006 was 56,300

(*The New York Times,* September 3, 2008: A 22). According to the Centers of Disease Control statistics, the ratio of American male: female who contracted HIV is about 3:1 as male-to-male sexual contact is still the major cause of infection in the US.[3] New infections are found primarily among African Americans who most frequently contract HIV via heterosexual intercourse (Harris 2008: A 15).

The number of new cases of HIV among African Americans aged 13 to 29 per 100,000 Americans is about 55 compared with 10 Hispanic and 2 white Americans (*The New York Times*, September 3, 2008: A 22). It is alarming to know that the US, which provides aid assistance to developing countries through the PEPFAR program, still has 49% of African Americans who live with HIV/AIDS.[4] This is in the context of 13% of the US population being African Americans and it means that HIV/AIDS has a lot to do with unequal development either in the world system or within a developed country such as the US.

How the mass media interplay with globalization and American culture

Samuel P. Huntington describes the core of American culture as Anglo-Protestant. He studied American history and concluded that non-white Protestants have become Americans by adopting America's Anglo-Protestant culture and political values (Huntington, 2000: 61). What differentiates American Protestantism from that of Europe is the manifestation of Puritanism and congregationalism in the US, which Huntington calls dissident Protestantism. This later resulted in Baptist, Methodist, pietist, fundamentalist, evangelical, Pentecostal, and other types of Protestantism (Huntington, 2000: 65) in the United States.

The central American values of individualism, achievement and equality of opportunity are based in dissenting Protestantism (Huntington, 2000: 69-71). Hofstede & Hofstede (2005: 121,124) studied collectivism and individualism along with other concepts such as masculinity and femininity in 74 different countries and found that the U.S. ranked 19th for masculinity (the lower the number, the more masculine the country is) and first in individualism.

For an explanation, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005: 120) say that a society is called masculine

when emotional gender roles are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough, and focused on material success, whereas women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. A society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life. For the individualistic identification, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005: 97) suggest the following key to measure the concept in three dimensions: language, personality and behaviour.

As argued, the HIV/AIDS epidemic is a manifestation of uneven development. The driving force of uneven development is globalization. 'Globalization' is about the emergence of completely new social, political and business models that interlink governments and big businesses and have a great impact on every aspect of society deep down to the nature of the social contract (Friedman, 2007: 48). According to Appadurai (2001: 17), globalization is a process in which 'locality' and 'globality' interact via the shrinking of space-time in the world system.

Interestingly, while secularism is expected as a result of globalization, the anti-globalization trend that Huntington (2000: 357-365) observed is the pluralism of religions in the 21st century, including the U.S. This is confirmed by Morris (2006: 271-309) who calls contemporary religious movements 'neopaganistic'. A Belgian sociologist on religions, Hellemans (2007: 169-173) explains the phenomena as caused by the separation of state from religion and the growth of individualism. Morris observes a postmodern form of spirituality, self-spirituality, which associates with humanistic and transpersonal psychology. This involves the discovery of inner divinity and the achievement of self-actualization. New age psychology has come with the promotion of 'holistic health', such as alternative medicinal practices and related approaches (Morris, 2006: 304-5).

The mass media are often blamed for being the cause of crime, immorality, individualism and loss of collective beliefs; but at the same time they are praised for contributing to cohesion, social integration and identity formation at local and national levels (McQuail, 2005: 52; Nash, 2000: 53). With the use of new media (such as the internet and the World Wide Web), the sense of community has changed from physically connected to virtually connected. They offer better speed and lower cost for sending and receiving messages. However, they do not replace the traditional mass media. Rather, they enhance and enrich the democratization and development processes nationally and globally as the main actors in the globalization process.

Thompson (1995) proposes that, though the mass media diffuse their messages globally, consumers of the mass media consume the messages locally; a process that he calls *the axis of globalised diffusion and localized appropriation*. Elliott and Lemert (2006: 114) contend that globalization has a profound impact on the individual level, which leads to a new kind of individualism. They note that current sexuality in the US is framed and regulated through mass media, advertising, and information culture as a consequence of globalization and that various forms of sexuality can be called 'discursive sexuality'.

Among American youth, there is evidence that increasing globalization within media systems has shaped a high degree of individualism in society (Elliot & Lemert, 2006: 4-5), and contributes to new attitudes toward sex, sexuality, and individual identity. Taylor (1997: 20) explains that postmodern cultural forms are more concerned with form than content and that they have become commodified. High individualism can lead to narcissism. Twenge and Campbell (2009: 19) state that the crucial feature of narcissism is a very positive and inflated view of self. This value is growing rapidly in the American culture fuelled by the mass media, including the new media.

Symbolic representations of the new American culture of self expression are celebrity news in the media, the flourishing of social networking sites, twitters (micro blogging and text-based social networking, or SMS on the internet) and blogging. Twenge and Campbell (2009: 63) explain that the goal of self-exploration in American culture and media has transitioned into the goal of self-expression. Personal websites, Facebook pages, video and blogs, they argue, contribute to the decline of community-oriented thinking. They jeopardize interpersonal relationships as exemplified in many divorce cases and destructive behaviours such as gambling, binge drinking, illicit sexual relationships,

etc. (Twenge & Campbell, 2009: 53, 63).

The growth in global media flow, especially from U.S. sources, has been proven to influence social norms and behaviours, particularly with regard to younger populations (Tunstall: 1994; Kamalipour & Rampal: 2001). So globalization as seen in the flow of mass media contents that affect sexuality and sexual practices in American culture is part of the socio-cultural environment that determines the spread of HIV/AIDS apart from the HIV/AIDS prevention policy and politics which are determined by religious beliefs. ■

Notes

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Pakistani social and religious discourse in perspective

Naveen Quayyum

Women's participation in politics, their journalistic and literary endeavours and their role in the struggle for freedom from colonialism, are some of the highlights of Pakistan's recent history. The following article explores gender dimensions of communication and interreligious dialogue, where women's voices can be found in some of its alternative histories.

To put the discourse of communications and interreligious dialogue into perspective, it is significant to observe that Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the founder of the country, took quite a secular approach to such matters. In the past, his views have either been deliberately hidden or propagated as 'misleading' in the media. Yet the following statement from his famous speech to the Pakistan Constituent Assembly on 11 August 1947 reveals his vision:

'You are free, you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in the State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed – that has nothing to do with the business of the State...'

Jinnah's marriage to a non-Muslim woman, Rattanbai, and his sister Fatima, Jinnah's strong companion in all his political struggles, are either ignored or often reduced to mere clichés in the media. Fatima Jinnah is known as the 'mother of the nation', but not many lessons from her support for the freedom struggle as a woman have been promoted by the state controlled communications.

Creation of Pakistan and women's voices

The partition of Pakistan and India was marred by communal riots, mass migration and the massacre of millions in 1947. Women paid an atrocious price. An uncountable number of women were raped, gave birth to 'unwanted-babies' and ended up in refugee camps, while many survivors were disowned by their own families.

In her remarkable research *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the partition of India*, Urvashi Botalia has documented the traumatic experiences of those women and how these narratives remained in the private realm of undocumented history.[1] Botalia says:

'As always, there was widespread sexual savagery: about 75,000 women are thought to have been abducted and raped by men of religions different from their own (and indeed, sometimes by men of their own religion). Thousands of families were divided, homes destroyed, crops left to rot, villages abandoned. Astonishingly, and despite many warnings, the new governments of India and Pakistan were unprepared...'

These painful memories had not healed when another partition followed. The independence of Bangladesh in 1971, known previously as East Pakistan, witnessed one of the worst human right atrocities. And yet again women's bodies served as the battle ground for this conflict as well:

'Numerous women were tortured, raped and killed during the war. The exact numbers are not known and are a subject of debate. Bangladeshi sources cite a figure of 200,000 women raped, giving birth to thousands of "war-babies". The Pakistan Army abused numerous Bengali women inside the Dhaka Cantonment. Most of the girls were captured from Dhaka University and private homes.'[2]

The mainstream media followed the policies of military governments for many years to come, and

managed to hide these unfortunate happenings from the public, until the independent media exposed the stories recently. Yet such histories still found a place in alternative communication expressions. Fiction and literature proved to be one of the spheres, where grief over these unfortunate histories and yearning for a better future by many Pakistani communicators found a space.

Many women writers expressed themselves in this political and historical context, while some were part of the famous Progressive Writers' Movement. Thinkers mostly with a socialist and leftist political inclination were the ones who initiated and contributed to this movement. They challenged mainstream state-controlled communications by offering an alternative view, including women's perspectives.

Qurutulain Haider, the subcontinent's renowned fiction writer, is one among many who took on the 'unnatural' (as described by her) partition of India and Pakistan in her work, including her most astounding novel *Mere Bhi Sanam Khane* (My Temples Too, 1949). She later delivered a brilliant commentary in fiction expressing her concerns about the social and political upheavals of the region in *Aag ka Dariya* (The River of Fire, 1953).

Amrita Pritam, Ismat Chughtai, and Dr Nusrat Jehan are three more names among others who contributed women's perspectives on socio-political issues as mainstream communicators.

The Zia era: Women's issues and religious minorities
While the long history of military dictatorships in Pakistan left minimal room for democracy to bloom and give birth to stability and development, it is the eleven-year rule of General Zia ul Haq (1977-88) that will always be remembered for its unfortunate consequences for Pakistani women and religious minorities. With his so called process of Islamisation he introduced most discriminatory laws under Hadood Ordinance and Muslim Family Laws. These laws subjected numerous women to accept punishment for adultery despite being raped, or gang raped in several cases. The Hadood Ordinance was revised in 2006 by the Women's Protection Bill followed by a long struggle by women asking fore this law to be repealed.

Similar to women's situation, Christians along with other religious minorities faced the consequences of General Zia's hideous policies. They suffered from the blasphemy law (introduced in 1986), under which innocent people were being victimised and were given the death penalty. Most cases have shown that this law is prone to target non-Muslims in situations of internal conflicts and disputes. The blasphemy law is still intact, and after 9/11 with the impact of extremism in Pakistan, it has inflamed the insecurity of religious minorities even more.

A recent statement made by the World Council of Churches (WCC) over the position of Christians was published by *Dawn*, a major Pakistani daily.[3] It said:

> 'The WCC has claimed that minorities in Pakistan live in fear of persecution and even execution or murder on false charges of blasphemy. The council, a global body linking Protestant and Orthodox churches in 110 countries, has urged the Pakistan government to change a law that allows for the death penalty for blasphemy.'

Women's movements and gender perspectives in media
Against all the challenges posed by discriminatory laws introduced by past governments and the inability of short-term democracies to deliver, the women's movement has come a long way in Pakistan. Women Action Forum (WAF) was the first organised women's group to raise concerns on these socio-political issues in a loud voice specifically from a gender perspective.[4] WAF was formed in 1981 in response to the Pakistani government's implementation of the traditional Islamic penal code.

WAF played a central role in the public exposure of controversy regarding various interpretations of Islamic law, its role in the modern state, and ways in which women can play a more active role in political matters. WAF considers all issues as 'women's issues' and has taken positions on national and global developments. It allies itself with democratic and progressive forces in the country as well as linking its struggle with that of minorities and other oppressed peoples.

A gender perspective was incorporated by many women journalists, artists and writers over the

years in different ways. Despite media censorship, many women found ways to communicate on these issues to the masses and helped spread awareness. An effort worth mentioning here is *Bari* (Acquittal), a theatre play.[5] It was written in 1986 and was first performed on International Women's Day in 1987, produced and directed by Madeeha Gauhar, an artist, media person and an enthusiastic member of WAF.

Gauhar's husband, Shahid Nadeem, wrote the play in exile, in London, after having been imprisoned by the military government of General Zia-ul-Haq. The play was based on discriminatory laws against women in Pakistan. *Bari* was later expanded as the TV serial *Neelay Haath* (Blue Hands) directed by Madeeha.

The clash between censorship policies and the struggle of progressive communicators has continued for some time. Efforts by numerous women communicators might have been small in number, but were strong enough to create an impact. 'Who Will Cast the First Stone?' was another ground breaking documentary film by journalist and filmmaker Sabiha Sumar in 1988. In this documentary she narrated the stories of three women in prison in Pakistan under Islamic law and the ordeal they went through. Banned by the government initially, the documentary won the Golden Gate Award at the San Francisco Film Festival in 1998.

Sabhiha continues to present a gender perspective in most of her productions, as shown by her recent feature film *Khamosh Pani* (Silent Waters) in 2003, where she tells the story of a migrant women during the partition times, losing her son once again to religious fundamentalism. The film has become known as a brilliant commentary on the issue of extremism from women's eyes.

Interfaith relations and gender dynamics

General Zia ul Haq's policies of so called Islamisation proved to be a catalyst for religious intolerance, while the recent government's decision to ally with the US after 9/11 added further to a backlash against non-Muslims, who make up 3% of the entire population. However, Christians more so, as they have often wrongly been linked with Western policies. Most of them have remained vulnerable for belonging to the lower economic strata of society. The roots for this vulnerability go back to the reality of pre-partition conversions of 'lower cast' Hindus by the missionaries, who still constitute the majority of these communities.

Issues from the past such as separate electorates (now repealed), mentioning religion on national identity cards and passports, forced religious conversions and now the growing threat of extremism still remain major concerns for the Christian minorities. Recently the situation worsened with the incident of Gojrah (a city in Punjab) where scores of houses were set on fire by a mob on July 30, 2009, when they were told that a few Christians had desecrated the Holy Quran.[6] Seven people were burnt alive. There were incidents of violence involving Christians in other parts of the country as well.

Ironically, in the specific social and historical context of Pakistan, women and minorities have both faced challenges posed by religious extremism. Therefore while the gender dimensions of interfaith relations might not be sharply defined in Pakistan, many women's groups including civil society organisations still joined hands with churches and communities to protest against violence and discrimination.

Nevertheless, a reality often ignored by the media is the history of people of different faiths living peacefully with their neighbours for years. Often despite the incidence of violence stemming from political issues and flawed laws, the communities at 'people to people' level have cherished a rapport of numerous commonalities. In an incident of church burnings and rioting in the small town of Shantinagar in 1997, many Muslim neighbours of the Christians condemned these acts of violence, and supported the communities and churches. A statement by an *Imam* of a local mosque declared these acts are as un-Islamic and inhuman. Many had a general feeling that the unfortunate incident was a result of an abuse of religious sentiments by only a few, who had their agendas in local politics.

Yet another component of religious intolerance comes from the constitution, where the law has problematic articles pertaining to interfaith marriages in Pakistan. According to interpretations in which a Muslim man can marry a Christian woman as *ahl-e-kitab* (people of the book), a Christian man cannot marry a Muslim woman.[7]

This brings even more complications as Pakistan is still a very conservative society and interfaith marriages are a huge taboo. Therefore, due to an imbalance of power relations in society, often the non-Muslim woman remains vulnerable. Young people who take this step either get ostracised from their communities, or end up with compromising forced conversions.

Communications and interreligious dialogue
Interreligious dialogue is still a unique term for Pakistani society and used more by religious institutions, rather than by the media. In most places, the term 'minority issues' has been preferred. This is due to the reality that it is not the religious communities as such who need to be engaged in dialogue with each other to resolve mutual conflicts, but it is rather initiating dialogue in order to influence the power holders and policymakers together. While religious institutions, including some churches and Christian organisations have been organizing dialogue activities, their outreach to the mainstream media has remained either restricted or exclusive.

The press in Pakistan in comparison to the electronic media has remained more liberal and, therefore, has covered several issues related to minorities and interfaith relations. The *Friday Times* (a quarterly) and *Dawn* (a daily) have been known for covering issues related to minorities as well as women's issues. However the mainstream electronic media still have reservations in addressing interfaith relations openly. Programs produced only with the aim of interfaith debate have been few, and some of the independent productions talking about these issues were only screened after much controversy as risking offending 'religious sensibilities'.

The religious institutions both Muslim and non-Muslim still need to highlight their positive experiences of engaging in dialogue in the media. There were recently positive efforts by the religious communities, where faith-based perspectives were promoted to condemn intolerance, violence and extremism. However not many received huge space in the media.

At the same time a positive example that can be cited is a programme called *Ghamdi* which has been shown on the popular independent television channel, Geo Network.[8] In the programme a much acclaimed religious Islamic scholar Dr Javed Ahmed Ghamdi initiated debates on many issues including women and religious minorities from a religious perspective, and promoted a liberal interpretation of the Quran to support his stance for equality and tolerance.

Many of the efforts by the churches, Christian organisations and other religious groups still need to be strengthened in order to highlight their voices in mainstream communications. Interfaith dialogue at the grassroots level also needs more positive involvement by women and young people. Therefore, the gender dynamics of communication and dialogue both need to be supported and promoted by learning the lessons of the past as well as to be able to work for a cohesive and peaceful pluralistic society in Pakistan. ■

Notes
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2. 'Pakistan: Even the Skies Weep', *Time Magazine*, October 25, 1971.
3. 'Minorities living in fear, says WCC', *Dawn*, 4 September 2009.
4. http://www.oxfordislamicstudies.com/article/opr/t125/e2511
5. Interview with Madeeha Gauhar by Rumana Hussain, *Social Pages*, No. 112, Vol. 10, 2004.
6. 'Accused in Gojra incident sent to jail', *Dawn*, 29 October 2009.
7. *Muslim Family Law: A Source Book* by Keith Hodkisnson. Croom Helm London & Canberra, 1984.
8. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Javed_Ahmad_Ghamidi

Naveen Qayyum is a postgraduate in media studies. She produced her first documentary film *Talking Faith* with WCC-World Youth Programme featuring young people exploring interfaith relations in post-9/11 Pakistan – a special mention by jury of the Kara Film Festival in 2009. Her recent documentary film *Hearing the Other Side* focuses on the issues of identity, media and dialogue in the Netherlands. Naveen has been associated with Simorgh, a feminist activist organisation in Pakistan, World Council of Churches – Communications Department in Switzerland, and the Christian Conference of Asia in Thailand. She is a member of WCC-Christian and Muslim Women's Network and WACC-Asia Region. Naveen writes on social issues, dialogue and ecumenism as a freelance journalist.

In memoriam Ron Holloway (1933-2009)

James M. Wall

The email brought the sad news: 'Heute morgen ist Ron Holloway gestorben.' Even without my limited grad school German, the news was clear, 'Ron Holloway died this morning'. Friend to all, mentor and teacher to many, Ron, died December 16, after a long bout with cancer. He provided media coverage of all the major festivals, and generously gave his time and personal cachet to the smallest festivals.

Ron was 76. He is survived by his wife Dorothea Moritz, with whom, for 30 years, he co-founded and co-edited the journal, KINO German Film.

Ron was a Catholic priest living and teaching in Chicago when I first met him. He had earned his BA and MA degrees in Chicago and was ordained as a Catholic priest by the Archdiocese of Chicago, on May 9, 1959.

He worked with Msgr. Daniel Cantwell at the Catholic Adult Education Centers, and together with Cantwell, and a lay Catholic high school teacher, Henry Herx, founded the National Center for Film Study (NCFS) in Chicago.

The NCFS evolved into a remarkable center which produced study guides for 16 mm films to be used in local parishes. These guides were largely written by Ron and Henry Herx. They were mimeographed (long before computers existed) for distribution, first to parishes, then, as word spread, to Protestant, Jewish, and secular educational outlets.

Before these two Catholic teachers left Chicago, they converted the NCFS into an ecumenical center. As a Protestant editor-clergy-critic-teacher who loved film, I became the de facto NCFS president and custodian 'for life' of a significant chapter in the history of US religious film study.

Ron Holloway inspired me to 'take film seriously', which I have attempted to do as a critic and teacher since those halcyon days when official religious circles and the motion picture industry began a national creative relationship, a relationship for which Ron Holloway deserves major credit.

I was not surprised to see Ron move his film sensibility and passion to Europe and continue a teaching role there, an assignment he had carried out in Chicago. Europe was a far more fertile field than the United States for the study of film and the interaction of religion and film.

In Europe, the churches, Catholic and Protestant, take film far more 'seriously' than we do in the United States. It is in this sense that Canada, with its festivals in Toronto and Montreal, is more European than North American in film outlook.

The most recent award honouring Ron's long career in film was the Honorary Award of the German Film Critics' Association (VDFK) during the Christmas Industry Get-Together of Medienboard Berlin-Brandenburg in Berlin. The award was announced December 9, 2009, a week before his death.
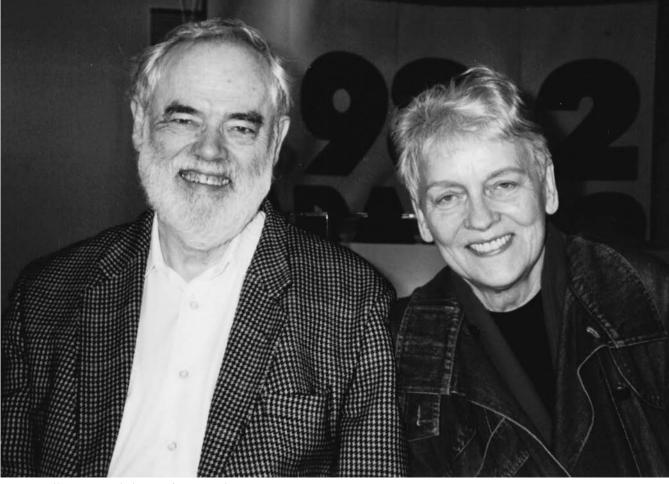
The VDFX award 'honours, in particular, his tireless commitment for the international circulation of German and East European cinema.'

Berlin and cinema

Ron and his wife Dorothea have lived in Berlin since 1976, moving there from Hamburg after Ron was invited by the newly appointed festival director, Wolf Donner, to serve on the Berlinale selection committee with a special responsibility for Russia. That work evolved into further research from which Ron originated a databank on film directors from the republics of the former USSR.

After 1976, Ron started work as the Berlin-based correspondent in film, television, and the media for *Variety,* the *Hollywood Reporter*, *Moving Pictures International* and *International Film Guide.* He wrote frequently on film, theatre and cultural affaires for the *Financial Times* and the *Herald Tribune*.

At Berlin, Ron set up the 'German Films' sidebar, at Donner's first Berlinale Festival in 1977, focusing on previously neglected German films. Dorothea served on the selection committee of the Berlinale's Kinderfilmfest for 19 years, starting in 1976.

Ron Holloway with his wife Dorothea Moritz.

In the autumn of 1979, Ron and Dorothea launched a new film magazine dedicated to German cinema, *KINO – German Film*. A welcome sight on the festival circuit was to see Ron moving about with copies of KINO, serving as his own personal distribution agent.

In an interview that appeared in the Fall 2009 issue of KINO, Dorothea was asked to describe the launching of the magazine. Ron had seen a number of really good German films by people like Rainer Werner Fassbinder, Reinhard Hauff and Uwe Brandner, but realized that nobody knew them in America.

So he went to the late Jochen Wilke at the German Federal Film Board (FFA) to see if they could give support for a German Film Tour. Ron then put the program together and we needed a catalogue to accompany the Film Tour – and that's how the first issue of KINO came about.

In that same issue, Ron added: 'The German Film Tour was the first time we broke the ice with regard to the aesthetics of German cinema in America. We knew that there were about 20-30 art houses in the States which were all hungry for German films to be shown in subtitled prints!'

Ron has long been an important presence at the annual Montreal World Film Festival, which I regularly attend. Serge Losique, the founder of the MWFF, has a native European sensibility. He also had a special fondness for Ron Holloway, inviting him to attend the festival as a regular critic and advisor.

From rural roots to ecumenical vision
The journey that came to an end for Ron on December 16, 2009, began 76 years ago on November 26, 1933, when he was born in his grandmother's house, in Peoria, Illinois, during a family visit. Ron was the third in a family of six children. The family lived for Ron's first nine years in the farming community of Momence, Illinois, 60 miles from Chicago, where Ron attended a one room rural schoolhouse.

The family moved to Chicago where Ron was baptized into his mother's St. Michael's Lithuanian Church. His father was a 'Yankee Baptist,' a parentage which could have contributed to Ron's ecumenical worldview.

Since moving to Germany 40 years ago, Ron has covered the film festival circuit from the major festivals in Berlin, Cannes, and Montreal, to the smallest festivals of Europe and East Asia. His presence at a festival was always a command performance. Walking with him through a festival hotel lobby was a slow process. He would encounter directors, producers, actors and critics who needed to say just one more word to Ron, often in the strictest confidence.

His ecumenical outreach found an outlet when for many years he was co-editor with Jan Hes, of *Interfilm Reports*. His published books reflect the wide variety of his film scholarship. They include *Z is for Zagreb, Beyond the Image, O is for Oberhausen, KINO Slovenian Film, Bulgarian Cinema, Goran Paskalkevic, The Human Tragicomedy,* and *KINO Macedonian Film.*

The World Council of Churches (WCC), in cooperation with INTERFILM, published his book, *Beyond the Image. Approaches to the religious dimension in the cinema*, in 1977. He was the first Catholic to earn a doctorate in Evangelical Theology at the University of Hamburg, writing on the films of Carl Dreyer, Ingmar Bergman and Robert Bresson.

I conclude these reflections with a personal word. Ron Holloway was my mentor, my teacher, my inspiration, my cherished friend, and a giant in the world of film as an art form. He never deviated from his belief that film was God's way of sharing His presence with the world. For Ron, film was an incarnation of the divine. ∎

Editor's Note
Over many years Ron Holloway contributed several articles to WACC's international journal Media Development, *most recently* 'Films in post-Taliban Afghanistan' and 'Documentaries on Afghanistan', *which appeared in the 1/2009 issue. He always responded promptly and affably to any request. He had a particular interest in the cinema of Eastern Europe, but it was a 'passion without borders' and his deep and perceptive understanding will be greatly missed.*

SIGNIS-WACC
Human Rights Award 2009

In October 2009, SIGNIS held its World Congress and Assembly in Chang Mai, Thailand. It was the occasion for presenting the annual SIGNIS-WACC Award for an outstanding documentary to *Dear Peace*, created by the Communication Foundation for Asia (CFA), based in Manila, Philippines.

In 2006, a group of Catholic and Moslem students attended a summer camp which enabled them to meet and get to know one another, their backgrounds and beliefs during shared art, poetry, music and film activities and workshops. In 2007, a 30-minute DVD was produced, illustrating the activities as well as incorporating interviews with students, teachers and instructors as well as parents.

During 2007 and 2008, some of the students with members from CFA travelled around the Philippines, screening the film, holding discussions, promoting interfaith conversation and understanding. Material from these meetings as well as footage of students reflecting on their initial experiences at the camp was included in a new edition of *Dear Peace*.

The award was made with the motto of the SIGNIS Congress 2005 in mind, 'Media for a Culture of Peace', and the motto for 2009, 'Today's Children, Tomorrow's Promise'.

ON THE SCREEN...

Arad (Romania) 2009

The very first Romania International Film Festival took place 26 September to 4 October 2009 in Arad, Romania, allowing the discovery of new cinematic trends and unusual films – most of them Romanian premieres. The CineBlackSea section focused exclusively on films produced in the Black Sea region.

This year's programme featured films from Azerbaijan, Turkey, Armenia, Romania, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Greece, Bulgaria, Ukraine, Georgia and Russia. The Women in Cinema section was dedicated to female directors and producers and offered a variety of contemporary storytelling from around the globe.

The CineBlackSea Jury gave its award to director George Ovashvili (Georgia) for his film *The Other Bank* (2009). 'For the accuracy of revealing the distorted world of war through the eyes of an innocent child using particularly strong images and characters.'

Best documentary for the Jury was *On the Way to School* (Netherlands, Turkey 2008) directed by Orhan Cskikoy and Ozgur Dogan. 'The jury unanimously choose *On the Way to School* for its cinematic approach to deal with reality in an unexaggerated way.'

The Women in Cinema Jury gave its award to director Lucía Puenzo for her film *El Niño Pez* (The Fish Child) (Argentina, France, Spain, 2009). 'For creating a riveting and intimate portrait of

young love in an emotionally corrupt world. With confidence the director constructed a deeply layered film filled with complex characters and situations.'

The Best documentary award went to *Gauchos: If You Don't Get On, You Don't Get Off* directed by Jana Richter (Germany, 2009). 'The film takes us into a universe where men and animals coexist in harmony. The filmmaker captured moments of magic humour and tenderness in a brutal world and displayed a strong passion for her subjects who teaches us that if the body is in balance, the soul is in balance too.'

The Critics Jury gave its award to *Room and a Half* directed by Andrej Khrzanovski (Russia, 2009). 'For an outstanding and unique cinematographic approach to addressing a semi-fictional portrait of Nobel Prize winner Josef Brodsky. The film is a masterful blend of emotionally gripping and widely imaginative mixture of documentary life-action and archival footage of the cultural world of the Soviet Union seen through the eyes of poet Josef Brodsky.'

The Critics Jury also gave a Special Mention to *Border* directed by Harutyun Khachtatryan (Armenia, 2009): 'For an innovative and non-verbal way of depicting the tragedy of being a refugee.'

Leipzig (Germany) 2009

The Ecumenical Jury at the 52nd International Leipzig Festival for Documentary and Animated Film, 26 October - 1 November 2009, awarded its prize to the film *Les Arrivants* (The Arrivals - see photo opposite) directed by Claudine Bories and Patrice Chagnard (France, 2009).

Citation: '*The Arrivals* shows that humanity can still triumph despite adverse financial and legal circumstances. The directors have portrayed the people with respect and dignity in their film, where each setting makes you feel the precise implementation of this strategy.' The film also won the 'Golden Dove', the main award of the festival.

Synopsis from the information provided by the Festival: The first shot of the film establishes its agenda: the arrival of the Indian elephant god in the streets of Paris. The elephant god – a symbol of power and wisdom – is a well-chosen metaphor for the clash of foreign cultures that is part of the daily life of the CAFDA, a municipal reception centre for asylum seeking families. For both sides must show power and wisdom – the social workers who are constantly at risk of collapsing under the sheer number of new arrivals, and the asylum seekers who are forced to comply with an administrative logic that must seem as alien and incomprehensible to them as life on the moon.

Lübeck (Germany) 2009

The Interfilm Prize at the 51st Nordic Film Days (4-8 November 2009), including prize money of □ 2.500 donated by the parish of Lübeck, went to *Letters to Father Jacob* (Postia pappi Jaakobille) directed by Klaus Härö (Finland, 2009). The film explores the emotional and spiritual bond that is formed between a blind pastor and a convicted murderer and shows the Gospel message of unconditional love and forgiveness in an uniquely refreshing and surprising way. The relative simplicity of the story combined with the emotionally charged yet serene acting of Kaarina Hazard and Heikki Nousiainen makes this an intensive film experience.

In addition, the Interfilm Jury awarded a Commendation to the film *Vegas* directed by Gunnar Vikene (Norway, 2009). The adolescent actors Karoline Stemre, Jørgen Hausberg Nilsen and Sindre Kvalvåg Jacobsen give a highly convincing portrayal of their characters, whose families are broken by domestic violence, sexual abuse and accusations. In the face of a lack of parental responsibility, which the film depicts in the socio-critical context of an affluent country, the film underlines the children's opportunity of becoming their mutual 'brothers' keepers' and of holding onto their hope of a safe family haven.

Mannheim-Heidelberg (Germany) 2008

The Ecumenical Jury at the 58th International Film Festival Mannheim-Heidelberg (5-15 November 2009) awarded its prize to the film *Coeur animal*

(Animal Heart) directed by Séverine Cornamusaz (Switzerland, 2009). Citation: 'In the austere world of the Swiss Alps the relationship between a dairy farmer and his wife takes a dramatic turn with the arrival of a Spanish farm hand. With the nuanced portrayal of the characters in their physicality and the masterly use of filmic means, Séverine Cornamusaz has achieved a piece of art of universal importance. Archaic nature is the backdrop to the fragile beginnings of a process of humanisation.'

Synopsis: Paul lives in the Swiss mountains near the tree-line. He loves his wife even less than his animals. Rosine has to work for him, always in danger of being raped as if she was his animal property. When he employs a new Spanish seasonal worker things start to change. The 'Spaniard' improves the villagers' quality of life. A new wind blows over the farm and Paul experiences the feeling of jealousy for the first time. He beats his wife almost to death. An emergency helicopter brings her to the hospital down in the valley. It's only now that Paul realises that he misses his wife, that he might actually love her and that he cannot continue living with an 'animal heart'.

Cottbus (Germany) 2009

The Ecumenical Jury at the 19th Film Festival Cottbus (10-15 November 2009) awarded its Prize to *Buben Baraban* directed by Aleksey Misgirev (Russia, 2009) for the complex presentation of the struggle to preserve moral values and human dignity in a society apparently having lost its spiritual orientation; and for the aesthetic achievements of the film artists, especially the main actress Natalya

Still (top left) from Letters to Father Jacob *(Postia pappi Jaakobille) directed by Klaus Härö (Finland, 2009). Still (bottom left) from* Buben Baraban *directed by Aleksey Misgirev (Russia, 2009). An Ecumenical Film Jury is officially recognised at the Berlin, Cannes, Locarno and Montreal film festivals and at a number of other festivals.*

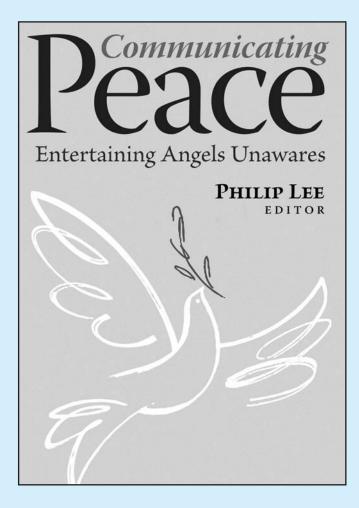Negoda, which call for understanding, passion and solidarity.

In addition, the Jury awarded a Commendation to the film *The 40th Door* directed by Elchin Musaoglu (Azerbaijan, 2009) for the images behind the images which – by a youth protagonist – tell about the problems of today's Azerbaijan and the readiness of people to work for a better future by preserving their values and identity. The film uses biblical metaphors in order to express this hope.

Bratislava (Slovakia) 2009

The Ecumenical Jury at the 11th International Film Festival in Bratislava (27 November to 4 December 2009) awarded its prize to the film *Eastern Plays* directed by Kamen Kalev, (Bulgaria/Sweden, 2009).

The film tells a story of two brothers from Sofia, living an unbearable situation: family and society isolation, superficial relations, alcoholism, hooliganism, violence and racism. A series of meetings with a young Turkish woman (love) and a mysterious old man (faith) reveals the possibility of change. This life-affirming film doesn't propose a simple solution, yet it offers a message of hope.

In addition the jury awarded a Commendation to the film *Ilusiones ópticas* directed by Cristián Jiménez (Chile/France, 2009). The film portrays in a grotesque manner several characters trapped in two representative modern institutions: a shopping mall and a private insurance company. The protagonists learn to reject their blind faith in the illusions that enslave them through false promises of happiness, thus discovering the importance of what we really are. ■

Why not join
the World Association for Christian Communication?

http://waccglobal.org/

WACC promotes communication for social change. It believes that communication is a basic human right that defines people's common humanity, strengthens cultures, enables participation, creates community and challenges tyranny and oppression. WACC's key concerns are media diversity, equal and affordable access to communication and knowledge, media and gender justice, and the relationship between communication and power. Being WACC means 'taking sides'.

Membership of WACC is open to individuals, churches, church-related agencies and media producers, educational institutions, secular communication organisations and everyone sympathetic to WACC's mission and to its *Christian Principles of Communication*.

Membership opportunities

Membership of WACC provides opportunities to network with people of similar interests, to learn about and support WACC's work, and to receive information on global and local issues of communication rights and the democratization of the media.
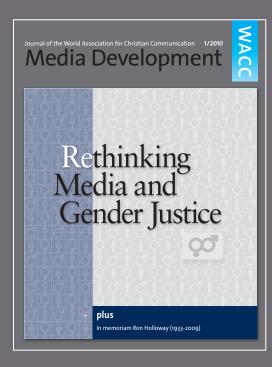
WACC members receive regular publications, occasional books, an annual report and other materials. Regional associations also produce newsletters. In addition, members are invited to participate in regional and global activities such as seminars, workshops, and Congresses.

Application Process

Organisations may apply for Corporate Membership and individuals may apply for Personal Membership. Visit *http://www.waccglobal.org/en/join.html* for further information about benefits.

Applicants will be linked to the Region in which they are based. Final decisions on applications for membership are taken by WACC's Executive Committee only after the relevant Regional Association has had the opportunity to make a recommendation.

Current membership rates
North America 40 USD (Personal) 120 USD (Corporate)
Rest of the World 30 USD (Personal) 100 USD (Corporate)
Student Rate 10 USD

Rethinking Media and Gender Justice

+ **plus**
In memoriam Ron Holloway (1933-2009)

" Feminist scholarship has the potential to expand our critiques and our understanding of the issues that media and communication research tries to explain, and the world that many of us would like to change. "

Margaret Gallagher

« L'usage du masculin symbolise le sexe des médias : du côté des hommes, et d'une certaine morale qui oublie les femmes. Il y a encore un long chemin à parcourir pour que l'ensemble de la presse prenne conscience de ses responsabilités. »

Natacha Henry

" Women's information and communication processes are also a way to empower women in local communities and to ensure that we do not perpetuate the information-communication divide between women. "

Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls

« Los grandes medios aún están en deuda con las mujeres, deben comprometerse más con la causa de la igualdad de género que implica impulsar, no sólo que más mujeres hablen, escriban y produzcan, sino que haya cambios en el enfoque de las noticias, en las imágenes y en los discursos que se reproducen cotidianamente. »

Ana Silvia Monzón