

WUMEN BAGUNG

Communication for Development and Social Change Bulletin

"Whose Theory Counts?"



Highlights in this issue:

- > Video Volunteers in India
- > Chinese media investments in Africa
- > Indigenous knowledge and the space between
- > C4D Network and Urban Future

Edited by Linje Manyozo
Dec 2018 | Issue 1



Wominjeka Wurundjeri balluk gearmann koondée biik

Welcome to the land of the Wurundjeri people

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The Wurundjeri Tribe Land Compensation and Cultural Heritage Council Inc (the Council), is the organisation that advocates for and represents the Wurundjeri people. The Wurundjeri, also known as the Yarra Yarra and the Manna Gum people, are the Traditional Owners of Melbourne and surrounding territories.

The traditional language of the Wurundjeri people is Woi-wurrung.

The Council was delighted to have been invited by RMIT to provide a Woi-wurrung language concept for this important Bulletin. The invitation demonstrated to the Council that RMIT recognised and respected Wurundjeri people's cultural protocols.

"Wumen Bagung Ngang-gak ba Boorndap" translates as "Come Gather, Listen and Respect". Gathering to share stories, learning from one another, respecting one another and the land that sustains us all, are experiences that unite everyone. Wumen Bagung will further facilitate learning, sharing and strengthening ties between participating communities.



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Communication for Development: Whose Theory Counts?

For more than half a century, a vast body of knowledge has been generated in deliberative development. Even so, practice is not short of theories and models. While the issue has always been about relevance: the materiality of models, approaches, perspectives, it raises the question, as articulated by Professor Robin Mansell of the London School of Economics and Political Science, 'whose knowledge counts'? In other words: whose models? Whose theories? To engage with this dilemma, let us examine the major formational phases in the field of communication for development.

The first, the orientalism phase, recognises the modernistic and colonial attempts to use media and communications as civilisational instruments, in which focus was and continues to be on educating the native to become modern. After all Mansell maintains, development paradigms haven't changed. This we see in the work of colonial institutions in much of the global south, especially under the directorship of settler missionaries, in which the orient was conceived as a subject out of history: static, the same, and stuck to traditions. The second, the modernisation phase, a reproduction of the orientalist

juncture, encompasses the earliest decades of independence where newly independent states would employ media and communications, based on colonial or exogenous models of education, to mobilise citizens to contribute to the modernist and Keynesian economic development agenda.

In contrast, the third, the liberation phase, was a celebration of not just participation, inclusion and diversity, but rather the recognition that the structure of development was inherently oppressive and the cause of poverty. Yes people's experiences, dialogues and social trajectories were seen as critical in policy formulation and implementation. But that was not all. Authentic development entailed liberating people and institutions from the proverbial bullshit of bourgeois economic development. This is what was proposed by Gustavo Gutiérrez, Oscar Romero, Paulo Freire, Ramiro Beltran, Adebayo Adedeji and the dependistas both in Latin America and Africa.

The current phase, the community chapter, emerges from this liberation phase. It emphasises the community as a platform for sustainable development. This includes the celebration of groups

left behind, and increasingly, the emancipatory nature of indigenous knowledge systems. We are also seeing an emphasis on class analyses in relation to how local contexts experience development – the recognition being that development does not occur in an historical vacuum.

In this edition of *Wumen Bagung*, we explore four key themes of this current phase, each focused on how communication outcomes are influenced by the role of the community, and whether it is passive or active participant. The first theme brings together analyses from across Asia of different ways of communicating to local communities. We start with a review of how water, hygiene and sanitation services are communicated in Cambodia, fresh approaches to communication underway in Myanmar by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the use of cable television in local Philippine communities.

The second theme - which details outside approaches to communication for development (C4D) - opens with Robert Boughen's challenge for us to rethink Chinese media

development investments, not from a neoliberal development perspective, rather through acknowledging that Chinese media assistance in Africa 'has an active function in a cohesive model of the 'development economy'. Edwar Hanna and Jackie Davies of C4D Network consider the effects of urbanisation on communication for development, while Sina Øversveen critically examines the Freedom of the Press Index.

The third theme focuses on the lessons to be learned from local communities by directly involving them in C4D. In 'The Space Between', Donna Griffin takes us on a journey of learning the Aboriginal way of understanding the world, while Winifredo Dagli reviews the learning development training offered by the University of Philippines Los Banos. Kylie Smith and Melissa Fan close this theme with an examination of C4D in the age of feminism.

The final theme provides examples of the community as leaders in communication. We look at how video is actively being used to interrogate local development challenges in India, followed by an analysis of public art as a critical tool in democratic communication.

In her poem, "Family Matters", Carey Walden invites us to reflect on the concept of feeling and of seeing as being what counts in the end, because it is only then that communities become actors and writers of their own history.

What all these articles show is that knowledge is not a commodity that can be hidden in journals, academic programmes or publications, nor can it be packaged and distributed in conferences and summits, that oftentimes take place in the obscene opulence of luxurious hotels, all in the name of discussing poverty and poor people. Knowledge is rather a process, rapture, a confrontation, an experience... a dawn... a realisation that is borne out of humility, empathy, understanding, learning and listening.

Antonio Gramsci observes that historical processes have deposited in us 'an infinity of traces without leaving an inventory'. This 'infinity of traces' becomes critical in understanding development from the perspective of the community. As the Poet Carey Walden observes, 'I feel and see your reflections in me.' Walden's theory of feeling, this theory of seeing is that what counts in the end, because it is only then that communities become actors and writers of their own history.

As such, class analyses of development will help us to reject the increasing capture of the field, its discourses, and its essence, by a network of bourgeois development industries, experts, scholars and implementing partners, that seem to assume, as is the case in classical modernism, that changing people's behaviour and moving them from their traditional selves, and not deconstructing oppressive social structures, is the key to developing communities and societies.

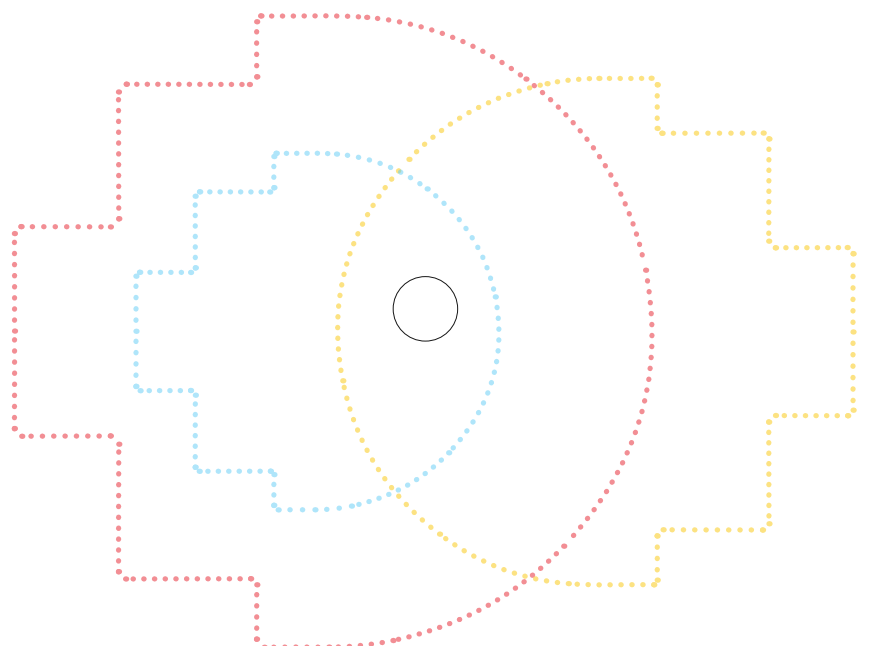
For those of us who are students of poverty and inequality, this is a moral, ideological and political duty: to ensure that the theory of the community does count.

The theory of my grandmother who wants to touch development, to see it, to eat it, to smell it, and who wants development to reach into her heart and stay there, so she can walk around with it and show it to everyone. In that way she can proudly share it with her relatives.

This theory of the community (not about the community but by the community) offers what Philosopher Slavoj Žižek describes as the 'parallax view' to orthodox development economics. In response to Mansell's question, we can state categorically, that it is precisely this theory of feeling, the theory of dreaming, the history of seeing... that counts...

And very much matters too, because it is the theory of the people.

Linje Manyozo





Communication for development and uptake of WASH services in rural Cambodia

By Rattana Lay

In many ways, communication for development (C4D) is about empowering groups and communities to take ownership of the development process. As a process, it involves engaging communities to identify problems and solutions. For UNICEF, C4D remains a two-way process for sharing ideas and knowledge by using various communication platforms and approaches to empower people and communities to get involved in actions to improve their lives. In this article, Rattana Lay, a Cambodian MA student reflects on how UNICEF Cambodia has harnessed C4D to improve the uptake of water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) services in the country.

Poor sanitation is one of the biggest development challenges facing Cambodia. More than eight million Cambodians do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities. Research shows that over 14 million people live in rural areas, so improving rural WASH services is important in providing quality of life, improving economic growth and reducing poverty rates.

Stakeholders and implementing partners working in WASH have used C4D approaches to solve WASH problems and in the process, contribute to the achievement of national and international development policies.

One of the common approaches is the Community-Led Total Sanitation (CLTS) approach that was pioneered and implemented to empower communities to address WASH challenges the world over. As a form of C4D, CLTS aims to trigger individual and social behavioural change and motivate households to examine and evaluate their sanitation problems and commence applying open defecation free (ODF) practices. The Cambodian government and NGOs working on WASH services have used this approach since 2006.

Central to CLTS is community mobilisation, which allows for initiating community discussions about WASH issues. As observed by UNICEF, such mobilisation allows the engagement of community members to reflect on their behaviour, make decisions and

solve issues that affect their lives and their community development. Alongside community mobilisation is social marketing, which has been applied to increase the use of WASH products, such as water treatment equipment and practices. It is recognised by government and implementing partners that social marketing increases the demand for products and services making latrines more affordable and easy to buy for individual households to create ODF zones. Reports suggest that over a million rural Cambodians have bought and accessed sanitary toilets since 2011. A TV educational advertisement called 'WASH Latrine Wedding' was produced and broadcasted nationwide to promote behavioural change of Cambodians. This TV commercial exposed the shame and emotional distress caused by people not having access to toilets and having to defecate in the open. As observed by SNV Cambodia, this advertisement drove audiences' interests, especially people who lived in rural Cambodia, to change their practices to ODF and try to have toilets at homes during the broadcasting period between 2015 and 2017.

Facebook is another popular media platform for promoting ODF practices and WASH services in Cambodia. A music video called 'WASH IT' created by WaterAid Cambodia and Epic Art in early 2016 aimed to promote hand washing behaviour. The report from WaterAid reveals that this video reached more than a million viewers online and in the first week it gained approximately 10,000 Facebook followers. In 2018, the video was one of the three winners of the Innovative Prize Award for the Global WASH Future Conference.

This successful media campaign applied entertainment communication to empower audiences. It is well known that entertainment communication can employ social marketing combined with music, storytelling, dance and drama. Participatory communication was used to invoke a discussion among the public with the aim of developing community and portraying development at the grass-roots level. Kilpatrick (2009) claims that this action creates community development that empowers communities to be responsible in terms of using their abilities and resources to improve the health of the community.

Capacity building plays a role in transferring knowledge and information to local people directly and effectively to promote behaviour change in families and communities. NGOs working in WASH and the National Centre for Health Promotion have worked collaboratively in developing manuals on effective WASH campaigns to build local capacity. They have provided training to all implementers and relevant stakeholders in Cambodia.

Photo credit:
ChildFund Cambodia



Picture 1: Typical dissemination session with armed carriers, Shan, Myanmar, September 2015.

Photocredits:
Moe Myint / ICRC



Photo credits:
ChildFund Cambodia



ICRC Myanmar and the Use of Participatory Communication

By Jean-Yves Clemenzo

As one of the oldest and largest humanitarian organisations in the world, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) helps people affected by armed conflicts and other situations of violence. Communication activities are central, yet, while most humanitarian organisations communicate to raise visibility, funding, advocate for an issue or to change behaviour, the ICRC employs 'operational communication' at local level to increase trust, and hence security for its staff. It encompasses all communication activities aimed at increasing acceptance (group presentations to radio spots, posters, etc.). While these activities have been for years mainly a one-way form of communication, it has the potential to be much more effective with a two-way mode. In this article, Jean-Yves Clémento shares his experiences working as a communication coordinator in Myanmar, from July 2015 to March 2017, and argues for a participative approach that feeds into the organisation's operations and programming.

Beginnings of operational communication

Marion Harroff-Tavel¹ traces the beginning of the ICRC operational communication approach. In 1978, in Nyansarope, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), three ICRC delegates were murdered despite the fact they were travelling in a vehicle displaying the Red Cross emblem. These deaths deeply affected the ICRC, prompting it to develop a detailed communication plan. Advised by sociologists, professors, journalists and other members of the civil society, the plan used radio, television, posters and cartoons to communicate simple messages to the Government, guerilla leaders, displaced people and the wider general public.

From dissemination to interaction

Central to operational communication are the 'dissemination sessions', which involve a group presentation that details the characteristics of the institution, and its values and main activities in a specific region. In Myanmar, the ICRC regularly adopted this communication approach. While the ICRC has been present in the country for 30 years, its main operations (in

Rakhine, Kachin and Shan) have been developed since 2012.

When Myanmar elected a civilian government after nearly 50 years of military rule, the ICRC recognised the need to build a network with local officials and communities, which had little knowledge of the ICRC and its activities. However, historically, dissemination sessions in Myanmar, were mainly one way, with a focus on 'selling' the ICRC and its principles, and leaving little room for audience interaction.

We identified an opportunity to improve on the traditional approach, by establishing a more interactive and engaging two-way conversation, to better understand ICRC's stakeholders, the challenges they face, how they receive information and how the ICRC is perceived. Such an approach builds trust and was supported by a systematic approach to the reporting and collection of information.

¹ Marion Harroff-Tavel, *The International Committee of the Red Cross and the promotion of international humanitarian law: Looking back, looking forward in: International Review of the Red Cross* (2014), 96 (895/896), 817-857.

Operational communication: the Myanmar approach

In June 2016, training was held for all ICRC communication officers, with participants encouraged to use alternative communication aids, beyond the traditional PowerPoint presentation, to encourage more audience interaction. Two alternative tools were also introduced. 'Operational communication reports' summarised key questions and answers, to gain insights of the information landscape. Together with a questionnaire, the reports also provided a self-assessment of perceptions about the ICRC learnt during the dissemination sessions.

From July to December 2016, 86 dissemination sessions were organised for more than 2,000 members of local authorities, civil society organisations, NGOs and internally displaced people camp leaders. The ICRC collected vital information and received written reports from 31 of the sessions, which produced the following key findings:

- Almost half of the sessions were organised for representatives of political authorities. The remainder were targeted at civil society organisations, the media and beneficiaries. The level of engagement with armed carriers was limited.
- The majority of the sessions were performed in order to increase the acceptance and the familiarity of the audience with the ICRC.
- A majority of the questions were linked to general information, activities and relations with armed carriers. (*see infographic*)
- According to self-assessments, perceptions about the ICRC were generally positive. Communication officers noted however, that while before the sessions most of the audience confused the ICRC with other humanitarian organisations, interlocutors expressed their interest on issues related to the ICRC's role and activities in conflict areas, mine-risk education, and health and capacity building training.

Lessons learned

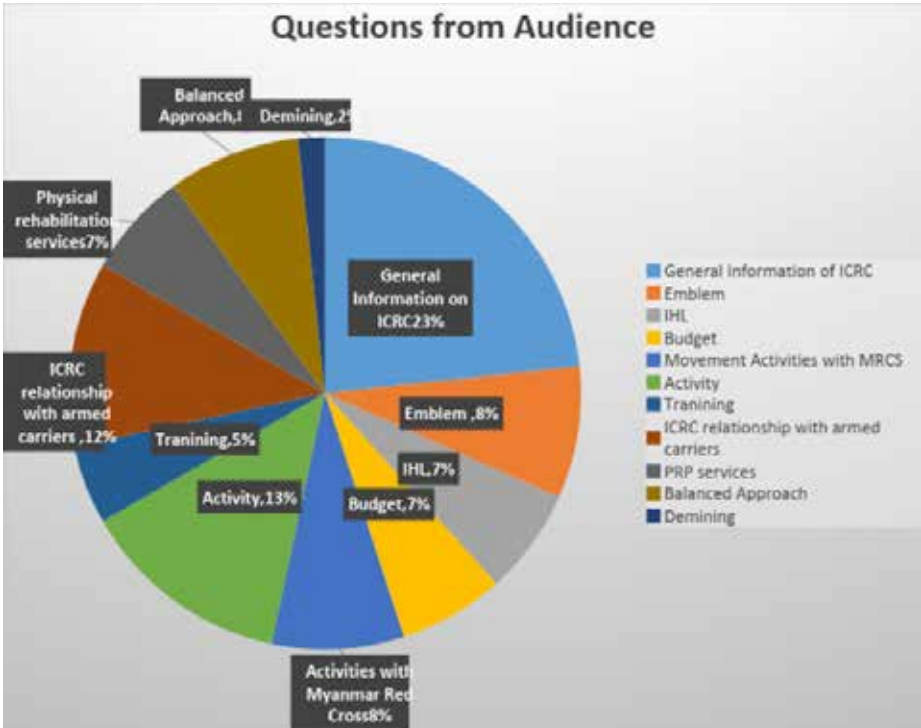
At the conclusion of these sessions, did the ICRC target the right people? What was the outcome? One of the main findings was that the data gathered could not support the correlation between the ICRC's operational priorities in Myanmar and the audience selected for each session. However, according to our field colleagues, these sessions were positive and should be considered as encouraging efforts for the medium to long term. Some indicators are positive. For instance, during a session with displaced people in Myitkyina, Kachin, we learnt more about the radio stations they listen to. Knowing which media to target to reach beneficiaries was very helpful during the inauguration of a physical rehabilitation center in Myitkyina in November 2016. A colleague in the field in Shan reported a pleasant encounter with a member of the general administration, who told him he received a good impression of the ICRC during a briefing at his training in Yangon. However, there is still a need to better assess the impact of these sessions and link them with operational priorities. For instance, designing clear plans of actions and indicators, such as feedback from field colleagues who return to areas where the sessions were conducted.

In a country like Myanmar, where the education system has traditionally adopted a one-way approach, it remains a long-term process to change behaviour and develop more interactive communication. However, the approach we developed started to deliver improvements, providing more opportunity for the audience to interact and respond. We conducted questionnaires to collect the audience's responses to potential issues and their perceptions of the ICRC. While this provided some insights, a more comprehensive and systematic survey or study should be conducted.

Operational communication should continue to evolve through a more participatory, interactive approach. This process should be supported by their managers and ongoing

training, with a focus on quality, not quantity. Messages should not be standardised for each session, rather opportunity should be given for the audience, with coffee breaks being a particularly effective and informal way for presenters and audiences to get to know each other better.

Operational communication remains key for the acceptance of any humanitarian organisation working in areas where security risks exist, such as armed conflicts. The more interactive and participative the sessions, the more the audience will retain some elements of the presentation and, hence the likelihood for mutual understanding between the ICRC and local communities affected by armed conflict. Operational communication is one element that can contribute to a better understanding of the people the ICRC works for.



Photocredits:
Clemenzo / ICRC

Picture 2: Two ICRC communication officers learn to explain in a simple way the Red Cross principle of impartiality. They use drawings of traditional costumes of the various ethnic groups in Shan State to explain that aid is provided to all groups who need it, irrespective of their political, religious and ethnic background.





Exploring Community Cable TV in the Philippines

By Trina Leah Mendoza

In the Philippines, television is a staple commodity in the homes of millions of Filipinos, whether from the rural and urban poor to the middle and upper classes of society. The Philippines' cable TV industry has experienced the most phenomenal growth of all the country's broadcasting trends, particularly since a 1987 government proclamation that prohibited monopolies in commercial mass media. This, in turn, regulated and opened the operation of cable TV systems to all citizens, corporations, cooperatives, and associations granted certificates of authority by the National Telecommunications Commission. In this analysis, Trina Mendoza of the College of Development Communication (CDC) at the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB), argues such media liberalisation has enabled cable TV to contribute to development discourse.

Beginnings

A study by Ramon Tuazon reveals that, in 1991 cable TV became popular with Filipinos following the introduction of satellite programming. The first networks were ABS-CBN and GMA. In the same year, a sizeable number of

Filipinos were able to watch CNN's blow-by-blow account of the Gulf War. Nowadays, Manila, is one of the most advanced urban centers in Asia with respect to cable TV, with major cable systems, offering more than 60 channels to the Filipino public.

The Philippine government considered cable TV a national information highway to the countryside, where Filipinos can gain access to more sources of news, information, education, sports events, and entertainment programs other than those provided for by mass media. To optimise the potential of cable TV, the government formulated a policy that required each cable TV provider to allot an access channel, which can be freely used by the national and local governments (including military), health and welfare, and educational, cultural, and civic entities.

Television and development

To find out whether cable TV in the Philippines was indeed being used as an alternative platform for community development, the College of Development Communication (CDC) at the UPLB conducted a study in 2016-17

among selected cable TV providers. Face-to-face interviews were held with five cable TV providers in Luzon, while phone interviews were conducted with 11 cable TV providers from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao.

Respondents indicated common objectives for establishing a cable TV company included providing the latest TV programming and internet services, entertainment and education, and public services; and earning a profit. Two Luzon cable TV providers however, aimed specifically to promote the culture and traditions of their respective towns.

Most of the respondents allotted one access channel to air recorded content (e.g. public service announcements) from the national and local governments. A cable TV provider in Cavite provided three access channels; two that aired live events and traffic updates and one that showcases student productions from partner schools. Only one cable TV provider from Tuguegarao City formed a production team that worked with community members and local agencies to plan and produce programs relevant to the community's needs and interests. These included weekly shows

featuring updates and completed projects of the different barangays (villages), local news, various school activities and students' productions, health topics from the provincial health office, and safety and security updates from police chiefs of different municipalities.

Two cable TV providers from Cavite City, as members of a cable operators' association in their province, partnered with local universities to broadcast content produced by the students. Part of their business model was to offer affordable internet services to universities. In exchange, the cable TV providers aired programs created by students. One of the providers in Cavite also developed a strong partnership with their local government, with the former dedicating its access channel, and the latter having its own production team and equipment, to air important local programs such as fiestas, municipal council meetings, and graduation rites of schools and universities. However, a majority of the respondents were not able to air local content, whether produced on their own or with a partner agency, due to a lack of funds allotted for video production and a higher priority to improve other income-generating services such as the internet.

Private broadcasting and community development

The study showed that while a majority of cable TV providers interviewed were privately owned and therefore offered limited community participation in planning and producing local TV programs, some models exhibited strategies that enhanced community communication. These were achieved with a production team working with community members to plan and produce programs, partnerships with agencies that have access to video equipment and resources to cover local events, and collaboration with local schools that can provide local content through their students' outputs. In addition, UPLB's CDC aims to move towards a more community-based production of its cable TV program *Dito sa Laguna* ('Here in Laguna'). Perhaps it could be argued community ownership of radio or television is not a given prerequisite for producing community programming? What matters is the process of involving communities, which, in this case, private cable television, seem to be doing.

Although the potential of cable TV for development in the Philippines has not yet been fully exploited, best practices in community-based media are being applied in various provinces, proving that efforts can be made to establish cable TV as a platform for development in the Philippines.



Photo credits:
Trina Leah Mendoza,
Ryan Jay Galang,
Antoni Kristofer Lim



Chinese Media assistance in Africa

By Robert Boughen

Convincing the Geese to Fly: Chinese Media assistance in Africa

Traditional Western media assistance in Africa has centered its attention on spreading liberal values such as freedom of speech and an independent press. China's media assistance seems to be the polar opposite: it has solely focused on bolstering the capabilities of African state-media organisations, with grants of millions of RMB in equipment and infrastructure to Zambia's national broadcaster (ZNBC) or the institutional training offered to journalists at Kenya's national broadcaster (KBC). This approach has been widely criticized in the West, with concerns that it hinders good governance across Africa by discouraging watchdog journalism and promoting state monopolisation of national communications networks. In this analysis, Robert Boughen, a graduate student in Media and International Development at the University of East Anglia, argues that China's goal is an essentially practical mission to improve global narratives about China by promoting state-owned media systems through forms of collaboration and exchange. He will attempt to promote a different understanding of how China's media assistance fits into its wider development strategies and models.

The context

Since the initiation of its 1999 'Go Out' Policy, which actively encouraged Chinese entrepreneurs to invest overseas, China has pioneered a particular model of development: the 'development economy,' and the requirements of this model bear further analysis if we are to understand how media assistance supports it. The 'development economy' approach views 'win-win' economic interactions between more and less developed nations as the key dynamic in a mutually beneficial developmental system. Generally, these interactions see the more developed nation providing concessional loans to export their advanced technological and industrial capabilities to the developing country, often repaid with products of the created industry.

This model is based firmly within China's own experience of development, particularly China's economic interactions with Japan from 1973 onwards, epitomised by the Daqing Oil-Fields Project. In this cooperative arrangement, Japan provided China with advanced industrial capabilities to help China exploit natural

resources, which were then used to clear China's incurred debts. China inherited the industrial base and gained home-grown expertise through spillover; whilst Japan solved its growing energy crisis, creating an apparent 'win-win' developmental interaction. These exchanges, while not traditional 'aid,' formed a central part of the experimental economy encouraged following China's post-Maoist reforms, underpinning China's drive towards expanded economic horizons, which catalysed the end of poverty for hundreds of millions of Chinese citizens. By virtue of its domestic success, this model now informs China's interactions with other developing nations.

China's economy is now extensive and highly diversified, including rapidly expanding hi-tech sectors. However, the majority of China's early ascent was grounded in low-tech manufacturing. Though the scale of this industry has left China with serious ecological questions, the improvement it has made to the quality of life of the average Chinese citizen cannot be understated, a fact not lost on authorities in Beijing. It is now, though, in China's strategic interests to outsource this low-grade industry in favor of its hi-

tech sectors. These 'dirty' industries also constitute a vital intermediate economic developmental stage, and so China is eager to pass on these industrial capabilities to Africa, representing the 'Flying Geese' paradigm: in order to facilitate internal restructuring as its economy expands and diversifies, the 'lead goose' passes down lower-grade industries to those behind them in a V-formation of development.

SMEs leading the way

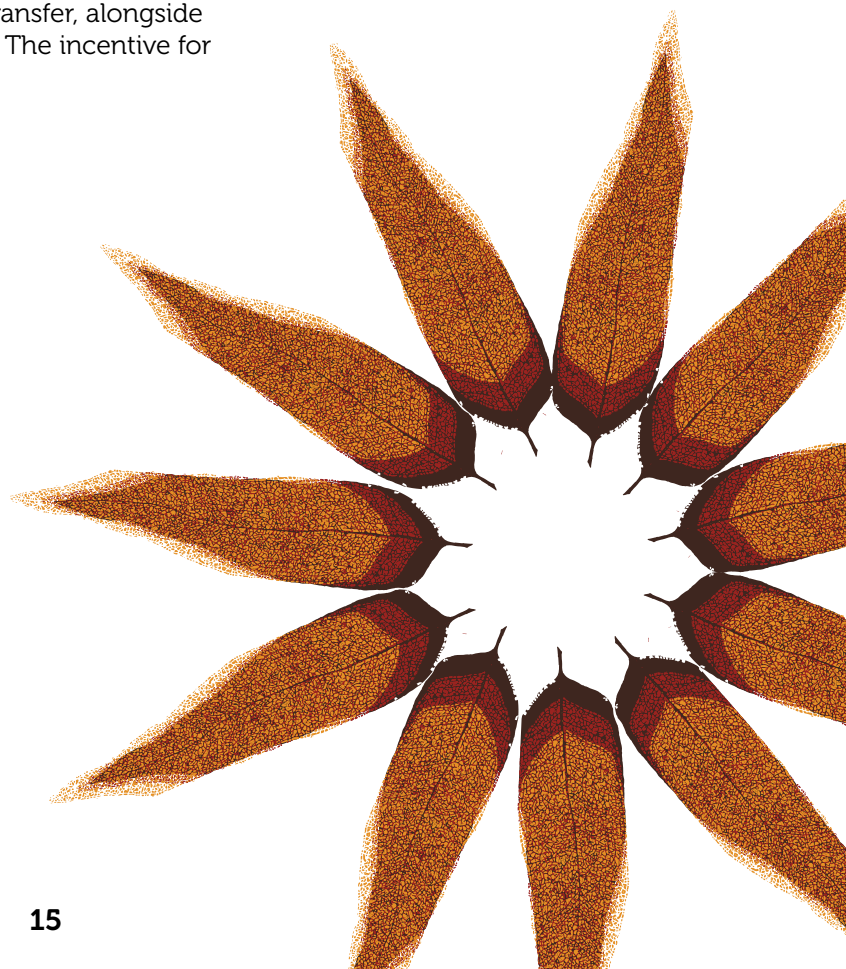
A major shift in how these industries are exported is now driving the need for media assistance. Historically, China's interactions with Africa have been dominated by state-owned enterprises (SOEs). Though these SOEs continue to undertake the larger 'prestige' projects, particularly those involving infrastructure and natural resources, since 2005, the balance of Chinese-African economic interactions has shifted increasingly towards privately owned small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The most recent large data set (2009), estimated that approximately 85 percent of Chinese businesses in Africa were SMEs; there were potentially 28,000 Chinese SMEs present across the continent, the majority involved in low-grade manufacturing. These are exactly the kind of enterprises that China seeks to export away from the oversaturated, smoggy special economic zones (SEZs) of Shenzhen and Zhejiang, into the more competitive export and labor markets of Africa. Unlike SOEs, though, SMEs cannot be handed state directives, and so must be convinced that Africa represents the best opportunity for them to fly the nest.

Media assistance as a lure

This informs us to why China's media assistance is guided by practical rather than ideological concerns, foremost amongst them being the relative failure of China's state media arms, Xinhua and CGTN, to break the West's hegemonic control over news creation in Africa and beyond. The majority of news about China continues to be created by a system that generally portrays China as, at best, mysterious and untrustworthy or, at worst, neo-colonial and reckless. This heightens the value of African state-media to China's soft-power campaigns to improve its international image. Providing assistance to the likes of ZNBC, KBC and many state broadcasters serves the dual purpose of weakening independent media, the main recipient of Western media assistance, and positively influencing state-media institutions towards China's own narrative.

The improvement of China's image, in turn, plays a vital role in the encouragement of SMEs moving to Africa from China. In a series of 2009 interviews, Chinese SME owners who had transferred their businesses from China to Africa listed customs, trade, and labor regulations as the key inhibitors to transfer, alongside infrastructure. The incentive for

African governments to encourage Chinese investment is that these interactions are 'win-win.' Yet, if the dominant narrative is that Chinese goals are neo-colonial this negatively affects both policies and investor confidence, as displayed by the downturn in investment amid anti-Chinese campaigning during Zambia's 2011 presidential election. Despite this, China has continued to pump assistance into state broadcasters across the continent, and it is no surprise that there is a strong correlation between levels of media assistance and levels of economic investment, with key trading partners like Kenya, Zambia, and Mauritius – all hosts to Chinese 'special export zones' – receiving consistently strong Chinese assistance for their state-media agencies. This suggests that Chinese media assistance has an active function in a cohesive model of the 'development economy' and plays an increasingly important role in encouraging SMEs to migrate China's low-grade industries to Africa.





Communication for Development and the Urban Future

By Edwar Hanna, Jackie Davis

C4D Network

Communication for Development and the Urban Future

Urbanisation is a major driving force of global development, with more than half the world's population now living in cities. It is estimated that by 2050 nearly 70% of the world's population will live in cities. The World Bank notes while urbanisation has enabled economic growth and innovation across all regions, it has also contributed to environmental and socioeconomic challenges, including climate change, waste and pollution, congestion, and the rapid growth of slums. In this topical paper, Edwar Hanna and Jackie Davies of The C4D Network outline what this means for communication for development.

Communication for development in the urban context

C4D is about the strategic use of communication processes and tools for development goals. C4D empowers people to take charge of their development objectives and plans. Processes including participatory communication, social and behaviour change communication, advocacy, social mobilisation, and ICT for

Development, all offer a growing richness of digital innovations and two-way communication opportunities, with the community as the site of action and decision-making. All offer potential instruments for change.

The 2018 'Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030', highlights the persistent challenge of limited communication opportunities available to urban-based groups and sectors i. The Declaration urges diverse groups to communicate and work together in urban planning and the need for inclusive planning approaches and understanding the potential of new technologies so 'no one is left behind'. Furthermore, the Declaration emphasises C4D communication processes and tools for participation and dialogue as 'key enablers for positive transformation'. The Declaration acknowledges the significance of unlocking positive change through continuous dialogue, multi-stakeholder approaches, transparency and accountability, creativity and innovation, inclusive partnerships, as well as meaningful participation and engagement.

Emphasis on social inclusion

Writing for a World Bank blog, Ivan Tosics argues social inclusion involves a improving the accessibility of a wide range of social groups (including vulnerable and marginalised groups that can easily be excluded) to public and private services.

For Tosics, socially inclusive planning puts the emphasis on the residents and their groups, and on the inclusion of the socially weaker parts of them.

'Communication is an obligation' - Lessons from Medellin, Colombia

As reported by the World Bank's Sustainable Cities Initiative, the city of Medellin has successfully implemented an integrated and multi-sector approach, which includes a combination of violence prevention programs and a deep commitment of its people to build a prosperous, inclusive and liveable city. Speaking at the 2018 SBCC Summit in Bali, former Mayor of Medellin, Anibal Gaviria, noted 'communication is not an option, but a constant obligation – a daily process where we communicate and receive communication from the citizens.'

Within urban development, this communication continuum is the imperative to keep people informed of urban development planning and activity on the one hand (and by doing so, fostering buy-in and engagement), and on the other, integrally engaging many different types of people as communicators themselves - participating, expressing and leading urban development in settings of increased social inclusion.

Locating communication in urban planning

In light of Gaviria's observations, the C4D Network outlines the six main areas of impact for C4D within urban planning and implementation: (1) information delivery and awareness raising, (2) resourcing people through communication routes, (3) aiding development practice using communication processes and tools, (4) advocating and resourcing advocates, (5) supporting increased voice and expression, and (6) promoting empowerment through communication participation.

Integrating C4D in Urban Futures

Lesson 1: Use of creativity

C4D may be a strategic and robust area of development in terms of theory and processes, but it is also an area of great creativity, artistry and joy, and these aspects can be utilised for effective promotion of learning, participation and expression. In her pioneering definition in the 1970s, Nora Quebral conceived C4D as the 'art and science'. It is the 'art' aspect that is often ignored in our obsession with theory and method.

Lesson 2: Centrality of culture

UNESCO emphasises the role of culture as a transformative driving force in the New Urban Agenda, leading to social cohesion, inclusive economic growth, sustainable environment, integrated territorial planning or urban resilience.

Lesson 3: Primacy of co-design process

A major shift in modern architecture and urban planning is the emphasis on co-designing, also known as participatory design. Architecture is

no longer about erecting buildings and infrastructure, but rather a process of thinking that emphasises sharing the visioning. Design thinking places communication at the heart of urban planning and implementation.

Lesson 4: The role of ICT

Utilising C4D tools such as ICTs can contribute significantly to urban social inclusion for many groups, including those who are marginalised groups. The World Bank notes 'the use of accessible ICT in the transportation sector, education, urban development, and for citizen engagement - all form part of an ecosystem critical for persons with disabilities to be included in skills development, have jobs, and contribute to society'.

Lesson 5: Participation has to be sustainable

An important lesson arising from a review of C4D practice within the urban development arena is the sustainability of participation. Issues around the sustainability of involvement have featured in a number of the C4D examples reviewed here. It is also common in other settings where participation and voice is promoted, but where insufficient consideration is given to the long-term strategy for sustaining such participation and expression.

It is no use involving people in the envisioning process, if it is not sustained. One Development Project Trainer, Delaney, notes the trend in the work of international development organisations has been to 'get people excited about

Lesson 6: The need for research

An example of recent research in scaling up participation in urban planning - and in how community involvement in urban development can help achieve inclusive cities - is the network of academics and civil society in Africa, led by the University of Manchester (UK). The network includes civil society alliances of organised groups of low-income residents, whose participatory efforts at neighbourhood level have been presented as best-practice examples in urban poverty reduction; working in partnership with academic

institutions that have previously conducted practice-relevant research on topics such as informal settlement upgrading, service provisioning and participatory community planning.

Conclusion

As the C4D Network, we suggest there is an important role for strategic and well-considered communication for development application in urban development. Across the key priority areas in urban development there is a golden thread of communication - communication for information delivery about urban strategies, communication between citizens and planners for collective planning, communication by people to different authorities and stakeholders about their own views and perspectives in the urban setting, and communication access, ability and empowerment that promotes and depends social inclusion - so everyone has a voice and a role to play in their own urban futures.



Rethinking the Freedom of the Press Index

By Sina Øversveen

The rhetoric that media development is essential for democracies and good governance is prominent, but where is the empirical evidence? In this article, MA Student in Media and International Development, Sina Øversveen critically raises questions about the empirical application of the Freedom of Press Index (FPI).

Most western scholarship attest to the significance of the freedom of media, generally agreeing that press freedom is a universal right. Yet press freedom is often promoted by western governments and institutions as an instrument, and the nature of this instrumentalisation has implications. It is a complex issue: a 2017 Freedom House Report shows that the global development of press freedom is increasingly going backwards. 2017 had the lowest levels of global press freedom in over a decade, despite massive investments in media development. How can we explain this contradiction?

Problems with the Freedom of the Press Index (FPI)

FPI is the most used and recognised instrument for measuring freedom of information. The index conceives 'press freedom' and how it works in different social contexts. FPI is used for media analysis, influencing policy dialogues, and shaping program implementation in media, development and democracy. My contention is that the FPI is ideologically problematic.

Diego Giannone argues that FPI is highly influenced by neoliberal values, mirrored in the model for press freedom. Giannone's examination of the indicators of FPI shows that they reflect the neoliberal model of democracy, especially relating to the role of the state and markets on media systems, but also regarding pluralism in the media. Giannone shows how different measurements play a role in legitimising concepts and different criteria for a particular neoliberal model of freedom of the press. When the index is then accepted as a toolkit for research and policies, it might contribute to the hegemony of the neoliberal model of democracy.

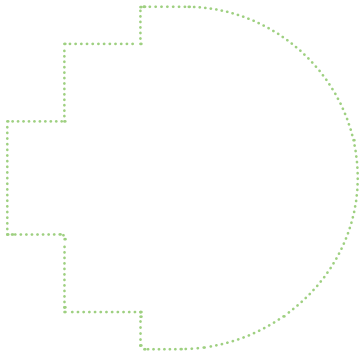
Press freedom and corruption

One key assumption is that strong press freedom is linked to low levels of corruption. A 2007 study by Frielle, Haque and Kneller supports this argument, finding high correlations between low corruption and strong press freedom. Certain forms of restrictions to press freedom are more strongly associated to higher corruption than others. Yet, it is often overlooked that press freedom can have both negative and positive consequences, especially in cases where there are strong links between the media and businesses, which can compromise independence. As such, it is possible that the positive effect of press freedom is being overstated.

Building on Giannone's critique, we can see that the data and indicators used by the Frielle, Haque and Kneller study are problematic. The data on corruption analysed in FPI are tested in relation to three aspects of press freedom: legal, political and economic environment. In the study, however, many of the correlations are not critically evaluated, leading to findings that political and economic pressures on the press that are particularly related to levels of corruption. This suggests that the



Source: <http://masralarabia.com/images/news/8b859cdf25a2a612b13b54a37dfa90c2.jpg>



study follows a neoliberal model in regards to the role of state and markets, which, if implemented in policy, could have implications for development.

The role of the free press

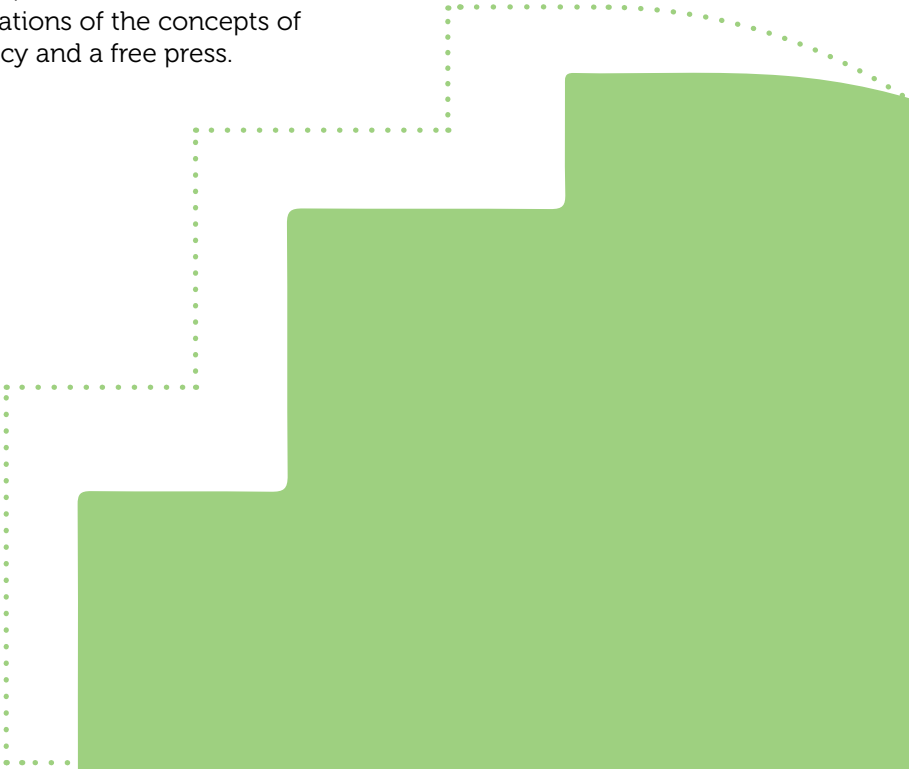
A 2006 study by Pippa Norris, employed the FPI framework, and supported the liberal claims about the importance of the free press. For Norris, press freedom has intrinsic and instrumental values, confirming her emphasis in the neoliberal democratic model: that increased press freedom helps to promote democracy, good governance and development. While there are several aspects of this analysis that could be criticised, the implications of the use of FPI is the focus here.

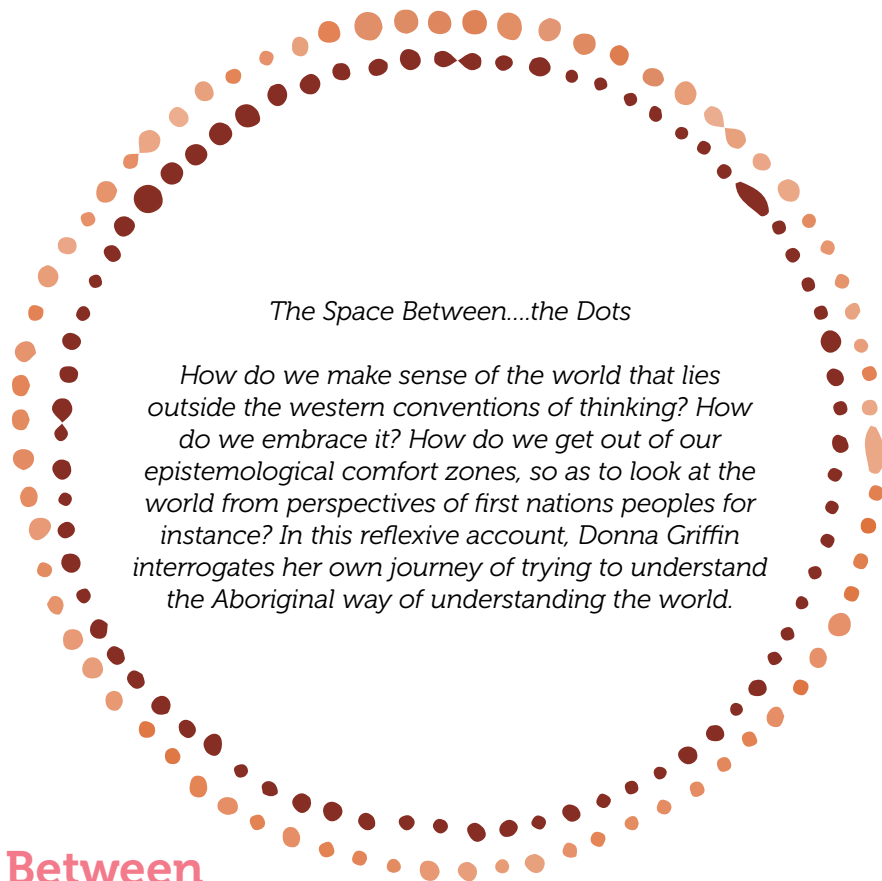
In examining Norris’ study, and that of organisations such as Reporters Without Borders, the similarity of their methods, findings and the indicators they analyse is noticeable. Yet, the index itself and the model of press freedom it follows go unquestioned. It is this implicit acceptance of neoliberal values associated with FPI which Giannone is critical of. Norris’ finding that democracy and free press are intrinsically associated seems reasonable, but there are reasons to question this regardless, because this is based on quantifications of the concepts of democracy and a free press.

Rethinking media development

Giannone found that the political dimension of FPI is more in line with a neoliberal approach to press freedom than the liberal approach it claims to support, which has implications for the numerous studies that apply data from the index. Uncritical use of the index in studies and by practitioners might then be part of legitimising a neoliberal model of press freedom, with implications for research and policies, in ways that undermine local contexts. We do not know the full implications of this.

The brief analysis here suggests that these studies do not take a critical enough approach to what model of press freedom the applied data follows. The data the evidence is based on, and therefore the model of press freedom it mirrors, have been scrutinised. It is questionable what political and ideological implications are possible when certain conceptualisations are uncritically used, and this requires further exploration.





The Space Between....the Dots

How do we make sense of the world that lies outside the western conventions of thinking? How do we embrace it? How do we get out of our epistemological comfort zones, so as to look at the world from perspectives of first nations peoples for instance? In this reflexive account, Donna Griffin interrogates her own journey of trying to understand the Aboriginal way of understanding the world.

The Space Between

By Donna Griffin

Context

In my work in town planning and environment law I came to realise that laws enacted for protection of the environment can actually also authorise its destruction, especially where large-scale resource projects are involved. Also, working in the highly corporate 'big-end-of-town', I began to wonder whether western society had lost a crucial connection with something. I couldn't readily identify what that 'something' might be, but the feeling persisted.

Prodded by these thoughts, I looked to the world's oldest continuing ancient culture of the first peoples of Australia. I was curious about the deep connection Indigenous peoples appear to have with the land, seas, sky and everything 'in between'.

I have been doing volunteer work with an Aboriginal corporation north of Brisbane for a few years now, and have recently been asked to assist with the establishment of another. This has given me a glimpse into the communication difficulties experienced in moving between a contemporary western mindset and an ancient oral culture.

The space between the dots, the space between people, the space between the stars, and the space between words – to me, this is the place and essence of real communication. It is where the communion happens, without which other, more superficial methods of communication are likely to crumble under the weight of our fast-paced contemporary society.

The space between dots
I recently attended a talk by an incredibly talented Aboriginal artist, Jandamarra Cadd, who said the most important element of the traditional dot painting in the background of his portraits was the space between the dots. He didn't elaborate further, but it is obvious that without that space, the dots would fall from the canvas into an uninspiring lifeless blob. What is holding the dots in place, and giving them meaningful relationship with each other and the entire painting, is the 'invisible', nondescript space between them.

The space between people
Jandamarra's message of United Journey – One Heart, One Mob is epitomised in his paintings, which

masterfully capture moments of deep connection between Aboriginal culture and mainstream Australia. In one painting, the look of awe on the face of a non-Aboriginal boy in the presence of an Aboriginal elder is undeniable, but it is the space in between the boy and the man that, for me, holds an almost tangible presence where the personalities of both subjects momentarily blend, giving birth to a united form of awareness and respect.

The space between the stars
A long time ago when I was lying with my two-year-old daughter to put her to sleep, I vacantly gazed out the window at the stars in the night sky. Instead of the usual wonderment at the pinpricks of light in the sky, I felt a strong love and gratitude for the space in between the stars. This reaction was very surprising and somewhat bewildering. Until then, I hadn't thought about 'the space between' being some 'thing' independently capable of consideration and experience. In Aboriginal culture, the space between the stars is crucially important, holding ancient law in the form of the large Dreamtime celestial emu, which can

be seen in the darker, starless parts of the Milky Way.

The space between words
Renowned Aboriginal Elder, Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr talks about a traditional practice, or probably more correctly, a way of being, called (in the Daly River area of the Northern Territory) dadirri. Below is an extract of Miriam-Rose's explanation of dadirri:

'It is inner, deep listening and quiet, still awareness. Dadirri recognises the deep spring that is inside us. We call on it and it calls to us. ... I can find my peace in this silent awareness. There is no need of words. A big part of dadirri is listening'.

Respected Aboriginal Elder, Garminungeena (Aunty Jenny Thompson) further explained to me that deep listening between people is essential for releasing suppressed emotions and for true healing to take place.

Lessons learnt

Instead of finding a quick fix to global environmental problems, I found among the Aboriginal people a tragic history (deliberately omitted from the school curriculum) and widespread first-hand and intergenerational trauma. I soon came to realise that much healing is needed – of people and country.

With the first organisation, I went with the intention of respectfully listening and learning. This has worked wonders for me - what I learn about Aboriginal culture allows me to be more 'me', but that

is another story. I also work 'in the office', which supports the running and flourishing of the organisation.

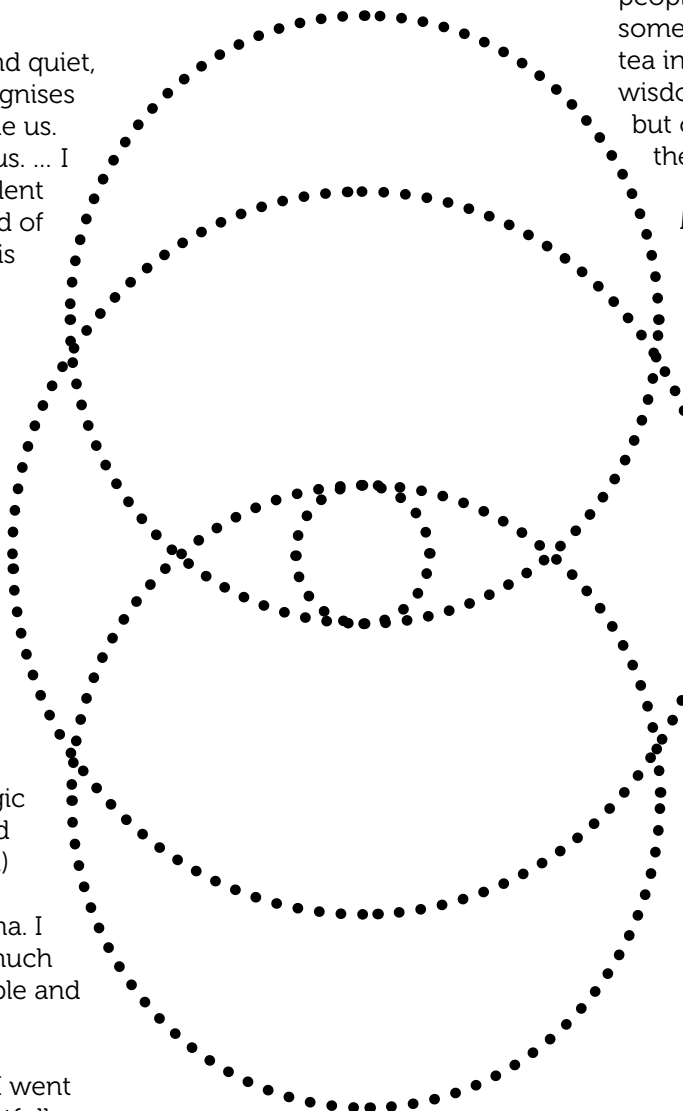
With the second organisation, I went with the desire to help (as I was asked to), but this didn't work, and I had to adjust accordingly. Indigenous Australia has had enough of whitefella 'help'. This oft-quoted sentiment accredited to

Aboriginal Elder Lilla Watson sums it up perfectly: 'If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together'.

It's not hard. I find the best way to gain invaluable Indigenous knowledge is to sit with Aboriginal people, often under a tree somewhere, usually with a cup of tea in hand, and just listen. Pearls of wisdom are constantly thrown up, but one has to be alert and alive to the message.

Miriam-Rose Ungunmerr says 'deep listening' (dadirri) is the Aboriginal gift Australia is thirsting for. I agree.

Perhaps we (non-Indigenous) need to drop the well-meaning but somewhat arrogant attitude of 'helping', and instead learn how to melt, float, fall or rise into 'the space between' to enable meaningful communication and communion to take place. Together, then, we may be able to weave in a new Dreaming and write a new, united story based on a deep, abiding spiritual connection with each other and 'all that is'.





Learning DevCom with Communities

By Winifredo Dagli

How does the pedagogy of communication for development in the university help students develop the necessary tools and skills to communicate and engage with people? In this analysis, Winifredo Dagli, a Rural Studies PhD Candidate at Guelph University, reflexively reviews the devcom training offered by the University of the Philippines Los Baños, where he also teaches the subject at the College of Development Communication. Dagli contends that a major aspect of this training is to build students' character through disengagement from the dominant narratives of development as a way of enabling them to meaningfully engage with communities.

Every year, more than 700 students take the undergraduate degree program in DevCom at the College of Development Communication. Even if research weighs more in staff promotions, many faculty members will agree that teaching is still the work we value and prioritise, as we feel it is our most direct contribution to nation building.

Notwithstanding it being referred to by different names, the field of devcom has become increasingly critical of 'development'—a

catchall term to refer to the logic, network of actors/agencies, and processes that represent the dominant ways of thinking and doing development, particularly in the global south, or what Linje Manyozo describes as 'bourgeois development.' With the widening inequality across the world and the weakening of democratic institutions, some scholars of the field turn to emerging models of change, particularly to the social movements who use media channels to shake up the system and demand real change. In Los Baños, our rethinking of DevCom and our relationship with 'development' is not only driven by our reading of the emerging literature in the field. Ours is largely a product of small talks, Facebook groups, collaborative writing projects, and everyday forms of resistance, mostly by the young faculty who seem to be more discerning of the institution's complicity in the failures of development. It appears it is in undergraduate teaching that most of the rethinking of the field occurs.

Community-based learning

In 2014, I worked with a team of faculty members and research staff who conceptualised a model

of how our students can better do their fieldwork. 'Better' means students are capable of building a more authentic, reciprocal, long-term and ethical relationship with the communities and other development stakeholders they work with for their courses. While we're calling it 'academic field instruction,' I prefer to call it community-based learning, so as to emphasise that learning takes place in the community where both students and the communities mutually benefit from the partnership they have built together.

Since then, we've discovered it is the faculty members, not the community partners, who really struggled in embracing such change. Community-based learning means learning begins with a good understanding of the community setting, not with pre-defined learning objectives or prepared course syllabus; it means the teachers closely coordinate their students' activities with the other team members. It also implies that they are flexible enough to respond to uncertainties inherent in community processes, and that they can make sense of the tensions and interactions between

DevCom students at the University of the Philippines Los Baños play with children to better understand their stories

Photo credits:
Eunice Brito

field-based learning and the theories discussed in classes, and for me, in my Participatory Development Journalism (PDJ) class.

Rethinking health communication

In 2016, my class partnered with the NGO, Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC). Initially, GARC wanted to produce communication materials that would capture the impact of their years of operation in the Philippines. What the students did however, was to work with the local organisations in Sorsogon to gather stories of how rabies affects the poorest communities and how the communities, with the help of local government agencies and GARC, build on their strength to address the issue. The Province of Sorsogon, located 300 kilometers south of Los Baños, has recorded one of the highest incidence of dog-mediated human rabies cases in the Philippines.

Instead of a top-down strategic communication planning approach, which is common in health communication, we held a series of workshops on critical pedagogy, listening and storytelling, alongside the sessions focused on the technical, social, and cultural aspects of rabies in Sorsogon. We spent our first days in the field looking for key informants and listening to random stories of people that helped us understand the broader context of rabies in the province. As days passed, the students began to see how individual stories coalesce into a complex tapestry of people's life worlds. In the end, the class produced two video documentaries that adopted a non-linear storytelling technique. They knew the video documentaries were not meant to inform or educate; rather, to evoke critical consciousness among various stakeholders in the community and the wider society, which hopefully will lead to concrete policy change and action.

To date, the video documentaries have been used in local and national planning sessions, particularly with the National Rabies Prevention and Control Committee and the Department of Education. In August 2017, the videos were also presented to teachers nationwide during the Development of Lesson Exemplars for Rabies Education. The videos have been translated into English and widely disseminated through social media.

Lessons on student-community engagement in DevCom

My experiences of working with students and partner communities and organisations in the Philippines from 2014-17 have taught us some important lessons on DevCom community-based learning: Begin where the community is. Plan and mobilise with and for the communities. Ensure there is buy-in among local leaders, though be mindful of the danger of co-optation.

Discuss and agree with students how the learning outcomes of the course will be achieved. Engage them in the project team's planning and evaluation sessions so they can identify how their contribution fits into the 'big picture.'

Work with those who feel neglected and isolated and always build on their strengths and resources. Focus on strategies that enable the poorest and the marginalised to benefit more from the process. Link them with other



Students accompanying a village health worker as they cross the rice fields to reach the next community where dog vaccinations take place.

Photo credits:
Edgar Bagasol Jr.

prospective partners, such as people from other academic fields or from the civil society, who can help them achieve their goals.

Invite partner communities and other stakeholders in assessing students' performance.

Since community-based learning allows students to become inseparable from the DevCom process (as opposed to mainstream journalists' illusion of objectivity), the teachers must allow time to thoroughly process with students the ethical dimensions of their active engagement (i.e. Who's voice is being heard? Are there any political implications of the video? Who will benefit the most?)

DevCom must not only shake up the system through advocacy and mobilisation; students must also identify the role of DevCom processes in the strengthening of institutions through policy processes and other sustainability mechanisms.



Purple Politics: Development in the Age of Feminism

By Melissa Fan and Kylie Smith

Questions have been raised as to how the praxis of feminism is shaping development discourse and practice. Since Gayatri Spivak's classic, 'Can the Subaltern Speak' was published in 1988, cementing the centrality of feminism in development thinking, scholars, practitioners and experts have considered how best to study the role of the 'woman' in the development dramaturgy. In this critical piece, Melissa Fan and Kylie Smith revisit Amryl Johnson's 'Purple Politics and the White Woman's Dress' in order to locate feminism in development.

Johnson's article was published in 1992 in *New Internationalist*, a magazine that focuses on global issues of social justice. The article uses Johnson's personal experiences to analyse how black and white women bring different perspectives to the feminist movement, and how this often leaves black women feeling further marginalised. She calls on all women to stop fighting among themselves and concentrate on supporting each other, while recognising that every woman has her own history and perspective, shaped by race, class and individual experience.

Our interest is in investigating the issues Johnson raises of power, racism and the single story. In light of this we suggest the 'pedagogy of listening' could be a way forward to solidarity in the feminist movement.

Power and marginality

What is the 'white woman's dress'?

It is possible the concept comes from Maya Angelou's autobiographical book, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, where the young Angelou, Marguerite, is excited her grandmother is sewing a dress for her from lavender taffeta. She says 'I knew that once I put it on, I'd look... like one of the sweet little white girls who were everybody's dream of what was right with the world'. But the next day, Marguerite realises the dress is just a 'plain ugly cut-down from a white woman's once-was-purple throwaway'.

Marguerite's realisation that her skin colour excludes her from attaining the symbolic power of the 'sweet little white girl' is a reflection of the experiences of many black women in the feminist movement. While white women see themselves as oppressed by the power held by

men in a patriarchal system, they can, in turn, fail to recognise the systemic power they exercise over black women.

Writers, including Melbourne academic Ruby Hamad and American blogger Luvvie Ajayi, have described how this power is often expressed through the 'weaponising of white women tears'. This involves white women deliberately or inadvertently playing the symbolic role of the 'damsel in distress', the victim of a black person's aggression, when in fact the black person is responding to the white woman's racism or aggression.

The danger of classification and orientalism

Johnson highlights the ramifications of labelling people based on their gender, ethnicity, class and individual experience. While white women perceive themselves as 'feminist', black women often prefer the term 'womanist' because it fits them better 'than the white woman's dress'. However, Johnson argues in creating this new identity, they too, are creating labels of their own.



Photo credits:
Sanjana Shrestha,
Read Nepal

She points out the faults on both sides; while white women can assume they are superior to their black sisters, a black woman falls into the trap of assuming she has suffered more than white women.

In white-dominated Britain, with its historic links to slavery, black women even today suffer from being perceived as inferior. For Johnson, racism is as prevalent as ever; 'You are black, therefore inferior'. The orientalism described by Edward Said continues to frame black people as potentially violent or aggressive. This continued, systemic racism has led to the Black Lives Matter social movement, in protest at race-based violence in the United States.

This perception of black women is an example of what novelist Chimamanda Adichie describes as 'the single story' or stereotype. 'The problem with stereotypes is not that they are untrue, but that they are incomplete'. Johnson's article highlights how the single story assumed by one woman of another could prevent them from authentically connecting with each other.

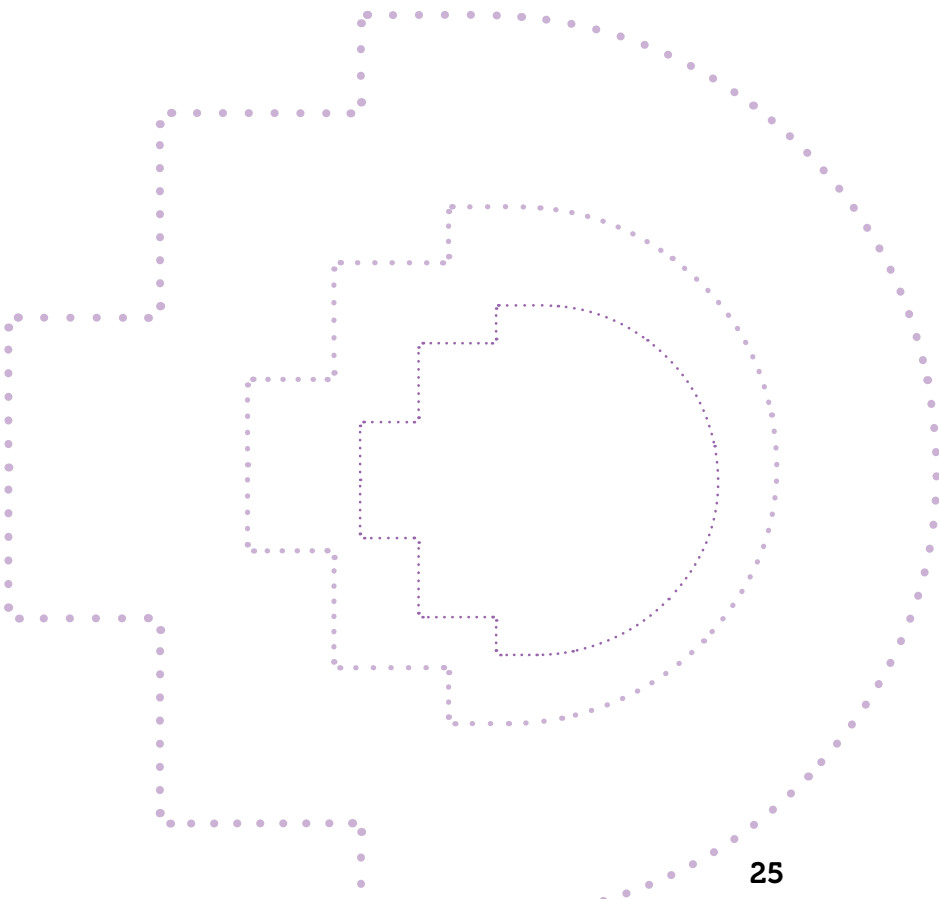
The 'pedagogy of listening'

Academic Linje Manyozo's concept of the 'pedagogy of listening' involves more than just staying silent. He suggests we must also listen to evidence, listen to ourselves and listen 'as a form of speaking'. Similarly, Johnson urges us to 'build bridges', ultimately concluding it is only by being open and listening to people from different ethnic backgrounds with different experiences - and acknowledging that those experiences are as valid and important as our own - that we can begin to unite for a common cause.

We suggest that becoming better listeners in the manner Manyozo describes - exercising 'a politically conscious decision to enter into a communion with other people' - is a constructive way to work towards Johnson's vision of unity within the feminist movement.

Implications for development

This potential for unity within feminism can flow on to impacts for women in development. Almost all women involved in development, whether beneficiaries or practitioners, have the common experience of their own social struggle to be recognised as equal to their male counterparts on a social, political and economic level. When Johnson talks about the importance of women uniting under feminism to celebrate themselves and their achievements, this goal can equally apply as an underlying principle of methodologies and approaches to development.





Video for Change in India

By Pooja Ichplani & Archana Kumar

From rural indigenous media in the early 1900s, to development journalism experiments of The Hindustan Times in the 1960s, India has a long history of media experimenting with raising issues that really matter to its citizenry. In this article, Pooja Ichplani examines one of the current efforts at using video technology to generate development dialogues among rural populations. As observed by Jessica Mayberry, who founded Video Volunteers back in 2003, 'rural issues have less than 2% coverage in mainstream media'. How can video facilitate the inclusion of rural populations in a country of about 1.3 billion?

The inception of the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) by the MacBride Commission shifted the emphasis of global news to issues of the 'third world' or developing nations, as perceived by their own people. Commercial Indian media has its own agenda, influenced by political propaganda. This is why problems of the poor continue to be neglected by commercial media. The real question is: how to give all people their right to voice?

In steps community media! Providing a spotlight to community issues and problems, and capacitating people in its process. Video Volunteers (VV) is a human rights organisation working to empower community voices. It provides marginalised communities with a community news service. Identifying people (Community Correspondents) from within the community, building their capacities and enhancing their communication skills, then transitioning them into agents of change for their own community with the use of participatory video.

UNESCO highlights the potential of technical innovation and the power of information and knowledge to achieve sustainable, positive impacts in all spheres of development. VV capitalises on these elements to capacitate communities with their own relevant and locally produced media and create inclusive knowledge societies. The organisation aims to empower world's poorest citizens to right the wrongs they witness by becoming players in global information revolution. It encourages women, Tribals, religious minorities, and similar groups to partake

in media processes in parallel with Sustainable Development Goal 16: 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.'

So, how does Video Volunteers employ community communications to bring change at individual and community level?

Community Correspondents

There are 249 Community Correspondents (CCs) in Video Volunteers network, about 57% of which are women. Belonging to different socio-economic and cultural backgrounds, they are characterised by their endless perseverance. As locals, CCs have a rich understanding of their community, which contributes to their comprehension of community issues, enabling innovative approaches for interacting and negotiating with different stakeholders.

Training and capacity building

Capacity building of CCs is a continuous and incremental process. Recruited individuals are initially exposed to residential

training focusing on basics of video production, journalism and community mobilisation. This training familiarises correspondents with their various roles and the concept of community media and video for social change. CCs are trained to produce videos, identify deep-rooted issues, collect facts and evidence, as well as negotiate and network with a range of people (self-efficacy). CCs learn to collaborate with external media and social organisations for effective action (social learning).

A major component of the training program is use of social media and technological proficiency of correspondents, which is essential as CCs use technologies like mobile phones/internet and their features for performing a range of tasks like shooting video clips, uploading photos and videos, sharing videos and communicating through social networks. Increasingly, social media has become a key medium of dissemination and awareness used by CCs for mobilisation of stakeholders. This training keeps them up-to-date with the changing technological environment, enabling the CCs to work efficiently, quickly network with people and devote time and resources. There are three types of videos produced: Primary Issue Videos, that expose and analyse problems while proposing solutions; Success Stories, that highlight change brought about during production; and Impact Videos, which depict the entire process of change, acknowledging the support systems.

Community Screenings and Community mobilisation

Issue videos are screened in communities to initiate dialogue (action and reflection). The video acts as visual evidence of the problem prevailing in the community and are followed by discussions with community spectators, mobilising them to partake in activities and spearhead change process. Screenings form an important post-production step; correspondents take up the role of activists and change makers, mobilising people, and pushing authorities and other stakeholders to desired action (advocacy). Video screenings act as a potent instrument for influencing people and mobilising them for collective action.

To build pressure on stakeholders, CCs encourage community people to write to officials demanding action using testimonials about existing problems. The video provides visual evidence and the letter serves as a formal document of complaint. The two in combination put pressure on officials to acknowledge and discuss the issue, and frequently result in redressal. Correspondents use multiple channels to build large-scale mobilisation of people and support for issues. These include local media, social media, online petitions like change.org, protests or rallies, and so on.

The VV's headquarters in Goa centrally manages the editing process, which is not focused upon in the training of CCs

or as a program task they are required to perform. Putting raw footage together and producing quality videos requires high-level skills, experience and specialist equipment. Video editing is time-consuming and resource intensive, which led to VV's quasi-decentralized model where CCs focus on researching issues and collecting quality content and post-production is conducted in one central location. Of late, many CCs have begun to edit their videos under specific circumstances on the tablet provided by VV.

Lessons learned

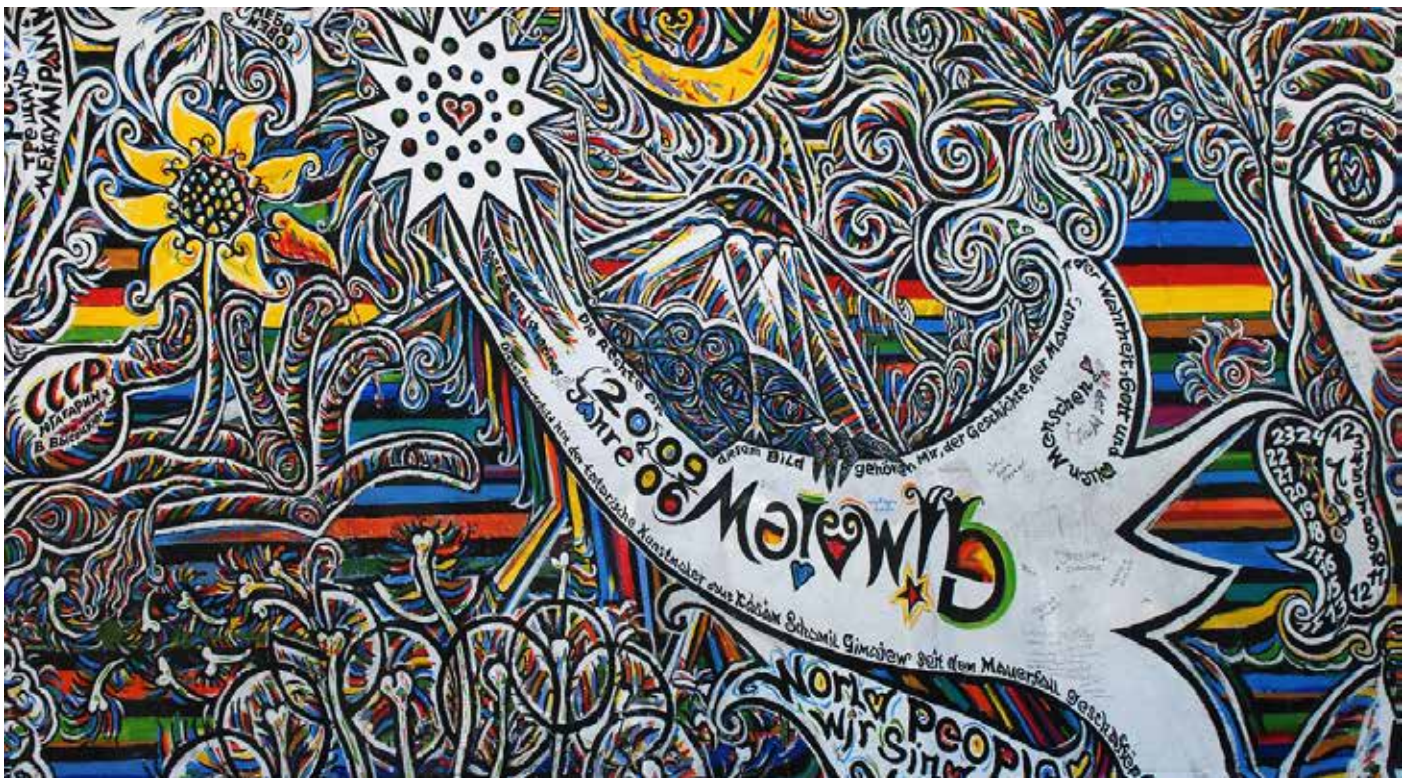
The three heads of media, advocacy and social mobilisation form the basis of communication for social change at an individual and community level. VV creates spaces for CCs to snowball change in their communities by involving them in change process. This enhances the collective efficacy of community at-large.

To make an impact on lives of people, VV converges various media. It collaborates with mainstream channels (Doordarshan, NDTV, RSTV) and broadcasts their video stories on such platforms for a greater reach. With its present social media campaigns focusing to eliminate gender bias, it aims to initiate a dialogue in the public sphere, breaking geographic boundaries and overcoming time-space limitations. Community media processes integrated in VV's functioning, pave the way to change.



Photocredit: Jessica Mayberry, Founding Director, Video Volunteers





Public Art and Social Change

By Roman Aizengendler

Since the beginning of the Anthropocene, public art, street art and graffiti have played an important role in the history of the public sphere. Indigenous communities the world over have long used rock art to communicate culturally important knowledge down the generations. Likewise, evidence shows that the Ancient Romans utilised the medium to comment on the state of their polity. Today public art is still used as a tool to inform, educate and shock members of the public by presenting colourful, yet insightful observations of modern society. In this analysis, Roman Aizengendler explores the need for us to pay critical attention to the exploration of this form of public communication.

Setting the scene

Dmitri Vrubel's 1990 painting *My God, Help Me to Survive This Deadly Love* is one of many public examples that encapsulated the grotesque and fraternal state of the German Democratic Republic. Author Marc Fisher notes that while the fall of the Berlin wall came as a result of important political changes within Germany, with traditional media ecstatically reporting on the rise and fall of the GDR, Vrubel's painting captured a telling moment of history in a chillingly provocative

way. By using the street as a gallery space, the artwork uses satire to pay a valuable contribution to the political climate and discourse of the time.

As well as being a political satirist, Vrubel highlights the differences between the state and the civil society with regards to the role and significance of the public sphere. Such street art is representative of public commentary being given freedom of formation to free, autonomous citizens, and prioritises horizontal communication strategies. Another scholar, Eileen Conn, observes that this strategy of media communication then encourages further citizen contribution, which can support community cohesion and citizen-lead action on topics that authoritative and administrative bodies do not have the will, or capacity to address.

Public art and social change

As a medium for communication on literally a street level, public art has an important capacity to bypass regulated communication platforms that are donor funded or State controlled. Consequently, it allows for a variety of issues to be raised, which can be sought

to break down or bypass existing power relations. This is important on two fronts: firstly, it allows those citizens to contribute to local policy dialogues; and secondly, street art's guerrilla history allows it to be a mode of communication that empowers citizens to hold office bearers to account. Hence, responsible governance is inherent in the critical nature of the artworks themselves. It is a media platform that is owned by, and serves the interests of geographical or ideological communities. It also provides alternative perspectives, rejects commercial and corporate agenda settings and can be antagonistic towards the State and market. Furthermore, it positions itself alongside independent civil society to appeal to the sensibilities of local citizens as the message is coming from within an already familiar local community and dialogue.

By practicing alongside and communicating with civic society rather than authoritative institutions, public art is free of the regulatory and administrative hurdles that may act as barriers to breaking down existing power relations. Considering Steven Lukes' reflections of the two–



Source: https://storage.needpix.com/rsynced_images/graffiti-693120_1280.jpg

and three-dimensional views of power, an accessible and free platform is created to discuss authoritarian behaviours. That is, while administrations may overtly be exercising power by influencing, shaping and determining society's preferences, rational citizens have the capacity to protest and incite change by appealing to the public. An opportunity exists for the street artist to respond, and bring attention to issues that are kept out of public discourse due to reasons of political tactfulness.

In doing so, governments and other media outlets have little option but to acknowledge the existence of these realities, and the attitudes of society towards them. This does not imply that power relations are necessarily broken or altered, but it does assume a right of power and free speech back to civic society. To expand on Paulo Freire's notion that self-determination is vital in the movement for liberation, public art has the capacity to act as a medium for social change as it encourages a realisation of oppression. Equally, it fosters a capacity to reject these oppressions and secure a democratic dialogue within the public realm.

As a freely displayed and accessible communication medium, public art can be considered a truly

democratic communication strategy that can affect change in marginalised and underprivileged communities. Just as Wilbur Schramm acknowledges that mass media are agents of social change, so too can public art be considered an important aspect of grassroots movements that can be incredibly successful at encouraging development. This is because it brings to light locally relevant perspectives by utilising a citizen-lead platform for communication, and openly allows for various points of view to be introduced to the public sphere. Furthermore, it encourages listening on behalf of citizens and bodies of power to consider the validity of arguments made. Importantly, it is a communication medium that allows for provocative messages to be relayed to a greater population, and encourages social change by individual citizens and community groups. After all, it is this process of influence that can incite larger scale social change.

Family Matters

Carey Walden

Fragments of your voices echo in my mind
Reading letters of ghosts past
Still part of me
Telling me your stories
Giving me a space in your lives
A window opening to see and hear you
Learning of your connections and lives
Seeing and hearing your pain and reality
I am part of you and you are part of me
I feel and see your reflections in me.

30 June, 2018

Published by School of Media and
Communication, RMIT University,
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Melbourne
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Editorial Team: Linje Manyozo and Louise Koschmann
Graphic Design: Samantha Iacono
Cover photo: Jessica Mayberry
(Founding Director, Video Volunteers)

Financial support for this issue came from the
RMIT-UNICEF ARC Linkage Grant, Evaluating
Communication for Development.

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