BJ (MC) – 306
GLOBAL MEDIA SCENARIO

L : 4 T/P : 0 CREDITS
Objectives of the Course: On completion of the course students should be able to:
1. Describe the North - South flow of information
2. Explain the New World Information and Communication Order
3. Explain contemporary global media scenario
4. Explain the influence of global media on India
Marks for Internal Assessment : 25

SYLLABUS

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3. Global news and information flow: the flip side
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Unit I [Global Communication: Historical Perspective]

The Great North – South Divide.

The **north–south divide** is a socio-economic and political division that exists between the wealthydeveloped countries, known collectively as "the north", and the poorer developing countries (least developed countries), or "the south." Although most nations comprising the "North" are in fact located in the Northern Hemisphere (with the notable exceptions of Australia and New Zealand), the divide is not wholly defined bygeography. The North is home to four of the five permanent members of theUnited Nations Security Council and all members of the G8. "The North" mostly covers the West and theFirst World, with much of the Second World. The expression "north–south divide" is still in common use, but the terms "North" and "South" are already somewhat outdated. As nations become economically developed, they may become part of the "North", regardless of geographical location, while any other nations which do not qualify for "developed" status are in effect deemed to be part of the "South".

The idea of categorizing countries by their economic and developmental status began during the Cold War with the classifications of East and West. The Soviet Union and China represented the developing East, and the United States and their allies represented the more developed West. Out of this paradigm of development surged the division of the First World [the west] and the Second World [the east] with the even less developed countries constituting the Third World. As some Second World countries joined the First World, and others joined the Third World, a new and simpler classification was needed. The First World became the "North" and the Third World became the "South

Digital divide

The global digital divide is often characterised as corresponding to the north–south divide; however, Internet use, and especially broadband access, is now soaring in Asia compared with other continents. This phenomenon is partially explained by the ability of many countries in Asia to bypass older Internet technology and infrastructure, coupled with booming economies which allow vastly more people to get online

Some would argue that free international trade and unhindered capital flows across countries will lead to a contraction in the North-South divide. In this case more equal trade and flow of capital would allow the possibility for developing countries to further develop economically. As some countries in the South experience rapid development, there is some evidence that those states are developing high levels of South-South aid. Brazil, in particular, has been noted for its high levels of aid ($1 billion annually - ahead of many traditional donors) and the ability to use its own experiences to provide high levels of expertise and knowledge transfer. This has been described as a 'global model in waiting'.

Domination of transnational news agencies

In the world, Domination or hegemony is exercised by 5 largest transnational news agencies. AP UPI Rueters AFP ITAR-TAS (information telegraph agency of russia - telegraph agency of the soviet union 80% of 15 great news media corporations dominate the production of radio sets, tv sets and print media sets including printing devices, radio and tv communication satellite, paper ink and other elements of mass media technological infrastructure. The statistics provide the details of disparities that exists, and the dominance of north in the field of information. Thus making the south depend on north

Eg.1 During the british war with argentina, over their claim on falklands islands, several developing countries supported the argentinian claim, but their newspapers were receiving the stories put out by the transnational news agencies, which were biased in favor of britain. The newspapers in the developing countries could not afford to send their own correspondents to cover the war.

Eg, 2 The gulf war provides the eg. of how dependency for news on the west can destroy the content of third world media. During the gulf war, India's language dailies did not have the capacity to cover war events with their own correspondents. Almost all the newspapers depended upon the news originating from the western news agencies. The usage of words in the news dispatches became a form of psychological warfare during the so called gulf war.

The AP is one of the largest and most trusted sources of independent newsgathering, supplying a steady stream of news to its members, international subscribers and commercial customers. AP is neither privately owned nor government-funded; instead, as a not-for-profit news cooperative owned by its American newspaper and broadcast members, it can maintain its single-minded focus on newsgathering and its commitment to the highest standards of objective, accurate journalism. AP's commitment to independent, comprehensive journalism has deep roots. Founded in 1846, AP has covered all the major news events of the past 165 years, providing high-quality, informed reporting of everything from wars and elections to championship games and royal weddings

Agence France-Presse (AFP) is a French news agency, the oldest one in the world,[1] and one of the three largest with Associated Press and Reuters. It is also the largest French news agency. Currently, its CEO is Emmanuel Hoog and its news director Philippe Massonnet. AFP is headquartered in Paris, with regional offices in Hong Kong, Nicosia, Montevideo, São Paulo, and Washington, D.C., and bureaus in 110 countries. It transmits news in French, English, Arabic, Spanish, German, and Portuguese.

Global news and information flow: the flip side

Information is power and the most critically sought commodity in today's world. Those that control the information are usually seemed to be the most powerful in our contemporary society. Therefore, for the past thirty years, there has been a controversy resulting from accusation and counter accusation of imbalance flow of information from the west to south. The purported victims which are the developing nations have been raging bitterly over the news coverage of

events in their continent and have denounced western newspapers, journals, and television outlets for their alleged sensationalism and anti-development bias. Due to this controversy, on several accounts, developing nations have attempted to engage the western nations through different channels to address the issue of global information inequality.

One that may readily comes to mind is the UNESCO meetings in 1969, 1974,1976,1980 consecutively, where the UNESCO group of experts on mass communication and society noted in its disturbing but revealing report that: "What has come to be known as the free flow of information at the present time is often in fact a one way rather than a true exchange of information.

In retaliation, western world has equally charged the developing world of seeking to obstruct the free flow of information and insist to make no change in the information flow which they regard as a threat to the freedom to report, to print, and to broadcast news". This charge and counter-charge is far from abating and in fact is gathering momentum as it persists in many developing countries as they are well aware of the value of information in speeding material development and in maintaining power.

Historical Perspective

News flow before World War II

The concept of imbalance in the media coverage and controversy over the international flow of news had been an important starting point in many of the deliberations concerning the national and international flow of information, culture and news. However, the significance of this controversy can be understood only be grasping the extent of the revolutionary changes that have been eroding the international system for the last thirty years.

Taking cognizance of the fact that in recent days, the world communication technology and the management of world information resources are clearly in the of the industrialized countries, Colin Legum and John Corn- well in their compiled report argues that western domination was actually the caused of disparity in both the economic and information order which they believed started after the World War II as described as the post imperial era. It was during this period that new ideas and forces took shape and power shift decisively to the west. They recounted that before the World War II , that western nations has no political power to impose their will on the non-western world and that the great power struggles of the European imperial era were all fought among the western nations themselves making it impossible for the west to dominate. However, they believed that the industrial revolution had given the west a head start over the rest of the world in creating new wealth and accumulating great military power, which in turn resulted both in the expansion of European imperialism and in the rise of the United state. But one thing that stood very obvious within those period was also subsequent rapid growth of emerging powers like Soviet Union and China. These duos also become players in the centre stage making the technological advances of the industrial revolution not remain exclusive to western possession.

News Flow after World War II

After the World War II, more events continue to unfold, developing countries began gradually to assume role in the central stage as major factor in world affairs. Suffice to note that the developing nation's first encounter in dealing with the western world was recorded to be hostile, as they experienced the western domination on almost every international affairs which Roger Tatarian, former vice-president of United Press International (UPI), acknowledged then by stating that the imbalance in economic and information order is due to the military, economic and political power distribution in the western world.. As things unfold, it becomes more clearer to the developing world that the western domination and control of information is not beneficial but later unhealthy to their growth given that this one- way flow of information inevitably reflects only the point of view, mentality, values and interests of these developed nations. Most importantly, they saw also repressive act of the western world where the major western media tend to treat the cultures of the industrialized nations as superior and place them at the top of this imaginary hierarchy, while the cultures of the developing nations are placed at the bottom of the hierarchy . For instance, we always see the journalist lump together the 53 nations of African continent as one while the continent is often portrayed as a crocodile-infested dark continent where jungle life has perpetually eluded civilization. These gross misrepresentations and imbalance in the inter-national news flow was a big concern to the developing countries , therefore there was a burning desire for a radical overhaul of the present international information system to a new information order where free flow of information will be equitable and balanced. They wanted the world communication system to reflect the diversity and equality of all human races more just and more beneficial to the whole community of mankind . Against this back- ground, the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debate was born. It was the greatest debates in the field of international communication in the 1970s and 1980s. Thus , the concept of imbalance and one-way flow is based on the following-

The western countries had monopolised the flow of international information. They decided on what news items/information must be consumed by the people of the developing countries.Through the International information networks, the West had retained their hegemonic power over the third World. Even after decades of independence,they still dominate and rule over 9 indirectly) thr Third world countries. The information set up in the international arena reflects a very strong political, economic, and cultural colonialism opposed to the aspirations of the people of developing countries.The mass media have replaced the armies of the colonial powers in this era.

Barriers to the flow of news and information

"Free flow of information" is a western term which means that any person or persons and/or any organisation/s can own and operate any media or information agency, gather any information and disseminate the same, if they so desire , to any target audience, wherever and whenever they want. Further, the ownership of the emdia or information agencies should be restricted to a certain category, the gathering of the news, facts and information and dissemination should be unhindered.

But this philosophy resulted in the consolidation of the centres of information gathering and dissemination in the western countries. For developing countries , it was only one-way flow , i.e from North to South. Thus there were many barriers in the way of free and balanced flow of information for developing countries-

Since their independence, the developing countries had no financial resources to establish and maintain their news and information network.

Due to their lacking at the financial front, they could not establish their media and information infrastructure at domestic as well as at abroad level.

Since they did not have that much power and say in the International organisations as the Western countries had, their demands were boycotted by nations of the global North.

Due to the unity of colonial powers and differences among nations of the south, for example India –Paistan, India-Bangladesh, India-China etc. Mutual co-operation could not be established between all of these.

Due to geo-political expansion during the colonial era, the Western nations spread their media network and resources in large part of the World which gave them a readymade monopoly over the collection and transmission of news and information among and between the nations.

Significant happenings in the developing countries were paid scant attention , and wherever done, those were half truths colored by the Western perceptions.

Their struggles to make the lives of their people better went unreported and never appreciated, whereas their weaknesses, shortcomings and failures get prominence in the World media.

Since, the Third World nations did not have resources to counter the omination of the Western Media , they had no choice but to consume what was being disseminated.

Unit II [Struggle for Balance of Information Flows]

Demand for NWICO

  The then existing trends of domination and imbalance in the flow of news and information made the Third World countries unite and put forward their complaints and demands regarding establishment of a new world order at International platform.

    The following overlapping and mutually complementing factors are at the base of the demand for a new order in the field of information:

The emergence of new nations following the dissolution of the colonial empires after world War II

The asymmetrical economic relationship between the new nations and the Western industrialized nations which, while strengthening the latter's wealth and power , perpetuated the new nations' dependency, not merey economic but political and cultural as well.

The new nations' realization that their under-development was related to their dependence on rich nations followed by a firm resolve to assertive actions to correct imbalances in world trade and commerce, and cultural exchanges.

The coming together of the new nations under the umbrella of non-alignment in the wake of aggressive bloc-building by the US and the USSR.

Their gaining in strength in international organizations, such as the UN and UNESCO.

MacBride Commission & its Recommendations

The International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems was set up in 1977 by the director of UNESCO Ahmadou-Mahtar M'Bow, under suggestion by the USA delegation. It was agreed that the commission would be chaired by Seán MacBride from Ireland and representatives from 15 other countries, invited due to their roles in national and international communication activities and picked among media activists, journalists, scholars, and media executives. Many Voices One World, also known as the MacBride report, was a 1980 UNESCO publication written by the International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, chaired by Irish Nobel laureate Seán MacBride. Its aim was to analyze communication problems in modern societies, particularly relating to mass media and news, consider the emergence of new technologies, and to suggest a kind of communication order (New World Information and Communication Order) to diminish these problems to further peace and human development.

Among the problems the report identified were concentration of the media, commercialization of the media, and unequal access to information and communication. The commission called for democratization of communication and strengthening of national media to avoid dependence on external sources, among others. Subsequently, Internet-based technologies considered in the work of the Commission, served as a means for furthering MacBride's visions.

The comprehensive report of the MacBride Commission named "Many Voices, OneWorld"

 Consists of five parts Part one, two, three and four describe and analyse the existing system of communication and resources as well as infrastructure- policies and normsThe fifth and concluding part consisted of conclusions and recommendations and issues requiring further study

The MacBride commission made 82 pertaining to different areas of communication development The report also emphasises, the importance of development of communication media in the spread of adult literacy.

Strengthening Independence andSelf-reliance – Communication Policies

The object must be to utilize the unique capacities of each form of communication, from interpersonaland traditional to the most modern, to make menand societies aware of their rights, harmonizeunity in diversity, and foster the growth ofindividuals and communities within the widerframe of national development in an interdependent world.

As language embodies the cultural experience of people, all languages should be adequately developed to serve the complex and diverse requirements of modern communication.Developing nations and multilingual societies need to evolve language policies that promote all national languages even while selecting some, where necessary, for more widespread use in communication , higher education and administration.

A primary policy objective should be to make elementary education available to all and to wipe-out illiteracy, supplementing formal schooling systems with non-formal education and enrichment within appropriate structures of continuing and distance learning (through radio, television and correspondence).Within the framework of national development policies, each country will have to work out its own set of priorities, bearing in mind that it will notbe possible to move in all directions at the same time.

Strengthening Capacities-

Developing countries take specific measures to establish or develop essential elements of their communication systems: print media, broadcasting and telecommunication along with the related training and production facilities. Strong national news agencies are vital for improving each country's national and international reporting. Adequate educational and training facilities are required to supply personnel for the media and production organizations, as well as managers, technicians and maintenance personnel.

Particular Challenges- A major international research and development effort to increase the supply of paper. The worldwide shortage of paper, including newsprint ,and its escalating cost impose crushing burdens upon struggling newspapers, periodicals and the publication industry, above all in the developing countries. Tariffs for news transmission, telecommunications rates and air mail charges for the dissemination of news, transport of newspapers, periodicals, books and audiovisual materials are one of the main obstacles to a free and balanced flow of information.The electro-magnetic spectrum and geo –stationary orbit should be more equitably shared as the common property of mankind.

. Social Consequences and NewTasks

Integrating Communication intoDevelopment-

Promotion of dialogue for development as acentral component of both communication anddevelopment policies In promoting communication policies, special attention should be

given to the use of non-technical language and comprehensible symbols, images and forms to ensure popular understanding of development issues and goals.

Facing the Technological Challenge

Devising policy instruments at the national level inorder to evaluate the positive and negative socialimplications of the introduction of powerful newcommunication technologiesIn developing countries the promotion ofautonomous research and development shouldblinked to specific projects and programmes at the national, regional and inter-regional levels,which are often geared to the satisfaction of basic needs the concentration of communications technology in arelatively few developed countries and transnationalcorporations has led to virtual monopoly situations in thisfield. To counteract these tendencies national andinternational measures are required, among them reformof existing patent laws and conventions, appropriatelegislation and international agreements.

Strengthening Cultural Identity-

   Establishment of national cultural policies, whichshould foster cultural identity and creativity, andinvolve the media in these tasks. Such policiesshould also contain guidelines for safeguarding national cultural development while promoting knowledge of other cultures.Communication and cultural policies shouldensure that creative artists and various grass-roots groups can make their voices heard through the media.Introduction of guidelines with respect toadvertising content and the values and attitudes itfosters, in accordance with national standards andpractices.

Reducing the Commercialization ofCommunication-

        In expanding communication systems, preference should be given to non-commercial forms of mass communication. Promotion of such types of communication should be integrated with the traditions, culture, development objectives and socio-political system of each country.

While acknowledging the need of the media for revenues, ways and means should be considered to reduce the negative effects that the influence of market and commercial considerations have in the organization and content of national and international communication flows

Access to Technical Information-

Developed countries should foster exchanges oftechnical information on the principle that allcountries have equal rights to full access toavailable information.Developing countries should adopt nationalinformatics policies as a matter of priority. Theseshould primarily relate to the establishment ofdecision-making centres.

Professional Integrity and Standards

-   **Responsibility of Journalists-**

The importance of the journalist's mission in thecontemporary world demands steps to enhancehis standing in society

To be treated as professionals, journalists requirebroad educational preparation and specificprofessional trainingSuch values as truthfulness, accuracy and respectfor human rights are not universally applied atpresent. Higher professional standards andresponsibility cannot be imposed by decree, nordo they depend solely on the goodwill of individual journalists, who are employed by institutions whichcan improve or handicap then-professionalperformance . As in other professions, journalists and mediaorganizations serve the public directly and thepublic, in turn, is entitled to hold them accountablefor their actions.

Towards Improved International Reporting-

All countries should take steps to assureadmittance of foreign correspondents and facilitatetheir collection and transmission of news.Conventional standards of news selection andreporting, and many accepted news values, needto be reassessed if readers and listeners aroundthe world are to receive a more faithful andcomprehensive account of events, movementsand trends in both developing and developedcountries.Reporters being assigned to foreign posts shouldhave the benefit of language training andacquaintance with the history, institutions, politics,economics and cultural environment of the countryor region in which they will be serving.

To offset the negative effects of inaccurate ormalicious reporting of international news, the rightof reply and correction should be furtherconsidered.

- **Protection of Journalists-**

The professional independence and integrity of allthose involved in the collection and disseminationof news, information and views to the publicshould be safeguarded.

Democratization of Communication

- **Human rights-**

All those working in the mass media should contribute to the fulfillment of human rights, both individual and collective, in the spirit of the UNESCO Declaration on the mass media and the International Bill of Human Rights. The media should contribute to promoting the just cause of peoples struggling for freedom and independence and their right to live in peace and equality without foreign interference.

While the report had strong international support, it was condemned by the United States and the United Kingdom as an attack on the freedom of the press, and both countries withdrew from UNESCO in protest in 1984 and 1985, respectively (and later rejoined in 2003 and 1997, respectively).

NWICO
(content and issues)

The New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO or NWIO) is a term that was coined in a debate over media representations of the developing world in UNESCO in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The term was widely used by the MacBride Commission, a UNESCO panel chaired by Nobel Peace Prize laureate Seán MacBride, which was charged with creation of a set of recommendations to make global media representation more equitable. The MacBride Commission produced a report titled "Many Voices, One World", which outlined the main philosophical points of the New World Information Communication Order.

NWICO grew out of the New International Economic Order of 1974. From 1976-1978, the New World Information and Communication Order was generally called the shorter New World Information Order or the New International Information Order.

The start of this discussion is the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) as associated with the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) starting from the early 1970s.

Mass media concerns began with the meeting of non-aligned nations in Algiers, 1973; again in Tunis 1976, and later in 1976 at the New Delhi Ministerial Conference of Non-Aligned Nations.

The 'new order' plan was textually formulated by Tunisia's Information Minister Mustapha Masmoudi. Masmoudi submitted working paper No. 31 to the MacBride Commission. These proposals of 1978 were titled the 'Mass Media Declaration.' The MacBride Commission at the time was a 16-member body created by UNESCO to study communication issues. Issued was Many Voices, One World (The MacBride Report), 1980, 312 pages, UNESCO.

The Resolution 4/19 Adopted by the Twenty-first Session of the UNESCO General Conference, Belgrade, 1980, was established as follows:

 The General conference considers that-

this new world information and communication order could be based, among other considerations, on:

- elimination of the imbalances and inequalities which characterize the present situation;
- elimination of the negative effects of certain monopolies, public or private, and excessive concentrations;
- removal of the internal and external obstacles to a free flow and wider and better balanced dissemination of information and ideas;
- plurality of sources and channels of information;
- freedom of the press and information;
- the freedom of journalists and all professionals in the communication media, a freedom inseparable from responsibility;
- the capacity of developing countries to achieve improvement of their own situations, notably by providing their own equipment, by training their personnel, by improving their infrastructures and by making their information and communication media suitable to their needs and aspirations;

- the sincere will of developed countries to help them attain these objectives;
- respect for each people's cultural identity and for the right of each nation to inform the world public about its interests, its aspirations and its social and cultural values;
- respect for the right of all peoples to participate in international exchanges of information on the basis of equality, justice and mutual benefit;
- respect for the right of the public, of ethnic and social groups and of individuals to have access to information sources and to participate actively in the communication process:
- this new world information and communication order should be based on the fundamental principles of international law, as laid down in the Charter of the United Nations;
- diverse solutions to information and communication problems are required because social, political, cultural and economic problems differ from one country to another and, within a given country, from one group to another

Issues

A wide range of issues were raised as part of NWICO discussions. Some of these involved long-standing issues of media coverage of the developing world and unbalanced flows of media influence. But other issues involved new technologies with important military and commercial uses. The developing world was likely to be marginalized by satellite and computer technologies. The issues included:

News reporting on the developing world that reflects the priorities of news agencies in London, Paris and New York. Reporting of natural disasters and military coups rather than the fundamental realities. At the time four major news agencies controlled over 80% of global news flow.

An unbalanced flow of mass media from the developed world (especially the United States) to the underdeveloped countries. Everyone watches American movies and television shows.

Advertising agencies in the developed world have indirect but significant effects on mass media in the developing countries. Some observers also judged the messages of these ads to be inappropriate for the Third World.

An unfair division of the radio spectrum. A small number of developed countries controlled almost 90% of the radio spectrum. Much of this was for military use.

There were similar concerns about the allocation of the geostationary orbit (parking spots in space) for satellites. At the time only a small number of developed countries had satellites and it was not possible for developing countries to be allocated a space that they might need ten years later. This might mean eventually getting a space that was more difficult and more expensive to operate.

Satellite broadcasting of television signals into Third World countries without prior permission was widely perceived as a threat to national sovereignty. The UN voted in the early 1970s against such broadcasts.

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Use of satellites to collect information on crops and natural resources in the Third World at a time when most developing countries lacked the capacity to analyze this data.

At the time most mainframe computers were located in the United States and there were concerns about the location of databases (such as airline reservations) and the difficulty of developing countries catching up with the US lead in computers.

The protection of journalists from violence was raised as an issue for discussion. For example, journalists were targeted by various military dictatorships in Latin America in the 1970s. As part of NWICO debates there were suggestions for study on how to protect journalists and even to discipline journalists who broke "generally recognized ethical standards". However, the MacBride Commission specifically came out against the idea of licensing journalists

Role of UN & UNESCO in bridging the gap between north and south

The United Nations plays a key role in overcoming one of the major challenges and harnessing one of the greatest opportunities facing humankind today bridging the gap both among and within countries. The importance of open, accessible, and relevantcommunications for fostering national development,social fulfilment, and human dignity, is undeniable .The more communicated a society is, the moreopportunities it will generate. Any platform and any media are relevant for thistask. However, the key of the contemporary equationlies in widespread digital connectivity, which meansupgrading information and communicationtechnologies (ICTs) in the developing world to thelevel already enjoyed by most developed countries.

This is the real meaning of bridging the gap. The taskis not just an issue of resources and technologies, nor of hardware and software. It is also a matter of wise priorities, good policies, intelligent leadership, transparent decision, and population involvement.

The good news is that the United Nations is alreadyworking hard towards bridging the gap, and is willingand capable of doing more. The bad news is that thechallenge is immense, and final success depends ona variety of actors and factors which include nationaland local governments, public organizations andprivate enterprises, technical improvements, as wellas political will and freedom

In order to expand its role and making greater inroads, the United Nations needs to work on twotracks—

maximizing its direct impact, and leveragingthe power of all relevant stakeholders, from both thesupply and demand ends of the communicationcontinuum.

Raising political awareness and commitment among states ,improving resource availability, and providing technical guidance and training. For example, in 1993, under request of the UnitedNations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the General Assembly established 3rd May as World Press Freedom Day, emphasizing the importance of opencommunications and free media, both for individualhuman beings and societies, as a foundation for civil and political rights, and as an instrument for inclusive development.. In November 2005, the World Summit on theInformation Society held in Tunis, and preceded byregional conferences, adopted an ambitious agendafor promoting ICT for development.

In 2006, 17 May was declared World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, thus bringing to the fore the relevance of the new media and technologies, and the urgency of bridging

the gap between the "have" and "have nots".

The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)and other UN agencies and programmes have provided technical assistance and expertise to Member States on ICT-related areas, including good regulation.

Also, training has been provided for both the public and private sectors in the use of new media and social networks . There is a key word for maximizing the impact of the UN beyond its direct actions partnerships. It is not just a matter of the UN directly partnering with outside (non-state) actors. It is also important to promote, at the national and international levels, good partnerships between businesses and academia, among diverse communities, or between grassroots organizations and potential "angel" supporters or investors

And, of course, to stimulate a clear commitment on the part of donors to support well-guided initiatives in the developing world. Effective and responsible local NGOs could also partner with the local offices and programs of the United Nations Development Program in developing creative ways to overcome, at the national level . The issues at stake are many and very important from much needed development to human rights, individual and collective opportunities, and the potential transformation of traditional power equations.

Thus, , the UN plays a major role in helping countries overcome the challenges and in leveraging the opportunities that lie ahead for ICT development. For multiplying the potential of partnerships, the UN will certainly need resources, but even more so openness, flexibility, and creativity on the part of its personnel and especially Member States in order to overcome a traditional reluctance to engage with other emerging stakeholders.

ROLE OF UNESCO

The role of the media in the changing world is now more important, more relevant than ever, it involves a mobilization, a call which has to emanate from the people, who can and must participate. UNESCO reaffirms its commitment to the " free flow of information" in order encourage the free flow of ideas byword and image and a wider and a better balance, dissemination of all forms of information contributing to the advancement of societies without any obstacle to freedom of expression, both through the traditional media and new electronic media system UNESCO has also endeavored, in recent years, to promote the educational and cultural dimensions in the media. The establishment in 1993 of the "World Radioand Television Council" was an important landmark in the direction. This move has also made it possible to disseminate information on the action taken by professional organization to reduce violence in the media and win recognition.

UNESCO's constitution states that is necessary to foster " the free exchange of ideas and knowledge to develop and increase the means of communication between peoples and to

employ" . For the current biennium 1998-99, freedom of expression and freedom of the press is still one of UNESCO's major programmes.

In the World Press Freedom Day celebrated on 3rd May,1998 , UNESCO's Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize was awarded. All members states made a special effort to celebrate the occasion which marked the fiftieth anniversary of Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

UNESCO's sub -program on "Media and freedom of expression" during 1998-99 focused on the following lines of action-

1) freedom of expression and freedom of the press

(2) Promoting independent and pluralistic media

(3) The educational and cultural mission of public service broadcasting, violence on the screen

(4) To enhance the role of women in the media

To have "access to information and new technologies" a project on Ethical and Socio -cultural Challenges of the New Information Society is planned and implemented jointly by sectors of Communication, information and informatics, Culture and Education. This inter-sectored project is aimed at strengthening UNESCO's role as a forum of reflection and clearing house on the impact of new information and technologies.

UNESCO is also committed to capacity building in Communication, information and informatics to help member states, particularly the developing countries and disadvantaged communities world-wide to strengthen their capacities in communication, information and informatics.

The mainlines of action for this are-

(1) assistance to project for the development of communication

(2) training of communication professionals

(3) development of community media UNESCO also continue to support the development of library and information service at the national andregional levels.

4) Development of library and information services including-

Restoration of world libraries and Upgrading of archival services

Bi-lateral, Multi-lateral and Regional /information Co-operation

Keeping in mind the situation from the time of second world war till date, it has become very important that both the global north and south operate with mutual understanding by co-operating with each other.

Thus there is a need for co-operation due to the following factors-

1. To give national identity and personality to the media
2. To give national perspective to the analysis of the World
3. To establish better understanding between developing countries
4. To stop foreign & alien culture, ideas and lifestyles
5. To give objective account of news and events

Bi-lateral means co-operation between two countries, multi-lateral means co-operation between more than two countries and regional co-operation means co-operation among the nations of a region, for example – SAARC countries, NAM countries etc.

Various forms of co-operation exist and they have their own positive as well as negative factors-

- **NANAP-**
  This is a pool of news agencies that was established by NAM countries to facilitate understanding by exchange of news and views with each other. It is a co-operative agreement for formed by news agencies of NAM countries. They exchange each others' news to counter the domination of western media and news agencies.
  It was made in 1976.

PROBLEMS IN INTER-REGIONAL CO-OPERATION
- Essentially domestic agencies serve purely national needs
- No changes are made in the news report according to readers abroad
- News are irrelevant to each others' needs
- Majority of these are hard news which don't attract the attention of editors in other countries
- Inaequate facilities
- Mutual distrust , e.g between India and Pakistan

  Due to these conditions , only mechanical exchange of information and not confidence and credibility of each others' media

SOUTH- SOUTH CO-OPERATON
It aims at increase in the quality and professionalism of media systems

It is based on co-operation and sacrifice between the countries of global south region.
It is important to develop each other's infrastructure

It is important to expand their news network abroad, a better situation that getting dependent on West for news.
It demands not only government but regional co-operation at the level of media also.

ISO 9001:2008 & 14001:2004

FAIRFIELD
Institute of Management & Technology
Managed by 'The Fairfield Foundation'
(Affiliated to GGSIP University, New Delhi)

REASONS OF DECLINE OF NANAP AFTER 1980's

A. US and UK retreated their memberships from the organization which caused financial loss to the pool. Also, western nations boycotted the organization and the nations involved in it.
B. In 1980, Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia died and the new govt. was not much interested in this exchange mechanism
C. In the same year, Iran and Iraq case happened. During this 8-yrs. War, INA and IRNA used NANAP for propaganda purpose.

Unit III [Contemporary Trends]

EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL MEDIA VILLAGE

The legendary media theorist, Marshall McLuhan, coined the term "The Global Village" to indicate the mass production and the mass consumption of media images and content across the world. The term denotes the coming together of the countries of the world in one gigantic web of media landscapes. To take an example, the popular US news channel, CNN, and the venerable British news channel, BBC, are available throughout the world. Similarly, in entertainment, we have the Star Group that is beamed throughout the world.

In knowledge and information category, we have National Geographic and Discovery that are available all over the world. What this means is that the ready availability of the same content throughout the world is binding the people in all countries to a common theme of oneness and shared media consumption. Hence, the term Global Village to indicate this phenomenon.

In the 1990s with the liberalization of many countries in the world, the global broadcasters entered countries like India in a big way. Though China had and still has restrictions on the kind of content that can be viewed in that country, the opening up of the Indian media landscape to foreign channels represented a revolution in the way media is produced and consumed in the country. Many experts have pointed to the liberalization of the Indian mindset because of the consumption of global media. Indeed, many Indians were exposed to the West for the first time and the consumption of western lifestyle imagery and consumer choices meant that the aspiring values of Indians went up. This was reflected in the burgeoning consumer culture that was the hallmark of the Indian consumer arena since the late 1990s. What this means is that Indians are no longer the monochromatic television viewers who had to contend with just one channel, but instead were consuming media images from across the world.

Similarly, many African countries were exposed to satellite television around this period for the first time. This resulted in greater awareness among the African people about the situation in the west and relatively comfortable lifestyles that the Westerners enjoyed. Like in many countries, the explosion of media choices leads to a widening of the debate in politics, economics, and

social sciences. This resulted in calls for greater freedom and better standard of living, which was manifested in the way the people in these countries, started using the media to voice their concerns.

The Media, in turn, were happy to transmit the aspirations of the people and it can be said that TV and Satellite TV in particular was the game changer for many countries that were throwing off the old habits and old attitudes and embracing the Western way of life. We shall be exploring these themes in detail in the subsequent articles. It would suffice here to say that Satellite TV played a prominent role in emancipation of women, more entertainment, and greater exposure to the youth resulting in the MTV Generation that was completely westernized and started to vote with their feet about the kind of products that they wanted to buy and consume.

In conclusion, the Global Village has meant that the vision of "One Market under God" has been realized and this has helped both the marketers who could market their products globally and the consumers who had more choices and a variety of options to choose from. Finally, it also resulted in greater political awareness and liberation of the attitudes among the youth

THE POLICIES OF GLOBAL COMMUNICATION

Communication policy of any state consists of Information policy , media policy and cultural policy. Communication policy is that policy which decides the nature, organizational structure and space given to people by that state in the areas of access and plurality of channels of communication and technology used therein. To understand the communication policy in the global context, we need to understand its dynamics at the basic level first.

CULTURAL POLICY - Mainly , it refers to the attitude of any govt. towards the cultural dynamics of the country- that is, its policy towards various the culture/s existing in the country along with the foreign culture that is entering it. The global trade policies, along with migration policy, tourism policy along with the attitude towards refugees reflects various policies adopted by the state towards encouraging or discouraging the existing plurality of cultures while maintain healthy inter-cultural dynamics.

INFORMATION POLICY- It refers to the policies adopted by a state towards the inflow and outflow of information through various channels and technologies. It includes not only the import and export of software part but hardware also. It includes a country's policy of issuing spectrum licensees, the authorities and institutions involved in the field of outsourcing , production and exchange of latest softwares and hardwares along with protecting the data through various cyber laws.

MEDIA POLICY- It refers to the policy of a state about the media existing in their own country as well as that operating from outside. It includes various policies for uplinking , downlinking of channels, % limit of FDI in various media, production and distribution technology and various regulations and Acts governing the content , structural-functioning and ownership patterns for national as well as transnational media.

Thus, it can be concluded that the type of communication policy that a country adopts not only towards the domestic cultural-information-media environment but towards the global media village. On this basis, we can say that the kind of communication policy that has been adopted by any state depends largely on the kind of freedom, if, given to various media and transnational agencies. Based on this, there are four theories that categorize the media systems being operated in various countries-

Authoritarian Theory- This is a system in which the press is subordinated to state power and interests of a ruling class. This kind of environment holds that press and other media should always be subordinate to established authority and should o nothing to undermine it. Media should avoid offence to the majority of dominant moral and political values. There is an arrangement of punishment for media in such system if it deviates from official policy. This kind of policy is found in dictatorial or repressive societies.

Free Press Theory- This kind of system is found in liberal democracies. It is based on the fundamental right of an individual to freedom of expression, which is regarded as the main legitimating principle for print media in liberal democracies. It says that an individual should be free to publish what he or she likes; it is thus extension of others' rights to hold opinions freely, to express them, to assemble and organize with others. But this freedom is not absolute. To prevent it from threatening good morals and authority of the state, it must be restrained.

Social Responsibility Theory- It is based on the observation that the free market has failed to fulfill some obligations to society. According to it, the press has not met the informational, social and moral needs of the society. In fact, it has increased the power of a single class. So, it says that media serve essential purpose in society. Therefore it should accept and fulfill certain obligations to society by setting up high standards, like- truth, objectivity and balance. In accepting and is charging these functions, media should be self-regulatory within the framework of law and established institutions. It should undermine the news which might lead to crime, violence and social tension in the public interest. This kind of policy is generally adopted by most of the developing democratic countries.

Communist Media Theory- Also called soviet media theory, this kind of policy is found in the nations with communist regimes. Derived from the basic tenets of Marx and Engels, it envisages media to be under the control of the working class whose interest they are to serve. Private ownership of the press or media is ruled out. The media must serve positive functions in society related to information, education, motivation and mobilization. The media must project society in accordance with the Marxist-Leninist principles. They must support progressive movements in the country and abroad.

So, the media is subjected to ultimate control of the State and are integrated with other instruments of political life.

Global Communication and Culture

Cultural Imperialism Theory states that Western nations dominate the media around the world which in return has a powerful effect on Third World Cultures by imposing n them Western

views and therefore destroying their native cultures. As television has embraced a huge number of nations we shall speak about global international market. The term "cultural imperialism" primarily appeared to demonstrate negative consequences of media spread throughout the world. So the initial definition of this process still keeps its negativity. As the term "cultural imperialism" demonstrates a modern manifestation of colonial and imperial relationships when peripheral countries are turned into markets for the cultural products of dominant nations. This negativity is caused by the appearance of one-way flow of television programming with dominance of the United States-produced media products. Simply it demonstrates the unfair exchange of media products in favor of the West. Such one-way flow is used to be called as imbalance in media production and distribution, "electronic neocolonialism" and even "Dallasification". The last term came from the popular American serial "Dallas" which was widely spread and demonstrating the American lifestyle and values throughout the world. The special stress is made on unequal existence of local and foreign information sources with the great domination of the latter which has reached the volume allowing to call it propaganda. The cultural imperialism through TV is considered to be attempts to create one standard set of stereotyped ideas and values within the world.

DEMOCRATISATION OF COMMUNICATION

It was one of the most important recommendations of MacBride Commission that even today's media needs to follow. Various flaws and barriers that hamper the process of communication are proof of a lack of democratic relationships. For the interest of the general public, the field of communication needs to be democratized.

Here communication refers to all kinds of media institutions as well as media persons working in them. Democratization refers to 'the process whereby (a) individual becomes an active partner and not a mere object of communication (b) the variety of message exchange increases (c) the extent and quality of social representation or participation in communication is augmented.

Thus, democratizing today's field of communication demands -

A. Broader public access to the media and overall communication system, through assertion of the right to reply and criticize, various forms of feedback , and regular contact between communicators and the public.
B. Participation of non-professionals in producing an broadcasting programmes, which enables them to make active use of information resources, and is also an outlet for individual skill and sometimes for artistic creativity .
C. The development of alternative channels of communication, usually but not always on a local scale.
D. Participation of the community and media-users in management and decision-making

Following all these steps to democratize the media demands a rigorous change in the current socio-political economy of the national as well as global media. While this process demands following of human rights by the journalists and media houses as well, it also applies the principle of giving importance to all the cultures, regions an religions,

communities by the media , especially in a country like India, so that its cultural diversity and plurality can be maintained.

It also highlights the role of social media- blogs, SNS, Tweets etc. that eliminate the difference between producer and consumer of content, thereby creating a new era of citizen journalism.

An important but tough task is the inclusion of social representation in the management and decision-process of media. While recent studies have proved that the representation of women in media is very low at global level, the representation of lower castes and communities are at their lowest in the Indian Media. So, to facilitate the diversity and plurality of opinion and communication and information channels, the current monopolizing form of cross-media ownership needs to be limited to avail the communication resources to tose-general public and common people , whom they really belong to.

Unit IV [Global Media Impact on India]

HEGEMONY OF INTERNATIONAL MEDIA MUGHALS

The decentralized nature of the Internet makes it very different from more traditional mass media, which distribute content created by the media industries. Global messages developed by the media industries are distributed through global media systems, such as CNN. CNN can distribute the same message throughout its worldwide television system. Prior to the 1990s, media systems were primarily national systems, but during the 1990s a global commercial media market emerged. According to McChesney (1999), "the rise of a global media market is encouraged by new digital and satellite technologies that make global markets both cost-effective and lucrative". Contributing to the trend toward media globalization was the formation of transnational corporations, the World Trade Organization (WTO), and the World Bank. All of these organizations helped to create a new form of global capitalism that uses global media to disseminate messages to global consumers.

In addition to financial interests, global media have an impact on media content, politics, and culture. Like the Internet, global media are influenced by the culture and interests of the United States. In some ways, global media could be considered an extension of the American system. At present, the United States exports more entertainment products than any other nation. McChesney (1999) reports that American media companies "have aggressively established numerous global editions of their channels to accommodate the new market". Three of the most important transnational media corporations are Time Warner (now AOL Time Warner), Disney, and News Corporation. In terms of globalization, American cable companies have been called cable colonialists because they control the worldwide export of media content and attempt to establish digital satellite TV systems in regional and national markets around the world.

As the Internet becomes a broadband medium, it is increasingly taking on the characteristics of a mass medium rather than an interpersonal one. In the future, mass media trends could be extended to the Internet. For instance, a recent study of Dutch children's Internet usage revealed that they primarily used the Internet as a leisure medium to play games, watch video clips, and visit entertainment sites. Research on Americans however, shows people primarily use the Internet to maintain social relationships through e-mail. The Dutch study was conducted by Valkenburg and Soeters (2001), who examined children's home Internet usage. They found three primary motives for children's Internet use: affinity with computers, information seeking, and entertainment. Children must first of all enjoy sitting in front of a computer, the researchers found. Second, children use the Internet to find information about hobbies and homework assignments. Finally, they visit entertainment Web sites. The use of the Internet as an entertainment and leisure medium is similar to television usage.

Although transnational media corporations are attempting to establish operations in nations around the world, some countries want to protect their domestic media and culture industries. Some nations, including Norway, Denmark, Spain, Mexico, and South Korea, have established government subsidies to maintain their own domestic film industries. The British government proposed a voluntary levy on the revenues from domestic film theaters, which show predominantly Hollywood movies. These theater revenues could then be used to subsidize the British commercial film industry. However, the proposal was not passed by Parliament. Culture ministers from a variety of nations have been discussing how they can protect their own cultural identities in an increasingly American-influenced global media environment. Some nations, such as Singapore, edit and censor for broadcast media content created in the United States. Language usage, for instance, in the Singapore version of the Sopranos is vastly different from the American version because curse words have been edited out of the sound track. In such ways, individual nations can establish barriers that make it more difficult for global companies to broadcast their American-produced content.

Global media systems have been considered a form of cultural imperialism. Cultural imperialism takes place when a country dominates others through its media exports, including advertising messages, films, and television and radio programming. America's dominance in the entertainment industries made it difficult for other cultures to produce and distribute their own cultural products. Supporters of American popular culture argue that the universal popularity of American media products promotes a global media system that allows communication to cross national boundaries. American popular culture in addition challenges authority and outmoded traditions. Critics of American culture contend that cultural imperialism prevents the development of native cultures and has a negative impact on teenagers. Teenagers in other nations have rejected their own cultural music and dress. Instead, they want to wear American jeans and listen to American recording artists. Rock groups from other countries will even sing in English rather than use their native tongue.

A larger concern in the emerging global information economy is the fact that most of the world's population cannot afford the types of products advertised on global media. People who are constantly exposed to these media messages may want to own products that they can never

afford, which could cause social unrest. Mass media portray a lifestyle of consumption that is very different from the lifestyles of people living in many other cultures.

From news to entertainment to hardware and technology , International ,m mainly western media moguls dominate -

GLOBAL MEDIA LEAERS 2010

- Time Warner (US)
- Disney (US)
- News Corp (US)
- Viacom + CBS (US)
- GE-NBC Universal (US)
- Sony (Japan)
- Bertelsmann (Germany)
- VNU (The Netherlands)
- Vivendi (france)
- Discovery communications

Top News Agencies –

- AP (US)
- UPI (US)
- Reuters (Britain)
- AFP (France)
- Bloomberg (Germany)
- Xinhua (China)
- Inter press Service (rome)

TRANSNATIONAL MEDIA AND INDIA

The last two decades have witnessed a dramatic transformation of India's 'mediascape' – a term first used by Arjun Appadurai, an academic of Indian origin based in the United States, to describe how visual imagery impacts the world and to describe and situate the role of the mass media in global cultural flows. While there is much that is praiseworthy about the manner in which large sections of the media have strengthened the world's largest democracy, there are also a lot of disquieting features that have come to characterize the current working of certain newspapers, television channels and Internet websites in the country – including the phenomenon of "paid news" and other crass forms of commercialization. From the early 1990s, when the working of the Indian economy was liberalized, the media has expanded as never before with the advent of new communication technologies and the burgeoning of the urban middle classes, whose consumerist aspirations made them targets for advertisers. India has the largest number of newspapers/publications in comparison with any country in the world. There

are over 60,000 publications currently registered with the Registrar of Newspapers of India. According to The Economist (July 7, 2011), India is now the fastest growing and biggest newspaper market in the world, having overtaken China to become the leader in paid-for daily circulation with 110 million copies sold each day. The growth in the number of television channels has been exponential. In 1991, there was one public broadcaster, Doordarshan. At present, over 600 TV channels have been permitted by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to uplink or downlink from the country. The number of radio stations using the frequency modulation (FM) broadcasting mode, too, has zoomed and will go up further – from over 250 now to around 1,200 in the next five years. And no one really has an estimate of the number of Internet websites catering to Indian users.

But quantity has not translated into quality. Defying conventional norms of capitalism, the intensification of competition in the media has been accompanied by a discernible lowering of ethical standards. The race to grab eyeballs has seen a simultaneous 'dumping down' of content as TV channels have become prisoners of a highly inadequate and flawed system of ascertaining audience sizes through TRPs (television rating points). With rules getting changed to attract foreign capital, it was hardly surprising that one of the first transnational media corporations to enter India in 1991 after lasciviously eying its market potential for years was the Rupert Murdoch-controlled STAR (Satellite Television Asia Region) group.

Murdoch clearly read the writing on the wall. His Indian empire now spans TV content production and distribution to news, publishing and cinema. The STAR India group is one of the biggest (in terms of turnover) media conglomerates in the country. It claims it has the largest number of viewers (around 170 million every week) for its 32 channels in eight languages, including STAR Plus, STAR One, STAR Gold, Channel V, STAR Jalsha, STAR Pravah, STAR World, STAR Movies, STAR Utsav and joint venture channels such as Asianet, Sky News, FX, Fox Crime, STAR Vijay, STAR News, ESPN and STAR Sports, among others. The STAR group has also partnered the Tata group for its direct-to-home (DTH) TV distribution operations.

Indian operations

Murdoch himself described News Corp's Indian operation as a "next generation" prospect. The success of Murdoch's Indian ventures has relied on his smart blending of commercial and Western methods with a localized approach. He was one of the first to introduce a music TV channel in India (Channel [V]); a 24×7 news network (STAR News); and a successful adaptation of an international game show ("Kaun Banega Crorepati", an Indian version of the British "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?").

The concentration of media ownership in the hands of large corporate groups; the increasing reliance on advertising revenue leading to a frenzied quest for ever-higher ratings; an exaggerated focus on what is often dubiously defined as "breaking news", so-called "exclusive" stories and the use of "anything goes" tactics; a restriction of topics to those that will interest the affluent middle class (the most profitable targets for advertisers); a sexing-up of news content and catering to the "lowest common denominator"; an increasingly uncomfortable closeness

between marketing and editorial departments; and the transformation of news into a commodity. These are all facets of "Murdochisation" that can be seen across large sections of the media in India.

James Bennett, who in the early 19th century founded The Herald, one of the first American tabloids, said that newspapers ought "not to instruct, but to startle". According to Thussu and others, the channels in the STAR group led the way in developing content that is sensationalist and emphasizes urban, Westernized, consumerist concerns, with a particular emphasis on sex and celebrity culture as well as the three Cs that Indians are supposed to be obsessed with: crime, cricket and cinema. Furthermore, many of India's newspapers are now openly partisan, taking on the aggressive style and tone of the Murdoch-controlled and strongly conservative Fox News and other media vehicles in the News Corp group.

The STAR News program "Sansani" (meaning 'sensation' in Hindi) focuses on metropolitan crime, rape and murder. Similarly, the program "Red Alert", which is about police efforts to deal with crime, uses a tabloid tone and is often thin on factual information. The aim is to dramatize and sensationalize stories, often using inspired representations of crime depicted in Hollywood and Hindi films. Lamenting recent changes in journalistic practices, N. Ram, Editor-in-Chief of The Hindu, has stated: "This is a disturbing trend. Investigative journalism has been given a bad name by the invasive spy camera."

It is not just STAR News that gives wide coverage to celebrities and their sex lives. As the media critic Sevanti Ninan has remarked: "Thanks to Mr. Murdoch, we watch more TV than ever before. That his product is neither elevating nor edifying is beside the point. Nobody else's is, either."- AFP

For example, Aaj Tak of the TV Today group launched a channel called Tez (meaning fast) with the tag line "Khabarein Phataphat" (snappy news). The channel will not indulge in "long-winded discussions or unnecessary analysis", promised Aroon Purie, its chief executive. If the business model of a media company is solely based on ways to increase circulation/viewership, the shock value of news content indeed becomes paramount. The kind of cut-throat tactics used by sections of the media in India to be the first with the news is reminiscent of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair's description of the media in the United Kingdom as a "feral beast" – he compared journalists to an unruly pack of hungry animals, in a speech delivered in June 2007.

The coverage of the November 2008 terrorist attacks in Mumbai brought to light many of these issues. In a scramble for the most startling images and sound bites, extremely insensitive methods were used, and in many cases unverified information was purveyed as fact. Another striking example of the way in which a section of the Indian media acted unethically was in the manner in which 14-year-old Aarushi Talwar's murder in May 2008 was covered and even sought to be 'fictionalized'. With the rising clout of advertisers in the working of media companies, one sees a breaking down of the Chinese wall that once existed between marketing and editorial departments. In 2003, Bennett, Coleman & Co. Ltd (BCCL, which publishes,

among other newspapers, The Times of India, Economic Times and Maharashtra Times – all market leaders in their categories) started a "paid content" service called Media net, which sent journalists to cover product launches or celebrity-related events for a fee. Its competitors pointed out that this practice blatantly violated journalistic ethics, but the BCCL management claimed that it was acceptable given that such "advertorials" appeared in the city-specific colour supplement on society trivia rather than in the main newspaper itself.

Paid news

Media net effectively institutionalized the phenomenon of paid news, which involves paying newspapers and broadcasters for positive coverage. Disguised as news, it is more effective than simple advertising, as it misleads the reader or viewer into thinking that the information or views being put out have been independently obtained by the journalist.

Even as other media companies followed in the footsteps of BCCL, this nefarious practice spread to the realm of political news and became widespread in the run-up to the 2009 Lok Sabha elections. 'Rate cards' or 'packages' were given on plain sheets of paper that listed rates for publication of editorial content that praised a particular candidate or criticised his or her political opponents. Candidates who refused to comply with these conditions were denied coverage.

In its non-institutionalized (and illegal as opposed to purely objectionable) forms, these practices are extremely difficult to prove because the financial transactions occur without any official record. This led to some comical situations as was pointed out by P. Sainath in a series of articles published in The Hindu. Although any wrongdoing was vehemently denied, the then Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Ashok Chavan, was unable to explain how identical articles praising his achievements and qualities were published within days of each other in separate, competing newspapers.

The Press Council of India entrusted a subcommittee (of which one of the authors of this article, Paranjoy Guha Thakurta, was a member) to write a report on paid news. The report assembled circumstantial evidence and named leading newspapers that had apparently received funds for publishing information, sought to be disguised as news, in favor of particular individuals, including representatives of political parties who were contesting elections.

Owing to the influence of a powerful lobby of publishers in the Council, a highly watered-down version of the report was presented to the government after a show of hands (no formal voting was recorded) at a meeting of the Council on July 31, 2010. However, the subcommittee's full, 71-page report was leaked and is available on a number of websites. This episode was commented on recently by Vice-President Mohammed Hamid Ansari. Speaking in Indore on July 15, on the occasion of the 75th birth anniversary of the late Prabhash Joshi (who had vehemently opposed paid news), the Vice-President observed that the Press Council's "inability to go public with its report on paid news is a pointer to the problems of self-regulation and the 'culture of silence' in the entire industry when it comes to self-criticism".

"Private treaties"

Another worrying trend in the media has been "private treaties" scheme, also pioneered by BCCL, which involves giving advertising space to corporate entities in exchange for equity shares. The success of this scheme turned BCCL into one of the largest private equity investors in India. Although BCCL spokespersons argue that editorial content is not influenced by advertisers and companies in which BCCL has investments, the potential for conflict of interest is obvious given the porous nature of the marketing-editorial wall. If favourable news is published about a client and adverse news is not reported, both the publishing company and the advertising company stand to gain.

The fall in stock-market indices in recent years and the decision of the income tax authorities to value the transactions at the old 'inflated' values at which transactions had taken place (instead of current prices) and shown as assessable taxable income robbed the private treaties scheme of some of its sheen. As in the case of Medianet, the private treaties scheme was started by BCCL, and others were quick to follow. On August 27, 2010, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) issued guidelines that made it mandatory for all media companies to disclose their interests in companies about whom articles were published or TV program broadcast, but it appears as if these guidelines are not being implemented sincerely.

Advertisers, predictably, target specific sections of the population that have purchasing power. If editorial content is determined only by what will maximize readership/viewership, the inevitable effect is a decrease in diversity. So we witness both a homogenization of content and a bias towards content that is of relevance only to urban, affluent or middle-class consumers.

During the 2008 terror attacks in Mumbai, the media were criticized for demonstrating class bias in their reporting. Undue coverage was given to what had happened at the five-star Taj and Oberoi Trident hotels over events at the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus, where ordinary people were killed. The problem here is more insidious than blatant cases of corruption since it has an effect of disconnecting the media from the concerns of the majority of the population, thereby resembling what Noam Chomsky has called the "manufacturing of consent", which is the creation of media representations by corporate groups, press barons, and politicians to serve their interests.

Regulation

Regulation can be the answer to this problem, particularly competition regulation to prevent cartelization and anti-competitive behavior, especially since the Press Council's writ is confined to the print medium and the quasi-judicial body has no punitive powers.

In February 2009, the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) submitted to the Information and Broadcasting Ministry a report entitled "Recommendations on Media Ownership". This report, which has not yet been made public (but a copy of which is available with the writers of this article), has advocated that "necessary safeguards be put in place to

ensure plurality and diversity are maintained across the three media segments of print, television and radio".

The report, prepared with the help of the Administrative Staff College of India, Hyderabad, has suggested measures to restrict cross-media ownership to some extent and to maintain a distinction between the broadcaster and the distributor in order to avoid anti-competitive behavior and media monopolies. It has also pointed out that one of the main problems with current media regulations in India is that these are based on companies, not corporate groups or conglomerates. Many large corporate groups own different companies and are, therefore, able to bypass restrictions totally. No action has been taken so far on the TRAI's recommendations.

Important individuals in all governments – in the U.K., India and elsewhere – like to cultivate the media even as they have a love-hate relationship with journalists and their employers. But time alone will answer the question as to whether the phone hacking scandal relating to News of the World – and the manner in which the Murdoch's and senior staffers once employed by companies controlled by them were publicly interrogated – will have a salutary effect on the promoters and editors of Indian media organizations.

Global media and the promotion of the cult of stars.

In assessing the current state of media conglomeration and corporate synergy, one key case study is the rise of multi-platform storytelling because it is a media trend that exemplifies corporate synergy. It is also important to examine the continuing development of related media practices such as crowd sourcing, mass customization, and user-generated content. All of these practices involve media production models that profit media conglomerates by coordinating among their different divisions, and they also entail monetizing how consumers try to interact with the media, turning fan behaviors into corporate profit, or seizing the democratic promise of new media for corporate gain. This topic is important to understand the competing trends in multi-platform storytelling, from corporate branding to more audience-centered, creative uses of the media technology that allows for greater user access and agency. As I will demonstrate, while corporate branding dominates, and many transmedia texts reflect this dynamic, alternative practices are nevertheless present and proffer other potential uses of transmedia storytelling.

Multi-platform storytelling refers specifically to texts where content appears in a coordinated way across many different media formats (such as television, film, episodes, mobile phone applications and mobisodes, games, books, graphic novels, and music albums) (Jenkins, 2006). For some popular Web content, audiences increasingly expect to see it directly linked to a broader array of media texts. These media formats have evolved in ways that speak to the cultural power of the Internet and to changing expectations of the entertainment content audiences seek there. The entertainment industry has new organizations and production models targeting this market. The Producer's Guild of American now recognizes transmedia producer as a category. A growing number of transmedia companies are appearing, often comprised of production units trying to generate transmedia content across film, games, TV, the Web, and mobile phones.

While multi-platform storytelling is not a new development, it is a booming media trend that reflects tendencies in the use of digital culture in the context of today's convergence culture. Convergence culture, in which old and new media systems interact in new ways and content flows across multiples media platforms, entails new media financing formats and cooperation between various media industries. Henry Jenkins (2006) notes that developments like digitization and new patterns of cross-media ownership beginning in the 1980s helped drive convergence culture, with media conglomerates moving to own interests across the industry, in film, television, popular music, computer games, Web sites, toys, amusement park rides, books, newspapers, magazines, and comics.1 Jenkins argues that convergence culture centrally involves dynamics that give greater agency and access to audiences, such as new interplay between producers and consumers, participatory fan culture, consumers becoming more active (seeking out entertainment they want across different media platforms), and new and unpredictable interactions between grassroots and corporate media. While he acknowledges that what he terms "transmedia storytelling" does involve corporate synergy, he insists that the more positive potential for fan expression and partial control is the more dominant dynamic in models such as "co-creation" between producers and consumers (Jenkins, 2006). While I would agree with Jenkins that there are some more audience-centered practices evident in some transmedia storytelling, which are promising developments from the point of view of benefitting audiences, I differ from him in arguing that the corporate branding dynamic is still a central part of the transmedia storytelling trend in ways that can be problematic.

Indeed, other scholars have critiqued how corporations have moved to monetize some of these trends. Jennifer Gillan (2011) has noted how television production companies are creating TV shows as a multi-platform network of texts by, in part, monetizing pre-existing fandom practices such as fan-centered websites (p. 2). Mark Andrejevic and others worry that developments like the rise of interactive media harness the democratic promise of the Internet for corporate profit and condition consumers to accept greater surveillance of them (in practices like mass customization marketing) and model neoliberal citizenship. More generally, Eileen Meehan (2005) has demonstrated how corporate synergy, involving cross-promotion of media properties within media conglomerates (and their trans-industrial structures) for maximum profit, can serve as a media conglomerate technique for controlling media markets through saturation. She details how this industry practice is driven by corporate profit motives, not audience interest, as the audiences-as-product are sold to advertisers and organized by demographics. In terms of corporate synergy and branding, Meehan (2005) notes that "the saturation of multiple markets with branded products means less air time, cable time, shelf space, and the like for nonbranded products" . The increasing turn to transmedia storytelling in current media culture only amplifies these corporate branding practices.

For television specifically, companies have moved to incorporate new media developments, creating elements for their TV shows such as fan-centered websites, mobile phone applications, online games, and even music albums and tours, all imagined as features that help further the content. Gillian (2011) identifies two stages of TV development in terms of how networks have monetized fandom practices and mainstreamed them. In the 1990s, networks transformed TV series into platforms for promoting other media (like the "Dawson's Desktop"

fan website for Dawson's Creek [1998-2003]). However, in the 2000s, new TV product is now conceptualized as a series of networked texts that prompt fans to track the content across multiple media platforms (like Heroes [2006-2010], which created a fan-centered website) (Gillian, 2011).

This multiplatform content is now central to what TV does and how it as an industry is trying to survive in the face of competition from other popular media platforms (like video games, social networking on the Web, content for smart phones, YouTube and other user-generated content websites, and even YouTube's sponsorship of professional channels designed to compete with television). Gillan (2011) argues that a model of multiplatform content also allows broadcast networks to target two audiences at once: the broader audience of the traditional broadcast platform, but now also the narrowcast audience of the multiplatform (smaller niche audiences who might, for example, play video games related to the TV series). Hence the TV industry has a new model of a combination "narrowcast-broadcast" TV series, and advertisers have embraced this model by participating in branded entertainment deals . This kind of model depends on attracting active fans who will become "brand advocates" who nurture fan networks, reposting content and links to their social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, etc.).

Examples of the rise in multi-platform texts include the Harry Potter franchise, which began as novels by J.K. Rowling, expanded into a film series, Web tie-ins, novelizations of the film versions, smart phone apps, and even a theme park (The Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Orlando's Islands of Adventure). Again, the transmedia Potter text depends on active fans who will seek out, share that content, and also interact with it. Because of the highly active fan culture around the Potter franchise, and the large number of fan fiction websites, Rowling has created the Potter more website to add more content to her series and to provide a space for further fan interaction. A fascinating development in the Harry Potter fan culture is the existence of college Quidditch teams, comprised of fans who play the fictional Potter sport against other teams, both intramurally and intermurally, with players decked out in jerseys, wielding brooms, and living out their Potter universe fantasies. While the fan culture allows audiences spaces for their own creativity and interpretations (and fan and audience behavior cannot be predicted or controlled by producers), nevertheless, the multi-platform text is designed specifically to profit from and monetize fan behaviors.

A new development in terms of multi-platform storytelling involves fictional TV series that add a tied-in reality show, which becomes a way to incorporate fandom practices and profit from user-generated content. In Glee, for example, as part of voluminous transmedia storytelling, the Fox series features numerous online music albums and singles on iTunes (many frequently placing in the iTunes bestseller lists), Web tie-ins, a smart phone application ("The Glee Experience") that lets fans sing karaoke along with the Glee cast, and even a nation-wide musical tour with cast members performing in character. On the Glee YouTube channel, fans can watch sneak peeks that include scenes and musical numbers from upcoming episodes, plus behind the scenes videos. Fans can also receive text messages about Glee content, like hints about future plotlines. The transmedia storytelling of Glee continued with Glee: The 3D Concert Movie

(2011). Most significantly, Glee added a reality TV gamedoc to involve fans more fully (in voting for a "fan favorite" to win a $10,000 prize) and to provide fans a chance to win a role on the series Glee itself. The Glee Project (Oxygen, 2011-) is designed to award the winner with a contract to be on Glee in a seven-episode character arc. The gamedoc provides marketing for Glee but also exists as a stand-alone text itself, meaning that viewers do not have to watch Glee to understand The Glee Project. Contestants sing and act and compete to win time with mentors from Glee. All appear in a weekly music video which the judges evaluate and then pick the bottom three for a sign-off, which determines who will be sent home. For the separate "fan favorite" contest, viewers vote on the Oxygen website (at oxygen.com) and access additional videos with more content from The Glee Project. Glee's transmedia storytelling has successfully generated an entire subculture of fans, dubbed Gleeks, who seek out and consume all Glee content across these various media platforms. With the reality show tie-in in particular, however, the Fox series extends its branding onto another cable channel, and it also prompts fans to want to become the cast members they see on the show -- once they literally do that, the audience really is entertaining the audience, generating corporate profits.

A Kardashian World

One of the best examples of a problematic use of transmedia storytelling is the reality television franchise Keeping Up With the Kardashians, which is rapidly turning an entire cable channel's programming into highly aggressive branding and corporate synergy in a way that exploits fan practices, eschews creative storytelling, and instead focuses on media saturation and product placement supported by loosely scripted stock plotlines. That reality franchise bears further scrutiny, not least because it is also a key instance of a channel profiting from participatory fan culture. It does so in part by manipulating narrative and thematic elements. These include the reality show practice of turning real people into stereotypical types, what I have elsewhere analyzed as "character narratives," where cast members are portrayed as story "types" starring in elaborate storylines shaped by the rhythms of fictional TV genres, such as sitcoms, soap operas, or dramas (Edwards, 2004). Reality television reverses classic narrative. Instead of trying to make characters seem real, it makes real people into characters, using predictable and repetitive narrative frames.

The E! Kardashian franchise involves a planned multi-platform text in the sense that each additional text contributes to the whole but can stand alone, and each takes the story of this family's life into a specific media environment in order to further the story and communicate with fans. In a striking piece of transmedia storytelling as corporate synergy, the E! network often uses their nightly entertainment news program, E! News Live, to interview Kardashian cast members and to recirculate entertainment news about the show, which functions as quite aggressive marketing for the program (with news host Ryan Sea crest, media mogul and prolific reality TV developer, notably serving as one of the program's executive producers). The reality show has generated successful spin-offs (Khloé and Lamar and Kourtney and Kim Take New York, a continuation of Kourtney and Khloé Take Miami). It also became the basis for a related reality show about Kim Kardashian's public relations representations (and close friends), Jonathan Chebon and Simon Huck, entitled The Spin Crowd. That particular text, a procedural reality show that followed public relations executives, became a blatant vehicle for simple

The Kardashian intertexts thus exemplify what Meehan (2005) describes as corporate synergy practices, such as spin-offs, recirculation, repackaging (in DVDs for sale), reversioning (behind the scenes specials), recycling (clip shows), and redeployment. Indeed, in addition to the spin-off shows, the Kardashian franchise also featured two different wedding specials, one depicting Khloé Kardashian's wedding to NBA player Lamar Odom, the other, Kim's Fairytale Wedding: A Kardashian Event, exhaustively chronicling Kim Kardashian's ill-fated wedding to NBA player Kris Humphries. In other reality roles, stepfather Bruce Jenner has appeared on reality shows previously (I'm a Celebrity...Get Me Out of Here, Skating With Celebrities), Kim and brother Rob Kardashian have both competed on Dancing With the Stars, and stepbrother Brody Jenner, who sometimes guest stars on Keeping Up With the Kardashians, has starred on several reality shows (MTV's The Hills, Bromance, and FOX's short-lived The Princes of Malibu, which was about two of Bruce Jenner's sons from a previous marriage).

In other transmedia features, the Kardashian books include Kris Jenner's autobiography (Kris Jenner...And All Things Kardashian [2011]) and the New York Times bestseller, Kardashian Konfidential (2010), a book about how sisters Kim, Kourtney, and Khloé experience their reality stardom and their pre-stardom lives. Additional online content includes pitches for the products they promote on their shows. Their aggressive marketing and product integration includes a nail polish line, clothing lines (with various companies, including Sears and QVC), perfume lines, diet supplements (QuickTrim), cosmetics (Perfect Skin), and a short-lived credit card endorsement that the Kardashians abandoned when there was a fan outcry over the card's exorbitant interest rates. Other product integration includes three locations of their own clothing boutique, Dash (with stores in Los Angeles, Miami, and New York), which become frequent settings on the series.

In marketing that blurs the line between the reality show and commercials, the Kardashian sisters promote their various products with commercials that use their personae from their reality shows. In such appearances and in interviews, the three sisters often roll their eyes at their momager Kris Jenner, who is portrayed as overbearing, yet they also acknowledge her as the family media mogul and executive producer on the Kardashian branded reality shows. Jenner provides one key guiding vision to how the family is portrayed, marketed, and branded.

The Kardashian shows have been polarizing, not least because of their obvious profit motive and manipulation, and all of the aggressive product integration, product endorsement, and branding. The family shares a six-figure payment for each reality episode, but their endorsements earn them much more, with the family pocketing $65 million in 2010 alone (Newman, 2011). In perhaps the best example of narrative manipulation in the service of profits, with Kim's wedding special, the franchise turned a fairytale romance and wedding story into a multi-million dollar wedding. The televised special covering the wedding aired in two parts and garnered high ratings for E! (4.4 million viewers the first night and 4 million the second) (Collins, 2011). With the lavish, multi-million dollar wedding came media comparisons to the Prince William and

Princess Catherine royal wedding (earning the Kardashians sometimes satirical analogies to American versions of celebrity as royalty). When Kim's media spectacle wedding to Kris Humphries ended in divorce 72 days later, many journalists and commentators criticized the opulent wedding and questioned whether the marriage had been a sham for the cameras. As part of the media backlash, one viewer even started a petition to ban the Kardashians from television because she felt they embodied empty, materialistic values and that the public had "had enough" of them. Addressed to E!, with more than 165,000 signatures, the online petition states: "We are respectfully requesting that your network find other shows to air. Keeping up with the Kardashians is just not viewing that we the public would like to see from your network. Enough is enough." When interviewed in the press, petition organizer Cyndi Snider explained: We feel that these shows are mostly staged and place an emphasis on vanity, greed, promiscuity, vulgarity and over-the-top conspicuous consumption. While some may have begun watching the spectacle as mindless entertainment or as a sort of 'reality satire,' it is a sad truth that many young people are looking up to this family and are modeling their appearance and behavior after them.)

However, the next season premiere of the reality show Courtney and Kim Take New York (in November 2011), which promised to explain what happened in the marriage and why it ended in divorce, garnered the highest ratings for the series yet (3.2 million viewers, up from the show's January 2011 premiere of 3 million viewers). The record ratings suggest that on one level, the negative publicity had only helped the Kardashian celebrity branding efforts.

In part, as a transmedia story, the Kardashian franchise is tied to the appeal of the familiar TV narratives the family embodies. Even if viewers felt cheated by the marriage narrative, fans will return for a new narrative, i.e. the story of how it all went wrong. The new story hook becomes Kim's reassessment of her idealistic true love concepts and her embrace of a more worldly view of relationships in today's society (in which over 50 percent of all marriages end in divorce). Yet even as such stories cross different media platforms and prompt fan interaction, they depend on stereotypical character narratives and recycled reality sitcom and docusoap types. Kris Jenner appears as the overbearing matriarch to her children with her late first husband Robert Kardashian (famous as one of O.J. Simpson's attorneys). Daughter Kim is framed as the uptight perfectionist, Khloé as the irreverent funny sister, and Courtney the laid-back sibling who is herself a new mother contending with an alcoholic boyfriend. Rob has a storyline in which he struggles to break out of his character narrative as the lazy, aimless brother who lives off of his sisters. Even his Dancing With the Stars appearance furthers that storyline. There, Rob and other dancers declared in edited interviews on that show that he was finally "becoming a man" and "stepping out of the shadow of his sisters," while earning respect for dancing well enough to be the show's runner-up, as decided by a combination of judges' scores and fan votes. Young daughters Kendall and Kylie Jenner, children of Kris and Bruce Jenner and half-sisters to the Kardashians, are framed on the Kardashian reality shows as idealistic teens trying to enjoy their childhood in the midst of the pressures of family fame. Bruce Jenner is the doddering, powerless father and stepfather whom the brood find boring and overly-strict but tolerate because he is well-intentioned.

Increasingly, the stock storylines become a way to advertise the show and the family as brand. Many plotlines (some more obviously staged than others) plumb familiar sitcom narratives: teens learn to drive, jealous sisters bicker with each other, daughters rebel against their parents. Others mine docusoap and drama narratives: a son is rushed to the hospital, kids deal with grief from the earlier death of the family patriarch; adults attempt to overcome tensions in marriages and relationships.

In a newer development, many Kardashian series stories are becoming meta-commentaries on reality stardom. Kris worries about her appearance in front of cameras and gets plastic surgery, Kim and Khloé fight about who is more famous or more jealous of the other, Courtney's boyfriend Scott Disick grows weary of always being placed in the villain role on TV. On the most recent season of Kourtney and Kim Take New York (2011-2012), in Kim's confession of her own unhappiness in marriage leading up to her divorce, she explains in direct address interviews to viewers that she felt she rushed into the marriage, got caught up in all the media attention and the "fairy tale" narrative, and fears she disappointed everyone. But she insists that all the press pundits claiming her marriage was a sham are wrong and that she married for love. By engaging with the meta-narrative of the family's media celebrity, these plotlines allow the series further to market themselves and the family brand, engaging in saturation and excessive branding.

The Kardashians thus combine storytelling across media platforms with extremely aggressive marketing and branding. Their branding practices have led industry magazines to insist that the Kardashians are a building a new, highly-influential business model based on the key elements of: the success of their reality shows, social media interaction with fans, and profitable products and brand endorsements, all in the service of promoting the Kardashians as a brand. As Khloé Kardashian Odom notes: "These shows are a 30-minute commercial". Even E! network executives report that it has altered the network's brand itself. According to Lisa Berger, E!'s Executive Vice President for original programming, "It has changed the face of E!. We were a place to report on celebrity; we weren't a place to break and make celebrity, which is now the whole idea of the E! brand". Meanwhile, Kris Jenner argues for the show's appeal based on the family's relatability:

We're just this big family with a lot of drama and a lot of issues, and there's someone here for everyone to relate to. I think if you've ever been embarrassed by your family -- like your mother's a kook or your father's too strict -- the show gives you hope. I've had so many people come over to me and say, 'I remember the episode where you were crying over blah, blah, blah and it helped me so much and I got through my dad's death because of you.'

Her arguments about the success of their family life stories depend on the idea of them fitting into relatable family tropes, while presenting their large, boisterous family life as a spectacle and a family circus, yet her comment also speaks to the superficiality and blandness of the content (because the content is secondary to the branding, merely becoming an excuse for marketing). Keeping Up With the Kardashians enjoys consistently high ratings (averaging over 3.5 million per week), while the season 4 finale set a record as the most-watched television episode on E!,

with 4.8 million viewers (Newman, 2011). Moving beyond the reality show into their transmedia presence, the Kardashian fan base is quite large. Each Kardashian has at least one million Twitter followers, while Kim tops the list at over 12 million, and the family as a whole has over 30 million followers. Kim Kardashian is paid to hawk products on Twitter, which is another example of corporate branding trends on Twitter (Edwards, 2009). Their model of reality TV shows as the basis for multiplatform storytelling, particularly with features that brand the cast members as characters, is clearly a bellwether for future media trends. Kim Kardashian might also signal a new attitude towards reality TV when she insisted, in a 2010 interview with W magazine, that people no longer see the dystopian satire of The Truman Show, in which TV producers stage a man's world without his knowledge in order to film his life for viewer entertainment, as a bad thing (Hirschberg, 2010). She certainly offers a model of welcoming that level of surveillance, and her implication is that such surveillance is about building an entertainment brand.

Transmedia Texts, Character Branding, and Reality TV

I would argue that in the case of reality TV, at least, character takes on increased importance in many reality transmedia texts. Applying the concept of transmedia storytelling to reality TV shows requires a few adjustments in the theory, since the programs are about actual people, rather than encyclopedic fictional worlds of the kind Jenkins describes. Yet, as we have seen with the Kardashians, reality franchises can obviously be planned transmedia texts. Since reality shows depend on the storytelling codes drawn from fictional TV genres (like primetime dramas, sitcoms, and soap operas), their use of storytelling across multiple media platforms would qualify as an example of transmedia texts. As reality shows bank on larger than life castmembers who draw in viewers with their emotional outbursts, conflicts, and melodramatic resolutions, reality TV characters become the basis for entire brands as well as for transmedia storytelling that depends on active fans.

In describing transmedia storytelling, Jenkins (2007) argues that successful transmedia texts must create a rich, encyclopedic fictional universe with enough gaps in the open-ended narrative for different texts to fill in the spaces. Even more crucially, the narrative has to offer enough spaces for fans to want to fill them in, engaging with that entire fictional world in their own fan responses (including fan fiction). Each additional piece of planned content in the larger transmedia text is able to exist on its own but also contribute to the overall story. Each added item also draws on the strengths and features of each medium (such as television's ability to tell stories in on-going episodes and story arcs, film's capacity to be immersive, or a video game's power to let fans explore the world depicted). However, Jenkins (2007) argues that transmedia texts tend to focus on the overall fictional universe rather than on particular plotlines and characters, such that a changing cast of characters and their stories can inhabit different aspects of that fictional world. Here, I depart from Jenkins, because I would argue that for reality TV, character itself becomes a focal point of transmedia storytelling.

As a case of how reality series can take a character, brand it, and turn it into transmedia storytelling profit, Bravo's Real Housewives franchise consistently follows that path. For

example, cult figures like Bethenny Frankel and NeNe Leakes from the Real Housewives franchise are narratively framed as charismatic personalities. In their reality storylines, they sport quick humor and sometimes outrageous behavior, and they claim always to "be themselves" on camera. They insist that they will tell anyone exactly what they think, and their viewers are encouraged to identify with their emotional roller-coaster rides, what Ien Ang (1985) would call the "tragic structure of feeling" common in soap operas . Both women appear in the Bravo Real Housewives-related media texts on different platforms that engage in excessive branding, such as DVDs with extra commentary, companion books, reunion specials, numerous online games on the Bravo website, mobile phone apps (like the "Housewives Hub," with news and gossip about the cast), personal appearances by the cast, and, in an aggressive example of corporate synergy, in interviews with Bravo TV executive and talk show host Andy Cohen on his live Bravo talk show, Watch What Happens Live.

Frankel in particular has used her reality stardom to create her own corporate synergy and branding of herself as a character (profiting both her and Bravo). She has starred on three different Bravo reality shows (the first three seasons of The Real Housewives of New York City [2008-] and her own Bethenny Getting Married? [2010] and Bethenny Ever After [2011-] spin-offs). Her draw as a reality star is indicated by the fact that Bethenny Getting Married?, which depicted her wedding to Jason Hoppy, had the highest rated series premiere on Bravo at that time (with more than 2 million viewers) (Stanhope, 2010). Her media presence is based on her characterization on reality TV as the witty, fast-talking, brash New Yorker with the heart of gold. She is most often portrayed as using humor to deal with the chaos of juggling her work with her new marriage and child. Her character narrative revolves around stories typical to family sitcoms (new parents try to sleep through the night, in-laws hover, the wife rushes to put a holiday dinner together with humorously disastrous results) or dramatic plotlines (the husband and wife argue over what role religion will play in the child's life, the couple grapple with business pressures, they deal with family illnesses).

But what is most striking about her is how Frankel has parlayed that reality stardom into her own corporate synergy efforts. In building her character as brand, Frankel has appeared on two other reality programs, both gamedocs: she was one of two finalists on The Apprentice: Martha Stewart (2005), prior to her Real Housewives stint, and she was the runner-up on Skating With the Stars (2011). A natural foods chef, Frankel drew on her reality stardom to release her own books, DVDs, online materials, diet products, cosmetics, and clothing lines. All part of her "Skinnygirl" line of products, they include items that span different media formats, such as: a diet book and audio accompaniment (Naturally Thin [2009] and The Skinnygirl Rules [2010]), a cookbook (The Skinnygirl Dish [2009]), exercise DVDs (Body by Bethenny [2010]), and an online personal trainer (Skinnygirl Personal Trainer). Most notably, she published a New York Times bestselling self-help book, A Place of Yes: 10 Rules for Getting Everything You Want out of Life (2011). Developing her Skinnygirl line further, Frankel founded her own company, Skinnygirl Cocktails, and then sold her line of cocktails to a larger company, Fortune Brands' Beam Global, for an estimated $120 million ("Forbes," 2011). Frankel is currently continuing her transmedia branding of herself with a fictional novel she is writing, entitled Skinnydipping, which she advertises on her Twitter feed (to her over 730,000 followers) and her webpage

(Bethenny.com). On her book tour, she billed herself as an inspirational speaker, telling fans humor-filled stories about how she found success as a woman business owner and author (with footage from the book tour featured on Bethenny Ever After), and such tours cement her as a brand.

Meanwhile, NeNe Leakes, from The Real Housewives of Atlanta (2008-), parlayed her reality stardom there into a role on The Celebrity Apprentice (in 2011). While she has not generated the level of corporate branding that Frankel has, she is similar to Frankel in becoming a cult figure, known for being outspoken and confrontational. In her character narratives onscreen, she declares loyalty to her friends but engages in highly melodramatic storylines in which she has volatile fights with them, sometimes becoming estranged from them. Most famously, Leakes quit The Celebrity Apprentice during the season because she objected to how other celebrity cast members, like Star Jones, were playing the game. In other dramatic storylines on The Real Housewives, Leakes searched for and met her biological father for the first time, advocated for domestic violence survivors like herself, and became separated from her current husband after on-going marital tensions and his financial troubles. In media ventures that bank on her reality show characterizations, Leakes has published her own autobiography (Never Make the Same Mistake Twice: Lessons on Love and Life Learned the Hard Way [2009]). She also undertakes speaking tours and celebrity appearances.

More notably in terms of cultural responses to reality TV and fan culture, Leakes has become the favorite reality star of many media personalities. Cohen openly worships her on his Watch What Happens Live, journalist Anderson Cooper frequently declares his obsession with her, and the cast of Glee have emoted their stalker-level joy at her 2012 guest star turn on the Fox cult hit television series (Mann, 2011). Bravo purposefully markets the fact that Leakes has become a fixation for other celebrities, like Sean "Diddy" Combs, who declares himself a NeNe "fanatic." In an example of series-related sponsor content on its website, Bravo trumpeted the Diddy fan story alongside advertising for the partnership between his Ciroc Vodka line and the Real Housewives franchise for a 2011 holiday sweepstakes competition (with the winner meeting some of the cast) and safe driving ad campaign.

Thus, while both women appear in the tie-in media products about the Real Housewives franchise, each woman has also taken her own "brand" and "character" into other media areas (autobiographies, other reality shows that are not part of the Real Housewives franchise, Twitter feeds, etc.). Meanwhile, Bravo has generated excessive branding and corporate synergy around them, as with the sponsored content and ad campaigns. The cable network banks on transmedia storytelling to engage in this branding.

Participatory Fan Culture

There are also some key counter-examples of transmedia storytelling that involve artists examining the aesthetics of new media interactivity and multi-platform texts and that provide greater audience access and expression. As such, they offer competing dynamics, in contrast with the Kardashian model of excessive branding. Some of these texts include participatory fan culture in a much different way.

A particularly good example of audience-centered transmedia storytelling is the music videos of filmmaker Chris Milk. Milk provides innovations in crowdsourced music videos, a trend in which Internet users help generate the content for videos. This kind of media text exemplifies Pierre Lévy's "collective intelligence" knowledge model. Lévy has argued that the Internet privileges what he calls "collective intelligence," where no one person knows all of the information being presented but rather each person contributes to a larger group knowledge, with the whole being greater than the sum of the parts. Lévy contrasts that model with an earlier model of "shared intelligence," where each member of a group possesses the same common knowledge (Jenkins, 2006, p. 4). For Lévy, this new model of knowledge speaks to the democratic and utopian promise of interactive digital media.

I would argue that Milk's films provide examples of productive collective intelligence and aesthetic expression. His curated Web-based art memorial entitled The Johnny Cash Project is one exciting and lively example. In a "global collective art project," filmmaker Chris Milk created a platform for fans to draw the frames of a music video for Cash's version of the song "Ain't No Grave." The template takes images of Cash from earlier film documentaries, such as Johnny Cash: The Man, His World, His Music (Robert Elfstrom's 1969 documentary). Using a custom drawing program, users select a frame online and draw over it digitally. Once they submit their image, it is included in different versions of the music video that play online. Each collection of frames is different, cycling and changing over time. Users can vote on the contributions they like best, and the site includes data such as the number of brush strokes used in any given frame. Internet consumers lured by a shared interest in a music icon can feel part of an online community creating tribute art together.

The images projected are generated by a collaboration between producers and consumers, and the consumers in effect "vote" on what images are screened most frequently. Some of the beliefs driving this kind of participatory fan culture trend, and indeed, the staggering rise in digital media usage more generally, involve visions of connectivity Many audiences thirst for immersive online content as well as community-building, based on the idea that digital interactions via social networking websites can make consumers feel part of larger affinity groups. While the film is a music video for the American Recordings label and Lost Highway Records release of the Cash song, in the case of this crowdsourced music video project, the emphasis is on audience expression and access rather than on corporate branding.

In another example of recent participatory fan culture media trends, some interactive videos use the technique of mass customization. This technique has become a dominant marketing strategy, in which an advertisement appears to be customized to each viewer, based on an aggregate of user information. An obvious example is the recommendations Amazon.com makes "for you" based on your past consumer behavior. Those recommendations might appear personal to you, but thousands of other users will receive the same "personalized" data, because it is personalized on a mass scale. In an example from entertainment media, producer McG's online TV show, Aim High, mass customizes by incorporating each viewer's name into the scenery and music from their iTunes library, which furthers corporate synergy and branding.

In an example of a more creative use of this media trend, Milk has also used this mass customization technique in his online interactive music videos, such as a music video entitled "3 Dreams of Black" that functions like a video game, with the user clicking on images to open or choosing directions to take, guiding where the video goes. His interactive Web film The Wilderness Downtown (a video for Arcade Fire's song "We Used to Wait") has users type in the address of their childhood home, and a Google Earth image of their home becomes one of the settings in the video (and the effect of seeing images of your childhood home in a music video can be unexpectedly poignant).

Some other recent media culture includes innovative texts whose very format relies on interactive creation involving both producers and consumers. Television offers some cogent examples. Bar Karma, a show on Current TV, has fans vote for and contribute storylines online. Beckenfield, a "Mass Participation Television" science fiction show launched by online entertainment company Theatrics, has audiences pay a subscription fee and then allows them to contribute segments to the show (designed for aspiring actors to gain a forum for furthering their careers). While some participants in these shows might be using the platform as a springboard to professional employment in the media industry, the more complex producer-consumer interactions are nonetheless different in kind from, say, Amazon's mass customization marketing and branding.

In contrast, once again, the technique of mass customization also has problematic uses. Andrejevic (2007b) argues that when a consumer interacts with a text on the Internet, for example by voting online for their favorite singer on American Idol and posting their comments, that user is providing the Fox network with free labor by providing user-generated content for them on their website. More crucially, that user is the product being sold to corporate advertisers, as when Fox tries to prove to an advertiser that it can deliver a certain demographic of viewers who will not only watch the television show but also visit the website and see the ad - - or, increasingly, watch the show episode online.

Examples of this "self-performed consumer research" use of mass customization on TV include the customization of websites for users once they register for the sites and express their interests (on a future visit to the site, you can be taken directly to your favorite reality show or castmember and their updates). MTV even advertises a new mobile phone app called "WatchWith" that sends you comments from other viewers in real time about the same show you are watching on MTV. They pitch to viewers by saying the "Watch With" app will gossip with you about reality TV like Jersey Shore even when real-world friends will not. Emphasizing the liveness and the interactivity of this product, MTV depends on crowdsourcing (the comments of thousands of viewers) and mass customization (each person using the app has it customized for their show preferences). Unfortunately, the app feels like a fake digital friend meant to replace actual real-life friends, all formed through aggregating data.

In other examples of crowdsourcing, MTV and E! routinely include viewer comments from their website message boards or from Facebook or Twitter posts as a scroll at the bottom of the screen, with viewers commenting on the television shows being aired. Their comments are

"being included" but only on a mass scale. In an example related to branding, the short-lived MC Hammer family reality show, Hammertime, included on-screen graphics of Hammer's Tweets along with fan responses. In his discussion of multimedia branding efforts at an academic panel at Stanford, which aired on the premiere episode, Hammer notes that his incorporation of Tweets was meant to make an emotional and interactive connection to viewers and to send them to his Twitter feed, which hawked more of his products, and to further his content creation and branding for various media platforms.

A particularly problematic example of crowdsourcing is an Internet-based reality TV show that downplays the potential for exploitation involved in this audience interactivity. Actor Seth Green produced an "online interactive reality TV show," ControlTV, in which viewers vote to determine what star Tristan Couvares will do, literally choosing what the young man starring on the show will do each day (from which young woman to date to what clothes to wear). This young man's life becomes entertainment for viewers, and they are given the power to help him or harm him, all for the audience's viewing pleasure. While Green's website pitches the idea of audience community, the show itself also obviously entails some degree of exploitation, voyeurism, and public humiliation -- the calling cards of many reality programs. Green pitched the show as the real-life EDtv (1999) in action. The EDtv film was itself both a comedy and a cautionary satire about the potentially degrading and debasing effects of reality TV. However, as we have seen with Kim Kardashian, many of today's reality stars are more likely to turn earlier dystopian satires of reality TV into rallying cries for their own desire for stardom.

However, in all of these examples of transmedia storytelling, it is important to examine the dynamics of how fan participation is integrated into these media trends, because the power relationships and producer-consumer relationships can vary by context. This issue opens out onto a larger debate about the cultural politics and economics of this use of new media interactivity in general. Many of these effects depend on how various audiences respond to the texts. The unpredictable behaviors of avid television fans provide a good case in point, such as fan spoiler behavior for reality television. Survivor online communities have infamously conspired to predict the show's outcome and influence audience reception of that result. Active fans who watched live Internet feeds of Big Brother posted spoilers to message boards before the edited versions made it to the air. Some fans went so far as to try to disrupt and influence the game (flying a banner over the Big Brother compound, pulled behind an airplane, warning one contestant not to trust another one). American Idol fans have famously organized efforts via the Web to disrupt voting, either by "voting for the worst" singer or voting against contestants the judges support. It is often in the fan response that one can see the issues convergence culture raises, and, again, that fan response can depend on the specific context, with effects that can vary widely. Ultimately, the rise of transmedia storytelling reflects some competing trends in current media culture, including an emphasis on corporate branding versus substantive audience expression. The Kardashian franchise might signal a new wave of excessive branding, and the prevalence and popularity of the kind of approach suggests that it will continue to have a significant impact on media culture. Nevertheless, counter-examples such as the Chris Milk crowdsourced music videos, which emphasize audience access, creativity, and collectivity, suggest that the effects of transmedia storytelling can depend crucially on context.

Hollywood's foray into film industry

When WikiLeaks went public with diplomatic cable 248355 last April, it revealed that even the Americans weren't too optimistic about their chances of breaching one of the last bastions against them: "Unfortunately, all of the joint Hollywood-Bollywood productions released thus far have been unsuccessful at the box office, signaling that a successful entry into Bollywood is not easy," some unsparing bureaucrat had written. Perhaps there was also a note of admiration there, for another country with a formidable popular cinema (about a 90% share of its own market), and a deep resistance to watching anything foreign.

But Hollywood isn't quitting yet. This week sees the release in India and the UK of the latest Hollywood wolf in Bollywood clothing, 20th Century Fox's Ekk Deewana Tha. A glossy-looking romantic drama with a pair of extremely winsome leads in real-life couple Prateik Babbar and Miss England finalist Amy Jackson, it's following Hollywood's current worldwide mantra of conquering from within. Traditional US blockbusters, hobbled by being so culturally alien, had been struggling to gain more than a 5% clawhold in the Indian market during the noughties. Efforts at assimilation, like adding Hindi songs to Casino Royale (but unfortunately not forcing Daniel Craig and Eva Green into a dance sequence on the Eurostar), haven't had much impact. So by late last decade, most of the Hollywood majors had decided to make Hindi-language movies.

Returns, as the cable said, have been mixed. Sony's first effort, the pricey romantic drama Saawariya, based on a Dostoyevsky story, was steamrollered at the box office in November 2007 by the Bollywood dream-team musical Om Shanti Om. Roadside Romeo, Disney's first Indian animation, bombed. Warner Brothers India tried to talk up the international credentials of its wuxia-masala hybrid Chandni Chowk to China, but it performed indifferently. Only 20th Century Fox, through its Fox Star India imprint, has come close to the big time: with crime thriller Dum Maaro Dum, which took a respectable $11m in India, and Shahrukh Khan vehicle My Name is Khan – the "desi Forrest Gump" and Hollywood's one palpable hit ($16.4m in India/$44m worldwide).

Why the disappointments? It is Indians, through local companies, who are making these films, so there's been nothing culturally off about them. Hollywood is simply suffering more than most from the law of averages in cinema because it's not investing anything like as seriously as it needs to if it wants to break into this vast territory. In 2009, Warner Brothers India promised Rs200 crore (about $40m) for Hindi-language projects. That's enough for about four big-budget films by Indian standards, but it's unlikely all of them would make a splash. In another WikiLeaks cable, Siddarth Roy Kapur, the CEO of the studio UTV, estimated that only 5% of all Bollywood films made any kind of profit. The Americans are going to need more than a thin scattering of films to sow this terrain sustainably.

It doesn't help that the newcomers don't have a deep understanding of how things function in India – at least according to an executive at Reliance Big Pictures quoted in the cables: "US studios need to reorient their strategies, rescind control and empower local people if they want to succeed in India. The Indian film-making process is not organised, and, unlike the professionalism in Hollywood, dealing with creative talent in India requires tact and flexibility."

And at the end of the day, Hollywood remains the competition – the communiques also highlight how reluctant Bollywood studios are to partner with American ones. Which leaves boardroom belligerency as the only remaining way of breaking in, as with Disney's recent acquisition of the controlling stake in UTV (and, of course, Indian studios are busy looking for the same opportunities in the States, like Reliance Big's financing of DreamWorks).

One thing could make this suspicion dissipate: China, and its repeated attempts to give an adrenalin shot to its own blockbuster production, something Reliance Entertainment chairman Amit Khanna has said he follows with "enormous attention". The area in which Bollywood can really learn from Hollywood, the cables suggest, is global marketing and distribution; if Bollywood has to shed its traditional insularity in order to stay competitive with Chinese films, it might have to learn how to apply a little American-style snake oil. It was 20th Century Fox that pushed My Name is Khan into the global mainstream, carefully exploiting Shahrukh Khan's star glow, the pertinence of its 9/11 plotline and the huge Indian diaspora. Bollywood's trade-off for a full apprenticeship in these ploys might be helping Hollywood with its dance moves, and holding the door of Indian box office open to it.

The WikiLeaks cables show that governments really do think along these strategic lines about the entertainment industry. They call it soft power. Let's hope that they don't forget that someone – Hollywood, Bollywood, or Chinese – is supposed to be making the next generation of classic films at the same time

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