Women, Media and Development:

Alternative Media Programmes by and for Women
a case study in Jamaica

Submitted in partial fullfilment
of the requirements for
the degree of
Master of Arts in International Development Studies
Saint Mary's University
Halifax, Nova Scotia
October 2, 1992

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ISBN 0-315-77046-5

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<u>Abstract</u>
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This thesis addresses the issue of women, media and development, looking specifically at the importance of alternative, community-based media initiatives in women's struggle to alter their portrayal in a Northern, male biased media. The term 'alternative media' refers to alternative approaches to mass communication and addresses both the need to pressure the existing mainstream media to provide a more accurate portrayal of women and women's concerns, as well as the need for opportunities for women to work outside the mainstream media to gain valuable media decision-making experience and voice concerns which would otherwise remain unheard.

To date, much of the research done on the issue of women, media and development, has failed to recognize the need for women's access to media-decision making. There has also been a lack of analysis concerning the relationship of women to the existing structure of the mainstream media industry. The majority of work in this area focuses almost exclusively on the barriers to women's employment in this industry.

Over the past ten to fifteen years, a growing number of women's organizations around the world have identified bias in the mainstream

media as an important development and gender issue. Many of these groups have also initiated alternative media programming as one response to this bias. As a result, during the past ten to fifteen years, alternative media programmes developed by and for women have grown in frequency and circulation world-wide.

Through a case study of two women's organizations operating in Kingston, Jamaica, this paper provides an example of how alternative media programming can and is being applied by women's organizations as part of a strategy for change. In the case of both these organizations, SISTREN and Women's Media Watch, alternative media programmes have provided important educational opportunities for women, as well as otherwise nonexistent channels of communication for women and women's concerns. Through these programmes, members of the two organizations have also had some impact on local mainstream media programming and the portrayal of Jamaican women in media advertising.

This thesis concludes that alternative media programmes for women offer important opportunities in the areas of media-decision making and media literacy. These programmes also provide unique communications opportunities for women, and offer a more accurate portrayal of women in mass media.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Since the 1960s, representatives from the South have been pointing
to a definite Northern bias in the mass media and demanding more
balanced and equitable media representation. At the same time
women - especially women from developing regions - have voiced
their concerns with both a Northern and male bias. Although the
literature on media bias and development is extensive, relatively few
authors deal with the role of women and their relationship to the
structure of the media industry. When the position of women in the
media is discussed, the majority of the work focuses narrowly on
barriers to women's employment in the industry.

More recently, research on the issue of women in the media has
indicated that strategies to reduce barriers to employment for women
are not enough. There must also be a move towards redefining the
role of women within the media industry. Alternative media
initiatives for women have emerged as one response to this need.

Over the past ten to fifteen years, alternative media initiatives have
grown in both frequency and circulation world-wide. These projects
have been, for the most part, introduced through women's
organizations which have identified bias in the mainstream media as
an important development and gender issue. Mainstream media
include both the print and broadcast technologies presently used in
the media industry. Mass media, as discussed in this thesis, refers to
a variety of modes of mass communication. These range from the

modern information technologies of the mainstream media to more traditional forms such as popular theater. The term 'alternative media' refers to alternative approaches to mass communication found both within and outside of the mainstream. This definition includes programming within the mainstream media which provides communication opportunities for otherwise marginalized groups, as well as forms of participatory community media produced outside of the mainstream media including music, drama, and arts, in addition to community press and broadcast initiatives.

Although localized and relatively small in scale, these alternative channels of communication are beginning to provide women an opportunity to voice their concerns, and share experiences and information. More importantly, they have helped to educate and empower women in their goals of 1) including women in media decision-making and 2) creating a more positive image of women in the media. As well, participants in these alternative programmes have the opportunity to gain valuable skills and experience. These skills, both in technical areas and media literacy, will allow women to effectively work for change in the representation of women in the media. The development of these skills also constitutes an important factor in the empowerment of women to make change in the structures of the existing media industry. According to Freire's (1983) definition of the process of empowerment, people first develop an initial awareness of their existing social structure and become aware that they can take action to improve their own lives and acquire the skills which enable them to do so. Through taking action, they

experience a loss of powerlessness and an increase in confidence (Protz, 1987,p.37).

Alternative media programmes have been increasingly cited by women's organizations as priorities in their struggle to take action to improve the situation of women in media. They also provide unique educational opportunities for both the organizations and the broader community with respect to the portrayal and participation of women in the mass media. However, they have not received the support they require from either government or other funding agencies. This thesis examines the importance of alternative media programmes in the empowerment and education of women working to change both the exclusion of women from media decision-making and the image of women in media. This thesis also provides a case study of two women's organizations in Jamaica, showing how community based alternative media initiatives have contributed to the education and empowerment of women thereby contributing to the two goals identified above.

Chapter 2 will discuss theories of development and the way the media is conceived within these theories. Having shown that gender is ignored in these conceptions, this chapter identifies the two major frameworks used to examine development and gender issues - women and development and gender and development. A participatory approach to understanding alternative media is then examined. This chapter concludes that a participatory approach informed by a gender and development theoretical perspective provides the most

appropriate conceptual framework for understanding women's relationship to the media.

Chapter 3 will provide the context of the situation of women in media globally. The first section of this chapter will discuss the exclusion of women from decision-making roles in the media, as well as examine the negative portrayal and representation of women in mass media programming.

Chapter 4 introduces the specific case of Jamaica. The first section of the chapter will give an overview of the social, economic and political situation in the country, and then examine the situation of women in Jamaican society. The second section will look at the case of the Jamaican media industry, and discuss the situation of women in Jamaican media in terms of content and the role of women in media decision-making. The following section will look at the case of the Sistren Women's Group and Women's Media Watch based in Kingston, Jamaica. This study will provide background information on these two organizations and their programmes. It will also provide an analysis of the importance of these programmes to the participants, the role of these initiatives in the community, and the future prospects for these alternative programmes.

This thesis is important for several reasons. First, it argues the need for a participatory, community-based approach to analysis of the involvement of women in media, as opposed to simply discussing the need from more women to be incorporated into the existing

mainstream media structures. Second, it illustrates that these alternative approaches offer women important opportunities for empowerment in their struggle to change the existing role of women in the media. Finally, it represents a compilation of relevant literature in support of these community-based initiatives which often lack the political and economic backing they need to survive outside of the mainstream media industry.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Framework

When analysing the relationship between women, media and development, it is necessary to employ a framework broad enough to encompass communications and development issues while using a feminist perspective.

Feminism, as defined by Rhoda Reddock (1988) is an "awareness of the oppression, exploitation and/or subordination of women within the society and the conscious action to change and transform this situation" (p.53). By looking at the relationships between media and development through a feminist perspective, this analysis will provide a clearer understanding of the exclusion of women from the media industry. As well, this perspective will indicate the action necessary to challenge the existing structures which limit the full participation of women in the media.

However, in the conceptualization of the relationship between women, media and development, there is no one single theoretical position. For the most part, communications theorists have offered various frameworks to deal with issues of communication and development with either limited or no regard for the question of gender. As a result, the recognition of the importance of women's issues within this debate is relatively new.

The early literature (e.g. Lerner, 1958; McLelland, 1963; Schramm, 1964) surrounding media and development issues came from a modernization perspective. This perspective dominated development thinking in the 1950s and '60s, and tended to analyze development in terms of economic growth. Modernization also relied on the 'trickle down' approach to development suggesting that the gains achieved through capitalist industrialization would 'trickle down' to the poorer segments of society and thus the society as a whole would benefit with an improved standard of living.

Early development communications theorists viewed the development process from this standpoint and advocated the large-scale adoption of Western, especially American, media technologies and systems for countries of the South. In 1958, Daniel Lerner, a leader in this field , wrote The Passing of Traditional Society, which laid the groundwork for modernization methodology as it related to communications. His emphasis was on the reproduction of American material values, linking these with the spread of commercial mass media. The focus of this strategy for development lay in the "identification, emulation and empathic adoption" of Western values by third world audiences (Lent, 1991, p.3).

Other authors in this same perspective included David McClelland, Ithiel de Sola Pool, Lucien Pye, Wilbur Schramm, and Karl Deutsch to name just a few. In his 1966 Voice-of-America produced book, Modernization: The Dynamics of Growth, Ithiel de Sola Pool pointed out "a growing access to the media of communication" in the Third

World and concluded that "correlation studies show few variables as predictive of modernization as the measures of mass media exposure." Based on these conclusions he further asserts that "where radio goes, there modernization attitudes come in" (Lent, 1991,p.106)

The modernization approach emphasised almost exclusively the use of modern, technologically advanced media while traditional media were seen as obstacles to development. The modernization approach to media and development was therefore seen as a transfer approach whereby Western values would be transferred to Third World peoples through mass media. The subsequent level of development would depend upon the audiences' willingness to change their attitudes and adopt these values.

Because the anticipated economic growth had failed to occur by the 1970s, the modernization approach to development was being questioned on many fronts including its relation to communications. Because of the newness and unexplored parameters of communications technologies at this time, their potential to bring about development had been mainly assumed rather than proven. Through the 1960s, and '70s, communication-support-development initiatives had failed to bring about the expected change. In fact, it was becoming more and more apparent that mass communication had actually contributed to growing inequalities between the North and South as well as between urban and rural regions, and male and female audiences (O'Sullivan, 1980, p.107).

By the late 1970s, modernization-type communications projects, which focused on large media systems, were seen to have failed in a number of aspects because of an inadequate analysis of the broader political and economic structures. "The external and internal structure of domination and the structural constraints on the potential of information, were largely ignored" (Shore, 1980, p.20), as were the issues of class differences and gender relations.

At this same time, dependency theorists (e.g. MacBride,1980; Boyd-Barret, 1977; Gerbner, 1977) were calling for a New International Economic Order and subsequently a New International Information and Communications Order through forums such as the United Nations, specifically UNESCO. Both these demands were focused on the need for a more democratic restructuring of global information systems. As well, they emphasised a need for more opportunities for less developed countries in terms of both economic and technological development. There was also a serious concern with what was identified as a one-way flow of information from the North to the South in the form of exported American media programming and propaganda. There was also a demand for greater access to the media for marginalized groups including women and youth among others. However, the dependency perspective fails to specifically address the issue of gender re.ations. Although more sensitive to social inequalities than the Modernization approach, Dependency theory does not focus on women as a marginalized group, and there is little evidence of feminist participation in the evolution and conceptualization of this development theory (Moore, 1986).

In the 1970s, Marxist theory and Marxist analysis of information gained renewed support from many development theorists largely because of the emergence of the dependency critique of modernization theory. Dependency theorists conceptualize development communication in political economy/cultural terms.

> Specifically, communication is viewed as a component of
> the international structure which either reinforces it or
> challenges it. For example, emphasis is placed on
> examining the role of communication in continuing or
> resisting dependent relationships (Mowlana, 1988, 28).

The role of the media has been analysed, to some degree in each of the Marxist-based perspectives. Control of the means of production and communication of ideas under the capitalist system is a fundamental concern within the Marxist perspective. A Marxian analysis of social communication contends that the dominant class controls this production and communication of ideas, and allows certain ideas to be communicated to society. These ideas constitute a system of beliefs or ideology which reinforce and maintain social norms (Anderson, 1983,p. 272).

This perspective also focuses on the development of the new information technologies, and the effects of these technologies as well as the economic evolution of the transnational communications media industry.

Feminists have criticized both modernization and dependency theories for their lack of analysis of gender relations. This criticism has come through three basic frameworks: 1) Women in Development or (WID), 2) Women and Development (WAD), and 3) Gender and Development (GAD).

Although a consideration of gender issues is absent from the modernization approach, the contemporary Liberal feminist perspective offers a feminist point-of-view which is related to the modernization theory and is refered to as WID. The Liberal-feminist perspective focuses on the inequality which women experience in society and is therefore concerned with removing barriers to women's full participation in society. This perspective does not seek to radically change the existing political and economic structures, but rather to work for gradual reform from within. The Liberal-Feminist perspective basically accepts the view that the free competition among equal contenders in the marketplace will lead to social and economic equality. Therefore, this perspective views the removal of barriers to the equal participation of women within the free market as of paramount importance (Jacquette, 1982).

Liberalism itself had developed as a challenge to the rule of the aristocracy and feudal lords who had gained power solely through the chance of birth. Just as a class system based on birthright seemed illogical, so did sexual discrimination. Liberals emphasised the inconsistencies with these forms of discrimination in a liberal democracy. They also argued that fuller participation of women in the

economy would be beneficial to the economy as a whole (see Jaquette, 1982; Maguire, 1987). This view of removing barriers for women's particiatpion in the economy is again reflected in the Liberal-feminist, WID strategies designed to integrate women into the development process. Policies for action from this perspective, therefore, tend to focus on the need for education. They also rely on the established political and legal systems to ensure that women be given equal opportunities with men to compete evenly on the labor market.

Consistent with this thinking, liberal-feminist policies in relation to women in the media emphasise increased employment opportunities for women in the media industry and the removal of barriers to this increased participation.

The majority of the literature available on the subject of women, media and development comes from the liberal-feminist tradition, and has clearly identified the need for women's increased participation in the media.

Since a great deal of the research done in the area of women, media and development comes from within UNESCO, the conclusions drawn from this research are basically consistent with UNESCO's Liberal-feminist theme that media is a tool through which women could potentially alter their image in society and therefore advance their status (Margaret Gallagher, 1981). However, this potential for change is constrained by the fact that since mass media have been introduced

In developing countries women have consistently been denied access to the decision-making processes involved with this technology.

The dominant view within recent literature is that control of the media is solidly in the hands of men, and if this situation could be remedied, the perceptions and therefore status of women would advance (Marilee Karl, 1984). However, there has been little attempt to place the issue of women's lack of control in the media industry into a broader contextual analysis of the global economic system or the social and political constraints operating on the international mass media. As a result, there is no real challenge to the male-dominated socio-economic and political structures which have facilitated and reinforced this exclusion of women.

As a response to these limitations in the WID approach, a WAD perspective emerged. This approach is related to the dependency theory, and focuses much of its analysis on class relations. While recognizing the integral role of women's productive and reproductive work in the perpetuation of class structures, gender subordination and patriarchy are not included in this analysis (Rathberger, 1989).

Women are seen to be unequal to men but this is seen to be the result of global structures of inequality and dependency. As a result, relations between men and women go unaddressed (Tiano, 1987). Like the WID approach, WAD also stops short of analyzing the role of patriarchy in women's oppression, assuming that a change in the global structures in general will lead to equality for both men and

women. Also, as seen in the WID perspective, strategies for development advocated by the WAD approach emphasize income-generating projects as a way to improve women's lives (Rathberger, 1989).

Based on a socialist-feminist framework, the GAD approach has been critical of both WID and WAD. GAD integrates an analysis of class relations and gender relations. Where WID and WAD stopped short, this theory challenges the structures of both patriarchy and capitalism (Rathberger, 1987).

Socialist-feminism began from a critique of classical Marxist thinking as well, and more recently, has emphasised the inability of socialist societies to balance gender inequalities. This perspective is also heavily influenced by Radical Feminist analysis of the personal as political. As well, it stresses the importance of analysing women's work in the home as an integral component of capitalist and socialist production relations (Tiano, 1987).

Feeling that an economic analysis alone could not address the specific situation of women, Socialist-feminists emphasise the role of patriarchy within the family as a major source of women's oppression. This analysis also suggests that the subordination of women and women's work within the household is supportive of the capitalist system and reproduces and maintains this system (Jaggar, 1984).

The Socialist-feminist framework illustrates the strong inter-
connectedness of patriarchy and capitalism, analysing the mutual
workings of these two forces in the oppression of women. Socialist-
feminism, although flexible in its approach to analysis, has been
criticized for falling short of confronting the discrimination of women
based on race, religion and nationality. The GAD approach is
beginning to rectify this fundamental problem.

In terms of development strategies, the GAD strategy focuses on the
need to address women's work both in the household and in the
broader economy. These strategies are particularly concerned with
the situation of women within the household unit. The analysis of
women in media through this perspective focuses on the negative
portrayal of women in mainstream media which reinforces negative
female stereotypes in society and in the home (Bhasin, 1980).

Although the various perspectives which have originated from classical
Marxist thought do address aspects of the relationship between
women, media and development, none of these frameworks analyses
these issues in relation to each other. As well, both Marxist and
Modernization based analysis of this topic have focused almost
exclusively on modern information technologies and large-scale media.
Traditional, local and alternative media have not been adequately
discussed in either of these perspectives.

The recognition of the need for a more comprehensive framework of
analysis has led development-communications theorists towards a

Participatory Paradigm. This perspective emphasises the importance of the traditional and alternative methods of mass communications, as well as the social relations of media, paying specific attention to marginalized groups including women.

This focus on the social relations of the media allows for alternative solutions to the lack of support to either development or gender issues in the mainstream media. This emphasis supports alternative feminist media, as well as movements to include alternative issues and features in the mainstream media, thus allowing for increased access to media decision-making by marginalized groups.

> The participatory paradigm explicitly addresses the
> gender inequalities in its conceptualization of
> development. Explicitly focusing on women as a
> marginalized group within societies of developing
> countries makes it imperative that development
> communications policies also explicitly address issues of
> gender inequalities (Mousambira, 1991 p.16).

This paradigm has emerged as a response the critique of both the modernization and dependency analyses and Mowlana and Wilson, (1988) describe this approach as "both a revolutionary, humanistic, and a spiritual movement which emphasizes quality and calls for equality and balance in the international system" (p.14).

Mowlana and Wilson have also outlined several basic characteristics of and analysis of development according to the participatory paradigm:

1) It is an all inclusive social unity, 2) it emphasizes the community rather than the nation-state, 3) it stresses universalism rather than nationalism 4) it emphasises dialogue rather than monologue, and 5) it aims at emancipation rather than alienation (Mousambira, 1991 p.13).

The participatory approach focuses on the need to empower people and communities, and with this in mind, emphasizes the role of media (traditional and modern) in this process. While this does not mean that the new information technologies are abandoned in favor of only traditional communication, the importance of such traditional media as oracy, music, dance, art and theater are not ignored. Traditional culture is emphasised as a form of communication in itself which can be used to achieve developmental objectives (Moore, 1986).

Some of the most important literature on this approach to development-support communication has come from the original proponents of the modernization approach from years before. For example, Wilbur Schramm (1979) has provided a strong criticism of his earlier work, Mass Media and National Development (1964). He emphasises the need for a community centered approach to media as "big media" had proven to be ineffectual in dealing with local development needs. Schramm himself felt he should have been "more sceptical about the applicability of the Western model of development, and paid more attention to integrating mass media with local activity" (Sussman, 1991 p.8).

The focus on community and individual level initiatives is what gives this perspective a unique basis of analysis. Using what Maguire (1987) calls "Interpretive Inquiry", participatory researchers are able to uncover how "individual and groups interpretations of reality influence both social actions and the intentions which social actors have in doing whatever they do" (p.18). Rather than focusing on the establishment of universal laws for human interaction, this approach seeks to determine how human interaction produces rules which govern social life. In addition to producing practical research knowledge, "interpretive inquiry, is used to create the conditions for mutual understanding and consensus between members of different social orders (Fay, 1975;Habermas,1971) as well as producing practical knowledge" (Maguire, 1987, p.16).

However, the difference in information generation techniques between the participatory and other paradigms is not simply about methodology. They are,

> based on fundamentally different assumptions about knowledge creation and the purposes for which social knowledge is generated. The competing views of the purposes of social sciences reflect the difference of competing views of society. On the one hand, dominant social science paradigm research supports "politically neutral" theories about social affairs that are supportive of the status quo (Faye, 1975). On the other hand, alternative paradigm research supports the production of knowledge for emancipatory interests. It encourages ordinary and oppressed people to free themselves from the mechanisms of social domination (Brydon-Miller, 1984, in Maguire, 1987, p.18).

'Participatory communication' is the term which defines the communication process necessary to achieve development according to the participatory paradigm (Jacobson, 1989). This type of communication emphasizes the importance of traditional and cultural modes of communication as well as modern media and new information technologies. Among the forms of communication discussed within the participatory paradigm are what is called alternative media including feminist programming in the mainstream news, advertising or entertainment media as well as alternative programming which operate outside of the main.

The objective of participatory communication is to provide channels of communication for the majority of the population which is now alienated from media decision-making, leaving their experiences and concerns unacknowledged. According to Moore (1986), participatory communication "presents and represents the different popular sectors of the world, and their struggles and actions to achieve emancipation" (p.16). The target groups for development efforts which Moore identifies include: the underpriviledged, women, youth ,children, the unemployed, suppressed minorities and suppressed majorities.

Through this conceptualization of communication and development, authors from the participatory perspective assert that "underpriviledged and otherwise powerless groups can exercise

countervailing power through alternative media or participatory communication" (Mousambira, 1991.p.14).

In addition, participatory community media, another characteristic of participatory communication, goes beyond non-mechanized media previously association with community based communication initiatives. It also includes print and broadcast technologies which provide an important educational opportunity for groups and individuals in terms of media skills as well as media literacy.

Feminist scholars such as Yacoob, 1990; Vajrathon, 1990; Belbase, 1987; and Zoonen, 1990, have all emphasized the specific issue of gender when writing about media and development and attest to the fact that feminist thought had played a significant role in the development of the participatory framework. This paradigm has identified women as a specific marginalized group and outlines strategies for empowerment which could facilitate the emancipation of women.

> The emphasis on traditional media would benefit the majority of women since most women in developing countries live in rural areas where traditional media is strongest. In addition, involving women directly in the production and distribution of messages as the participatory community media strategy implies would enhance their self-reliance. It would empower them rather than leave them as mere spectators and consumers of messages produced and controlled by the more

powerful groups (in this case men) (Mousambira, 1991, p. 14).

In summary, this thesis uses a participatory perspective for analysis, while incorporating insights from the socialist-feminist (GAD) approach. The flexibility of socialist feminism allows for an important analysis of the structural considerations of class and gender, capitalism and patriarchy. The participatory framework offers a broader analysis of the situation of marginalized groups and within this, questions of race, religion and nationality. At the same time, it offers an essential focus on the importance of a participatory, community perspective for a clearer understanding for the role of alternative programs in women's struggle to change their situation in the media. While emphasising the role of alternative media initiatives, this framework also provides an examination of the role of feminist media in challenging the mainstream media stereotypes which exist, as well as the need for women's increased access to media decision-making.

Chapter 3:

Bias in the media industry

In 1985, ISIS the (International Women's Communications and Information Service), conducted research through women's organizations around the world on the issue of the portrayal and participation of women in the media. The results of this research showed, in a consistent manner, that women have been excluded from and by the mass media on a global scale in both their representation in media programming and as participants in media decision-making. The researchers have also concluded that this exclusion has occurred systematically on three levels: political, economic and social.

Political Exclusion

The "news", or what has become the most credible and serious aspect of mass media broadcasting and publications has increased in importance and accessibility over the past several decades. As the news focuses heavily on political issues and events, the exclusion of women from the political scene means that they are not adequately represented in this serious sphere. The primary concern of women's organizations in the ISIS survey was that women are virtually absent from the 'important' news of the world, whether transmitted by press, radio or television. Women are, generally speaking, not newsmakers. Those who do dominate the content of mass media are political or social leaders and as leadership in most countries is in the hands of men, women, for the most part, remain invisible. "The conclusion researchers have drawn is that in the main, the media relegate women to marginality, silence or absence." (Besha, 1990, p.114). Besha also

contends that women are excluded from the media as consumers as well as content because of their generally lower level of literacy than their male counterparts, as well as the fact that they have little time in their daily routine to listen to the radio, or watch television if the technology is available at all (p.115).

Social Exclusion

Other major concerns which were identified in this research indicate that very little media coverage is given to women's work, achievements, situations or needs. At the same time, the media are responsible for perpetuating and disseminating traditional stereotypes of women. In a summary of these findings ISIS reports that,

> While there are variations from society to society, from culture to culture, the basic images remain the same: women are portrayed as inferior, submissive, subordinate, emotional, irrational, confined to home and to roles assigned by a patriarchal society. Women are also portrayed as sex objects and commodities (ISIS, 1985,p.4).

Although the exclusion of women, both as part of the content and as participants in the media, presents a global concern, women of developing countries face a particularly difficult task in their attempt to make their voices heard in the mainstream media. They must combat not only the general Western media bias, but also the obvious male bias found throughout the media. For example, in the early stages of the communications debate, with the call for a more development oriented focus from the media, a Delhi-based English

daily newspaper introduced a new precedent by 'adopting' a village in a rural area of the country and following some of its development experiences and daily struggles. This represented an important step in development communication from the point of view of development issues. However, one woman journalist after going through the reports found that the male reporters on the story had not once alluded to the existence of women in the village. When she visited the village herself she saw women everywhere taking an important role in the survival and daily life of the village. The reports had left these women, and their work, invisible and therefore unimportant. The reporters on the story said they had not written about the women because they could not speak with them, however, the female journalist pointed out that even in the descriptive portion of the stories where animals were mentioned, women were still not acknowledged (Bhasin, 1985, p.11).

This example of an (conscious or unconscious) exclusion of women from even a description of daily life in the village illustrates very clearly the fact that women and women's work were not valued or even taken seriously by these journalists. More importantly, the objective of this particular series was to use a more development oriented style of reporting and allow urban and rural audiences to share experiences and information. This report, apparently, did not consider the importance of information exchange between rural and urban women although the women were responsible for an important part of the survival and daily life of the village. This emphasizes another of the themes which emerged from the ISIS research which indicates that women lack access to information they need and to

which they have a right. information which would help them answer questions affecting their daily lives, problems and needs (ISIS International, 1985).

For the most part, the debate on communication-support-development strategies has been carried on in forums such as UNESCO and the United Nations with very little attention being paid to gender issues or the image and portrayal of women in the media. The main concern has been to initially get development issues into the media and in most cases, gender issues have either taken a back seat or had no place at all in the discussion.

Economic Exclusion

Another important issue is women's exclusion from the media through economic considerations. With the emergence of unprecedented media communications technologies the industry is growing rapidly in terms of both size and scope. However, the control of this industry is becoming increasingly concentrated within a few transnational corporations. Because women have continually been denied access to new information technologies due to lack of education, necessary economic resources, and political decision-making power, they have been excluded from a large portion of the information revolution.

> Women have always had their own informal
> communications systems whether it be exchanging
> news and information around a village well, or in a
> sewing circle , or through 'gossip' at the market, or
> handing down lore from mother to daughter. With

> the advent of mass communications and
> sophisticated technology, however, women have
> been left out. The control of the mass media -
> television.radio.cinema.the daily press , periodicals,
> and advertising - is solidly in the hands of men.
> (ISIS, 1985)

The fact that the mass media is controlled through the interests of transnational corporations means that women, due to their exclusion from the decision-making positions in these corporations, are rarely in positions to influence the media. "The fact that few women advance to the top of these companies means that women's input into research and development decisions, let alone distribution decisions, is minuscule" (Steeves, 1989,p.87).

The issue of ownership and control of the media is one which is of central concern to each of the previously discussed perspectives on mass media. In any analysis of the media it is imperative that not only the power of the technology and process of communications itself be recognized, but also the interests in which this power operates. The reality of the mass media industry today is that it is dominated by huge transnational corporations which are overwhelmingly Western based (the four major wire services are all based in the North, as well as most major broadcasting corporations i.e. Turner Broadcasting, USA. Reuters/Visnews, England). This situation is further exacerbated by the fact that the operations of these transnational corporations are supported by advertising, which, in turn, influence editorial and entertainment content (Steeves, 1989, p.86).

Gordon (1981) draws a strong link between the interests of transnational advertising and the portrayal of women in the mass media, indicating that these links between media and business interests are not difficult to establish, whether at national or transnational levels. Gordon's analysis of Caribbean newspapers condemns their lack of commitment to mirror social reality:

> Where were the stories about women involved in the rehabilitation of bananas in the Windward Islands, the processing of beef in Belize, fishing in St. Lucia, vegetable production in Antigua and tobacco production in St. Vincent? Whatever happened to the women fighting for consumer protection, their rights as tenants and against abuses at the foreign embassies?(p. 114)

Media denial of their existence, Gordon concludes, "may be an unconscious act or it could be that these women are not saleable products which would stimulate the advertising dollars." Over the past ten years, UNESCO has done some important research on the issue of women in advertising. In her summary of this research, Steeves emphasizes a link between the media contribution to systems of representation that make up societal ideological processes and the international economy. Advertising, the main factor in profits for the communication industry, has become the means of survival for most of the media industry and plays a key role in this link. (Steeves, 1989, p.89). The controversial issue of women's portrayal in transnational advertising will be looked at further in this paper under the discussion of women's image in the media.

Sean MacBride, in his report to UNESCO regarding problems of mass communications cited the growth of transnational corporations as an extremely powerful force in the media industry. These corporations have created models of high productivity and profit rates, stimulating the further development of new information technologies. The overwhelming majority of this development occurs in the industrialized North through firms which the MacBride Commission has characterized as typically transnational and vertically integrated. This leaves little room for initiatives from the South to become competitive, or even survive in the industry. As a result, as far as communications technologies are concerned, the industry is increasingly controlled by the few largest corporations, which are based in about five Western countries, the most in the United States (MacBride, 1980).

Effects of This Exclusion:

Due to the exclusion of women from all aspects of media decision-making, as well as the lack of opportunities for women to gain education in media-literacy, women's concerns have not been heard in the media. The decision-making process involved in media content and access is solidly in the hands of men. This situation results in the systematic exclusion of women globally, right down to the local level of media consumption and delivery. Stereotypical representations of women permeate the media and there is little opportunity for women to voice their objections to this situation or offer alternative images.

However, to simply imply by this analysis that the response would be to encourage more women to become media executives would be incorrect. As was previously discussed, this issue must be placed within a broader social context, wherein men, for the most part, hold the economic and political power world-wide and therefore control most decision-making processes. The situation of women in media is simply another manifestation of this exclusion. The condition of the media industry is unique in some respects, for this technology acts as possibly the most important source of information for its global audience, and therefore having a significant impact on the ideology and decision-making of society.

Kamla Bhasin (1985) tells us in her research on women, development and the media that the impact of the media is different at different levels. The most obvious effect of a biased media is that it perpetuates and supports negative-stereotypes and glorifies motherhood and subservience. The media therefore provides the necessary ideology for the society to make acceptable social conditions such as the fact that women and girls are more undernourished, and generally have less value in society than males. The media's portrayal of these biases makes it difficult for women to break out of the societal norms, thereby supporting the view of women as second class citizens. Furthermore, there is little challenge to these values which will see more daughters remain uneducated, unemployed, and discriminated against in favor of sons.

A second impact of this exclusion is that not only do male audiences see reinforced images of women as inferior, but also, women themselves subscribe to these images and therefore the self-image of women is affected. As mentioned earlier, in many cases the efforts of women to change their role in society have been trivialized by the media. Also, through the mass media women are constantly shown images of what society demands and expects from them as women, and therefore the media is very important in the socialization of women into their defined roles as wives and mothers.

In developing areas there is still another aspect to this bias, the reinforcement of biases in development plans (Bhasin,1985, p. 15). As illustrated by the report from a rural Indian village discussed earlier, women are often not considered in the development process, either by the media or by development projects concerned primarily with increasing production. The fact that the value of women's economic participation is not considered in development projects or by the media means they are isolated from the formulation of both the projects and the message which is communicated about these projects.

Unfortunately, the importance of research on women, media and development is often underestimated. While since the 1960s there has been a recognition of the importance of the mass media as a critical component in any development strategy, there has also been a misconception that any information directed through the media towards a general audience will reach women and men equally.

Because of a generally lower educational level, restricted access to media, and restricted mobility outside the home, women often do not have the same access to the media as men. As well, much of the programming developed in and for Third World audiences is geared towards disseminating information about agricultural issues or programs and although women are responsible for food production and preparation in most rural areas, these programs are predominantly developed for and available to male audiences. As Leslie Steeves points out in her research on women and media in Africa, for more than a decade development practitioners have known that women in Sub-Saharan Africa are responsible for over 80 per cent of food production. However, the main programming for disseminating agricultural information, agricultural extension systems, continue to ignore the needs and situations of African women farmers (Steeves, 1990 p.4).

Mallica Vjrathon (1990) identifies several characteristics of a female audience which development communicators and educators should emphasize when attempting to reach these audiences. In her analysis of the situation, Vjrathon states that,

> When development communicators ignore women, they
> consciously or unconsciously slow down the pace of
> development and perpetuate the vicious cycles of poverty,
> illiteracy, starvation, and human suffering (p.1).

By focusing on women, development communicators have the ability to communicate with a key audience for development. Vajrathon list several qualities in this audience which make women not only

Important contributors to and participants in the media, but essential in any development communications strategy. To begin with, women act as economic agents, although they are usually not perceived to be. Their work is not accounted for, and so their potential for further development is grossly neglected. Women are also the major participants in agricultural production. In Africa they produce 80 per cent of the food, yet they receive little information or technology for this purpose. Vajrathon also cites women as the key agents of environmental protection because, in rural areas, they live and work closer to the eco-system. Therefore, she continues, they need support, technical conservation information, and sharing of their experience through communication. Finally, women are the key agents of human development.

> ... They can improve the quality of life and optimize human responses in communities through reducing maternal and child mortality, reducing fertility, improving family nutrition, and managing safe drinking water and sanitation. They also teach their children (especially their daughters) good health practices and other skills at home, thus supporting formal education systems (p.1).

The concerns of women have not figured prominently in most communication plans to date, however, over the past ten or fifteen years, there has been some movement towards an awareness of women and the media in the context of development. During the UN Decade for Women (1976-1985) several national and international conferences were conducted on the theme of women, media and development. The main areas of concern at these conferences were,

the images of women portrayed in the mass media, and the participation of women in the media industry. Research in these areas has been quite limited and as the awareness of the inequalities in the media industry towards women of developing countries grows slowly, the industry itself is moving very rapidly to become more powerful from technological, political, and economic perspectives.

Furthermore, when women have been considered in development projects their participation has been relegated to reproductive labor or house-wife related activities. As well, many projects developed for women which have been funded through foreign aid are also developed to help women perform household duties more efficiently, i.e. cooking classes or cooperatives, child care classes, etc.

The extent to which the media influences the development and results of these projects is certainly debatable. Although most members of the media agree that mass media does have some influence on society if only by setting agendas and defining issues for discussion many will also argue that the media does not tell people what to think, it simply provides the information necessary to make individual opinions and decisions. This attitude, however, does not take into account the ideological impact the media can and have had, and the fact that if the information provided comes from a western, male bias, than the decisions individuals derive from the data must also have this bias.

One difficulty which arises in a discussion of women, media and development is the difference in the relationship between women and media in those societies which have a well developed media industry and those which do not. For example, in the case of print media, a standard of living and education which enables women (and men) access to that media is essential. It is difficult as well to attempt to analyze the relationship between women and media when women do not constitute a homogeneous population. As Gallagher (1981) points out:

> The preoccupations of the majority of women in the West vis-a-vis the media are the preoccupations of only a fraction of the populations of the developing world. Discrimination against women's access to decision-making posts within the media is hardly a problem in countries where only a handful of women enter the media profession in the first place. (p.28).

The literature on the issue of women in newly emerging media industries emphasizes the importance of 'appropriate' and fair structures within the industry. This would mean an increase in the employment of women in the industry, and increased access for women in decision-making roles. However, as was previously discussed, this response does not completely address the issue of how these new media industries can compete or even survive within the structure of global mass communications. As Gallagher points out:

> based on our knowledge of the essentially conservative or even discriminatory tendencies of the developed media in both the portrayal and the employment of women and the

> potential influence of the media on the formation of
> attitudes, self-concepts and social perceptions, the debate
> in countries with newly emerging media systems is more
> concerned with how to make these media work in
> women's best interests. (Gallagher
> 1981 p. 30)

One of the most important indications of the impact of the mass media on the status of women in society continues to be the frequency with which women's organizations world-wide identify this issue as a priority for their membership. In many cases the potential of the mass media to act as "powerful agents of socialization and social change" (Gallagher 1981, p.29) has encouraged these organizations to focus increasingly more attention in this area. One funding agency which has recognized this fact is the Global Fund for Women, which provides funds to initiate, strengthen, and link organizations promoting women's interests. According to the organization's president, Anne Firth Murray, the organization has chosen to emphasize the area of communication. In the first three years of the organization's operations, 115 grants of between $500 and $10,000 were awarded to grassroots non-governmental organizations mostly in developing countries, and approximately 30 per cent of these were in the area of communications. Firth Murray also states that,

> The emphasis on communication evolved because women's
> organizations world wide have made it clear that
> communication is vital to women's empowerment. Women
> want to communicate-locally, regionally, and globally.
> They want to share their experiences, learn from one
> another, and devise collaborative strategies to deal with

the difficult issues they face. Moreover, women's
organizations are at a critical stage of transition. Having
articulated specific needs, principles, and goals in their
own organizations, women are now ready to make an
impact on the larger society. They see communication as
critical to that objective (Murray, 1990, p.14).

Images portrayed by the media

One international organization which has done some comprehensive

work on the portrayal of women in media is UNESCO.   (Appendix II)

One of the most useful pieces of research UNESCO has carried out is a

survey questionnaire given to member country governments at the

World Conference for the UN Decade for Women in 1985. A copy of

this questionnaire is included with the appendix and these results will

be refered to further in this paper.

Research on the issue of women, development ar.d media is important

for several reasons. It is a field where a great deal of work has not

been done to-date, as the issue has not come to the forefront in either

the media world or for many development agencies. It is, however, an

important issue as the development of modern communications

technologies mean the media is more widely received through radios,

televisions, and publications, and more available to organizations as a

development tool. As the industry is growing, so is the media's

influence and impact on societies both in the developed and

developing worlds. As a result, both the negative impacts and the

positive potential of communications are magnified.

The mass media constitute a very powerful influence on social perceptions and women's representation in the media is a critical issue in research into the role or status of women in society. This industry is also very complex with class and gender biases and a definite Northern/Western bias, yet the media is seen by many as an important tool in the pursuit of changing perceptions of women in society.

The results of the UNESCO survey (UNESCO, 1985) confirm that with few exceptions women continue to be portrayed in a traditionally stereotyped way. The media in Turkey tend to portray women as "wife, mother, sex symbol", whereas in Senegal they show her as "mother, wife, agent for development". In the Republic of Korea, when the media depict a working woman, she is "seldom happy". Sudanese media find it "incumbent upon them to portray women in an optimal image consistent with the Shari'a (Islamic law)"... A study sent in by Costa Rica analyses advertising's concentration on domestic activities and personal appearance, and documents the stereotypes used to project an illusion of social mobility to the deprived masses. In school textbooks, concludes the study, "man is the leader, he who has a place in history" (UNESCO, 1985, p.37).

In response to the survey's question, *Has there been any change since 1975 in these media images?*, 44 governments answered yes while 28 answered no. The researchers indicate here, however, that clearly a number of the positive responses are actually in reference to changes

in women's role in society, as opposed to changes in the media
portrayal of that role. Looking specifically at those countries which
responded positively to changes in media representation alone, the
yes-no balance is approximately equal. Progress reported generally
refered to increased portrayal of women in professional capacities
(Ecuador, Jordan, Madagascar, United States, Zimbabwe) (UNESCO p.
38).

In countries which have experienced a social revolution, responses to
the above question indicated a complete transformation in the
portrayal of women in the media. In countries such as Poland and the
USSR, the transformation is indicated to have occurred simultaneously
with the move to socialism. The response from Cuba states:

> Since the triumph of the 1959 revolution, the image of
> woman projected by the broadcast media in Cuba has
> undergone a total change. ... The image now presented is
> that of the worker - students, militants, professionals - an
> involved participant in all branches of Cuban daily activity.
> UNESCO p. 38.

However, further UNESCO research (1985) warns that while media in
socialist countries do provide a relatively more positive view of
women, they continue to direct images which "embody traditional
distinctions between women's and men's emotional make-up,
intellectual capacities and motivations." (p.71) At the same time, in
the People's Republic of China, concerns have been identified (p.71)
with the media's reflection of the social dilemma of reconciling the
new economic and political roles of women in society with their
traditional roles.

Regardless of the media in specific countries or regions, there are some factors of the media industry which indicate that the mass media play a particularly conservative role in socialization, and reflect and reinforce traditional values and beliefs. These specific factors include the male-biased profile of employment in the industry, especially in the decision-making positions with the media. As well, the messages put forward by the mass media are tailored for audiences demanding vivid impact and easy to understand concepts. Therefore, there has been a reliance on simplified, recognizable and standardized characteristics in media messages.

For these reasons, it has seemed possible to some commentators that the media present a social reality which - if not demonstrably false - feeds on the most conservative voices in society, ignoring new trends until they have become established and thus fulfilling a primarily reinforcing role - rather than a transforming one - in the culture (Gallagher, 1981, p.36).

These standardized symbols translate into stereotypes which dominated media representation of various groups and issues. Images of women in the media can be analyzed through several categories, however the consistency of the findings is carried across geographical and political regions, the various media, and different audiences.

> On film, in the press and the broadcast media, women's activities and interests typically go no further than the confines of home and family. Characterized as essentially dependent and romantic, women are rarely portrayed as rational, active or decisive...Prevalent news values define most women, and most women's problems as

unnewsworthy...As the bait through which products are
advertised, women are exploited in terms of their sexuality
and physical appearance (UNESCO, 1989, p.209).

A summary of the dominant imagery of women shows that in general,
women are underrepresented in the media. When they do appear,
they are shown as employed in traditionally female occupations, more
concerned with family and marriage than their male counterparts, and
generally more passive and indecisive than males (UNESCO, 1981
p.40).

Underlying all these situations is a dichotomy which, for the most
part, portrays women as either completely good or completely evil. In
many cases the good side of women is represented through illustrating
her strong maternal instincts, femininity, and generally passive nature,
and she is most often found in the home. On the other hand, her evil
counterpart shows none of these characteristics and is depicted as
unscrupulous, immoral, insensitive, and cruel (Touchman, 1981).

UNESCO (1981, Gallagher) has provided regional reviews of the
portrayal of women in North America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Latin
America and the Caribbean. Since the major UNESCO studies on this
issue (1981, 1985) further information has been gathered, and a
reasonably complete global profile of women's images in the media can
be found. What is most impressive about this research is the
consistency of the findings. Women, worldwide, are portrayed in a
startlingly similar fashion in all forms of mass media.

One area of particular concern in the literature is with the portrayal, or lack of portrayal, of women in the news. News programming has become one of the most important sources of international information for audiences world-wide. In addition, researchers who study the news industry have illustrated that the news serves to legitimize and assign status to issues, events and leaders in a more substantial way than other forms of the media (Bryerly, 1990, p.79). Today, not only is the news component of the media itself seen to be the most 'serious', credible and important form of media communication, new information technologies and broadcast innovations such as the Cable News Network have now made the news extremely accessible to every region of the world.

Gallagher reports from her research that where data were available, incidences of news about women ranged from only 4 to 20 per cent of news items (National Union of Journalists, 1978). She concludes, "News is associated with important events, and news in every country reflects a male social order." (1981, p.77) This absence of women in the news not only withholds an opportunity to show women's issues, concerns and achievements, it also reinforces the message that women are not newsmakers or newsworthy. Even in the incidences where women do figure in the news, there is a lack of serious acceptance of women and their activities.

UNESCO (1985) research in this area showed that there exists a severe under-representation of women as both gatekeepers and newsmakers. The gatekeeper function of the media to select which

Items will become part "of the news" refers to the lack of women in the decision-making process of the news industry. UNESCO's (1985) review of research in this area to date shows a consistent exclusion of women from the important world of news. This conclusion has been emphasized by the findings of Kaiser (1984) in the Netherlands, Madaok (1984) in India, Gordon (1981) in the Caribbean, Penolidis (1984) across ten European Countries, Abrahamson et al. (1983) in Sweden, Holopaines, 1984) in Finland and Hanak, (1984) in Hungary. In addition, further research (Cuthbert, 1981) has analyzed the way in which the predominant values of the news business have led to 'event-oriented' reporting as opposed to in-depth analytical reporting of on going processes or movements. Other results have been an emphasis on political and economic elites which ignores the activities and concerns of the majority of the population and especially any marginalized groups. As the media reflect the existing power structures of society, it follows then that representation would focus on the decision-makers in society to the exclusion of all other strata of society. This exclusion, obviously, would include women as they do not represent a politically or economically powerful sector of society.

At the same time, the emergence of a beat structure in news gathering has left little room for anything outside the mainstream news. The 'beat' concept is basically the assigning of a journalist to a specific institution, location, organization or event where news is deemed likely to occur. This results in a very narrow focus for news gathering, and limits the available news items, and a "general non-coverage of women" (UNESCO 1985, p.64).

The most consistent evidence of the use of female stereotypes can be found in advertising in both print and electronic media. The use of women, specifically their appearances to sell an number of products is in evidence world-wide, regardless of region. As Gallagher states: "The particularly degrading nature of many advertising images of women is well- documented." (1981, p.75) For example, comprehensive studies on this issue can be found for every region of the world including: Canada (Task Force on Women and Advertising, 1977) United Kingdom (Millum, 1975) Austria (Arbeitsgrubbe Frauenmaul, 1979), Denmark (Sestrup, 1978), The Philippines (National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women, 1978), Jamaica (Cuthbert, 1979), Sri Lanka (Goontilabe, 1980), and Latin America (Quirox and Larrain, 1978).

The portrayal of women in advertising is probably the most controversial and criticized issue in the literature on women in the media. The exploitation of women in advertisements is quite blatant in many cases and provides a clear objective around which many women's media groups have organized. The most critical aspect of any discussion of women and advertising is the transnational focus of this advertising. The majority of advertisements are purchased and produced through transnational advertising firms based in industrialized countries (Steeves 1989, p.89). Women constitute the largest base for private consumption decisions in most societies and therefore are an important target for transnational marketing. The research to date on women and advertising has been quite well

documented. Since advertising is often less subtle in its approach
than other mainstream media programming, it is often much easier to
identify the negative images of women and contact the producer
involved. As Steeves points out, Another factor in advertising which
has gender implications is "...its persuasive, unidirectional nature."

> Advertising research has become highly sophisticated and
> can identify techniques that are most likely to sell goods
> and encourage materialistic values. Since products
> advertised are often non-essential, luxury types of items,
> poor women's oppressed status is likely to be reinforced
> by advertising, as is their status as consumers. In fact,
> international studies of media advertising have consistently
> reported images of women that reflect the capitalist and
> consumerist orientation of the Western agencies that
> create most advertisements and the transnational
> corporations that make the products (Gallagher,
> 1981:UNESCO, 1985) Steeves, 1989 p.89).

The effects of this type of imagery of women through the mass media
on society are very difficult to determine in any kind of concrete way.
Obviously, women's organizations around the world have identified the
issue of media portrayal of women as a priority for their membership
and this in itself tells us that these groups have perceived some type of
correlation or possibly causal relationship between the image of
women in the media and the role and situation of women in society.
The case study which will be examined in the following chapter is
based on an organization which has perceived a correlation between
the violence against women in Jamaican society and the
representation of women in Jamaican society. As previously discussed,
women's funding institutions are financing research and programming
in this area, indicating again the importance international

organizations have placed on this issue, including the Unesco Conference on Women and Development which has cited the negative portrayal of women in the media as a barrier to the advancement of the status of women in society.

However, although the assumption that the mainstream media images of women have a negative effect on the lives and situation of women underlies much of the argument for significant change within the media industry, there is little empirical evidence to support a causal relationship between media exposure and specific effects. This is also the case with any other aspect of research on the social effects of the mass media. For example, after an exhaustive report by the American Surgeon General's Advisory Committee on the most studied area of media effects, violence and the media, it could only be concluded that for some people, under some circumstances, exposure to television violence may be harmful (Surgeon General, 1972). As a result, it is impossible to illustrate clearly that the negative image of women in the media has a negative impact on the role of women in society.

However, some experimental studies aimed at measuring the impact of media imagery of women have indicated a correlation, or at least some relationship between media portrayal of women and the status or perception of women in society. According to Touchman (1979) many findings of these experimental studies (i.e. Cheles-Miller, 1975, Courtney and Whipple, 1978, and Pingree and Hawkins, 1978) have been replicated from study to study. These findings indicate that children who are exposed to media content which portrays sex role

stereotypes will describe women's roles in traditional ways. At the same time, children who are exposed to content which contradicts sex-stereotyping tend to describe women's roles in a less traditional manner. These studies have also found that when watching television, children tend to pay particular attention to, and identify more strongly with children of their own sex performing sex-role stereotypical tasks. Finally, it has been found that the more television children watch, the more traditional their attitudes and expectations become. Some tentative conclusions from these findings indicate that children, and possible women and men, do appear to model themselves along lines suggested by media imagery. Studies of women in advertising suggest that the impact of advertising may be particularly powerful in providing modelling behavior (Brown, 1979). Advertisements are extremely effective in reaching and influencing specific target audiences. Through most advertising, the sex-role stereotyping is usually implicit, rather than blatant, and while the explicit sales message is being discounted consciously, the more subtle stereotyping can be absorbed unnoticed (Gallagher, 1981).

Further research in the area of media exposure and identification and imitation suggest that women do identify themselves with media situations. Studies in Brazil (Marques de Melo, 1971), Venezuela (Colomina de Rivera, 1968), the Netherlands (Berman, 1977) and Japan (Miyazaki, 1978) have shown that in addition, many women apply media situations and solutions to their own problems. Fifty per cent of a sample of housewives in Venezuela reported that they believed that radio and television soap-operas derived from real life,

53 per cent reported that they felt the solutions offered in these soap-operas could help them solve their own problems, and 30 per cent said that their children often imitated the characters in these programmes. The findings of the study in Brazil were very similar concluding from a study of Sao Paulo housewives that such programmes perform a specifically ideological function. And as well, 28 per cent of housewives surveyed in Japan responded that they watched television soap-operas because of a belief that they dealt with real-life problems and were a good education.

Women's participation in mass communications

As was the case with previous issues surrounding the topic of women, media and development, little conclusive data is available in this area. The need for research in this area, however, is extremely important not only to establish the status of women's employment in this growing and powerful industry, but also because of the assumption that their is a link between the decision- making processes involved in media content and programming and the lack of female participation in this process.

Seager and Olson (1986) in Steeves (1989) have provided data on women's employment in the media industry for 46 countries, and on both print and broadcast media from 25 countries.
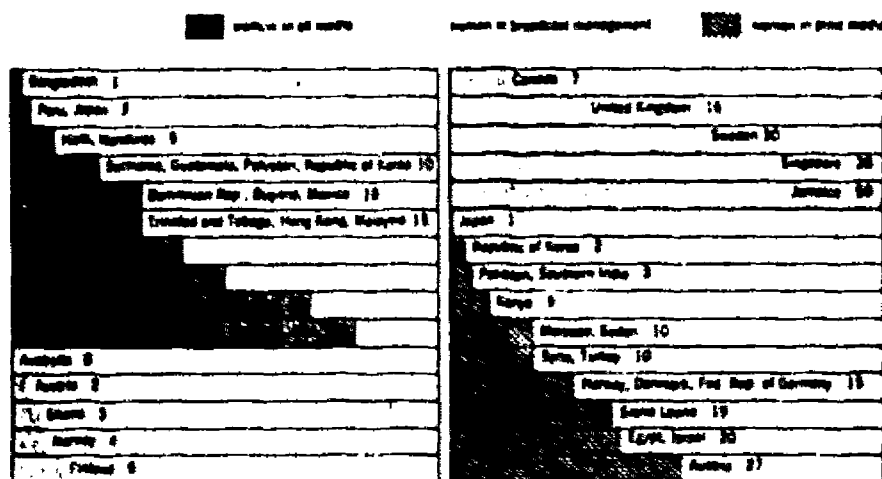
Media workers
Women as a proportion of workers in media where known, most recent year since 1970 (percentages)
Source: J. Seager and A. Olson, Women in the World: An International Atlas, London, Pan, 1986.

This research shows that while in several countries (i.e. Jamaica, Singapore) women have achieved some degree of access to employment in the media industry, they are almost completely excluded from the decision-.making positions within the industry. In her analysis of these results, Steeves draws a link between women's positions and the power structure within which the media operate:

> Perhaps more revealing than numbers of women in media is specific information about their jobs. ... The available data indicate serious problems of vertical and horizontal segregation. ...These similarities are not accidental and may be significantly attributable t o the impact of, first, colonial powers and, later, Western development agencies and multinational corporation. As previously noted, these various forces introduced not only media but Western assumptions about their operation. (1989, p.86)

Case studies in recent UNESCO research show a consistent trend towards women's employment in low-paid, low impact positions with the industry. For example, in Sierra Leone, women represent 11 percent of the total employees of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting in that country. At the same time, 74 per cent of these women are employed in low-level positions as typists and clerical workers. (Anni, 1981 in Unesco 1985, p.79) This same situation is mirrored around the world. In Finland and Jamaica, where women account for between 40 and 50 per cent of the total employment in the mass media industry, the majority of this employment is found as office staff or production assistants, and women continue to be "...very underrepresented at senior and management levels." (UNESCO, 1985, p.80) Even in those countries where women have achieved a relatively high level of participation within the industry, access to the decision-making levels of the mass media has remained elusive.

Gallagher's (1981) research indicates that throughout the world women are virtually absent from the top decision-making or executive position. At the same time, even at the lower levels of the corporate structure, women are isolated in lower-paying clerical positions. The women who are employed in news positions typically handle women's features or the social pages, assignments generally seen to be of lesser importance. Gallagher's research also discussed problems with job conditions (e.g., the expectation of high performance in youth with no consideration for childbearing and child care), protective and restrictive legislation for media women in some countries which

restrict overtime and night work, and the poor rate of participation for women in media union membership, as well as inadequate training and education for women in media. (pp.94-95).

The UNESCO literature reviewed indicates that throughout the world much more is known about images of women than about women's participation in media industries. There are many levels for discussion about women's participation. Certainly it is useful to know about women's success in obtaining media jobs, but it is also important to ask whether this will make a difference. In other words, will increased numbers of women change media content and policy? Or will women conform to the practices of existing structures?

Many of the strategies for change suggested by the liberal-feminist approach to the issue of women in media are based on the assumption that there is a link between access and image. The emphasis of the UNESCO research to date has been to push for increased participation of women in the mainstream media as a response to the existing media imbalance. Steeves makes this position very clear in her review,

> On the surface, it appears that research and political efforts to increase numbers of women employed in mass media, particularly at the higher levels, indicates a liberal feminist orientation. Many radical and socialist feminists would argue that such efforts ignore patriarchal structures that are unlikely to change with the simple addition of women. However, Zillah Eisenstein (1981), a socialist feminist, has argued persuasively that patriarchal structures and products cannot help but change as increasing numbers of women participate in them and appeal to them for support. Empirically, very little media

research has addressed the issue." (Steeves, 1989, p. 95)
note: there has been little such research in the United
States either, as indicated by Muriel Cantor's (1987)
recent report to the Benton Foundation.

However, there is actually little hard evidence to support this link in the existing studies. Often, women working in the media themselves have been found to originate sexist content (Gallagher, 1981, p.108). For example, the most sexist and sexually explicit of a particular series of Venezuelan fotonovelas were almost all written by women (Flora, 1980) and Gallagher (1981, p.109) cites further examples where individual women producers, journalists or decision-makers have been associated with - or directly responsible for - negative and stereotypical portrayals of women. There have been, however, some studies done which provide evidence in support of increased female participation in the media. A case study from Sri Lanka, (Goonatilake, 1980) indicates that in Sri Lankan radio, the higher the participation of women, the more positive the portrayal of women represented in its programming. The representation of women in a positive (or non-negative) light was highest in the English-language service which also has the highest female participation rate, almost 50 per cent. This was followed by the Tamil service (with 43 percent female participation) and the Sinhala service with only 18 percent. It should also be noted that although there are no women on the board of directors for the English service, 60 per cent of the positions at the director and assistant director levels are held by women (in Gallagher, 1981, p.108).

It is somewhat difficult, therefore, at this point to establish whether or not an increased participation of women in media alone would facilitate change in the portrayal of women in the media. In fact, it seems apparent that further research into both women's participation in media and alternative strategies for women to influence media content is required.

Gallagher's conclusions also emphasize the need for further research in this area:

> The fact that most research into media imagery has been limited to content analysis means that, overall, there have been virtually no attempts to establish links between the dominant images and the dominant values, beliefs, or attitudes of media personnel. (Gallagher, 1981, p.109)

Responses:

Women and women's organizations have begun to combat the persistence of male dominated perceptions in the media through two general strategies. The first is the use of pressure from women's organizations on the media, governments, and subscribers to demand a more aware and responsive media. The second is the introduction of feminist media developed by and for women to create a forum for women's issues and concerns. However, these communications networks are not a part of the mainstream and in most cases lack money and support for their production and distribution.

Most of the discussion of solutions to the problems presented for women by the mainstream media deal with the question of how to reform the existing mainstream media to be more equitable towards

women. "In a broad sense, effort is focused on reform, amendment, and sensitization while accepting the basic political and ideological assumptions of the present system" (Gallagher 1981, p. 137) At the same time, there has been some recognition of the need for such dramatic changes in the existing media structure that any realization of such change is unlikely. In addition, some communications - development experts agree that due to the structure of the industry itself, these inequalities are virtually inherent, and change cannot be made within the constraints of the existing media industry.

Some women's organizations have indicated that although they support the participation of women in the mainstream media, the more effective approach to dealing with media bias is to develop alternative media channels and provide feminist media and development support communications programmes directed specifically towards women (Gallagher, 1981, p. 37).

Proponents of a more grassroots, participatory approach advocate the recognition of both cultural and popular media as valid forms of mass communication and are in the forefront of the field of alternative media. In addition, while those of a more liberal-feminist orientation, as evident in most UNESCO work on this issue, are working toward changes in mainstream media (i.e. more equitable employment practices with regards to women, and a more responsible portrayal of women in advertising) they are also working to provide alternative outlets for women's communication. The question remains, however, can these attempts to get the message across from outside the

mainstream media, combined with the social, political and economic pressures of maintaining a media outlet, provide any real alternative to the problems posed by the present-day communications industry?

According to UNESCO's World Communications Report (1989) the past fifteen years have seen unprecedented growth in the role of alternative media and especially with regards to feminist media. The primary focus in the development of these media is to provide communications channels which are controlled and operated by women themselves, as well as readily accessible to a female audience. These alternative channels operate to present a more balanced and realistic view of women in the world as well as a forum for women's concerns. By sidestepping the mainstream media, these alternative forms of media attempt to operate independently from the constraints of profit margins and patriarchy which exist in the mainstream.

Alternative media programming includes all forms of print and broadcast media, as well as traditional forms of communication including popular theater. Print media, due to their inexpensive nature have increased substantially in many areas of the developing world, women's publications (magazines, newspapers, and other print media) provide one of the most popular types of alternative media. This medium is relatively inexpensive, compared with more complicated broadcast technologies, and fairly accessible to a mass audience. The problem of illiteracy in many societies does, however, limit the circulation of these publications and in some areas makes

them irrelevant to the population which would likely be most
interested in their content. There is competition, as well, from
mainstream women's publications which generally hold a much larger
circulation.

These publications are distinguished from mainstream women's
magazines not only through circulation, but by content. Women's
alternative publications focus on issues directly related to women, and
the struggle of women for equality. These issues might include,
violence against women, reproductive health care, etc. In addition,
these publications also devote space to the achievements and concerns
of women and women's organizations. This opportunity for
publication of the achievements of women and information regarding
women's projects, research, and work, is extremely important as few
mainstream publications will allow the space or resources to discuss
these issues in their publications other than an occasional, brief
announcement.

The World Communications Report (1989) demonstrates that the
number of these alternative publications are growing, and taking root
around the world:

> From 1985 to 1986 there was a 6 per cent increase in
> women's publications in North America, and a 3 per cent
> increase in Europe, but increases of 53 per cent in the
> South Pacific, 33 per cent in the Middle East, 61 per cent
> in Asia, 143 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean,
> and an extraordinary 266 per cent in Africa. But the

overall number of publications produced in the developing regions remains relatively low: under 50 for Asia, Africa and the Middle East and the South Pacific, in comparison with 365 for North America and 76 for Europe. However, these statistics should be treated with some caution: data-gathering is much easier in North America and Western Europe that in other regions, and the definition of 'women's alternative publications' may vary in different countries (UNESCO, 1989 p. 214).

Broadcast technologies are also growing in popularity as channels for alternative messages. These technologies provide a greater impact with their audio/visual appeal than the simpler print media, and at the same time the issue of literacy is not such a serious obstacle as with publications. Access to these technologies are just as limited in some cases, although, by the inaccessibility of the technology (radio, video player, television, etc.) for many potential audiences. Over the past ten or so year, however, the availability of radio technologies to rural areas has significantly increased (UNESCO, 1989). The content of alternative women's radio programming differs from the content of mainstream women's radio which is commonly transmitted by the mass media. The mainstream programming tends to concentrate on the traditional roles of women and focus on topics such as home and beauty themes, fashion, cooking, etc. Alternative broadcasting tends to cover more controversial issues such as rape, domestic violence, economic and political issues. As well, this type of programming also offers a forum for the voice of 'ordinary' women to discuss their concerns as opposed to inviting experts to speak on various issues.

One of the best known alternative women's radio broadcasts was Radio Donna, in Italy. This was a two-hour daily broadcast through Radio Citta Futura, a private left-wing station in a working-class section of Rome. Radio Donna provided a daily opportunity for various groups of women to discuss their concerns on the air. On January 9, 1979, five women form the Housewives Collective were participating in such a broadcast, discussing abortion, when a fascist group attacked the station, setting it on fire. The women were seriously injured, and the station was shut down. Several large demonstrations were staged to support the women, however Radio Donna has stopped broadcasting. Radical feminists have subsequently started a new station called Radio Lillith, and similar broadcasts have started up on other European countries. (Gallagher, 1981)

Women's community radio has become popular as well in Latin America and the Caribbean, as the strong tradition of community radio in Latin America has generated programmes by and for women (UNESCO, 1989). Since 1985, a Chilean based regional women's information network called the Unidad de Comunicacion Alternativa de la Mujer, has been developing a network -Red Radiofonica de Mujeres- to exchange women's alternative radio programming. Catalogues of this programming were produced in 1986 and 1987, providing information on 80 programmes form 14 Latin American countries.

On a somewhat larger scale, another network, WINGS the Women's International News Gathering Service was founded in San Francisco

through Western Public Radio to act as a major distribution point for radio news about women, women's issues and women's organizations. WINGS covers international topics such as economics, employment the environment, legal and political issues, peace and war, the concern of indigenous women, culture and gender research. (UNESCO, 1989).

Undoubtedly the mass media with the highest visual impact is television, and advances in media technologies have meant that television audiences around the world are growing rapidly. However, there has been, to date anyway, very little done in the way of introducing women's alternative programming through television. This medium is relatively expensive, compared to other print and broadcast technologies. As well, it is easily controlled due to the need for sophisticated equipment, editing and broadcast technologies and the large capital outlay necessary for these requirements.

There has been, however, some work done in the area of films, videos, and audio-visuals. In 1986, Isis International produced a guide to visual resources. This guide, called "Powerful Images", lists over 600 visuals, mainly videos, slideshows and films, about women. The majority of these were produced by women and 167 of the listings come from Asia and the Pacific, 43 from Oceania, 35 from Africa and the Middle East, and the remaining 24 are in a general 'world-wide' category. The major themes covered by resources in this guide include: 32 percent pertaining to images and culture (including identity, roles, relationships, migration), 18 per cent relate to work,

16 per cent on health, 11 per cent pertaining to women's history, 9 percent deal with sexual violence, prostitution, and pornography, 8 per cent discuss empowerment of women, 4 per cent discuss racism and 2 per cent focus on peace issues. (Unesco, 1989).

Further work in the area of alternative media has come from the women's feature services. These networks function to provide a channel through which women's concerns, achievements, and experiences may be introduced into the mainstream media, a role which is seen by many as critical.

> The women's feature services represent the first systematic, international attempt by women in the developing world to speak to their societies and each other through the mainstream news industries. (Bryerly, 1991, p.83)

During the first UN conference for women in 1975, UNESCO identified the need for women's feature services to operate on regional and global levels, and provide a vehicle for women's voices to be heard in the mainstream news media. Unesco worked through the Inter Press Service (IPS) in Rome in 1978 to establish the Latin American feature service the Oficina Informativa de la Mujer (OIM). This was based in the IPS office in San Jose, Costa Rica, and shortly thereafter, IPS also sponsored the African Womens Feature Service (AWFS) through its Nairobi office. In 1978, as well, UNESCO and the Christian Action for Development Agency, in Barbados initiated the Caribbean Women's Feature Syndicate (CWFS), and in Manila, UNESCO worked with the Press Foundation of Asia to form the Depthnews Womens

Service (DNWS). In the Middle East, UNESCO worked with the
Federation of Arab News Agencies (FANA) in Beirut, with field offices
in Baghdad and Tunis to form the Arab States Women's Feature Service
(ASWFS), the fifth and final women's regional feature service.

The importance of these channels for communication was certainly
identified in terms of their role as a vehicle for women's voices into
the mainstream. However, at the same time, they provided an
excellent opportunity to record and exchange women's experiences
on a global level, and offer training and experience to women working
in the media industry.

> In addition to their timely, informative value, the women's
> feature services also have provided a written record of
> women's events, problems, achievements and analysis of
> world issues. This contribution to Third World women's
> (and, indeed, every woman's) history is not to be
> underestimated. There has been a dearth of such source
> materials to date' this project has begun to fill this need.
> The fact that the articles were written by women of the
> developing nations themselves makes them all the more
> valuable (Bryerly, 1990, p.83).

Unfortunately, in 1983, UNESCO's central role in this project, along
with its funding, came to an end. Faced with the social, political and
economic constraints of operating alternative media, only two of the
five services are still in operation today. These are the Inter Press
Service, and the Depthnews Women's Service at the Press Foundation
of Asia (DNWS).

While the women's feature services are working to have women's voices heard in the mainstream news, grassroots movements in many regions are attempting to create effective community based alternative media which give local women the opportunity to present realistic images of their lives, work and role in society as well as provide an opportunity for the concerns of these women to be discussed. At the same time, many of these grassroots organizations also involve a media-monitoring component which watches for sexist and inaccurate representations of women in mainstream media and attempt to pressure media, advertisers, government and consumers into withdrawing these images.

In addition, possibly the most important function of these organizations is to provide an opportunity for traditional, cultural means of communication to be delivered to a mass audience. Legitimation of traditional methods of communication in this information age is an important step in effectively reaching audiences such as women, especially in the rural areas, who have been excluded from the modern, mainstream information technologies and services. This emphasis on traditional communication, however, is not at the expense of modern communication technologies. Those organizations which follow a more participatory approach to communication emphasize equally the need for traditional communication as well as, mechanical and new information technologies.

Chapter 4: Case Study of Alternative Programming

SISTREN/Media Watch

A case study of the work being generated by two Jamaica based
women's organizations, Women's Media Watch (WMW) and Sistren,
further illustrate the points discussed in the previous chapters. This
study was selected because of the programs and objectives of WMW
and Sistren, in the area of women in the media, as well as their focus
on the role of the mass media in both women's and development
issues.

Women's organizations in Jamaica have consistently identified the
issue of violence towards women as one which must be addressed in
development strategies, community programs, women's initiatives,
and across all aspects of society. Many of these groups have also
identified the portrayal of women in the mass media as a critical
element in the social attitudes which perpetuate this violence. As a
result, both SISTREN and Women's Media Watch are working to
provide channels of communication for Jamaican women to voice
these concerns.

Jamaica's geopolitical location and the strong influence of foreign
ownership in Jamaican media provide other interesting dimensions to
this case.   In addition, important studies on the relationship between
women in media have originated in Jamaica (e.g. Cuthbert, 1976,1981,
1984, Gallagher, 1981, Unesco, 1985).

The information provided by this case offers a description of the program activities of Sistren and Women's Media Watch. It also examines the goals and objectives of these programs in relation to the overall objectives of the organizations within the community. There is an analysis of the conceptualization of the alternative media component of the programmes, and an assessment of where women and media issues fit as priorities in gender and development programming.

Some preliminary information regarding the organizations' self-evaluation is also provided. This information is based on such criteria as - media coverage and reports, effectiveness of lobbying activities, and community response, among others.

It is not within the scope of this thesis to develop a comprehensive external evaluation of these programmes. That type of evaluation is planned for within the 1992 programme of WMW and will involve both social and communications audits to determine the impact of the programmes on the media industry, and within the broader community.

The importance of the Sistren/WMW case within the context of this thesis is to highlight a working example of how a participatory/community intitated alternative to mainstream media is functioning as a mechanism for change.

Jamaica Profile

Jamaican history and the country's struggle for social, political and economic development have been dominanted for centuries by foreign influences.

Since the first Europeans laid claim to the island, Jamaica's destiny has been decided by a variety of colonial powers. Consequently, present day Jamaican society has been formed by very strong external forces dating back to Columbus.

The original inhabitants of Jamaica were the Arawaks, Caribbean Indians who called the island Xayamaca (land of springs) because of its natural springs and lush vegetation. The first Europeans to visit the island came with Columbus in 1492, and in 1509, Diego Colon, son of Columbus, conquered the island in the name of Spain. Over the next fifty years, the aboriginal population of the island was decimated to the point of extinction. The Spanish ruled Jamaica until the English claimed ownership in 1655, and Jamaica became a base for pirates and buccaneers who were sabotaging Spanish trade in the Caribbean seas.

By the end of the 19th century, Jamaica had approximately 800 sugar mills and more than a thousand cattle ranches, labor power for these ventures was supplied by the more than 200,000 African slaves brought to the island. In the 18th and 19th centuries, anti-slavery and anti-colonialism rebellions had gained momentum, and by the early 20th century labor unions had also gained strength and continued the

struggle for social change. These struggles led to a movement towards Independence which was achieved in 1962.

Since independence, however, Jamaica's ties with England have continued to be very strong. English remains the official Jamaican language, although a dialect based on English :an also be heard. As well, the political system is based on the British system of representative democracy. The Head of State is still the Queen, who is represented by a governor general. The present government is headed by Prime Minister Micheal Manley. The ministry responsible for women in development matters is the Jamaican Bureau of Women's Affairs (see attached fact sheet); this bureau falls under the jurisdiction of the minister of Youth and Community Development, Mr. Douglas Manley. There is a 60 member House of Representatives directly elected for five year terms - Manley's People's National Party (PNP) presently holds 45 of the 60 seats and the opposition, the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) holds 15. The last national election was held February 29, 1989, and the next election is expected by February 1994.

·Jamaica's location, being in close proximity to Cuba and in the 'backyard' of the United States, has also had a significant influence on its development. Socialist policies of development have been popular in Jamaica at different times during the past two decades, and the example of Cuba has provided an important model of development. The earlier Manley administrations of the 1970s, adopted socialist policies in an attempt to bring about equality and development. These

policies, mainly the nationalization of the bauxite industry, were extremely unpopular in Washington, and Jamaica faced strong pressure to move towards a more market driven economy. This was the objective of the Seaga government, when it took power in the early 1980s; however the following decade has been, for the most part, an economic disaster and it has become evident that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is now making the major economic decisions of the country (The Economist, 1990).

Jamaica owes approximately 20% of its $4.5 billion (US) debt to the IMF. The country's leading industries, aside from tourism, are agriculture and mining. Bauxite is the main mineral resource on the island and this has opened the door to a tumultuous history of resource exploitation through, for the most part, the activities of multi-national corporations such as Alcan Limited. The following graph shows the distribution of agricultural land on the island. The primary crops are sugar cane and bananas grown for export markets.

Land Use in Jamaica

17.82%

39.60%

17.82%

■ forest
■ pasture
■ arable land
▨ other land

Source: Third World
Guide 1989/90

24.75%
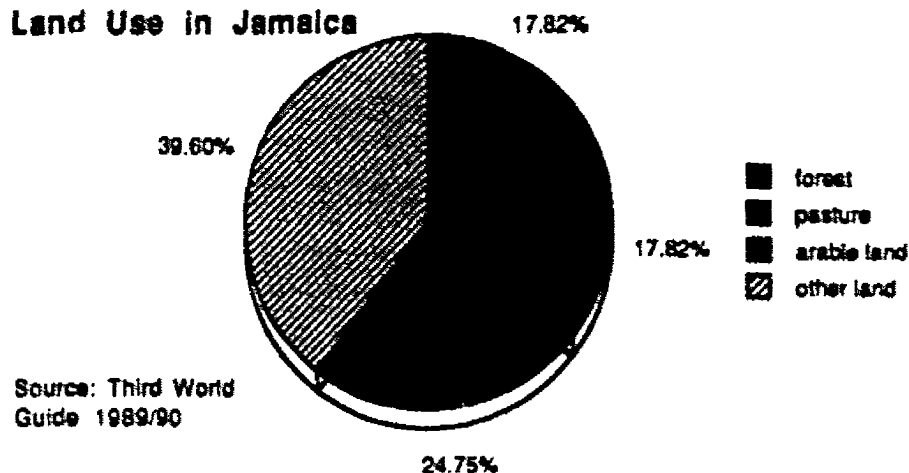
Agriculture and mining dominate the country's Gross National
Product which totaled $940(US) per capita in 1987. However, the
economy is significantly constrained by an escalating external debt
which rose from US$1.7 billion in 1980 to US$3.3 billion in 1985 and
to $4.5 billion in January of 1990. Interest payments on the debt now
cancel out 40 per cent of the island's foreign earnings. Besides the
IMF, other major creditors include the United States (16 per cent),
the World Bank (12 per cent) and Venezuela and Mexico (12 per cent)
(Economist, 1991).

During the 1970s the world recession had cut demand for bauxite and
aluminum and forced Jamaica into a negative growth rate. At the same
time the OPEC oil price shocks led to high inflation rates reaching 30
percent by the late '70s. In 1980 and 1981 a significant growth in the
tourism industry is attributed with a subsequent turnaround in the
economy and an average GDP growth rate of 1.8 per cent a year. The

government introduced food subsidies and undervalued the Jamaican currency to bring inflation down to 6.5 percent. However, in 1982 another drop in the world demand for bauxite and increasing debt payments plunged the country back into recession. Unemployment rates are over 25 per cent and as high as 56 percent among the island's youth. As well, Jamaica's minimum wage for unskilled workers is under $10.00 US a week and one of the lowest in the Caribbean region.(Economist Intelligence Unit,1991)

During the 1980s, the Seaga government attempted to restore growth through both an opening of free-market principles and privatization as well as through adherence to IMF conditionalities which were required under Jamaica's structural adjustment program. However, the conditions included requirements that Jamaica reduce public spending, boost exports, hold demand in check and encourage deregulation of the economy. By 1983 it was apparent that Jamaica could not comply with these conditions and the IMF cut back significantly on its assistance and placed the country on a series of standby credits. The Seaga government was never really able to pull the country out of recession and was defeated in the 1989 elections by Micheal Manley who campaigned on promises to improve economic conditions. This government, however, has been forced as well to adopted strict and unpopular IMF policies.

To comply with these requirements, the Manley administration has introduced severe austerity measures. The interest rates are kept high, ceilings have been imposed on commercial bank credit and

subsidies for basic foodstuffs have been cut. Rate for electricity and petroleum have been increased and retail sales taxes on some items have been doubled. Labor unions have offered the strongest opposition to these measures. In late 1989, a poll by the University of the West Ir.dies indicated that 66 per cent of Jamaicans were dissatisfied with the performance of the new government.

Debt rescheduling negotiations have been arranged in a further attempt to mitigate the social impact of the high Jamaican debt servicing ratio. In October of 1990, Jamaica and the Netherlands signed an agreement for the rescheduling of payments on $10.4 million US in public external debt. The agreement is just one of the bilateral arrangements which are planned under the auspices of the Paris Club of creditor nations. The overall amount agreed to be rescheduled is $179 million US, representing 100 per cent of principal and interest on debt due between December 1989 and April 1991 including previously rescheduled debt. The United States congress has also authorized debt reduction talks and President is reportedly seeking further talks on USAID debt. Both debt negotiations would fall under the US Enterprise for the Americas Initiative. The total external debt to be rescheduled is $700 million US (Economist Intelligence Unit, 1991)

Jamaican Media

The highly concentrated foreign owenership of Jamaican industry extends as well to the mainstream media. The question of media ownership is one of extreme importance in an analysis of the function

of the media in society. The turbulent social and political history of the Caribbean region over the past few decades has led to a recognition of the central role of the media in resistance movements, and consequently the development of both a Caribbean News Agency and a greater control of the mass media within some countries. Media owners in the region have opposed this increased government control of the media as censorship while other media analysts argue that the media continues to be biased through not only official government propaganda but private commercial propaganda (Brown, 1976, p.43).

In Jamaica, although government policies have shifted back and forth over the past twenty to twenty-five years, the function and ownership of the media have remained relatively the same.

> While the "product" of the communications industry - information- differs significantly from the product of all other industries, the private ownership of the means of producing information for a society is closely linked to the overall agenda of producing goods and services for profit. Specifically, the information that is made available to the public serves the interests overtly and covertly of the owners and managers of the information media (Brown, 1976, p.43).

Jamaica's media industry is quite well established, and has been a long recognized component of decision-making and information within the society. The cornerstone of the media industry is the leading Jamaican daily newspaper, The Gleaner. This paper was established in 1834, seventeen years before the first printing of the New York Times. This

daily, combined with its sister publication, the Star (Jamaica's only afternoon paper) has a circulation of over 154,000 readers; both are owned by the Gleaner Company Ltd. in Kingston. In 1973, Jamaica's third daily, the Daily News was founded. The combined circulation of these three papers is approximately 184,000 readers.

Although the Daily News is making a place for itself in the market, it cannot rival the established Gleaner. In fact, it is still quite common to hear Jamaicans refer to the word Gleaner as a synonym for newspaper. "This merely reinforces the point that the direct and indirect influence of the island's daily newspapers on the population is greater than their circulation statistics would indicate; with control of the Jamaican daily press remaining entirely in private hands." (Brown, 1976, p.46) However, the Daily News is no small venture, it is owned by Communications Corporations, which includes on its list of shareholders, the National Continental Corporation which is in turn 30% owned by International Telegraph and Telecommunications Ltd. (ITT) (Cuthbert, 1976,p.51).

In addition to the foreign influences on ownership of the Jamaican print media, all three papers subscribe heavily to syndicated material from the major wire services, especially Associated Press. The Daily News also subscribes to the Caribbean News Agency,(CANA). However the Gleaner and Star refuse to subscribe to the agency fearing "political control of the agency." In the words of Harry Mayers, General manager of CANA "as a matter of principle, the Gleaner does not feel that

government should have any dealing whatsoever, directly or indirectly in the running of the media" (Quoted in Cuthbert, 1976, p.51).

Although the press has a long and important history in Jamaica, the medium which has the greatest direct impact on Jamaican society is radio. In 1976, approximately 88 percent of Jamaican households owned a radio and the estimated number of adults who listened to the radio on an average day was 76 percent or 857,000 people (Brown, 1976). The largest audience for radio in Jamaica comes from the unskilled and manual-labor sectors of the society. This may be largely due to the high proportion of the non-literate population found among these two categories of workers. Brown makes an interesting point with cultural overtones, that middle and upper-income audiences tend to rely more on the daily press for their primary sources of news and information (Brown, 1976).

The most powerful radio station on the island is Radio Jamaica and Rediffusion Ltd., (RJR). This station, franchised in 1951, is still 70% owned by Rediffusion of England. The Jamaican Broadcasting Corporation (JBC), the island's other station, is a wholly-owned statutory corporation of the Jamaican Government. The station is technically a public broadcasting service, however, it depends entirely upon commercial advertising for its economic survival.

In his article on media in Jamaica, Aggrey Brown gives an interesting and critical glimpse of the typical content of radio programming on the island.

The two radio stations, RJR and JB (AM) broadcast a combined total of 302.75 hours weekly. Twenty-five hours of this time, or 8.25 per cent of broadcast time, are devoted to news and commentary. Between the two stations, there are only fifteen and a half hours per week of public affairs programming including such programmes as Public Eye, Palavar-JBC, and Exposure-RJR. This constitutes 5.1 per cent of weekly broadcast time. There are, however, seventeen and one quarter hours of weekly religious programming, constituting 0.8 percent more time than is given to public affairs. The majority of air-broadcast time, approximately eighty percent or two-hundred and fifteen hours per week, is devoted to entertainment programming including North-American style disc-jockey programmes, soap operas, quiz shows, etc. (Brown, 1976, p.47).

Women in Jamaican media

Despite the fact that the mass media obviously constitute an important industry on the island, women have very little access to the decision-making process of this industry. Although women are increasingly gaining access to employment in the industry, this employment remains in the lower-level positions. The number of women employed in the industry increased from 28 percent of total media employees in 1979 (Cuthbert, 1981) to almost 50 percent in 1989 (UNESCO, 1989). However, at the same time, women are not gaining access to employment in the broadcast technologies at the same rates as their male counterparts, and they are significantly underrepresented at senior and management levels (UNESCO, 1989).

As women's organizations continue to work toward increased access for women in the media decision-making process, the issue of the portrayal of women in the mainstream media is also a primary concern. Marlene Cuthbert's (1979) study of the effects of the mass media on women in Jamaica demonstrated that the image of women in the media varied depending on the different media.

Again looking at radio, she finds that approximately 80 percent of broadcast time is devoted to entertainment, and for the most part, music. Approximately 50 percent of the entertainment content is American in origin. Cuthbert (1979) describes this imagery, in terms of both men and women, as characterized by 'romantic escapism'. However, in the local popular reggae music, women are depicted more in the role of mother, someone trying to stay at home and care for the children. Excluding the musical content of radio programming, only about five percent of content is foreign generated and most imported programming is religious. As a result, most of the remaining representations of women on radio are local images. These appear to be fairly dynamic in terms of the portrayal of women in a variety of social roles and the inclusion of low-income and rural women in these representations. This programming is mainly focused on educational broadcasts and soap-opera formats (p 51).

On the other hand, television programming consists of approximately 60 percent foreign content and the dominant source of this programming is American. Here, the images of women are mixed. Cuthbert reports that in most cases this content is fairly low-quality

and offers a fairly stereotypical portrayal of women. However, she also
indicates that in some cases, an image of male-female equality is
apparent in some American programming which is in contrast with
the traditional Jamaican view of male dominance.

> Although locally produced educational and informar on
> programmes are said to highlight positive information on
> women in society, their treatment of sexual equality at
> time remains ambiguous. For instance, one television film
> made by the Agency for Public Information told the story of
> a youth who resented being taught agricultural skills by a
> young woman. Persuaded by his aunt to realize that these
> are 'new days of equality' and that he should try another
> approach with he young woman, he does so and they fall in
> love. Thus the old themes sometimes appear in new
> outlines (p.51).

News coverage of women in Jamaica also mirrors the evidence found
worldwide. In most cases, women are hardly portrayed unless they
are political, have achieved high government office or have status as
the wives of prominent men. As was discussed in the previous
chapter, this is another example of the damaging non-portrayal or
absence of women as serious news makers with serious concerns.

The Jamaican entertainment industry spends an estimated $10
million a year importing foreign films. During the course of Cuthbert's
(1979) study of this industry, a seven-week sample taken in the study
indicated that 75 per cent of films showing in the cinemas were
American and 25 per cent were from Hong Kong. Most of these are
cheap productions typified by violence and present an almost totally

negative image of women as sex objects and appendages to men. By the mid-1980s, only three feature films had been financed and produced by Jamaicans. The representation of women in two of these films is described by Cuthbert (1979) as women being 'part of the backdrop', the third and most recent film 'The Children of Babylon" was written and produced by a male; however, it has attempted to present a woman's perspective and portrays the central female character as strong, independent and as someone trying to determine her own life style (Gallagher, 1981, p.50).

Further studies on the image of women in Jamaican media have reemphasized these earlier findings. Gordon (1981) has surveyed eight Caribbean regional newspapers, and found that women newsmakers were, for the most part, nonexistent and when they did appear, they were subject to highly sensationalized treatment. In the entertainment field, the majority of films and magazines were imported, almost exclusively from North America, and women fertured in these media appeared in roles "designed to play on sexual fantasies, often within a violent context." (Unesco, 1985, p.58)

The primary focus of concern for women's groups challenging the media in Jamaica is on advertising. Researchers in this field emphasize the damaging portrayal of women in advertising. Gordon (1981) has reported from her survey, " A demeaning use of women in advertising." Through her study of television advertisements in Jamaica, Royale (1981), concluded that the image of women has "not kept pace with changing social perceptions of women." (Gordon in

Unesco, 1985,p.59) Although 87 percent of the advertisements were directed at women, 82 percent of the "voice-overs" were done by men. Forty-five percent of women appearing in these ads were portrayed primarily as sex objects, and 25 percent as housewives or mothers. The males who appeared in these same ads appeared as sex objects only 9 percent of the time and 14 percent for the time as fathers. (Gordon, 1981) As UNESCO (1985) research concludes: "...the findings support the main, by now well-known, criticisms of the use of women by the advertising industry" (p.58).

Marlene Cuthbert (1984) concludes from her research in this area that although women do still appear in stereotypical roles, there has been a move towards a slightly different portrayal of women over the past few years. She cites the move away from the previous focus on women as 'glamour girls' to more of a focus on the family. Over the past 15 years, advertising, which supports the Jamaican media industry, has become almost all locally produced. With this shift away from North American advertising there has been an improvement in the representation of women (Cuthbert, 1984). Although images of women as 'household drudge' or sex objects still occur, there has been a move towards a more family oriented focus. However, this representations of women as sterotypical housewives and mothers remains an inaccurate picture of Jamican women. In addition, these advertisements still encourage a consumption orientation and women are the target audience (Cuthbert, 1984).

Women in Jamaican society: Background

Jamaican women's organizations are outraged by this unrealistic portrayal of women in advertising, and in the mainstream media in general, and continue to protest the historical inaccuracy and negative impact of this imagery.

> In the Jamican reality, the typical woman is black; she plays multiple roles, often heading a household as a single parent, working outside the home in an underpaid position, hustling a second job in the evenings to make ends meet, and playing a pivotal role in her community as well. More than 24 per cent of the female labour force works in agriculture, and many more women are self-employed or working in the service sector. Model looks, designer clothes, the never-stressed-out-by-work-at-home-or-on-the-job white sex object is hardly the Jamaican reality (Nicholson, 1991, p.5.).

The image of Jamaican women as submissive and easily dominated by males is also criticized by women's groups as inaccurate and the unrealistic portrayal of the role of women within the home is also a point of concern. The idea of Jamaican women as 'housewives' is a recent phenomenon on the island. Historically, Jamaican women have always been strong, independent and very active in the struggle for social change. From the time of slavery, through the Maroon rebellions, up to the present, Jamaican women and men have fought oppression and imperialism side by side. Unfortunately, the efforts of Jamaican women in this struggle have not been remembered in history and women have been encouraged to accept the role of housewife and mother and conform to the stereotypes which were and are strongly prevalent in the United States (Brereton, 1986).

One woman who is remembered for her strong leadership is known simply as Nanny, a Maroon warrior leader. Her leadership was not just an exception. she followed a tradition of women leaders from the Akan Society. and the Ashanti Kingdom of West Africa. The highest female official in the Ashanti kingdom was the Queen Mother. the Ohemaa. Ashanti people traced their descent matrilineally, and although political office was held by men it was conferred through women. Nanny's power was eventually undermined when the British conspired with the Western maroons. whose leadership was male (Mathurin, 1975).

Another female leader emerged in 1683. The Queen of the Coromantee (Ashanti) people led an army of runaways against the British. and later a female Coromantee slave named Cubah led a slave conspiracy extending across six parishes. Women were a key element of the uprising of 1831 in Jamaica. Records of that date show that Elizabeth Ball (a free colored woman) was sentenced for sedition. Jinny, a slave from Knockpatrick Estate was executed for arson, and Isabel Scarlet and Priscilla and Sarah Jackson were all transported for their parts in the rebellion. Many authors argue that the resistance of women to slave labor was one of the main strategic blows to the slave system .Mathurin, 1975).

Many methods were introduced to try to control and subdue women. One issue which arose during the time of slavery and is still an issues today is that of control of women's reproductive rights. The early slave

period had discouraged women from having children since it was cheaper to buy a slave than to raise one. Just prior to the abolition of slavery local landlords needed more slaves and offered incentives to women to bear children. For example, any woman with more than 6 children was exempt from field labor. Between 1792 and 1820 women resisted this move to control the reproduction of the slave system and stillbirths, miscarriages and abortions ran close to 200 per thousand.

Between 1800 and 1840, a new era of morality was introduced and, mainly through missionaries, the idea of the 'Christian' Male-headed, legally sanctioned, monogamous unions with one household base was introduced and fairly strictly enforced. Also, goddesses which had been brought over in African religions were replaced by the Christian doctrine which insisted men were the basis of the church and superior to women. Women further lost social and economic importance when, immediately following emancipation, women were no longer the preferred labor force since their children were no longer the property of the estate. Previously, women had been valued by estate owners as they were capable of reproducing the labor force on the plantation through their children at little or no cost to the estate (Brereton, 1986).

The feminist movement found a voice in the early twentieth century through the black nationalist movements of the time. Mrs. James McKenzie, a Pan Africanist, was the earliest Feminist spokeswoman who was active around the turn of the century. She joined Robert

Love's People's convention, a pan-Africanist movement which emphasized involving women and the plight of poor women.

The United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) was founded by Marcus Garvey and his wife Amy Ashwood in 1914 in Kingston. Amy organized a woman's division of the UNIA and the UNIA has always had a woman as its vice-presidu. The visibility of women in spontaneous protests throughout the twentieth century has been well documented. In 1918 and 1919 protests rocked the island as war veterans were returning unprepared to accept current conditions (Ellis, 1986).

Women's importance in the labor struggle became even more apparent in 1918 when female agricultural workers, banana carriers and coal carriers went on strike in April, June, July and December, all over the island, for better pay . In the 1930s the world-wide depression increased the burden of poverty for Jamaican workers and protests were frequent and violent. In 1938, Hilda Cunningham, or Hilda Rioter as she was called, is labeled as the person who threw the first stone in the Frome uprising.

After this period, women's organizations began to assume a changing role in society as the image of the housewife was introduced. By 1945, the state was sponsoring programs for woman which declared that the cure for the problems of the 30s (specifically the riots) was a good family life. Women's institutions were established which promoted civic education, handicrafts and the establishment o proper family life. By 1950, the Federation of Women in Jamaica estimated that

thirty per cent of the entire population of Jamaica was organized in its ranks and active. However, it was agitating for mass marriages, and raised the percentage of married couples on the island (Mohammed, 1988).

On the whole, however, there is still a relatively high incidence of female-headed households in Jamaica today. Common-law and 'visiting' relationships are also quite common with the mother or her female family members caring for the children, while the father either lives with the family or lives elsewhere but visits the family unit frequently. Although many couples may have marriage as a long term goal, within recent years, many middle-class young women have been questioning the institution of marriage and in many cases rejecting the idea of marriage as the ultimate goal for their relationships. Others believe that marriage must be accompanied by financial stability, meaning many couples do not marry until they have some savings (Ellis, 1986).

Further research on the dynamics of male-female relationships in Jamaica suggests that there are contradictory attitudes in the society surrounding the roles of both women and men (e.g. Brober, 1986; Ellis, 1986). Girls are taught from an early age to ensure their survival and that of their families whether a male is present or not. This creates a sense of independence. However, at the same time they are told that it is important and necessary to have a male partner, and that in any relationship the male is dominant. This leads to conflict when deciding who will be the decision maker in the family. This situation

also contributes to the problem of domestic violence and violence towards women which is apparent in the Caribbean region. In the case of Jamaica, although rape, wife-beating, assault and incest are crimes by law, it is very difficult for the victims to prove their innocence, and the ideology of male dominance in society is so entrenched that in many cases the right of men to use violence to control and keep women in submission is completely accepted. (Ellis, 1986)

Motherhood in Jamaica, and throughout the Caribbean is associated with a high value and status, but the stereotypical view of full-time mothering and house-minding has not been the typical role for mothers in Jamaica. In fact, in the 1950s and 1960s, if a man could afford to have a non-working wife or partner, he gained status and prestige. Seventy-five per cent of all Caribbean women are mothers and the average number of children per mother is 4.5 (Ellis, 1986). Many women see having children as an economic investment for their old age, and on the whole, women have their first pregnancies at an early age. There is a high proportion of teenage pregnancies and this can often mean that these women do not complete their formal education (Mohamed, 1989).

The extended family and strong kinship networks are also important for Jamaican women. Through these types of support groups, resources, time and child-care responsibilities are shared especially in times of economic crisis. As a result of these types of networks, Jamaican women have also developed strong feelings of solidarity

which have been integral in their continued struggle to meet basic human needs and make social change.

Legislation for women

As previously discussed, there have been some advances in the struggle to protect women from violence and discrimination in society. Women's organizations have been agitating for legislation to protect women's rights and have been quite successful to date. Over the past fifteen years the following legislation has been passed or revised to protect the rights of the female population. (Mohammed, 1988)

-The Equal Pay Act, which guarantees that men and women get equal pay for equal work

-The Affiliation Act, which makes both fathers and mothers responsible for the care of the children

-The Offences Against the Person Act, which protects women from abuse

-The Maintenance Act, which requires a man to maintain his wife whether or not she is able to do so herself.

-The Intestate Estates and Property Act, which guarantees the right of common-law wives to inherit from their husbands

-The Married Women's Property Act, gives married women the right to own and dispose of their own property.

-Those convicted of crimes of rape and carnal knowledge of female minors or females of unsound mind are subject to imprisonment for life.

-Persons found guilty of rape or attempted rape of a woman are subject to sentences ranging from 10 years to life.

Although this legislation has been passed, many aspects of these laws are unenforceable and women are still subjected to high rates of domestic violence, assault and other forms of discrimination. One form of this discrimination is seen in the comparatively higher rates of unemployment for women than seen for their male counterparts. As well, violence towards women has been identified by the Jamaican Government's Women's Bureau as a major social problem in Jamaica.

Major Economic Activities

Statistics from the International Labor Organization (1985) show that 7.6 per cent of Jamaican women twenty-five years of age or younger were involved in economic activity in 1982. This compares with 15.9 per cent of males in that same age group. This information is important because approximately one third of the island's population falls into this age group.

Women in Jamaica have always been highly visible in the traditional and informal sectors of the economy and are still more likely than men to work there. Female 'higglers' (market women) have a higher status than men in the market place. In Jamaica, a successful male higgler is said to "act like a woman" and an unsuccessful one is said "not to know how to act like a woman". But within the larger society higglering is viewed as a low-status job (Ellis. 1986, p.4).

For a more general description of women's employment, the following statistics are available for 1981 (numbers are in thousands and per cents)

Total economically active women	Agriculture	Industry	Services	Others
476.2	60.5	21.4	209.2	185.1
100%	12.7%	4.5%	43.9%	38.9%

Source ILO (INSTRAW) 1985.

As indicated by this information, women are also highly involved in Jamaica's large service sector, where tourism accounts for the country's major foreign exchange earner. This has again reenforced the role of women in domestic-type employment, i.e. maids, waitresses, etc.

From even this brief overview of the role of women in Jamaican society, it is clear that in reality, Jamaican women certinaly do not fit the media projected image of docile, dependent housewives, or stereotypically helpless females. Concern over the portrayal of women in advertising primarily, but also in the broader mainstream media, has led women's organizations in Jamaica to begin monitoring and confronting the imagery of women in both print and electronic media. The leading organizations in this area are the Women's Media Watch organization and SISTREN.

SISTREN: background, goals and objectives

Started in 1977, SISTREN is one of the most popular professional theatre groups in Jamaica, as well as a driving force in the island's women's movement. The Kingston based organization is part of a women's movement involved in addressing national problems ranging from poverty, unemployment and illiteracy to coming to terms with a history of slavery and national socio-economic and political issues.

Under the Manley administration in 1975, a Women's Bureau was established and two years later, UNICEF hosted the first Caribbean Conference on Women in Development in Kingston. These two events led to increased awareness of women's issues in the country, and from this consciousness, SISTREN evolved.

Members were selected through the Women's Bureau for an employment program to keep the streets clean. The eleven original women were employed as street cleaners, and also trained as teacher's aids and placed in schools. They were also introduced to popular theatre, and received education in skills such as accounting. As Lilian Foster, one of the original members of the collective, puts it, "I saw it (Sistren) as an educational center, an upgrading center, upgrading both ourselves and society -- women on a whole." in (Ford-Smith, 1989,p.24).

However, in 1980, Sistren, and all of Jamaica faced crisis. Violent national elections swept the conservative opposition party into power and national priorities and policies changed drastically as IMF

conditionalities dominated government policy. Programs, such as Sistren, which had been supported by the previous government in an attempt to create a popular power base were suddenly dismantled or left with no support at all. The Sistren employment program was seen as partisan by the new administration and subsequently discontinued. Sistren members were harassed, and their programs closely monitored. The organization was labeled subversive and banned from radio and television. Several theatre scripts were also confiscated apparently because of subversive material, and a Sistren documentary video production on the plight of elderly women living in a burned-out alms house was pulled by the state-owned television station because its content was too political.

Many Jamaican women's organizations, and other popular organizations collapsed under the political and economic pressures of the early 1980s, but this crisis intensified the resolve of the Sistren group to survive, and also acted as a catalyst for change in the focus of the organization. It had become clear to Sistren's directors that what was needed was an independent women's movement for social change. The early Sistren had been closely affiliated with Manley's government and had not achieved the power or respect necessary to articulate gender concerns and influence party policy (Ford-Smith, 1991).

The new Sistren functioned outside of government boundaries as an autonomous force, away from traditional male-dominated organizations. This new role for the organizations also meant a new way of thinking. The need for a feminist analysis of the situation of

Jamaican women at that time meant relating the position and situation of women to the problems of the country, the political and economic strategies being followed and the development strategies being pursued. As a result, Sistren began to develop a research and analysis role as well as searching for new income generating activities and maintaining drama and other communications programs.

Sistren has grown from that point into a multidimensional women's organization. The organizational aims are: 1) to empower women to contribute to the process of development and change in society, and 2) to develop in the society an awareness of the importance of gender as an issue in the development process. The strategic objectives which have been defined to achieve these aims include the following: 1) the development of respect for personal experience as part of a process of participatory research and group building, to connect personal experience to widen social issues, and to promote understanding of the gender dimensions of these larger social issues and their implications for change; 2)the provision of information to enable women to take action on their own behalf (French, 1987).

Research on women's issues is also a key focus of Sistren work. The five main areas of research for the organization currently include the following: 1)women and law, 2) violence against women, 3) women and housing, 4) women's employment and the recognition of women's work, 5) and women's health concerns. The branch of the Sistren organization which directs the majority of work in these areas is Sistren Research (SR). SR, formed in 1983, operates as a semi-

autonomous department within Sistren to generate research, network with other women's organizations concerned with similar issues, and provide direction for Sistren programming. Research through documentation of life histories and personal testimonies have always been a part of Sistren's work; however, SR responded to a need for more quantitative information on the condition of Jamaican women. This information is then disseminated to the public, and shared with other women's organizations.

The publics which Sistren has targetted as both beneficiaries and recipients of their programming include a broad section of Jamaican society. Those most closely associated with the programmes, and therefore with the most direct personal contact, are the Sistren members themselves. Local and regional groups and institutions are also an important audience as Sistren emphasises the need for networking and sharing of experiences and concerns among groups. Sistren works closely with several Jamaican groups and institutions and maintains contacts with many others. The focus for networking consists of four areas: 1) groups and institutions with a gender focus, 2) groups and institutions without a gender focus (i.e. trade unions), 3) students and student organizations, and 4) community workers. Previously unorganized women interested in becoming organized around gender issues also constitute an important audience.

Finally, men and women in the wider society are also targetted by Sistren through the use of mass media. This represents the least cohesive audience and it is difficult to determine not only the size of

this audience but the impact of the messages received. A straw-poll conducted by Sistren in 1987 indicated that while many members of the public had heard of Sistren, they were unclear about what exactly the organization was doing. Some respondents felt it was a charity, others said it was a communist organization, a feminist organization, or a part-time theatre group run by an arm of the socialist party.

Although theatre is still an important vehicle of communication for the group, other forms of communication have also been adopted, as well as a policy of monitoring the media in an attempt to influence the images and perceptions of women shown to the public. One example of a successful campaign to pressure media and government to be more sensitive to gender issues came in 1977. At that time the Jamaican National Investment Promotion's corporation had placed a sexist advertisement in American newspapers in an attempt to attract investors to Jamaica's free trade zones. SISTREN protested the ad and after meeting with the corporations managing director the ad was pulled. The JNIP said "Since you people feel that it is denigrating for women ... we have discontinued the ad because we don't want to get caught up in any controversy." (Sistren, 1987, p.7) (Appendix 111).

Women's Media Watch: background

In 1987 SR undertook a nationwide participatory research project involving more than thirty women's organizations. It was to identify what women see as hindrances to their full participation in the cultural development of the society. It became apparent from the findings that over and over, women cited violence as a problem.

> The feeling was unanimous amongst those present: the
> media, through its predominantly sexist and racist images
> of women, plays a key role in the increasing incidences of
> sexual and domestic violence in women's lives (Nicholson,
> 1991, p. 5).

> When the findings of the project were shared at a large
> gathering where representatives from all the groups
> (involved in the research projects) met, these very varied
> women from all walks of life and from different parts of
> Jamaica felt that a need was clear: address the problem of
> sexual violence, four sub-committees decided to approach
> the problem in different ways, through research, through
> education, through networking and through media-
> monitoring. (Nelson, 1991)

Women's Media Watch evolved from this fourth sub-committee four
years ago. The challenge which WMW has set for itself is to make a
strong and convincing connection between the issue of violence
against women and the portrayal of women in the media.
Furthermore, the organization contends that frequent viewing of a
negative portrayal of images of and attitudes about women leads to an
acceptance of violence against women as a social norm.

At present, the primary activities of WMW are to both monitor the
mainstream media and provide alternative media, as well as articles
and features for the mainstream media. More recently, the role of
lobbying for change in the existing media has also become an
important activity for the organization. As WMW originated from

concerns about violence towards women, education and information dissemination are also key functions. Research is another focus for the organization. In 1991 and 1992 WMW is conducting a national survey on attitudes towards the media's portrayal of women. This survey will be carried out with the assistance of a surveyor from the department of sociology at the University of the West Indies, and the organization hopes to use this information to better tailor the educational component of their programs. as well as in the designing of programs for the coming year.

In addition to working in and around the mainstream media. WMW also utilizes other forms of communication media in order to promote positive, strong and accurate images of women in Jamaican society. Drama is used to analyze media messages targetted at young people in particular. In one WMW dramatic production. Uncle Dean attempts to sexually assault his niece after her appearance on a poster wearing only a bathing suit. Participants in this drama workshop challenge Uncle Dean's misinterpretation of his niece's action and subsequent claim that he is justified in acting as he did (Nicholson. 1991).

As was previously mentioned. the main objective of the organization's programs is to provide an alternative voice for women's issues with a special emphasis on the problem of violence towards women in Jamaica. To that end, most of the articles, information packages, visual displays, etc., which the organization produces attempt to deal with the issue of violence towards women in society, and counteract the portrayal of violence against women in the mainstream media.

Last year. WMW produced and distributed 5,000 message stickers reading "REAL MEN DON'T ABUSE WOMEN", and "NUFF RESPECT TO WOMAN EVERYTIME!" across the Island. In addition, 2,000 brochures outlining the WMW program were produced and distributed, and articles on the topics of media portrayal of women, violence against women, and women and health (and the media) were written and published through the Caribbean News Agency, the SISTREN News Magazine, and People Magazine (national and regional). In collaboration with SISTREN, WMW also participated in the production, use and distribution of a booklet entitled "No to Sexual Violence".

In an effort to more directly influence the existing mainstream media, WMW has also worked to establish and strengthen ties with media personnel. This is accomplished through persistent mail and personal contacts, keeping the media appraised of WMW programs and concerns, and sharing material on the issues of violence against women and the portrayal of women in the media. Elaine Nelson, information officer with WMW explains,

> Dialogue with policy makers was initiated in 1988-89. We maintained contact with programmed directors at JBC-T.V. (national television) and with the Advertisers Association of Jamaica. We participated in a Public Forum of the Press Association of Jamaica (Dec.'90) at which our intervention focussed on the media's treatment of women and its tendency to sensationalize/trivialize reports of violence against women and children in particular. We

continue to respond to issues raised in the media. (Nelson, 1991)

WMW is also involved with programs which go beyond the focus of the mainstream media. The group participated in International Women's Day, distributing information packages and stickers and conducting three workshops on women in media in collaboration with the Women's Bureau and the Kingston Jaycees. As well, over a four week period surrounding the International Day Against Violence Against Women, WMW launched their new brochure, held three rap sessions with Police Youth Groups, participated in radio call-in programs highlighting the issue of women and violence, participated in the Association of Women's Organizations in Jamaica press conference, ran a one-month self-defence course for women in association with a Jamaican Karate school and conducted a public video screening and discussion around the topics of child abuse and sexual violence.

One of the most important aspects of all these activities is that WMW attempted, in each case, to link the issue of the portrayal of violence towards women in the media to these programs concerned with violence towards women in society. As this is, to some extent, a grey area in media research, it is often difficult to draw a direct link between these two phenomenon. However, based on the experience of WMW there does seem to be a strong correlation between media portrayal and violence and thus the organization's educational programs focus on increasing awareness of this correlation and challenging the portrayal of women in the mainstream media.

Development of alternative media publications

The main focus of WMW programming to date has been on inserting women's issues into the mainstream media through articles and feature stories. Future plans do include the production of alternative media, probably print media, however the success of the organization's participation on radio panel discussions and talk shows has shown that there is room for programming in this area as well. The financial constraints on the organization, again, have limited its growth in this area.

One example of alternative feminist media which SISTREN has developed is the Sistren Newsmagazine. This is currently published in a 20 page news magazine format which serves as a forum for discussing women's concerns, and facilitates networking among women involved in cultural or lobbying actions to promote a positive self-image of women, in particular, that of working-class women (French, 1989).

The most recent issues have focussed on:
> -conditions of employment in the Free Trade Zones in Jamaica
> and the Caribbean.
> -activities of Caribbean women around the issue of sexual
> violence.
> -major health needs of Caribbean women.
> -women in non-traditional jobs.

The distribution of the magazine is presently at 9000 issues per year. Of this 6000 go immediately to subscribers and to community women through women's organizations and another 1,500 over the counter to women generally. The rest are distributed through regional and international work. Demand is now outstripping supply.

SISTREN is also involved in the design and production of a radio series, "Bess and Dill-Dill" which will be a dramatic treatment of women's issues in Jamaican society.

These alternative media initiatives are seen by both WMW and Sistren as some of the most significant contributions of the organizations to the community. The tight control of the Jamaican media industry in the hands of a very few decision-makers means that alternative channels of communication have not been widely available to the Jamaican public. The development of these alternative channels of communication have offered an opportunity for messages which have not been, and probably would not be, discussed within the existing mainstream media.

Social Impact: WMW and SISTREN

The nebulous nature of the issue of women's portrayal in the media and its effect on women in society, makes it very difficult to evaluate and measure the impact of organizations such as Sistren and WMW. The WMW evaluation of its programs is based primarily on the fact that the goals of workshops, media monitoring, information dissemination,

and public education have been reached. Almost all of the planned activities proposed for the 1989-91 project proposal have been completed, including consolidation of links with media personnel, involvement in International Women's Day, and a general increase in public discussion on the topic of violence against women and the portrayal of women in the media.

WMW receives regular invitations to speak on radio, at community events, and at women's meetings, and the Director of the Women's Bureau and the Minister responsible for women's affairs regularly cite WMW work at public events. With respect to the organization's lobbying activities, two national corporations have re-considered their advertising based on lobbying and dialoguing with WMW. As well, comments from members of the public along the lines of, "You WMW people show up everywhere", "WMW always has good points to make..." and "WMW seems to have a clearer/busier programme than most women's organizations out there", are included in the organization's evaluation of its 1990 programs. Based on this evidence, WMW concludes that the organization, " has had a positive impact not just among the women's organizations but at national levels" (Nelson, 1991). Still, it is difficult to measure definitively the impact the organization may have on the Island without a great deal more research on both the attitudes of the society, the perception of women in society, the impact of the mass media, and the broader issue of the linkages between the portrayal of women in the media and their status and treatment in society.

Another problem arises from the fact that the ten members of the WMW organization are all volunteers, most of whom have families and full-time employment during the day on top of their volunteer activities. As a result, many opportunities to reach the public with information, issues, etc., are missed through lack of time and personnel. At the same time, the financial resources necessary to provide effective, skilled support services are not readily available. The organization has identified the need for a part-time research assistant with some administrative skills, but have been able only to hire a 'very part-time' secretarial assistant. The group would also like to see more integration of women's and media issues in the educational system, and would like to work more closely with the schools, however, this again takes time and resources.

Other difficulties include the fact that so far, most networking and dialogue with media personnel has been done at the level of journalists, and it has been difficult to gain access to the decision-makers within the industry. As well, this situation has been compounded by the fact that in the radio industry, regional radio stations have been divested to private enterprises which can dictate their own policies. As the national media policy is still up in the air, this has increased the difficulties in reaching policy makers and being taken seriously by management. (Appendix IV)

As with WMW, Sistren also faces economic and political constraints and has been unable to thoroughly evaluate its social impact. Although a social audit is planned, no studies on the impact of these programs

on Jamaican society are presently available. The organization, as with WMW, has largely based its evaluation of programming upon impressions from audiences, members, and media coverage over the past several years.

In terms of mainstream media, Sistren now receives far more national media attention than in previous years, and, therefore, it seems logical to assume that a wider section of Jamaican society has heard from Sistren, but again, the impact is unclear. As well, the Sistren newsletter reaches approximately 9,000 readers which includes both a Jamaican and international audience.

Among the non-government organization (NGO) sector the impact is more clear. For example, Canadian NGO, CUSO, recently cited Sistren among agencies receiving CUSO funding, as one of the few examples of a development agency addressing women's concerns as a priority. In addition, students and academics both nationally and internationally have focused on Sistren's work in research, again attesting to its importance and relevance for women.

Although it is difficult to estimate the impact of Sistren and WMW programs on the society, it is clear that the alternative media programs have offered women an opportunity to participate in all processes of media development and distribution. Jamaican women have gained access to employment to the media industry as employees over the past few years, however, they have been relegated to low-wage, low-impact positions and therefore this opportunity for women

to gain experience as media decision-makers is both uncommon and essential. With this experience comes not only technical media ski!l, but a grea'er understanding of the media industry.

Media literacy, something that has not been widely discussed among women's groups in Jamaica previous to the WMW program, is an extremely important aspect of any consiousness-raising campaign. It is important that women have the opportunity to learn about the media as an industry, as a medium for communication, and its function in society. Directors of the WMW project hope that as audiences, both male and female, become more informed as media consumers, they will begin to demand a less biased, more progressive representation of not only women in the media but of all marginalized segments of society.

Essential research on media portrayal of women and social attitudes toward women in Jamaican society is also being carried out through these two organizations. This commitment to research is critical if further progress is to be made in the study of the effects of media portrayal on the status of women. The results of this research will be especially important in any attempt at an evaluation of the impact of the WMW program on violence against women. This was, of course, the initial thought behind the project but as previously discussed, it is extremely difficult to draw a causal relationship between media exposure and specific social actions or effects. As seen in the children and TV violence study done by the Surgeon General's office in the United States (Surgeon General, 1972), at best there was evidence

to support a correlation for some of the audience, under certain conditions. Given this starting point, it is virtually impossible to ascertain the effect that the subsequent programming of WMW has had on the specific situation of violence towards Jamaican women. At the same time, it is valuable to note that from this initial starting point, the project has expanded to deal with more and broader issues of social concern to women. Now the project has taken on a focus of dealing with the more general representation of women in the media, not necessarily limiting itself to protesting images of violence against women.

As well, the conceptualization of the WMW project which began with a primary focus of addressing the issue of violence against women has now broadened into a more general media literacy campaign which has certainly brought the issue of women in the media more into focus in the community. It would appear, therefore, that the effectiveness of this project is not so much in its attempt to deal with the specific social issue of violence against women, but rather in its development and discussion of the issue of the portrayal of women in the media, therefore addressing the more specific issue in a broader framework.

Although it is difficult to determine the degree of effectiveness this program has had on social attitudes towards women, the WMW case provides an important example of how one women's organization has conceptualized the problems facing women in society and strategies to combat these. In identifying a need for this project the media were identified not only as a tool through which to work for change, but also

as a significant factor in the problem itself. This fact, combined with the fact that the WMW women as well as the Jamaican women surveyed felt so strongly that the image of women in the media was detrimental to their status in society, certainly indicates a correlation between these two phenomena. As further research is pursued by organizations such as WMW and others concerned with the relationship between media and social effects the relationship between the status of women and media portrayal of women can be further explored. The fact that out of a discussion on a very serious social problem, violence against women, the media were identified as both a problem and a possible solution indicates that this research is essential and will continue.

An initial evaluation of the WMW program shows that the topic of women in the media and the issue of violence against women in the media has received more public attention and gained a higher profile in the community. Whether or not this will effect the incidences of violence against women in the society, is another issue. As well, the media lobbying campaign has achieved some initial successes, for the most part in the area of transnational and corporate advertising and the portrayal of women in that advertising.

The impressions of Sistren member Honor Ford-Smith summarize the broader contribution of that organization to society:

> In a general sense the group has offered an
> alternative image of women, particularly of black
> working-class women. Through its plays, workshops

and other activities. Sistren has brought to light
many women's hidden experiences. It has shown
the specific strength and creativity of Jamaican
working-class women and the importance of this for
the future of the society. It has shown the potential
of working-class women. It has also encouraged
women to organize and to express their ideas
through the arts (although the extent to which it has
been able to offer women the concrete means to do
this has been limited). In this sense Sistren has
offered an example of an alternative to the white,
glamorized icons presented on television and in the
newspapers in Jamaica. (Ford-Smith, 1989, p.31).

Hillary Nicholson of WMW summarizes her impressions of the
organization's impact with one phrase "we little but we
Tallawah", (we're small but we're strong in a Jamaican dialect).
Based upon comments from members of the public, feedback
from other women's groups, media and government. Nicholson
feels that WMW has had a very positive impact, not just among
organized women, but throughout the general public as well
(Nicholson, 1991).

WMW and Sistren provide useful examples of organizations
which have adopted alternative media strategies to combat the
bias against women in the mainstream media. In keeping with
the participatory paradigm, these strategies are designed to
empower women at a community level. Through both lobbying
for change within the existing media industry, and initiating
alternative programs outside of the mainstream these strategies

are also assisting women in their efforts to challenge the structures of northern and male bias in the mainstream media.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the experiences of women working in media around the world suggest that simply including more women in the industry through employment does not necessarily head to an increased access to media-decision making on their part. As seen in the case of Jamaica, approximately 50 percent of employees in the media industry are women. However, these women are relegated to the lower level positions with little decision-making power.

Sistren and WMW are addressing this issue, and the broader issue of the social consequences of this exclusion of women by providing opportunities for women to gain experience in media decision-making. These alternative programs also provide a channel of communication for women which would otherwise not exist.

Honor Ford-Smith (1991), emphasizes the importance of the development process involved in the conceptualization and growth of WMW and Sistren. The work of these organizations was decided upon in a participatory manner by Jamaican women from a variety of socio-economic and educational backgrounds. The process of identifying the need for a media project right through to the implementation of the strategic planning for the WMW program offered these women a unique opportunity to participate in media decision-making at a

grassroots level. In her evaluation of the program. Ford-Smith has concluded that WMW offers a much needed avenue for women to raise an angry voice against the images of women in the media, and the treatment of women by the media as consumers. These opportunities for both participation in media planning and an alternative channel of communication for women are clearly two of the most important aspects of the program.

The challenge for these organizations now lies in their ability to effect the formation of national media policy. At present, there is no clear media policy in Jamaica although the formation of national and regional policies have been the subject of debate over the past two decades. Clearly, the success of WMW and Sistren in lobbying against sexist advertising by the Jamaican National Investment Promotions Corporation and Jamaican media indicates women's organizations do have some voice in directing advertising policy. The WMW emphasis on dialoguing with media and advertisers also illustrates the organization's commitment to working for change · ithin the existing media industry as well as supporting independent alternative programs.

Although the organizations' objectives for social change are focused on the long-term. WMW and Sistren both offer unique opportunities for Jamaican women today. Through their methodology and composition. these two organizations are unique not only in Jamaica but throughout the Caribbean region.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Throughout this thesis, several points have emerged as critical in the discussion of women, media and development. The first is that women are excluded from the mass media both as decision-makers and through the inaccurate or nonexistent representation of women in media programming. The second is the inability of previous strategies to increase women's access to the media by demanding increased employment opportunities for women. And finally, through a review of the literature on this subject, it has become clear that there is a need for alternatives to the existing mainstream media which allow women the opportunity to challenge the structure of the media industry.

The global picture of women in media illustrated in Chapter 3, showed that not only are women excluded from the decision-making process, but also from employment. In addition, the portrayal of women in media, on a global scale, continues to exclude women in its representation of 'serious' development issues and other news items. Instead, women are represented through negative stereotypical images. Chapter 3, has also provided an examination of the work of women's organizations in an attempt to change this representation in the media.

For women's groups working from a liberal-feminist perspective, the most valuable aspects of the struggle for change in the mass media are both the demand for increased access to the new information

technologies, as well as the work of women in lobbying for more equitable employment practices within the industry. These two areas are extremely important if women are to have any impact at all in the mass media industry. However, as was previously discussed, this perspective has failed to take into account the need for more systemic and structural changes which would allow women to use the media as a tool to combat the prevalent social attitudes which are now reflected and perpetuated through the media.

While some organizations have continued to follow liberal-feminist strategies, many women's groups have recognized that reforms within the mainstream media are neither likely nor sufficient to provide solutions to the problems posed for women by the mass media. As Wallerstein (1979) states in Sussman's (1991) review of the new communications technologies: " The problem for oppressed strata is not how to communicate within this world but how to overthrow it" (p.133).

As illustrated through the work of Jamaica's Sistren and WMW, some women's organizations are working, if not necessarily to overthrow the media industry, at least to develop alternatives to these media. In most cases, these alternatives are pursued in conjunction with programs designed to lobby the existing media structure for increased access for women, as well as to monitor the portrayal of women in the mainstream media.

Proponents of alternative media as a solution to the crisis in mainstream media feel that true change can only be achieved by working outside existing structures. Remaining independent is important both so that alternative, radically different views can be heard through the media, as well as so that these views will not be stifled or transformed and incorporated into the existing mainstream (Gallagher, 1981). The hope is that these alternative media, initially isolated and small in scale, will raise the profile of alternative views and provide a channel of communication effective enough to undermine or certainly restructure the existing mainstream system.

From the review of theoretical perspectives provided in Chapter 2, it becomes apparent that the most effective framework for analysis of this issue is a participatory paradigm, informed by a gender and development perspective. This framework has allowed for an examination of not only women's lack of media access, but the broader structural considerations of patriarchy and capitalism which effect women's exclusion.

The participatory nature of the development of alternative media has created greater opportunities for women to voice their own concerns, as well as to gain an understanding of the structures of the media industry. If the situation of women in the media is to change, clearly the structure of the existing mainstream media must change. Women, and women's concerns, must be included in the development and establishment of this new communications structure. As Gallagher (1981) concludes, these structures must admit women as "...

autonomous and central characters in the process of communications. But if that is to be possible, women must themselves imagine and create the structures" (p.175).

As indicated through the programming requested and provided by women's organizations around the world, these structures must be relevant for both urban and rural women and women from all walks of life and various degrees of education. Although women can in no way be represented as a homogeneous population in a discussion of women and media, little research so far has been done to identify the different impacts of the media on women of different backgrounds. Obviously, the level of education and income of women would significantly effect their access to the various forms of media, their role as consumers, and their access to different perspectives within the media. However, the research which does exist shows that women suffer from the same lack of access to media-decision making in every region and at every level. Alternative media projects such as the example in Jamaica do provide media opportunities for women who would otherwise have no access to media and no opportunity to investigate the impact of the media on society.

While the experiences of many community based alternative media projects have been very positive for the participants and others in the community, the support of alternative media without continued research and work in the area of the mainstream media would be unproductive. One of the major obstacles to progress in this area so far is a lack of recognition of the problems presented by the

mainstream media for women and particularly women in developing countries. As long as the role of women in media decision-making as well the portrayal of women in the media continue to take a secondary status to other issues in the field of women and development, the necessary research and commitment will not be achieved. It is important to emphasize, however, that this research must not be simply seen as concerning the issue of women, media and development as an isolated topic. This research must be conducted in a broader framework, recognizing the importance of the relationship of women and media within a more comprehensive discussion of gender issues in relation to the social system. Proposals for change in the area of bias in the media against women must look at the wider social bias against women in society if they are to be effective.

Research which came as a result of the United Nations Decade for Women, has shown that during the 1980s, there was no indication of a radical change in the media industry, or any remarkable breakthroughs in the general portrayal of women in the media worldwide. These studies conclude as well that,

> Perhaps the most important change - if it can be seen as such - has been in women themselves: in their growing understanding of the interests and influences working to maintain dominant media presentations and patterns, and in their increasing search for alternative media strategies and channels which have some hope - however slight - of under-cutting the status quo (UNESCO 1985 p.86).

Conclusions from research done on women in media in the late 1970s tended to emphasize the importance of structural change within society in order to achieve equity within the media industry. The emphasis here was on the necessity for revolutionary changes within the mass media both as far as content and control, as a prerequisite to significant changes in the status of women in society. Further research through UNESCO in this area now suggests, however, that although this need for structural change is still apparent, it alone is not enough to facilitate real advancement for women in society. According to these findings, it seems that the strength of ideology itself was perhaps underestimated.

> It has been normal to suppose, for example that in societies undergoing revolutionary socio-structural change, genuine equality between the sexes can be more easily guarantied. Experience suggests that this conclusion is becoming less and less obvious (UNESCO 1985 p. 86).

During the past decade it has become apparent that significant changes in the status of women in society will not simply occur with structural changes in society, and that this is also the case concerning the portrayal of women in the media, and women's access to media. Therefore, it is important to recognize the need for women's participation in the designing of structures which will allow their concerns to be heard. The question of restructuring the mass media industry is an extremely complicated issue, since this industry is so integrated into the international economy as well as political and ideological structures. Alternative media provide an opportunity for

the voices of marginalized groups to be heard, but these smaller initiatives cannot hope to be heard over the mainstream media on a global scale unless they gain significant increases in both their audiences, and financial and technological support. The objective of these alternative projects is not simply to gain access to the media as an industry or a technology, but to change social attitudes towards women in general, and this can only be achieved as part of a larger social initiative for change.

Research on alternative media projects world-wide indicate a consistent call from women involved in alternative media for more support from funding and development agencies in this area. The opportunities provided for women to voice their concerns through the media, and take an active role in media decision making, are seen to be two of the most important aspects of this alternative media. At the same time, further research is necessary on the relationship between the portrayal of women in the mass media and the status of women in society. Most of the research which has been done in this area focuses exclusively on the problem of access to media employment for women, and does not adequately discuss the social relationship between women's images and their reality. As Gallagher concludes, "...clearly the media do play a central ideological role in that their practices and products are both a source and a confirmation of the structural inequality of women in society" (Gallagher 1981 p.18.). However, until this relationship is more widely recognized and thoroughly researched, it will be difficult to formulate effective solutions.

As new information technologies move towards unprecedented capabilities, the impact of the mass media is becoming more significant and an understanding of the relationship between media and social structures more critical . This growth in technology also means an increased demand for access to new information technologies by women and other marginalized groups. The potential of these technologies to either assist women's efforts or further isolate their voices makes the role of media with regards to women and development an even more pressing issue. A common concern in recent literature is expressed by Leslie Steves:

> ...recent advances in telecommunication and information
> technologies make it imperative that women learn to use
> these technologies and collaborate internationally to use
> them for feminist purposes (Steeves, 1989,p.103).

Alternative media programs also have a role to play in this area. Although developments in alternative media have lead to support for programs involving more localized, less formal media, folk media, and more reliance on interpersonal communication, this does not mean that the mainstream media is to be ignored. The participatory paradigm, which advocates the advancement of alternative media, recognizes the importance of traditional and community based methods of communication. At the same time, larger participatory initiatives designed within this same framework, such as the women's feature services, have also been important in raising consciousness about the issues and empowering women through access to media.

Change in the portrayal of women in media will involve not only a change in the image of women in and through the media, but in the greater society as a whole. There is, as of yet, insufficient evidence on which to base a conclusion as to the necessary conditions for change regarding the media's portrayal of women. However, from the research which has been done, it is apparent that structural changes in national political and economic systems are not enough. The development of alternative channels of communication for women is imperative now so that women's concerns may be heard, and they may gain access to media and experience in this field. At the same time, further work must be done in the study of media, women and development looking at the issues in a broader examination of the status of women in society, and the relationship between women's portrayal in the media and the advancement of this status.

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UNESCO'S PROGRAMME FOR WOMEN AND MEDIA

Unesco's action programmes on women and media started long before the first World Conference of International Women's Year held in Mexico in 1975. As early as 1964, a Unesco Pilot Project in Senegal which continued for five years set up professional training courses for both men and women in television techniques and programming and, in particular, used television for the social education of women who were organized in tele-clubs for group viewing throughout the city of Dakar.

But it was the Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference which acted as a world-wide catalyst, leading to increased activities in the media as well as other spheres. The World Plan of Action recognized the potential of the media in promoting social and attitudinal changes, in accelerating women's participation in society and in encouraging their equal integration in development. It particularly emphasized that women should be employed in greater numbers in decision-making, professional and creative capacities within media organizations. The Media Workshop for Journalists and Broadcasters organized by Unesco in Mexico following the World Conference formulated a series of recommendations to media and non-governmental organizations, professional communicators, governments and intergovernmental bodies for the more effective use of media and the increased participation of women as media professionals. The workshop led to the creation of regional networks for the production and dissemination of news concerning women known as the Unesco Features Service. This significant development in news coverage started with financing from the UN Fund for Population Activities. It began with a Latin American Feature under contract with the

Inter-Press Service. This was followed by the Caribbean Women's Feature Syndicate set up under contract between Unesco and the Christian Action for Development in the Caribbean. In 1979, the Depth News Women Feature Service was created for Asia under contract with the Press Foundation of Asia. Services for Africa and the Arab States followed, the ultimate goal being a world-wide network to increase the flow of news and information on women to help remove prejudices and stereotypes reflected in the mass media and thus to speed up women's full equality with men.

One of the major activities of Unesco in the field of women and media is the organization of a series of regional seminars devoted to women and media decision-making. These seminars are the result of the priority recommendation of an international UN/Unesco Seminar on Women and Media which was held at UN headquarters in 1980. The participants, all media professionals, stressed that the fundamental aim of these seminars should be to sensitize high-level media managers to the implication for society of the neglect of women, both as audience members and media personnel. What they were looking for was a commitment of decision-makers to more sensitive media policies which they hoped would be followed by national seminars to lay down action guidelines. It should be noted that the participants emphasized that the struggle to overcome problems concerning women and the media do not concern women alone. They concern the society as a whole. Therefore, it is imperative for women AND men to engage in common endeavour leading to a genuine democratization of the media and of the society of which they are part.

The first seminar on women and media decision-making took place in Jamaica in 1981 for the Caribbean region organized by the Caribbean Institute of Mass Communication. Later that year, the second regional seminar took place in Malaysia organized

for Asia by the Asia-Pacific Institute for Broadcasting Development. A third seminar, for Latin America, was held in Mexico in March 1982 while a fourth took place in Fiji for the Pacific region at the end of 1982 organized by the Extension Services of the University of the South Pacific. The fifth was held in 1983 in Tunis for the Arab States, organized by the Union Nationale des Femmes de Tunisie. This was the first time the subject was discussed by participants, both men and women, of the Arab States under the auspices of an international organization. The sixth seminar was held in Warsaw, organized by the International Organization of Journalists (IOJ) in October 1984. It marked the first time that participants from all over Europe - North and South, East and West including North America - discussed women and media on such a wide basis. The seventh and last in this series was held for the African region of the Subsahara in February 1985, organized in Addis Ababa by the African Training and Research Centre for Women, Economic Commission for Africa. All of the seminars made pleas for intensified training of women media professionals particularly in the non-traditional areas such as management, the technical aspects of television, video, radio, audio-visual, satellite communication and print media. Particular attention was to be paid to training in electronic field production techniques so that programmes for national development would involve women's concerns as equal partners in society. This was reiterated in specific recommendations concerning women in the media formulated at the recent Meeting of Experts on Co-operation among Regional Communication Training Institutions (Unesco, Paris, 19-22 April 1983). In the next biennium, Unesco is planning to finance such courses in the leading regional communication training institutions throughout the world. Many other important recommendations and proposals for action on women and the media were promulgated during an Expert Group Meeting in Vienna in 1981 on Women and the Media convened by the Advancement of Women Branch of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA)

of the UN Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and in which Unesco played an active role.

Unesco has also assisted numerous national and inter-regional seminars in Puerto Rico, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Malaysia and the United States and financed, in particular, the participation of women from developing countries. In addition, a training course on the cultural content of television programmes aimed at women was held during 1981 in collaboration with the Centre for Studies relating to Science and Technology of Information (CESTI) of the University of Dakar and assembled women media professionals from six French-speaking African countries who not only discussed theoretical problems but also did practical exercises which resulted in a videotape production.

On the research side, Unesco has published two global reports and a book on the image and role of women in the media: "The Portrayal and Participation of Women in the Media" by Margaret Gallagher of the Institute of Educational Technology, the Open University, United Kingdom; "Mass Media: the Image, Role and Social Conditions of Women" by Mieke Ceulemans and Guido Fauconnier of the Catholic University of Leuven and the book "Unequal Opportunities: the Case of Women and Media" by Margaret Gallagher. Other studies have been published from Canada, Jamaica, Japan and Senegal on the impact of cultural (media) industries on the socio-cultural behaviour of women which were discussed in Helsinki at an expert meeting organized by Unesco and the Finnish National Commission (1979). In addition, a publication entitled "Women in the Media" which included an enquiry on participation of women in radio, television and film in four countries: Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and the United States was issued by Unesco in 1980.

The Communication sector of Unesco is endeavouring to carry out

as many recommendations as possible emanating both from its own regional meetings and international expert groups on women and the media. It also promotes and encourages non-governmental organizations having status with Unesco to make their own unique contribution in this field.

A recent project submission by Unesco to the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) may lead to considerable extra-budgetary funding for the women and media programme. In addition, Unesco is submitting a regional three-year project to the March 1985 Governing Council meeting of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) for communication training and career development for women in Africa. If approved, this will be the very first IPDC project devoted exclusively to women.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE REGIONAL SEMINAR

'WOMEN AND MEDIA DECISION-MAKING IN THE CARIBBEAN'

Kingston, Jamaica, 28-30 September 1981

PORTRAYAL AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THE MEDIA

Challenge for Action to Media Workers

This seminar urges women at all levels of the media to acknowledge the positive role that they have played and to be confident of their ability to effect change.

Within the limitations of organizational structures, all participants of this seminar should regard themselves as agents within a network to promote the objectives of advancement for women in the media.

Pledge of Support

This Seminar pledges its support of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union in any positive efforts made towards the development and exchange of local and regional programmes especially those which reflect the participation of Caribbean women in the developmental programmes of the region.

A. To UNESCO

In view of the fact that UNESCO has an extensive communications programme throughout the Caribbean, dialogue should be established between the Steering Committee appointed by this seminar and the UNESCO Regional Office in the Caribbean to discuss the following:

> 1. Support for the formation of a Caribbean association of men and women in media.
>
> 2. Development by WAND of the Women and Development Unit. Module for use in CARIMAC and Communicarib programmes.
>
> 3. Procedures for applications for scholarships, fellowships, etc., for Caribbean women to pursue long and short-term technical courses at the above institutions.
>
> 4. The elimination of sexist language in its publications.

...

5. Assistance in the evaluation of Caribbean Women's Features Syndicate (CWFS), and continued support for the preparation and dissemination of material aimed at presenting a positive image of women through the media.

6. The acceleration of training for women, especially in non-traditional job areas in the media. While recognizing the value of training offered by developed countries, efforts should be made to take advantage of existing training institutions in the region and in other developing countries and to devise additional training courses. Courses offered by developed countries should be considered on the basis of content relevance and with due regard to the use of appropriate technology.

7. Support and possible financing of national/regional seminars dealing with the integration of media women in development.

8. Strengthening the organization of the Caribbean Broadcasting Union (CBU) in respect of its programmes and training for Women in Development.

B. To Media Organizations

1. The seminar recommends that Regional and National Organizations be guided by the following criteria in the preparation of materials for the media:

(a) More authentic representation of women's participation in all spheres of Caribbean life.

(b) More active involvement of women in serious discussions, news commentaries and voiceovers in commercials and documentaries.

(c) Representative reporting on the contributions of women to community and national life.

...

(d) Less emphasis on physical attributes in reporting on women.

(e) Removal of sexism in language, e.g. newscaster instead of newsman; anchorperson instead of anchorman; weather forecaster instead of weatherman.

(f) Using female talent of all ages, as is the practice with male talent.

(g) Widening the scope of women's pages beyond the traditional coverage of domestic functions and working towards their integration into the regular columns of the newspapers.

(h) Stressing partnership of both sexes in the home and in the workplace.

(i) Annual awards for the most positive and citations of the most negative advertising portrayal of women.

(j) Ethical standards in media reporting and advertising as they relate to women.

2. The regional media organizations such as the Caribbean Broadcasting Union, the Caribbean Publishers and Broadcasters Association, the Caribbean Press Council and the CARICOM Information Ministers Meeting should be approached by the Steering Committee appointed by this seminar to seek invitations to their next meeting in order to make formal presentation of the issues concerning women and the media identified by this seminar.

3. In conjunction with educational institutions, both formal and informal, media organizations should undertake programmes to inform and educate young women about the variety of occupational opportunities within the media, especially in those areas which have been traditionally held by men.

. . .

4. Subjective biases in the interviewing process should be eliminated. Management training courses should be designed to sensitize managers about fair employment practices in relation to women.

5. The acceleration of training for women, especially in non-traditional job areas in the media. While recognizing the value of training offered by developed countries, efforts should be made to take advantage of existing training institutions in the region and in other developing countries and to devise additional training courses. Courses offered by developed countries should be considered on the basis of content relevance and with due regard to the use of appropriate technology.

6. Media organizations should institute in-service training in supervisory, technical and management skills on an on-going basis to prepare women in particular for promotion and advancement within the organization.

7. In the selection process, equal opportunities should be given to women and men to receive the benefits of scholarships, fellowships, research grants, etc.

8. Notwithstanding the terms and conditions which might be embodied in labour contracts, media houses should ensure that personnel policies include a periodic evaluation system so that promotion is effected on the basis of merit.

9. Where the limitations of organizational structures frustrate mobility, media houses should seek to widen career opportunities for women and men and, where necessary, create special projects which could utilize their experience and skills.

10. Media organizations should provide the opportunities for training for women who work as secretaries, clerks, production assistants, operators, etc. to enable them to develop other creative and professional skills for advancement within the organization.

11. Media organizations have a responsibility to ensure that the working environment of media workers is humane and there should be positive improvements in such areas as :

...

(a) Health care.

(b) Pension schemes:

(c) Safety and security.

(d) Lightweight, portable equipment.

(e) Provision of day care facilities.

(f) Provision of canteen facilities
and well equipped restrooms.

12. The composition of Media Boards in both public
and private sector organizations should:

(a) Include a fair representation of
women.

(b) Include persons sensitive to media issues
and the problems of media workers.

13. Following the criteria outlined in B.1 above,
every medium in each territory should have a screening
process for viewing audio visual material, particularly
foreign material to ensure that it is not at variance
with women's stated desire to have more positive
and participatory roles projected. Women should
be fully represented on such screening committess.

14. In view of the fact that the Caribbean media
are urban-oriented and recognizing that the importance
of the rural woman in national development is often
overlooked, special attention should be given to
the access and participation of rural women in the
media. The seminar recommends that:

(a) the importance of radio in rural
development and its potential to develop
and re-order non-formal education be
recognized;

(b) the use of radio as a means of offering
learning continuity to women, particularly
in their attempts to acquire marketable
skills should be expanded;

(c) Governments should ensure that national
development projects include a
communication component for rural women.

budgets devoted to foreign material and should move promptly to encourage the production of local material by:

(a) introducing tax incentives to encourage production of local material;

(b) collaborating in the development and exchange of regional products.

8. Governments are encouraged to ensure that women are represented in the formulation of communication policy.

9. Government's attention is directed to the need for revision and harmonization of legislation dealing with the communications media, advertising, copyright and cinematography as they affect the portrayal of women.

10. Governments through their relevant agencies such as Broadcasting Councils, Information Ministries, Women's Bureaux, Cinematographic Authorities, etc., should:

(a) monitor the style and content of advertising with reference to the portrayal of women;

(b) take appropriate action to ensure that this portrayal is positive.

11. This seminar recognizes and endorses the work being done by WAND in shaping the content of CXC and Primary Education curricula to ensure that the contribution of women to the development of the region is adequately represented. Governments are urged to support the continuity and expansion of this work.

12. Governments should support and strengthen the information components of Women's Desks/Bureaux, to ensure the widest dissemination of relevant information to all women.

F. To Women's Organizations

1. Women's organizations should collaborate with women in the media and Women's Desks/Bureaux to generate debate and effect change at national and regiona levels on the status and image of women.

C. To Women in Media and Associations of Media Workers

1. Due to inequalities and anomalies of salaries and allowances as between men and women in the media, between media workers associations and between levels, of professionals in the media, media workers associations, with assistance from professional research and training institutions such as CARIMAC and national statistical units, should collect information in relation to salaries and anomalies to form the basis for arriving at a scale of remuneration applicable to all job categories.

D. To the University of the West Indies

1. The University of the West Indies, particularly through CARIMAC, should undertake to commission, following areas:

(a) attitudinal research both among media workers and consumers towards the protrayal and treatment of women in the media;

(b) the effect of media messages on women and children;

(c) how the media can assist in solving problems in women's lives, family relationships and the socialization of children;

(d) the present state of legislation relating to information, communication and advertising in the Caribbean;

(e) in collaboration with organizations of media workers, research into salary anomalies, as indicated in C.1 above.

2. The University of the West Indies, through WAND, should provide support for the working of the Steering Committee.

3. The seminar endorses the inclusion of material on Women in Development issues, such as the module being prepared by WAND, in the training programmes for media workers at CARIMAC and Communicarib.

E. To Governments

1. Considering that women entering the job market, including the media, are at a disadvantage in exercising career options because often the educational system as structured does not provide instruction for women in non-traditional areas, e.g. technical subjects, there is a definite need for schools to encourage and provide guidance for young women to receive the technical training to equip them for a wider job market.

2. Subjective biases in the interviewing process should be eliminated. Management training courses should be designed to sensitize managers about fair employment practices in relation to women.

3. The acceleration of training for women, especially in non-traditional job areas in the media. While recognizing the value of training offered by developed countries, efforts should be made to take advantage of existing training institutions in the region and in other developing countries and to devise additional training courses. Courses offered by developed countries should be considered on the basis of content relevance and with due regard to the use of appropriate technology.

4. Support and possible financing of national/regional seminars dealing with the integration of media women in development.

5. Governments should ensure the representation of women at the decision-making levels of the major regional organizations such as the Caribbean Development Bank (CBD), CARICOM, Caribbean Centre for Administration Development (CARICAD), Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (CARDI), and the Caribbean Institute of Mass Communication (CARIMAC).

6. The composition of Media Boards in both public and private sector organizations should:

   (a) include a fair representation of women; and
   (b) include persons sensitive to media issues and the problems of media workers.

7. Ministers of Information in the region should recognize the disproportionate percentage of media

...

2. Women's organizations, including consumers' organizations, should monitor and lobby advertising agencies to reflect a positive presentation of women.

3. Rural women and the media. In view of the fact that the Caribbean media are urban-oriented and recognizing that the importance of the rural woman in national development is often overlooked, special attention should be given to the access and participation of rural women in the media.

1. COMMUNICATION POLICY

1.1 Briefly describe the structure of communication policy in your country i.e. as between private companies and government-controlled or -sponsored media. Please indicate for which types of media*.

1.2 Have any specific policies and guidelines been adopted requiring media to promote the advancement of women, in particular women's equal participation - both as agents and as beneficiaries - in all sectors and at all levels of development process?   Yes /☐/ Since 19 —   No /☐/

If yes, please specify

    1.2.1 At what level: Governmental /☐/; Non-governmental /☐/;
                             by various types of Media themselves /☐/

    1.2.2 Area of media addressed: content /☐/; organization /☐/;
                                employment /☐/; promotion /☐/;

    1.2.3 Specific content:

    1.2.4 Measures for its reinforcement:

    1.2.5 Background of its formulation:

1.3 If no policies, guidelines or measures exist as yet for various types of media, are they planned?   Yes /☐/ No /☐/

If yes, how and when?

1.4 In the formulation and implementation of specific policies or guidelines requiring media to promote the advancement of women where there major obstacles encountered?   Yes /☐/ No /☐/

If yes, please

    - identify and list them by order of decreasing importance
    - list those which have been overcome and briefly describe measures
      facilitating success in this respect
    - list those which remain or are likely to emerge in the future and
      indicate strategies/measures envisaged for their resolution.

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* Media in this questionnaire will include interalia newspapers, radio, television film production, video production, journals and other press, sound recording,)

2. MEDIA CONTENT

2.1 Have any scientific studies been undertaken on how women are commonly portrayed by the media, including in advertising and in textbooks?

Yes /⎯/ No /⎯/

If yes, please name some of the significant studies (if possible attach summary of findings).

2.2 How do the discerned images relate to dominant social roles and values? Has there been any change since 1975 of these media images?

Yes /⎯/ No /⎯/

If yes, what kind?

2.3 Has any analysis been made of the roles and functions of the feminine press and feminine programmes on television and radio? Yes /⎯/ No /⎯/

If yes, please provide summary of findings

3. EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN BY MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS: RECRUITMENT, PROMOTION, TRAINING

3.1 Has there been an increase in the number of women occupying senior decision-making positions in major media organizations within the last ten years.

Yes /⎯/ No /⎯/

If yes, please provide the following information:

Name of Major Media Organizations	Type	Year	Senior Decision Making Positions		
			Total	Men	Women
a.		1975			
		1983			
b.		1975			
		1983			
c.		1975			
		1983			
d.		1975			
		1983			

3.2 Do women participate in editorial and management positions in the generally "masculine" magazines, e.g. science, technology, economics?

Yes /⎯/ No /⎯/

Name of Major Magazines (Field: science, technology economics)	Year	Editoral and Management Positions		
		Total	Men	Women(*)
a. (field:)	1975 1983			
b. (field:)	1975 1983			
c. (field:)	1975 1983			
d. (field:)	1975 1983			

(*) Specify area of responsibility:

3.3 Have there been any special professional training courses exclusively for women working in the media?   Yes /__/   No /__/

If yes, please specify what kind of courses (list the subjects) and for what category of women:

3.4 Are there female employees in the different categories (e.g. news, sports, culture, home and fashion) and levels of media employment?
     Yes /__/   No /__/

If yes, please provide the following information or briefly describe changes since 1975.

Categories of Media	Year	Employees					
		Senior Level			Other Levels		
		Total	Men	Women(*)	Total	Men	Women
a.	1975						
	1983						
b.	1975						
	1983						
c.	1975						
	1983						

(*) Please specify area of responsibility.

3.5 How do existing recruitment policies and criteria for promotion affect the employment of women within media organisations? Are there specific policies and/or criteria for promotion of women?   Yes /___/ No /___/

Is affirmative action used?   Yes /___/ No /___/
If yes, please specify:

3.6 Has any research concerning women's professional opportunities in media organisations been carried out since 1975?
                                                               Yes /___/ No /___/
If yes, on what specific subjects?Please attach reports if available, or brief summary of findings.

3.7 Have any professional groups or associations of women in the media been formed since 1975?   Yes /___/ No /___/

If yes, what are their objectives?

Are women admitted to general groups of associations of media professionals?
                                                               Yes /___/ No /___/
If no, what differences exist?

3.8 In the promotion of employment of women by media organizations, were there major obstacles encountered?   Yes /___/ No /___/

If yes, please

    - identify and list them by order of decreasing importance
    - list those which have been overcome and briefly describe measures facilitating success in this respect
    - list those which remain or are likely to emerge in the future and indicate strategies/measures envisaged for their resolution.

4. ALTERNATIVE MEDIA AND NETWORKS

4.1 What magazines/journals for women were published from 1975 to 1983? Please give titles and attach copies if available.

4.2 What role does the feminist press play in the treatment of women's issues?

Have feminist publishing houses been established in your countries?
Yes /__/ No /__/
Please describe their objectives and work.

4.3 What measures exist or could be instituted to promote the access and participation of women in relation to the media?

4.4 Have any information networks concerning women's issues been established since 1975? Yes /__/ No /__/
If yes, briefly describe its structure and operational activities.

5. WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

5.1 Are there women's groups/organizations active in the field of media and communication activities to promote the participation of women in social, economic and political activities? Yes /__/ No /__/
If yes, please name the major ones:

5.2 Are there periodicals, news bulletins, etc. published by these women's groups/ organizations? Yes /__/ No /__/
If yes, please list them and indicate the date of their foundation.

5.3 Do women's groups/organizations have regular access to newspapers/radio/ television to air their concerns? Yes/__/ Since 19__ No /__/
If yes, please specify how or in what way.

6. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

6.1 What cooperation and assistance have been sought and received from the United Nations Agencies in the area of women and communication ? Please give name of Agencies and Type(s) of cooperation/assistance received?

6.2 If no such assistance have been received in the past, is it desirable to receive some in the future?   Yes /___/ No /___/
If yes, please specify in what form and indicate what should be the priority areas of work (research and operational) of the United Nations Organizations (including the specialized agencies) in this area?

6.3 Are there journalists in your country associated with the UNESCO/UNFPA African Women's Features Service?   Yes /___/ No /___/
If not, would you be interested in learning more about it?
                                                          Yes /___/ No /___/

W O M E N ' S   M E D I A   W A T C H

R E P O R T   F O R   1 9 9 0

AND

B U D G E T   F O P   1 9 9 2 - 3

****

SUMMARY OF PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES FOR 1990

PRODUCTION & DISTRIBUTION OF BROCHURES   (2,000)
                                 Stickers   (5,000) Information packages
                                 VISUAL EXHIBITION
WORKSHOPS & PRESENTATIONS   (18)

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

MEDIA APPEARANCES ON   radio & TV   (5)

LOBBYING

WRITING ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION IN NATIONAL/REGIONAL JOURNALS

DOCUMENTING/MONITORING MEDIA/PRESS

A: RESEARCH AND PRODUCTION OF INFORMATION MATERIALS

A-1.   VISUAL EXHIBITION:
        This was upgraded with the acquisition of display boards and media/
        advertising material.   Display now includes 12 large boards;
        used at all our public education events.

A-2.   BROCHURE ON WOMEN's MEDIA WATCH was produced (2,000) in
        collaboration with graphic artist Mbala, a long-time male
        supporter of WMW.

A-3   5,000 Message Stickers :   "REAL MEN DON'T ABUSE WOMEN"
                                                    and
                                    "NUFF RESPECT TO WOMAN EVERYTIME!"

A-4.   MEDIA CLIPPINGS for documentation continued although not as
        systematically or consistently as we would wish.
        MEDIA ARTICLES AND RESEARCH ARTICLES from overseas also gathered,
        Xeroxed, and from all these INFORMATION PACKAGES were assembled
        from time to time.

A-5.   ARTICLES   on the topics of media portrayal of women, violence
        against women, women & health (and the media) were written and
        published.

A-6.   THE NATIONAL SURVEY ON ATTITUDES towards the media's portrayal

        of women:
        We identified a surveyor (from Dept. of Sociology, University
        of the West Indies) & worked out the parameters of the survey
        and survey sample.

B.   PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

      B-1   COLLABORATION WITH WOMEN's ORGANIZATIONS.

            .   We expanded our collaboration, responding to many more organizations
                nationally and regionally, who took the initiative to contact us. Eg:

            -   Committee for the Development of Women (St. Vincent)

            -   Belize Women against violence
            -   Women's Centre (West Berlin)
            -   Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)
            -   TEENS IN ACTION (Kingston)

            -   AWOJA (Association of Women's Orgs. in Jamaica) - we were active
                on the Education Committee and the Membership Committee.

            -   WOMAN INC/CRISIS CENTRE - jointly lead with WMW, a public discussion
                                          on Women & Rape, July 1990.

            -   WMW invited by WOMAN INC. to be on panel on "Women & Photography -
                                          Pornography or Art?" - October 1990.
            - WOMAN's BUREAU: WMW conducted 2 drama-in-ed presentation/workshops
                for 2 major Bureau events around IWD in March:
                          (a)   Image of women in the media (at a rural Training Seminar
                          (b)   Women in politics (public event in Kingston)

B-2.   DISSEMINATION OF MATERIALS

            - BROCHURES & STICKERS   distributed to

                  85 Media persons (journalists, editors, radio/TV hosts,
                                    programme directors...)

                  36 Private public-relations/advertising companies

                  120 women's organizations and individuals, rural & urban, as
                      well as regionally.

                  3 urban police youth groups.

            In addition thousands of stickers were distributed at public
            events and workshops.

            - "NO TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE" booklet; collaborated with SISTREN RESEARCH
              on the use and distribution.

            - PREPARED ARTICLES for publication in:-

                  CAFRA NEWS (REGIONAL/INTERNATIONAL)

                  SISTREN NEWS MAGAZINE (national focus, some regional/international)

                  PEOPLE MAGAZINE (national, regional).

B-3 **LINKS WITH MEDIA**

We furthered links with media personnel, increasing the media mailing list, with persistent mail and personal contact, keeping them informed of WMW activities and sharing material with them on the issues of media portrayal of women and violence against women. We received increasing support from concerned media persons in publicising our public events, and received invitations to discuss the issues on radio/TV talk shows.

DIALOGUE WITH POLICY MAKERS initiated in 1988-89: we maintained contact with programme directors at JBC-T.V. (national television) and with the advertisers Association of Ja. we participated in a Public Forum of the Press Association of Jamaica (Dec.'90) at which our intervention focussed on the media's treatment of women and its tendency to sensationalize / trivialize reports of violence against women and children in particular.

We continued to respond to issues raised in the media (mostly press) although our monthly target was not met.

B-4 **INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH 8:**

We distributed thousands of message stickers, conducted 3 workshops in collaboration with the Women'S Bureau and the Kingston Jaycees and participated in panel discussions.

B-5 **NOVEMBER 25:INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:**

Over a 4 week period we
-Launched our Brochures and did official "handing overs" to
Minister Labour/Welfare and Women's Affairs

Director, Government Women's Bureau

Jamaica Broadcasting Commission

- Held 3 rap sessions with Police Youth Groups
- Conducted workshops with: Hope United Church Youth Group

University students

Social Workers Fraternity

- Participated in 2 radio-call in programmes highlighting the issue of women and violence (broadcast nationally)
- Participated in the Association of Women's Organizations in Jamaica press conference.
- Participated in the Women's Bureau Forum aimed at involving men in developing strategies to counteract violence and identify the social causes of the problem.

B.5 cont'd. - Ran a one-month self-defence course for women in association with W.I.Karate school.

- Conducted a public video screening & Discussion around the topics of child abuse and sexual violence.

B.6 TARGET GROUPS REACHED

We widened the scope of target groups to include community based youth groups, teacher training colleges and the police force as well as women's organizations and school students. These groups were represented at our workshops and public video screenings and discussion.

In a face-to-face manner at workshops etc. we reached approximately 850 persons.

Other of our activities were conducted at a national level reaching many thousands (e.g. Radio/TV activities, articles in press/journals).

C. 1 TRAINING (internal)

We had one session with a resource person skilled in public speaking. While we recognize this as very useful, we need more such sessions.

C.2, LOCATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

Office premises were rented at 21 Roosevelt Ave. , Kingston 6. (one room with access to bathroom). The basic equipment acquired through purchase and donation included:-

        - 1 x 4 - drawer Filing Cabinet
        - 1   - Table (donated)
          1   Electric typewriter (2nd hand

A telephone was also made available to the office, contributed by the Residents of the premises where we rent the space.

C-3 PERSONNEL

Mrs. Pearl Cunningham provided part-time secretarial services. Much of the secretarial work was still done voluntarily eg: public relations for public events, correspondence, mailing, minuting, maintenance of the office.

All programme work by Women's Media Watch is done on a voluntary basis by the 10 Members.

        - workshop preparation and facilitation
        - talks, presentations
        - research and documentation
        - ptoduction of materials

        - lobbying.

C-4. MEETINGS

Regular monthly meetings were held through the year, and
records kept.   Additional planning sessions, meetings were
held as necessary to prepare for workshops.   Average
duration was three hours.

D. EVALUATION

D-1A We were able to carry through nearly all planned activities as
set out in the Project Proposal for 1989-91.

In the area of workshops/presentations we did more than
planned.   However we only managed to reach rural women on a
face-to-face basis at 2 workshops, although our work through
national media was quite far-reaching.

We were consistent in having our monthly meetings.
The rental of a room where we could gather records and materials
and meet regularly was of some assistance.
The upgrading of one visual exhibition enabled us to do
regular displays.   The production and distribution of the
BROCHURE enabled us to introduce (to a very wide public):-

(a) WMW aims and activities
(b) Why/how to monitor the media.
(c) the possible link to violence.
(d) possible action to take at individual and group level.

We consolidated links with, and support from, persons in the
media and/or using the media who consulted us to obtain WMW
viewpoints and/or information on numerous occasions, especially
at I.W.D. or for November 25 activities.   We opened dialogue
with a few more persons in decision-making positions: WMW work
was pivotal in keeping public discussion going on the topic of violence
against women.   We received regular invitations to speak on
radio, at community events, and at women's meetings.

Regional contacts were improved by correspondence and by
publishing articles.
Students increasingly approached us for information on research
projects on the topic -
A couple of years ago the issue was not one for such major
public interest.

Both the Director of Woman's Bureau and the Minister responsible
for women's affairs, regularly cite WMW work at public events.

On a number of occasions we received comments such as:-

"You WMW people show up everywhere"

"....Only 8-10 of you?   We got the impression that
you were a big organization...."

"WMW always has good points to make..."

Two women, both active in community affairs/women's movement,
independently, made the remark that WMW "seems to have a
clearer/busier programme than most women's organization out there".

Two very big companies have re-considered their advertising
after our lobbying and then dialoguing with them.

All of the above leads us to believe that WMW has had a positive
impact not just among the women's organizations but at a
national level.

Amongst the WMW members we have a considerable assortment of
skills which means that public speaking, workshop design,
writing, graphics and design, public relations, accounting
can all be done to a high level of proficiency from within our
small membership.   While this saves on costs,it does mean
we are often over-extended in terms of work hours!!

D-2.   PROBLEMS FACED

Members of WMW are persons already involved in much community
work on top of daily jobs so that TIME AVAILABLE for programme
work is limited.   We now get more requests than we can
comfortably accommodate.

We lack the financial resources to provide efficient, skilled
support services.   We identified the need for a part-time
research assistant with some administrative skills, but we have
only been able to take on very part-time secretarial assistance.

There is lack of support in the educational system for addressing
issues like this; we therefore see our school-oriented work
as important.

Our dialogue has been with journalists and media persons, but
it is harder to reach and affect decision-makers at media houses.

The National Media Policy has been in a state of flux - regional
radio stations have been divested to private enterprises which
can 'do their own thing'.   This poses further difficulties in
reaching policy makers.

D-3   <u>CONCLUSIONS - THE FUTURE 1992 ON</u>.

We need training for members internally, especially in the
area of public speaking and workshop facilitation.

Our public education programme will continue at several levels.
The·outreach programme will continue to use participatory and
and non-formal methods which have proved popular and effective.

We will continue to strengthen our collaboration with other
women's groups and community based organizations and trv to
reach more rural groups.

We have identified that the time is right for the production of
a quarterly Newsletter but until our infrastructure and
support services (equipment, secretarial research assistant)
can be strengthened, this is not possible.

We will incorporate next year (1992) an EVALUATION OF WMW work
over the past 3-4 years, to be undertaken by an outside evaluator.
Parameters to be worked out in 1991.

We will respond to interest from specific persons in the media
who have contacted us, and make efforts to reach some schools.

We recognize that our most effective periods of activity are in
March and November when we can get access to the media   -
and support.

IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS (ESTIMATED)*

		1992	1993
A.	**VOLUNTEER RESOURCE PERSONNEL**		
I.	Programme planners/coordinators/public speakers: workshop facilitators: research/editor of teaching packages:		
	Ave. 56 person-hours per month at $150 10 months/year	JA$84,000	84,000
ii.	Admin. support activities: Ave. 45 person/hours per month at $20. 12 months	10,800	10,800
B.	**TRANSPORTATION**		
	Members' cars (3) used for outreach and on-going work	14,000	16,500
	JA	$108,800	$111,300
	OR US	$ 12,088	12,364

* The major items of local contribution
are quantified here; obviously there
are many small items un-quantified.
All members of WMW work on
a voluntary basis.

WOMEN's MEDIA WATCH 1992 - 3	CASH NEEDS		TOTAL US$
	JA$ 1992	JA$ 1993	2 years 1992 3
C. SPECIAL PROJECTS			
EVALUATION	10,000	1,400	US$ 1,264
UPDATE & REPRINT BROCHURES	-	6,400	711
MESSAGE STICKERS	5,400	2,200	844
VISUAL EXHIBITION (UPGRADING)	800	1,400	245
NOV. 25th(DAY AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	3,200	3,760	773
NATIONAL SURVEY: distribution and use of data in outreach work	5,000	1,000	667
COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVELOPMENT OF POPULAR EDUCATION WORKSHOPS	1,800	2,750	505
OUTREACH WORKSHOPS: TO SCHOOLS & RURAL WOMEN'S ORGS.	5,400	6,720	1,305
I.W.D. PROJECTS	1,300	1,800	344
	JA $32,900	27,430	US$6,703
B. RESEARCH & PRODUCTION OF TEACHING MATERIALS & DOCUMENTATION			
XEROXING: Press Clippings, research materials & teaching packages	2,900	4,000	764
TRANSPORTATION	2,600	5,200	980
OFFICE SUPPLIES & STATIONERY	1,150	1,350	279
C. OPERATING COSTS			
Stamps & Cables	400	500	100
Rental of OFFICE SPACE/PHONE	8,000	9,000	1,888
Part-time Research Assistant	18,000	18,000	4,000
Equipment Maintenance	500	900	155
	67,450	66,380	14,862
5% CONTINGENCY	3,372	3,319	743
GRAND TOTAL	JA$70,822	69,699	US$15,612