

"I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education."

-- Thomas Jefferson

Council for Public Media

Objective:

The Council for Public Media will serve as a resource, clearinghouse, and training center for grassroots groups seeking effective ways to make the communications media responsive to the public's interest.

The public needs the communications media for two general purposes: (1) as a means for becoming fully informed and (2) as a space that the public can use as a forum for setting the country's direction in terms that it finds meaningful and relevant.

Public media can provide public forums for public discussion, spaces in which people can make decisions together about how they want their communities to act. Public access to the media means many things, not the least of which is ownership. But even in the absence of actually owning radio stations, television stations, newspapers and magazines, access is possible through:

- developing creative strategies to get the mass media's attention, and
- promoting and using alternative media.

Serving as a resource for public groups in a community, the Council for Public Media will:

- develop tactics and strategies for gaining access to the media
- train public groups on the logistics of publicity, particularly writing and distributing effective press releases, maintaining and developing relationships with reporters, and getting on radio and TV talk shows
- work with and promote alternative media, such as existing nonprofit computer networks and public access television, to gather and disseminate information the public needs
- disseminate foreign and domestic news that the mainstream media filters out and/or censors and publicize the mainstream media's omissions and distortions as they happen
- coordinate with local and national organizations that are seeking ways to gain public access to the media
- help public groups reframe the public debate
- advocate for public media
- OTHER AIMS?

Organization of the Council for Public Media:

Our aim is to organize as a nonprofit educational organization with: an executive director and a board of directors who are actively involved in the work of the Council; several working groups; and a national advisory council.

The working groups will include:

- Public Access Television Producers (PATP), who will
 - (1) publicize peace & justice programming in the Austin area,
 - (2) distribute such programming to other access channels nationwide,
 - (3) advise access producers in other communities.
- Telecommunications Group (TG), who will use computer networks and short-wave radio to discover alternative news which can be distributed to grassroots groups and the mainstream media.
- Mainstream Media Tactics Group (MMTG) will compile and distribute a media kit for grassroots groups on the logistics of getting press coverage, including media lists, information on writing and distributing news releases, writing op-eds and letters to the editor, advertising, using radio and public access television, developing and maintaining relationships with reporters, and issue framing.
- Strategy & Symbols Group (SSG) will draw on the work of the Advocacy Institute in Washington, D.C., which advises public interest groups on ways to use the symbols of the current debate, to help public groups reframe issues.
- Media Monitor Group (MMG): will organize and support campaigns to make the mainstream media more responsive to grassroots and opposing views. MMG will work with the New York-based media watch dog group FAIR (Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting). *& call and write main media outlets.*
- OTHERS?
- Fundraising
- Speakers Bureau

The National Advisory Council (NAC) will:

- help the Council for Public Media serve as a resource – drawing on national media research – and as a model for communities around the country. The Council for Public Media will use media research nationwide in order to directly help local grassroots groups. In order to fulfill this aim, we will invite national media experts to join the Council for Public Media's National Advisory Council (NAC). Their function will be to contribute the work of national organizations and researchers dealing with information and the media.

CANDIDATES?

