

To: Jeff Chester <jeff@cme.org>, Kate Duncan <cem@libertynet.org>
From: George Gerbner <ggerbner@nimbus.temple.edu>
Subject: Re: Conference on Digital
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

>Hi George. Hope your conference went well. My trip to South Africa was
>very good. Moving ahead on our project to counter globalization of media
>policy re: children.

>Can you resend the attachment. It didn't come through. Best

Send me more info on above. We would like to publish in next issue of CEM MONITOR.
Board meeting in Chicago was excellent. You'll get report. See digital below.

Public Space in the Digital Age: The New Marketplace of Ideas?
A conference proposed for the fall of 1998

Unbeknownst to most Americans, the "digital age" begins on Dec. 31, 2006. On that
day, our television set will become a hunk of junk. Other ways of communication,
ranging from computers to satellites, will also change.

The change holds out the promise of much greater diversity of access and
democratization of communication than has been possible before. It also involves the
risk of the greatest giveaway of a public resource in American history.

The convergence of various media industries (network television and telephone
providers buying cable stations, computer companies going into WebTV, software
companies becoming Internet providers, etc.) raises the prospect of further
monopolization, standardization, homogenization and sterilization of content.

The purpose of the proposed international conference on "Public Space in the Digital
Age" is to focus media and public attention on this critical juncture in the
structure of communication and power, and to provide a forum for a dialogue among
leading telecommunication industry executives, members of the creative community
("content providers"), community organizers, consumer
advocates, and media scholars and researchers.

The specific questions to be addressed by panels of international telecommunications
executives, community leaders, and consumer advocates include the following.

1. How to put communication issues on the political agenda, making them subject to
informed public debate, locally, nationally and globally.
2. How to protect and expand democratic and accountable public service media and
communication, to lessen inequality and to promote civic values.
3. How to promote gender equity and general diversity in media ownership,
employment, and representation.
4. How to develop high quality journalism and public affairs
media that will draw citizens into public life as meaningful and informed
participants, rather than mostly as targets for sales and persuasion.
5. How to establish a global communication network based upon mutual respect between
peoples and nations more than upon marketing or power?,
6. How to create a nurturing cultural climate for our children, rather than subject

them to mindless violence and exploitation.

7. How to protect and promote individual free expression without either state or conglomerate censorship.

8. How to effectively regulate the activities of transnational media firms that generally operate in uncompetitive markets.