

# Informal informational networks in authoritarian regimes

## Examples from the People's Republic of China

JOHN W. WILLIAMS, PRINCIPIA COLLEGE

*[This is the first part of a two-part commentary on aspects of communication in the People's Republic of China. The second part will appear in the Spring edition of this newsletter.—Ed.]*

Those familiar with China appreciate the indirectness of communication of ideas and emotions that is a feature of Asian cultures. It should come as no surprise that the Chinese leadership sees the recent spate of films "about" China and Tibet as part of a coordinated strategy of political and diplomatic attack rather than as entertainment coincidence.

Indirectness is not only a mode of communicating diplomatic information and attitudes, it is also a method of surviving in the world's largest authoritarian country. I offer these observations not to further theory or confirm a hypothesis, but rather to provide data for consideration. Mass communication was part of my research agenda on a number of recent extended visits to the People's Republic of China.

Let me give a powerful example of the nature of political communication. It appears that the stimulus for the Cultural Revolution was a play written by Wu Han, Deputy Mayor of Beijing, in 1961. The play, "Hai Rui Dismissed from Office," was about a wise and virtuous Ming official who, devoted to the welfare of the people, questioned the wisdom of the actions of an egotistical emperor. The emperor dismissed the official, Hai Rui.

Mao Zedong was threatened by the parallel to his dismissal of General Peng

Dehuai, a fellow survivor of the Long March, who dared question Mao's conduct of the Great Leap Forward in a private letter. Mao, not wanting to acknowledge failure, extended the ill-fated policies several more years, resulting in famine and economic disaster.

Peng Dehuai was one of the survivors of the Long March to rise to prominence. He commanded the Chinese attack against the American forces at the Yalu River during the Korean conflict, resulting in the American retreat into South Korea. He also served as Minister of Defense.

Peng's challenge to Mao's handling of the Great Leap Forward resulted in a swift purge, and he was labeled as the head of the "anti-Party group." In 1965 he was sent to work in the "third line" construction in Southwest China and died

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### Diversity yet in communication?

ANA GARNER, MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY

This year, QS will host a mini-plenary session entitled "Which Public and Whose Interest: Assessing the Future of Women and People of Color in the Media." It is scheduled for Thursday, August 6, from 2:45-4:30 p.m. The panel brings together people who work in the area of women and/or people of color and asks them to assess the present and talk about the future of these groups within the media.

Participants include Jennifer Lynn Bailey, University of Indiana; Gigi Durham, University of Texas at Austin; Karen Riggs, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee; Linda Steiner, Rutgers University; and Angharad Valdivia, University of Illinois.

When I asked our participants to do this work for us, I thought it was time to *(continued on page 5)*

# Chip auction needs attention

BONNIE BRENNEN, VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

Last year at this time I described the infamous AEJMC midwinter meeting chip auction. I'm pleased to report that the tradition has endured, and once again Qualitative Studies did well at the chip game. Yet, perhaps it's time to rethink the chip auction as we now know it.



Currently, each division receives an equal number of programming chips (eight) and all interest groups equally receive half that number (four). The standard number of chips are assigned regardless of membership size, paper submissions, or group activities. Each jointly sponsored session counts as one-half of a programming chip as do the first four solely sponsored research sessions. Any division wishing to have more than four solely sponsored research sessions, is assessed one chip per session.

As you can quickly see, groups that focus primarily on refereed research and solely sponsored sessions will be on the program far less often than those who jointly sponsor their sessions. In addition, the current policy requires all jointly sponsored sessions to be programmed before the solely

sponsored ones, further weighting the program in the direction of joint sessions.

SOME DIVISIONS FEEL that the current system benefits the divisions whose members do the least research and that it actually penalizes the more active groups. During the mid-winter business meeting, Robert Huesca, head of the

International Division, proposed a variety of options to the current policy.

In response to his request, the Council of Divisions has formed a committee to investigate the alternatives and will hold an open meeting in Baltimore to discuss the procedure. I have been appointed to the committee and would appreciate hearing from all of you about this issue.

WHILE YOU'RE DEBATING the larger programming issues surrounding the chip auction, let me tell you specifically how QS fared this time around.

Six of our ten panel proposals for Baltimore were co-sponsored, and QS will solely or jointly sponsor a total of sixteen different research, teaching, and PF&R sessions as well as a business meeting.

We will co-sponsor sessions with Advertising, Communication Theory and Methodology, History, International, and Visual Communication Divisions, along with the Commission on the Status of Minorities, and the Mass Communication Bibliographers, and Media and Disabilities Interest groups. That is why I say QS has learned to play the game quite well.

OF SPECIAL NOTE is this year's Professional Freedom and Responsibility Award that will be given to Hanno Hardt on Friday, August 7 from 2:45 to 4:15 p.m.

Hardt, who is the John F. Murray Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Iowa, has a joint appointment in the Department of Communication Studies, and is also professor of communication science at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. He has been a consistent voice for critical introspection in communication studies and has

## Qualitative Studies Division 1997-1998

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JAY HAMILTON  
S.U.N.Y. Geneseo  
CAROLYN BRONSTEIN  
University of Wisconsin-Madison

<http://www.geneseo.edu/~comm/qs/>

also played a pivotal role in the development of the Qualitative Studies Division. The session, co-sponsored with the History Division will include a talk by Hardt as well as a "mini-roast" by individuals who will briefly discuss how he has impacted their academic careers.

ALSO MARK YOUR CALENDARS for our mini-plenary research session, "Which Public and Whose Interest: Assessing the Future of Women and People of Color in the Media," co-sponsored by QS and five other divisions and interest groups that will be held from 2:45 to 4:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 6. Panelists Jennifer Lynn Bailey, University of Indiana; Gigi Durham, University of Texas, Austin; Karen Riggs, University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee; Linda Steiner, Rutgers University; and Angharad Valdivia, University of Illinois, will focus on action, activism, and effective ways of achieving change.

OTHER QS PRIMARY-SPONSORED sessions will debate whether commentary is ad-bashing or constructive criticism of advertising as well as discuss issues in writing women's history, while others will focus on teaching technology in the classroom and the concept of the frame in "Functionalism, Cultural Studies, and Postmodernism."

QS will also co-sponsor sessions on ethical practices in research, the global condition of journalistic labor, negotiating mental illness coverage in the media, and visual communication theory and research. We will also have a poster session with the Advertising Division, a refereed research session co-sponsored with the History Division, and four solely-sponsored refereed research sessions.

And don't forget our business meeting and top paper presentations is set for Thursday, August 6, from 8 to 9:30 p.m.

AS YOU CAN SEE, there is sure to be lots of stimulating conversation at the 1998 AEJMC conference in Baltimore. I encourage all of you to attend. ❖

# Call for papers

## Qualitative Studies Division 1998 AEJMC Convention

The Qualitative Studies Division AEJMC invites submissions of original research papers that are interdisciplinary in focus and theoretically grounded.

We welcome a wide range of approaches, methodologies and perspectives including but not limited to cultural studies, historical studies, feminist scholarship, news analysis, political economy, literary analysis, qualitative methodologies, philosophy of communication, ethics, and media criticism.

Follow these guidelines:

1. Preferred length of 7,500 words (approximately 25 pages).
2. Include an abstract of no more than 75 words.
3. Follow AEJMC guidelines for paper submission published in the January 1998 issue of *AEJMC News*. Please pay special attention to rules regarding author identification—author identification should not appear anywhere except for the title page. Papers should be pre-

pared for blind review.

4. Send 6 (six) typed copies of the paper and 6 (six) typed copies of the abstract to the address below.

5. Follow AEJMC rules for computer disk submission and reproduction permission forms. Computer disk and reproduction permission forms should be included with the paper.

6. Send the paper by first class or priority mail, **postmarked no later than April 1, 1998**. Acceptance by an overnight delivery service by the deadline is acceptable. *E-mail and fax submissions will not be accepted.*

Papers that do not meet AEJMC guidelines or that are postmarked after April 1, 1998 will not be accepted.

Send papers and inquiries to Frank D. Durham, Dept. of Journalism, CMA 6.144, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 78712, (512) 471-1729; e-mail [fdd@uts.cc.utexas.edu](mailto:fdd@uts.cc.utexas.edu). ❖

## Meeting of the Union for Democratic Communications

Is it possible to seize a democratic public sphere from the jaws of transnational media conglomerates?

This is the question to be addressed at the Union for Democratic Communications' conference to be held from June 11-14 in San Francisco, within the theme of media, democracy, and the public sphere.

Possible topics include:

- the role of media policy in helping or hindering democracy,
- the dissemination of radical claims through alternative, community and mainstream media,
- the ways in which the everyday media practices of the public help or

hinder the creation of a democratic public sphere,

- the education of media workers in the interest of democracy.

UDC welcomes papers, audiovisual works, panels, workshops and projects that break with a monological approach and, instead, promote dialogue and interaction around questions of critical communications and media activism.

Proposals should be sent by **March 1** to Bernadette Barker Plummer, Dept. of Comm., University of San Francisco, San Francisco, Calif., 94117. E-mail questions to [barkerplum@usfca.edu](mailto:barkerplum@usfca.edu). ❖

(CHINA, continued from page 1) in 1974, near the end of the Cultural Revolution.

Mao attempted to challenge Wu Han's play by writing letters for publication in the party papers in Beijing. The Beijing party bosses backed the playwright, and the Beijing papers refused to publish Mao's criticisms. To Mao, the party needed purification and the Cultural Revolution began its ten-year reign of terror in 1966.

THIRTY YEARS LATER, Marshal Peng Dehuai was rehabilitated, as Deng was several times during his life. One of the most recent films produced by the Beijing Film Studios was "Peng Dehuai in the 'Third Line' Construction." The film, according to publicity, "is considered an ode to the devotion of communists" (*China Daily*, 12 April 1996, p. 9.) Peng's reputation has since been "rehabilitated," and "the film tells of his unique experience working [in Southwest China] and praises his profound love for the people" (*China Daily*, 12 April 1996, p. 9.).

ONE OF THE MOST POWERFUL tools for identifying and condemning traitors to the state were the Big Character posters. It was such a poster that helped spark the Cultural Revolution.

In May 1966, Nie Yuanzi put up a wall poster at Beijing University denouncing the university administration for restricting the Cultural Revolution and preventing it from developing. She argued for a vigorous mass movement. Mao had the poster reprinted in the Communist Party's national newspaper, *People's Daily*.

In response, wall posters proliferated, outstripping available space. Courtyards, even rooms, had ropes strung across them like clotheslines from which posters hung.

THE MONTH OF MAY is an auspicious month for Chinese communism and for Beijing University. The month begins with May Day, the international labor celebration. The Chinese Communist Party is often dated to a declaration made on the steps of Beijing (then Peking) University in

May 1921.

The Cultural Revolution is associated with the May 1966 Big Character poster. The student movement that resulted in Tien An Mien Square crisis rumbled out of the Beijing University campus in May 1989. The two-month period leading to June 4 involves an increase in Public Security Bureau activity, including closing of the "BeiDa" campus. Foreign correspondents call it "the silly season."

SYMBOLS ARE IMPORTANT DEVICES for communication. Located in the center of Tien An Mien Square is an obelisk, surrounded by security personnel and security devices, including remote controlled cameras. This spot was a rallying point for symbolic politics long before Lady Democracy was carried into the Square in 1989. The Cultural Revolution ground to a halt with the deaths of Mao and the popular premier Zhou En-Lai. Those who lived through the times remember Zhou as the man who saved China from itself, including personally assuring the protection of the Forbidden City and other cultural artifacts.

Mourners flooded into the Square to lay wreaths at the obelisk in honor of Zhou.

THE NOTORIOUS GANG OF FOUR, including Mao's widow, opposed Zhou and ordered the wreaths removed. This was too much for the public and the outcry emboldened the moderates to move against the Gang of Four, resulting in their arrest and imprisonment. Wreaths were tangible threat to power and their removal brought down a "clique."

The struggles of the Eighties between Deng's economic reformers and the conservative hard-liners played itself out on the Democracy Wall, upon which home-grown publishers posted the one copy of their newspapers. Democracy Wall-style publishing attracted a ready readership

crossing socio-economic lines. Later, cracking down on dissent meant stripping the walls.

WHILE THE FAMOUS DEMOCRACY WALL no longer functions, nor do the times allow such free expression, "wall publishing" is standard fare on university campuses. Unlike American universities where fliers and posters are ignored, Chinese students devour campus news posted on designated boards.

Two of my favorites were the announcement of the Friday night American movie, "Everlasting Man Who Flies Like a Bat," and an invitation to a party sponsored by the youth branch of the Communist Party. I explained "Batman Forever" and the university administrator apologized that the campus Communist Party had become little more than a social club. This was hardly the stuff of student revolution.

AN ARTICLE IN THE *China Daily*, the Party's English language organ, revealed a curious situation under an odd rubric. The article, headlined "Healthy college environment a priori

**Sponsoring a showing of "Everlasting Man Who Flies Like a Bat" and a party.... This was hardly the stuff of student revolution.**

ty," discussed the results of a three-day conference on enhancing security in the country's colleges and universities. The lead paragraph reported that State Councilor Luo Gan "asked governments at all levels to ensure safety in schools and to create a healthy environment for college students." Luo said that a safe and healthy environment is as important as the quality of the education. The terminology appears to reflect that same concerns facing American college and university administrators, including problems

of campus crime and student health issues.

SUBSEQUENT PARAGRAPHS in the story, however, suggested different concepts as the story reported that “this is the first time ministerial leaders have gathered to report on morality education and security conditions.” The conference “was aimed at cracking down on crimes that encroach on the interests of teachers and students in colleges and universities, and to prevent possible serious cases in order to guarantee a more safe climate for students.”

THE CONFERENCE ALSO DISCUSSED the “Regulation on College Security Work,” jointly issued by the State Education Commission (SEC) and the Ministry of Public Security. According to the article, “the regulation asks school authorities to reinforce management of campus cultural activities, entertainment and service activities, and to clean up pornographic audio-video products and electronic publications spreading in some schools.”

The regulations also regulate commercial activities by universities (such as renting of school buildings, opening of commercial activities, licensing of commercial vendors). Also, no bars, dancing halls, video rooms, billiard centres or video game rooms are allowed to open near schools” (Cui Ning, “Healthy college environment a priority,” *China Daily*, 9 May 9 1996, p. 2).

DEMOCRACY WALL-STYLE communication and Big Character posters no longer exist. There is no obvious informal or non-governmental public communication in this manner. Among the official pronouncements that are posted are photographs of convicted criminals executed under the recent aggressive campaign against crime.

Communication appears to be one-way, from the government (including the party) through an extensive and well-orchestrated network of media, including newspapers, magazines, books, radio, and television. ❖

[To be concluded next issue.—Ed.]

(DIVERSITY, cont. from page 1) reassess ourselves as scholars and practitioners. We talk about diversity, about change, and we do studies that look for change and we frequently say there is need for change. After all of this we tend to assume that the needed changes we called for occurred.

BUT I WONDER IF WE have really made progress. Have we significantly and effectively moved onward and upward since the Kerner Commission Report? Have we really moved to a position where women and people of color are more than mere tokens in the newsroom and media pages or screens?

More generally, are the audience needs of women and people of color being met more successfully—from their perspectives? Do we really have more gender and racial diversity in the newsroom and on the advertising page? If so, what has been the impact of these practices? What about pay equity? Discrimination? Harassment? Have these practices really lessened or have they just gone more deeply into the back corners of our closets? What about media representation and presentation of these groups?

ONE WOULD THINK significant changes have occurred given the active efforts of AEJMC and the organizations associated with it such as the National Association of Black Journalists, National Association of Hispanic Journalists, National Federation of Press Women, Inc., Asian American Journalists Association, and so many many more (See listing in 1997/1998 AEJMC Directory, p. 94), But have we really made significant progress?

I HAVE THIS NAGGING FEELING that we have not “come a long way, baby.” We only think we have. I worry that the problem has been solved only from a white perspective and that reality tells a different

story. I worry that we have been living a white lie, which says these were issues of the ‘60s and ‘70s, and maybe the ‘80s, and that was then, but this is now.

WITH RECENT ATTACKS on affirmative action, new immigration and employment laws, and with insights from my own work on women in the media, I wonder if we have made as much progress as we want to think we have.

I wonder because there are still too many tales that sound as if they came from the ‘60s, the ‘70s and maybe the ‘80s. Tales of isolation in the work place, in the classroom, in the culture. Tales of being the only person of color in the room and no one will talk to you or sit with you; of being stopped on your way to your car at night because you are the wrong color in the right neighborhood; lives lived where those who work with you treat you politely but firmly as an alien or someone who is “too sensitive” about language; and so on and so forth.

ARE THESE ISSUES OLD-HAT? Have they lost their significance?

I think not, but I have asked our colleagues to re-examine these issues and to tell us where we are, what we need to do now, and how we can most effectively reach our desired ends.

When I put this panel together, I hoped a few other divisions and interest groups would be interested and that it would be on this year’s program. I was more than pleased when not just one, but six groups expressed an interest in the panel including: Mass Communication Bibliographers, Disabilities Interest Group, Commission on the Status of Minorities, International and Communication, Theory and Methodology.

Because of their interest, this panel is now a mini-plenary. Because of your interest, I hope you will help make it a most worthwhile investment of time. ❖

Co-sponsored by Qualitative Studies

# Mid-spring conference on media and free speech

“New Media and Free Speech: Challenges for the Future” is the topic for three-day conference April 2-4 at the University of South Florida in Tampa.

SPONSORED BY THE School of Mass Communications at the University of South Florida and the Mass Comm & Society Division of AEJMC, this conference will offer a mix of referred papers, panels, and guest speakers. Each session will examine the impact of new technology on free expression and our First Amendment Rights.

Eight divisions, commissions, and interest groups are co-sponsors of this year's conference. For the first time, the Graduate Education Interest Group has signed on to help sponsor the event. Other sponsors include Comm Theory & Methodology, Comm Technology & Policy, Visual Communication, *Qualitative Studies* [emphasis added], Newspaper, and International Divisions, as well as the Commission on the Status of Minorities.

PRELIMINARY PANEL TOPICS include “New Media, New Voices? New Opportunities for Photography Online,” sponsored by the VisCom division. The Graduate Education Interest Group is offering a panel titled, “Who Will Control the Internet? Future Issues in Journalism.” Both panels include scholars and Tampa-area media professionals.

The weekend will also include spe-

cial events and guest speakers. Rick Wilber, USF professor and conference co-chair, has planned several exciting events for conference participants. The highlight of Friday's programming is an evening at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies in adjacent St. Petersburg.

Poynter Associate William M. Boyd II, author of “Thinking Clearly About New Media” and “Lead, Follow, and Get Out of the Way” will speak on the conference theme at a dinner meeting. Following the Poynter visit, the group will travel by bus to The Pier, a popular St. Pete night spot with spectacular views of Tampa Bay.

THE USF FACULTY WILL also be the host of welcoming cocktail reception Thursday night. A tour of the new USF Communication and Information Sciences Building will be offered that night.

## Registration information

Early Bird Registration for the conference is \$65 and includes the Poynter dinner and opening reception; graduate student registration is \$40. This year, graduate student registration is being supported by the co-sponsoring AEJMC divisions. The received-by deadline for Early Bird Registration is March 25; registrations received after that date are \$75 for faculty and \$45 for graduate students.

TO REGISTER FOR THE CONFERENCE, send a check or money order to: Free

Speech/New Media Conference, School of Mass Communications, CIS 1040, University of South Florida, 4202 E. Fowler, Tampa, Fla. 33620.

## Hotel and travel arrangements

Travel Concepts of Tampa is the official travel agency for the conference. Participants will receive a 10 percent discount on Delta Airlines tickets. Call Miriam at (800) 428-1544 for reservations.

Travel Concepts is also handling the official conference hotel. The brand-new Embassy Suites Hotel on the USF campus is offering a room rate of \$129 for two people in one suite. This price includes a full, cooked-to-order breakfast each day and cocktail reception each evening. A third person can share the suite for an additional \$10. Miriam has details on reservations for this hotel.

Embassy Suites also has a health club, pool, and an airport shuttle. It is within walking distance of our meeting.

The nearby Holiday Inn hotel is also offering rooms for the conference at a rate of \$79 per room for two.

For more information on the conference, contact either:

- Ginger Rudeseal Carter, Vice-head MC&S, School of Mass Communications, Georgia College & State University, at (912) 445-3178 or [GCarter@Mail.gcsu.edu](mailto:GCarter@Mail.gcsu.edu).
- or Rick Wilber, University of South Florida, at (813) 974-6792 or [RWilber@chuma.cas.usf.edu](mailto:RWilber@chuma.cas.usf.edu). ❖

## Contribute to this newsletter

We seek contributions from QS members. We're especially interested in

items for which few professional outlets exist.

Contact Jay Hamilton, Dept. of

Communication., SUNY Geneseo, Geneseo, NY 14454, (716) 226-6092, [hamilton@uno.cc.geneseo.edu](mailto:hamilton@uno.cc.geneseo.edu). Or contact Carolyn Bronstein at [cbronste@students.wisc.edu](mailto:cbronste@students.wisc.edu). ❖

## Teaching Standards paper competition to take place again this year

During AEJMC's midwinter meeting, the Teaching Standards Committee was allocated \$600 to award in prizes for its second-annual paper competition.

First prize is \$300, second \$200, and third \$100.

The five top papers in this year's competition will be presented at AEJMC'S 1998 convention in Baltimore—and submitted to *Journalism & Mass Communication Educator* for consideration. In addition, authors will be awarded plaques.

The committee encourages a diversity in topics and methodologies. Applications can submit papers that encourage excellence in teaching of any type and at any level: undergraduate, graduate, distance, etc.

Papers might, for example, assess courses or programs; compare the effectiveness of various teaching techniques; investigate the innovative application of computers; or consider diversity issues.

Papers will be refereed. They should include a rigorous analysis of the findings that suggests some direction for the future. Teaching tips, literature reviews, or papers on curriculum design are not appropriate for this competition. However, teaching activities that include a careful, systematic assessment of results are encouraged.

Entries should follow all the standard AEJMC rules for the submission of convention papers. A papers presented to another organization or submitted to other AEJMC divisions, conventions, or publications is ineligible.

Send entries to Fred Fedler, School of Communication, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Fla., 32816-1344. Phone: 407-823-2839 or 407-365-6974. E-mail [ffedler@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu](mailto:ffedler@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu). Papers should be post-marked by **April 1, 1997**. Faxes will not be accepted. ❖

# Students on the move

A. S. ZAIDI,  
UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER (CAN-EX)

From October 31 to November 2, 1997, hundreds of students from around the nation gathered for the Democracy Teach-in Organizing Conference at the University of Chicago.

Cosponsored by the Center for Campus Organizing (CCO), the Alliance for Democracy and the United States Student Association, the conference was held in preparation for the March 1-7, 1998 university teach-ins and the May 1, 1998 Day of Action to End Corporate Dominance.

Activists attended workshops such as "How to Investigate Your University," "Student Activist Radio," and "Using Campus and Community Media" in order to learn the nuts and bolts of campus organizing.

In a plenary session, there was a roll call of universities, at which students described their campaigns. These included recycling, democratizing trustee boards, and research into military and corporate contracts with universities. University of Florida students have established a "War Department" to deal with their current crisis.

Judging from the sit-ins and building takeovers, the upsurge in graduate student organizing, and the spate of publications on the academic labor crisis, it appears that our campuses are no longer the "hotbeds of social rest" that Abby Hoffman once decried. It's about time. Tenure and affirmative action are under fire, public education is being privatized, and higher education in general is increasingly subject to the exigencies of the military. Tuition at public colleges soared 256 percent from 1980 to 1995, while prices rose just 85 percent, thus jeopardizing access for

the poor. Karen Arenson points out in the January 27, 1997 *New York Times* that "affluent students were nearly four times as likely as the poorest to graduate from college by age 24 in 1979, but nearly ten times as likely in 1994."

Corporate control has emerged as a defining issue of our times. Corporate ownership of our media, resources, and politicians has made it difficult to address concerns such as global warming, pollution, and human rights. In his address to conference participants, Richard Grossman noted that corporations have the laws and the violence of the state at their disposal. Activists who attempt to halt the destruction of the remnants of the redwood forests are often clubbed, pepper-sprayed and arrested for their efforts.

The first Democracy Teach-in organizing conference in August 1996, which drew 55 activists, led to teach-ins at 45 campuses in October 1996. This year's organizing conference drew 250 activists and more than 100 campuses are expected to participate in the March 98 teach-ins.

CCO has helped build momentum, creating e-mail discussion lists and an invaluable bimonthly, *Infusion*, which is available for \$25 (\$15 for students) from CCO, Box 748, Cambridge, Mass. 02142.

Insofar as it claims to nurture the life of the mind and spirit, the university is surely an appropriate place to challenge corporate power. The contradictions between the ideals and realities of our society are most apparent there.

In order to succeed, activists will need to foster a sense of empathy and shared struggle in places that, until now, have been characterized in large measure by competition and isolation. ❖

# Cyberculture studies web site established

A fully operational version of the Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies (RCCS) is now up and running at <http://otal.umd.edu/~rccs>.

## What is RCCS?

RCCS is an online, not-for-profit organization whose purpose is to research, study, teach, support, and create diverse and dynamic elements of cyberculture. Collaborative in nature, RCCS seeks to establish and support ongoing conversations about the emerging field, to foster a community of students, scholars, teachers, explorers, and builders of cyberculture, and to showcase various models, works-in-progress, and on-line projects.

In the future, the Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies hopes to

sponsor a number of collaborative projects, colloquia, symposia, and workshops. Presently, the site contains a collection of scholarly resources, including university-level courses in cyberculture, events and conferences, and related links. Further, the site features an extensive annotated bibliography devoted to the topic of cyberculture. Finally, the site includes "conversations/collaborations," an online listing of scholars researching various elements of cyberculture.

SINCE ITS INITIAL LAUNCH in January 1997, RCCS has developed two new major features. The first is "Conversations/Collaborations." Here, visitors are invited to browse through the research interests and ongoing projects of a number of scholars,

researchers, and instructors affiliated directly and indirectly with the field of cyberculture. Moreover, visitors are encouraged to contribute their own entries, listing their interests and contact information.

The second new feature is called "Internet Interviews." It includes a list of links to online interviews with a number of digerati. The list includes Nicholas Negroponete, Allucquere Rosanne (aka Sandy) Stone, Sherry Turkle, and Gregory Ulmer.

## Questions? Comments?

Contact David Silver, Founder, Resource Center for Cyberculture Studies, Department of American Studies, University of Maryland, College Park, [rccs@otal.umd.edu](mailto:rccs@otal.umd.edu). ❖