

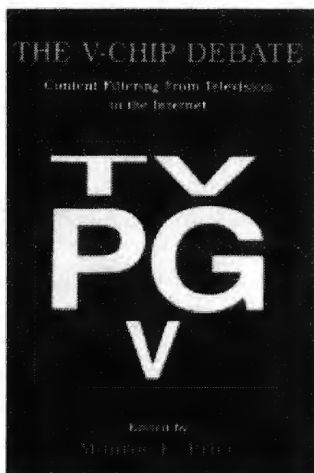
## New in the library

The following books have been selected from the range of new additions. These notes are indicative of a book's subject matter, but are not intended as critical comment or review. The ABA invites the public to use the library for research purposes during normal business hours.

### The V-chip debate: content filtering from television to the Internet

Edited by Monroe R Price.  
Mahwah, NJ.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1998.  
ISBN 00805830626

While the concept of the V-chip is simple, i.e. a combination of wires and plastic that filters broadcast media content, its implications are varied and complex. The V-chip is a highly significant part of the discussion about whether television deserves special attention in terms of its accessibility to children, its particular power to affect conduct, and its invasiveness. As the notion of filter-

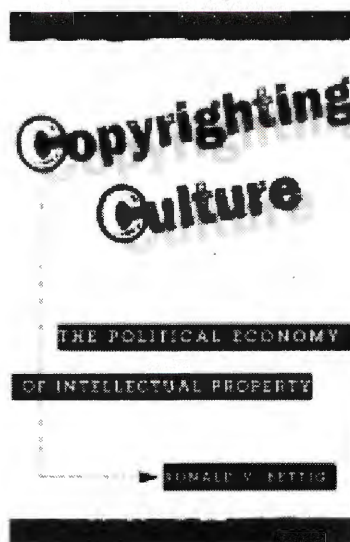


ing and labelling content has captured the imagination of regulators and legislators, the idea of the V-chip is spreading to other technologies, including the Internet. In *The V-Chip Debate*, an international set of contributors from government, academe and industry discuss the origins and development of the V-chip and its likely destiny to alter not just programming and broadcasting policies, but public law and policy as well. The essays in this book contrast the approaches in Canada and the United States of America in terms of the role of regulatory agency, industry and government as well as discuss existing television rating systems throughout the world.

### Copyrighting culture: the political economy of intellectual property

Ronald V Bettig. Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1996.  
ISBN: 0813333040

One of the outcomes of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations on liberalising world trade has been the increased importance of intellectual property rights. However there has been little discussion in western academe on this issue. This book aims to fill this gap. Bettig argues that the growing concentration of knowledge-based industries among a few transnational corporations has resulted in their control of culture through the ownership of copyrights. Having saturated their domestic markets, these corporations are seeking to extend the law of intellectual property into new technological and geographical domains. The author analyses the political economy of the evolution of intellec-

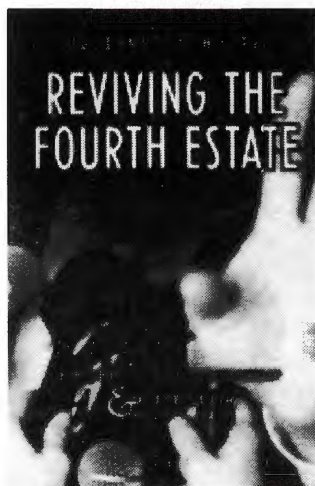


tual property, arguing how the changing contours of capitalism have necessitated changes in intellectual property rights. He explores crucial issues such as the videocassette recorder and the control of copyrights, the invention of cable television and the first challenge to the filmed entertainment copyright system, the politics and economics of intellectual property as seen from both the neoclassical economists' and the radical political economists' points of view, and methods of resisting laws.

**Reviving the Fourth Estate: democracy, accountability and the media**

Julianne Schultz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988. ISBN 0521629705

Traditionally, the news media acted as the watchdog of democracy, but varied in meaning in response to changing political and economic circumstances. Today the news media is also a major global business. In this book, the author analyses the role of journalism in Australia, the scope of its democratic



purpose and the relationship of the Fourth Estate to the judiciary, the executive and the legislature. The author finds that the increasing concentration of media ownership in Australia, as well as political, ethical and career interests have seriously impaired the traditional ideals of the Fourth Estate. The author argues that if the decade of the 1980s saw the development of the development of an assertive, investigative journalism, the following decade saw a reversal of this trend. Nevertheless, the ideals of the Fourth Estate are resilient and relevant and must be preserved. Ms Schultz argues for a revival of the Fourth Estate based on journalistic independence and political autonomy, together with increased accountability and responsiveness.

**Television on trial: citizens' juries on taste and decency**

Pam Hanley. London: Independent Television Commission, 1998. ISBN 0900485744

The ITC is the first regulatory body which has chosen to use citizens' juries as a means of discovering whether its approach to regulation has kept pace with the opinions of the viewing public. In making its decisions about the acceptability of broadcast material, the ITC considered it must be aware of current opinion. Audience research, with its ability to tap into a representative cross-section of the population is a

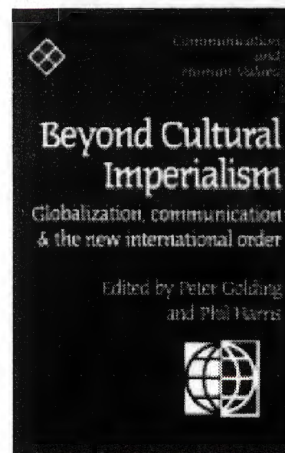


linchpin in the ITC's task of keeping in touch with the opinions and concerns of the ordinary viewers. In 1997 the ITC decided to get behind the more superficial response of what viewers like and don't like to watch on their television screens, elicited from surveys and focus groups. People had to be encouraged to look behind their own initial reactions to the wider picture of regulation for everyone. A much longer, more deliberative approach was needed. To this end, the ITC commissioned two citizens' juries from the Institute for Policy Research and Opinion Leader Research. The juries affirmed that the way in which the ITC currently regulates taste and decency on commercial television broadly delivers the right outcome. The two juries produced remarkably similar lists of recommendations, despite differences in emphasis. The general view was that the main thrust of regulation should be aimed at protecting children, and providing sufficient information for adults to regulate their own viewing.

**Beyond cultural imperialism: globalization, communication and the new international order**

Edited by Peter Golding and Phil Harris. London: Sage Publications, 1997. ISBN 071953310

Recent decades have witnessed a massive international flow of films, television programs and other media around the world. This flow poses vital questions of culture and power. How can this central feature of the modern world be best understood? Is a model of cultural imperialism a valid way of understanding global communications as we near the next millennium? In this book, an international group of scholars discuss different perspectives of the role of the state, the range of cultural impact and influence beyond the media, the roles of international organisa-



tions and business interests in world communications, and the potential for resistance and alternatives. They reflect on the new world international communications order as delineated since the 1970s and examine its changing nature. Throughout, they connect analysis of the flows and forces which form the world of the media and communications with the fundamental themes of social science, and illuminate the ways in which underlying questions of inequality, power and control reappear within new media environments. 