

supporting the production of children's programs, is seen as a model by many countries. I spoke about the development of children's television in the context of broadcasting regulation in Australia in my main address to the opening session on international broadcasting systems and structures at Javeriana University on 13 September. There was a Colombian focus at the meeting with officials the next day, when the National Television Commission (CNTV) and other agencies reported on local studies of children's programs.

The situation with children's television in Colombia is not surprising given the lack of positive program requirements for children and the proliferation of channels serving national, regional and city audiences, and competing foreign satellite services. Licensing new services rather than content regulation had kept CNTV busy since it was established in 1992. Local producers were impressed with the candid presentation of the results of a joint industry-CNTV investigation of children's television.

It found that 80 per cent of children's programs were foreign, 60 per cent were cartoons, and there was minimal educational content. There was no consistent scheduling of programs and many programs were targeted at families rather than children. Some children's programs on the private channels were not broadcast in the required children's time band. CNTV put forward some proposals to improve the situation, including set amounts of children's programs and quality criteria for the content of those

programs. An incentive of extra advertising in return for minimum levels of cultural programming, greater flexibility in children's time and support from

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an existing television development fund were also proposed.

Discussions of children and the media inevitably involve questions about the portrayal of violence. These questions were more pointed in Colombia where violence is unfortunately a very real part of many children's lives and bloody conflict is regularly reported in the news. The CNTV has a 9.30 p.m. 'watershed' and rules about the portrayal of violence (and sexual content) aimed at the protection of children. The use of warnings, as in Australia, was seen as a good additional safeguard.

**Integrating television and
the Internet**

Apparently Colombia was a leader in the use of radio in education twenty

years ago. The educational disparities in the country as a whole coupled with economic turmoil give an added urgency to finding new ways of providing educational services more effectively.

The integration of television and the Internet was another theme at the conference. There is a program to bring all Bogota public schools online and to give teachers the technical skills and confidence to integrate the Internet and other electronic resources into classroom learning.

Throughout the conference there was an emphasis on the need to build social cohesion and national identity. Speakers stressed the importance of television as a powerful means of reinforcing the values of citizenship in children and young people.

The special Prix Jeunesse session on 17 September was interested in the ABA's criteria for quality set out in the Children's Television Standards, and how we classify children's programs using experts in child development and television production. The CTS criteria, documents detailing ABA policies and research reports were part of the mountain of material and ideas generated by conference participants.

The conference finished very optimistically with the speaker from the Ministry of Culture inviting all those committed to better television for Colombian children,

to gather round the pot plant so that we can water it together.



C and P programs

Programs granted C and P classification between 16 August and 26 September 2000. Producers interested in submitting programs for classification should contact the Children's Television section on (02) 9334 7840.

Program title	Origin	Class	New/ renewal	Decision date	Applicant
BUSH BEAT (SERIES 2)	Australia	C	new	19-9-00	Queensland Television Limited
CYBERGIRL	Australia	CAD	new	18-9-00	Jonathan M Shiff Productions Pty Ltd
LI'L HORRORS (SERIES 3 & 4)	Australia	CAD	new	26-9-00	December Films
OUTRIDERS	Australia	PRC	new	12-9-00	Southern Star Group
THE REAL MACAW	Australia	CAD	new	23-8-00	TCN Channel Nine
WILD KAT	Australia	CAD	new	16-8-00	Barron Entertainment

C – children's program, CAD – C Australian drama, P – preschool, PRC – provisional C

