



Jamaican radio scriptwriter and producer Elaine Perkins works with production crew to broadcast a popular Jamaican radio soap opera series.

RADIO PANEL Making Waves

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RADIO

The Most...

Tonight, just two blocks away from this conference site, one of the most glamorous of entertainment industry events will be telecast live to one billion people worldwide: the Academy Awards, the presentations of the coveted Oscar.

Powerful Medium...

As attractive as film and TV are, they still reach fewer people than the medium that is the subject of this panel. Radio is still the most powerful information and entertainment medium for reaching rural people around the world. It may not have as much excitement as music videos and television, but for many people it is the primary mass communication channel.

The power of radio is such that even in the US, whose population has access to every kind of medium, the impact of a radio talk show with a relatively small listenership can have strong national policy implications because the proportion of those listeners who vote is disproportionately higher than that of the general public.

For Reaching People Everywhere

Most of the members of this afternoon's Radio Panel are the behind-the-scenes personalities who make things happen in radio. They are the men and women who make celebrities. They have crossed continents to be with us today to share their experiences making radio come alive for the people in their countries. They are the creative and marketing talents behind radio program-

ming that can compete with soccer games for listeners, that can sustain a family planning radio soap opera for more than a decade, that is given a million free hours of airplay for a popular song on sexual responsibility.

Indeed, in many countries in the developing world, radio serves as the pivotal medium upon which other media interventions are planned in waging social campaigns. ■

THE ENTER-EDUCATE CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 29, 1989

José G. Rimon II (JHU/CCP), *Moderator*
Elaine Perkins (Producer, Jamaica)
Tom Kazungu (Producer, Kenya)
Rogelio Villarreal (Marketing, Mexico)
Sumarsono, (Producer, Indonesia)
Carole Hemingway (Talk Show Host, USA)

ELAINE PERKINS



Radio Producer, Jamaica. Ms. Perkins is one of the foremost writers, producers, and directors of radio drama in Jamaica. A former journalist, she began creating radio drama series as vehicles for social messages. Her soap opera, Naseberry Street, created to promote positive attitudes toward issues such as family planning, has achieved such popularity it is said that during broadcasts you don't find many Jamaicans on the streets. Ms. Perkins is currently working with Johns Hopkins University Population Communication Services to develop a manual on how to plan, produce, and evaluate radio soap operas.

RADIO IN JAMAICA

A New Twist on an Old Tradition

Radio is an extension of Jamaica's oral tradition. Radio is the most effective tool to speak to people in remote areas, especially in a country where word-of-mouth still carries most information from person to person. So many of our traditions are passed down orally from generation to generation through folk tales, proverbs, and rhymes.

Getting Information to Remote Villages

In 1963, the newly established government of Jamaica wanted to explain its policies and programs to the people, many of whom were illiterate and lived in remote villages. It was my job as broadcasting officer of the Jamaica Information Services to design appropriate radio programs. Our aim was propagandistic in the best sense in that we wanted to teach people things that would enhance their own welfare and influence their behavior in positive ways.

We did programs to teach farmers more advanced technology. We did programs to teach illiterate people how to register their children, or how to boil water. We explored indigenous art forms, folk music, folklore, literature and history.

Respecting Traditions, Delighting Listeners, and Remembering the Main Purpose

I knew that just reading some facts over a microphone would not work. I had to take into account people's traditional beliefs and values, many of which were based on tried and true experience. I always tried to get information to listeners by way of their own traditional beliefs.

Whatever the program, the format we used had to immediately grab hold of the listener. To speak about things that interested him in a language that was readily understood. To amuse and de-

light while never losing sight of the main purpose, which was to educate and motivate.

A Promising Start

We tried to seduce people into understanding that what we were teaching them was in their best interest. We would try out different formats talking to an ordinary person in the local dialect over a cup of coffee. Every week, we would gradually see him absorbing more and more.

Soft-sell proved to be the best approach. Our programs were quite popular. Sometimes they would even surpass the listenership of purely commercial programs. One night, I went out to get some feedback and heard our cult folk music program coming at me from all sides of the street. "Boy," I thought, "I really have something here."

Drawing in Listeners with Drama and Reality

To sell the government's five-year rural development program to people in the rural areas, I created a radio soap opera, *Life in Hopeful Village*. Prototypes of typical villagers unfolded the drama of people's joys, sorrows, triumphs, disappointments, strengths, failures, loves, and hatreds.

Once again, the approach was soft-sell. There was no preaching. The messages were learned from the story. If a baby died from gastroenteritis because he wasn't taken to the clinic for his shots, that was the message.

With *Life In Hopeful Village* we really attained a mass listenership. It was the most popular radio show in Jamaica for four years, with many villages in Jamaica named after the program.

A Commercial Success with Social Implications

My next effort was a commercially sponsored soap, *Dulcemia*, that retained the number one spot in Jamaica for 13 years. It was the story of a country girl living in the city. The theme was survival, with people sometimes ex-

plotting and killing each other, but more often supporting, caring for and feeding each other, and on occasion literally giving up their lives for each other.

Studies have suggested that the show was so popular because the characters were true to life and familiar to the audience who empathized with them. One researcher said that *Dulcemina* caused people to look at themselves in a new way, to recognize the drama in their everyday lives.

It has even been recognized that the level of public acceptance of *Dulcemina* influenced commercial advertisement in Jamaica. Before *Dulcemina* was aired, all advertisements had been imported from America or Britain and contained no local content.

Naseberry Street: Fighting Despair with Optimism

Naseberry Street is the story of a nurse who tries to introduce family planning practices into a highly prolific area of Jamaica. It is a very optimistic program. Sponsored by the Jamaica Family Planning Association, *Naseberry Street* was created to encourage women and men of child bearing age to better their lives and their children's prospects by limiting the number of children they bring into the world.

Many people in Jamaica believe that their own achievements and destinies are beyond their own control. Due to superstition, mistrust, misinformation and despair, they are prevented from taking responsibility for their own actions and lives. *Naseberry Street* takes all these things into consideration and unwinds stories of love, abandonment, and economics. The purpose is to foster self-pride by showing people that they are responsible for their own actions and lives.

Once again, the characters and what happens to them are the message. The listener learns from knowing that a woman's prospects have been blotted by teenage pregnancy, unwanted pregnancy, traumatic abortion, or abandonment.

Family planning does not need to be pushed. The listeners will go and find contraceptives themselves.

Soft Selling the Options to More than a Million People

This approach works well in attracting a large audience. *Naseberry Street* is heard by more than a million Jamaicans from a total population of 2.3 million.

Surveys have shown that the message has been successfully transmitted and has influenced behavior. There has even been a marked decline in the birthrate in Jamaica, though more research is required to indicate what part of that is due to *Naseberry Street*.

Working in this field for so many years has sensitized me to the many ongoing problems affecting my country as it moves into the 21st century. I hope that I have contributed some small thing and will continue to contribute towards alleviating some of the problems. ■

TOM KAZUNGU



Radio Producer, Voice of Kenya. Mr. Kazungu has been producing radio programs in Kenya for over 10 years. He is the producer of a popular radio soap opera, entitled When Given Advice, Take It, whose aim is to help slow the birthrate in Kenya.

RADIO IN KENYA

Trying to Reduce the World's Highest Birthrate

Kenya's birthrate is the highest in the world. Its population of 21 million people could triple in the next ten years if births continue at their present levels.

It is not that Kenyans don't know about family planning. Family planning programs have been around since 1962 when the Kenya Family Planning Association was established. Yet Kenyans are plagued by fears and rumors about contraceptives. "If you use injectables or the pill, chances are that you'll get cancer." "IUDs travel through your body and get lodged in your heart."

Learning from the Mexican Experience

Radio is still "the" medium for reaching large parts of the population in Kenya, especially in rural areas where there is no television. The Voice of Kenya was convinced that a radio soap opera could play an important role in persuading people to adopt family planning.

In Kenya, such a soap opera had not been done before. But it had in Mexico. So, a group of radio and TV producers from the Voice of Kenya traveled to Mexico to learn the basic concepts of producing soap operas with social messages. We visited the facilities of Televisa and worked with none other than Miguel Sabido whose commercially produced soap operas were known to have elicited changes in people's attitudes and behavior.

Two weeks in Mexico was not enough time to learn everything, but it was a good beginning. It was also a good time in Kenya to tackle the population problem with a soap opera since the National Council for Population and Development had just recently been formed.

Identifying a "Kenyan Culture"

Kenya has 42 different tribes and lifestyles. We needed to appeal to a cross section of the population, so we explored our own country and tried to identify a way of life that would be recognized as Kenyan. We talked to people and found out what we could and could not say about family planning.

We knew if we wanted to change people's attitudes, we could not give a direct family planning message. We designed the script so that listeners realize the need for family planning, even though details of specific methods are not given. Instead, we focus on issues that are related to family planning such as land, an explosive topic in Kenya, and family health.

When Given Advice, Take It

The theme of the story is family harmony. *When Given Advice, Take It* contrasts two families. One is that of an old man with four wives who cannot understand why he has so many problems. His land is not producing enough food to support his family. He cannot pay his children's school fees. His family life is out of control.

The other family is small, monogamous, harmonious, and offers better opportunities for its children's future. The two families represent a clear contrast between two different approaches to life.

The storyline also reflects the ideals and aspirations of rural people. We try to show people that they won't find the answers to their problems by moving to the city. They can develop, grow and live good lives where they are, a theme that dovetails with government development efforts to encourage productivity in rural areas.

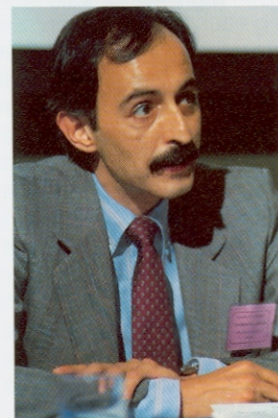
The Challenges of Producing Soap Operas

There are many challenges in producing soap operas, and many obstacles to overcome. You have to be prepared for anything. Sometimes things don't work the way you intended. Sometimes, circumstances beyond the control of the producer or director dictate a change in a storyline.

Two days before I left for this conference, the character around whom our story is built passed away. We cannot replace him with another actor because he was such a well known figure and his death was given full television coverage. We were about to conclude the whole series, but now we even have to change the storyline.

That is the problem I will be working on when I return to Kenya. And this is an example of the kind of enter-educate programs that we have been working on in Kenya. ■

ROGELIO VILLARREAL



Vice President, Fuentes y Fommento Intercontinentales (FFI), Mexico. Mr. Villarreal was a key designer of the marketing plan for Mexico and all of Latin America for the highly acclaimed Tatiana and Johnny project. The key to the phenomenal commercial and social success of the project was the massive support provided by radio programmers.

MARKETING A SUCCESSFUL ENTER-EDUCATE MUSIC PROJECT

There is no way to guarantee a top ten music hit. Sometimes it's a matter of chance and luck. Steps can be taken to make success more likely, but the final decision is up to the audience. It's up to the listening audience to call the radio station to ask to hear the song. Then, it's up to the radio station to decide to play the song five or six times a day rather than two or three.

The marketing strategy of the Tatiana and Johnny project was based on FFI's experience in the Latin American music industry and on the social communi-

cation expertise of Patrick Coleman of Johns Hopkins University. The purpose of the project was to promote the idea of sexual responsibility among young people through two popular songs. It was essential in the early stages of the project to find a common ground between social communication and mass media promotion.

The Music, the Messages, the Artists

To start with, we needed some good music. FFI contacted record companies in Latin America who recommended 32 composers and writers, each of whom was asked to write two songs. Then we held focus group discussions among young people in Mexico City to get a clear idea which songs among the six finalists had the most acceptable message.

The message we wanted to get across was one of restraint and responsibility. We were not pushing sexual abstinence. We wanted to say, "Your future is in your hands. Be informed. Get in touch with your local service agency. Here is the phone number."

We felt that the message and the music could be attractive enough, commercial enough and popular enough to attract the attention of young people. With this in mind we searched for the artists who would be key factors in the success of the songs. Rather than using already established musicians with preconceived images, we chose Tatiana and Johnny, young upcoming artists to give the songs a fresh image.

Getting the Production Together

We had one catchy dance tune, "Cuando Estemos Juntos," and one slow tune, "Detente." In Latin America, it is usually a lot easier to have a hit if the song is danceable or quick-tempoed rather than slow or romantic. We therefore released "Cuando Estemos Juntos," the quick, catchy tune first, and the slower, more romantic "Detente" several months later.

To compete in the commercial music market and to have a chance at a top ten radio hit, we insisted on the highest quality production. It was truly an international effort. The music was recorded in a sound studio in Spain. The voices were mixed in Los Angeles. "Cuandos Estemos Juntos" was composed in Argentina. "Detente" in Mexico. Johnny was from Puerto Rico. Tatiana from Mexico. And the music video was filmed in Mexico.

A Bit of Premarketing Helped

Before we even recorded the music, we wrote to over 3,000 radio stations, television stations, and newspapers and magazines. We told them what we were going to do, presented them with an overview of the population problem, and emphasized that it was a local problem, something we could all do something about. We had many responses from record companies, radio networks and television stations with offers of free time and space.

Commercial Release: Radio First

Each song was released in two phases. First was the commercial release of the songs. When the music peaked, or reached the highest position on the charts that we expected it to, we would bring out the spot campaign that backed up the messages and referred young people to the youth service centers.

Separation of the two phases was important. We felt that if we identified the song with a social message right from the start, young people would very likely reject it suspecting another government or institutional message. We wanted them to feel the message was coming from their peers. From the music. Young people speaking to young people.

The Media Pitches in

We organized a press conference with the commercial release of each song. The press responded positively. In fact, it was something of a snowball effect—

it rolled and grew. We circulated early press clippings to other newspapers and magazines in Mexico and the US. They responded enthusiastically by sending us their clippings which we in turn sent to other publications. It was a continuous but gradual development.

The TV debut of the songs was also a tremendous success. We were supported by Mr. Raoul Velasco of Televisa who premiered the music video of "Cuando Estemos Juntos" on the Mexican television variety show, "Siempre en Domingo," which is broadcast to over 180 million viewers. We were swamped with requests for copies of the video from Latin American television stations who saw the premiere. We referred requests to the local youth organizations of each country whom we had already supplied with copies of the video. The idea was to bring together the media with these organizations.

Hitting the Right Keys

Positive response to the project from the media, from government and church officials, from parents, teachers and young people exceeded our highest expectations. Both songs were top ten hits.

Key to the overall success of the project was the high quality of the music and the artists, and the amount of strategic planning and preparation that went into the project. An estimated \$300,000 and 2½ years of planning were invested in the project, along with \$100,000 for evaluation research.

In return, over one million hours of free radio and television broadcasting time was given to the songs, and stations frequently broadcast a brief advertisement for a family planning youth clinic just after playing the song. ■

SUMARSONO



Director, Bureau of Planning, National Family Planning and Coordinating Board (BKKBN), Indonesia. Sumarsono was formerly chief of BKKBN's Information and Motivation Bureau and is both a TV and radio producer. He developed and sustained a popular radio soap opera, Grains of Sand in the Sea, which has been broadcast for the last 12 years and is considered the longest running soap on family planning in the world.

TRADITIONAL DRAMA, MODERN TECHNOLOGY

For hundreds of years, religion in Indonesia has been taught with puppet shows that combine folklore with the message of Islamic teaching. Puppet shows are still popular in Indonesia, and traditional folklore is now used to convey development messages on radio and television.

This combination has been a key to Indonesia's successful family planning program. A small family norm is promoted through the traditional Mahabarata epic that tells of the conflict between a small successful family and a very large—100 sons—troubled family.

Radio Drama Indonesian Style

In 1976, inspired by radio drama in the Philippines, BKKBN worked with Radio Republik Indonesia (RRI), the national radio company, to produce *Grains of Sand in the Sea*, a radio drama series to promote family planning. The script and distribution of the cassettes were financed privately in exchange for a 30-second commercial at the start of each broadcast, and USAID helped finance production.

Dr. Syarief, the first character introduced in the series, is from a simple family who struggled to send him through university to become a medical doctor. He pledged to devote his life to serving the people in the villages after his first patient died from complications during the birth of her sixth child. He works diligently with informal village leaders to keep people healthy. He works especially with poor families who are overburdened with too many children.

The series also features another doctor and two nurses. All are positive role models who visit rural villages, help people to modernize their communities and encourage them to adopt family planning.

The Audience Responds

In 1979, over 3,000 written responses to questions broadcast over the radio were received. To stimulate participation in the evaluation, one of the letters was randomly selected to win an award. More than 90 percent of the respondents answered the questions correctly.

In addition, RRI received many spontaneous letters from the audience, some of them seeking medical advice.

Reaching Maturity

Grains of Sand in the Sea is one of the longest running radio soap operas in the world. It has expanded to cover not only family planning topics, but also health, agriculture, cooperatives and income generation. The episodes are broadcast daily by 47 radio stations. More than 3,500 episodes have been aired over the past 12 years.

And Reaching Beyond

For the series, RRI received an award in 1984 from the Population Institute. The program has inspired the television network, TVRI, and BKKBN to produce a weekly 15-minute series on development topics using popular characters from the Mahabarata story. There have also been several attempts in Indonesia to combine popular music with family planning messages.

What Indonesia now needs is to convince producers that, with professional management, family planning messages can also become profitable commodities. There is also a need to conduct more in-depth research on the popularity and impact of the radio series. ■

CAROLE HEMINGWAY



Radio Talk Show Host, US. Ms. Hemingway is an on-air personality at KGIL Radio in California. She has broadcast radio programs in Los Angeles and New York, hosted and produced national programs for Metromedia and Public Broadcasting, and has been a newspaper columnist for the Los Angeles Times Syndicate. Ms. Hemingway was the first recipient of the Susan B. Anthony Award, was Los Angeles' "Woman of the Year," was named "Broadcaster of the Year" by the California Trial Lawyers Association, and won a Golden Mike Award for outstanding documentary. Mayor Bradley of Los Angeles proclaimed May 5, 1980 as Carole Hemingway Day.

STIRRING THINGS UP IN THE US ON TALK RADIO

Controversy generates energy. Controversy is the essence of talk radio. People call in to say what's on their minds.

Sometimes a show is built around guests. I might invite a couple of lawyers to argue different sides of a case that is before the Supreme Court. Sometimes I will take a controversial position on an issue.

There is no script. Yet talk radio is dramatic and entertaining. A lot of characters come into my life. They're anonymous and exciting. They make my day. Even during the wildest arguments, it is pure fun.

Take Saul and Ruth...

A Lesson in Economics

We were talking about the minimum wage the other day. I was outraged that we couldn't raise it higher than the President called for.

Saul called in. He's 77 years old. "I don't understand why these kids should make more money. I can't buy all those things they want."

Then Ruth called. She's 82. "Saul doesn't know what he's talking about. He's too young. I've been around longer. I started working when I was 12 in the garment industry. When I got a nickel more for my work, I went out and bought shoes. And the guy who made the shoes went out and bought groceries."

I told Saul he'd have to yield to seniority.

Educated, Consumer-Oriented Folks

That's the kind of audience we have on talk radio. Talk radio listeners are well-educated. Ninety-four percent of them vote. Very high compared to the overall population. They make the decisions for our country, state, county, city, and local governments.

Over the radio, we talk about issues in an intelligent, lively and democratic fashion. The boundaries of discussion are broad and attract a large audience. This means the ratings are high, and adver-

tisers have a lot of educated consumers to sell to. And it means I'll keep my job.

Sometimes it's not easy to accept that I am a vehicle for pushing products. I get around it by doing the best quality programming that I can. By using personal responsibility and compassion as guiding themes.

Issues that Grab Heart and Soul

Abortion is an issue that calls for a responsible and compassionate approach. Religious extremists in this country want to diminish the rights that women in America have fought for and won.

I want to change the way women are viewed everywhere. I want women to be viewed as *productive* human beings. Not just *reproductive* human beings. Women must be able to feel that they themselves have the power to decide when to reproduce.

A woman who does not have absolute control over her own body and over reproduction is not a first class citizen. She could become a brood mare for the State the moment she becomes pregnant. The State could do anything. Put her in jail if she smokes or drinks. Charge her with manslaughter if she seeks an abortion. Chain her to a bed until she gives birth.

What about the Children?

The family planning issue at the heart of the decision to reproduce or not is how babies are treated after they are born. What happens to our children?

I often do programs on children's issues. We are far too often not kind to our children. And neither is our court system. It allows room for children to be abused. For visitation rights for fathers who sexually abuse their children. For mothers to be charged with kidnapping their own children when they are trying to protect them.

I would like to see more emphasis in our society placed on nurturing or "female values." To see kids brought up in healthier physical and psychological environments. ■