



... Continued from page 6

satellite pay TV licence A. He too agreed that the existing television sector did not face extinction. While the pay TV licensees are not allowed to source programs jointly, they will be collaborating to develop a uniform subscriber management system. People want more of what they already like and pay TV's advantage is that it can deliver to people what they want to watch when they want to watch it. Continental Century will definitely be targeting local Australian audiences, Patton said.

Home Video Hits US Pay TV Hard

FACTS director Tony Branigan, speaking on behalf of Bruce Gyngell, claimed that, in the US, the spread of home video has brought growth in premium pay services to a halt. In the US, basic cable, which carries ads and is offered at reasonable subscription charges, has been the engine for pay services.

Basic cable will not translate well in Australia. The cost of 'naturalising' it will be prohibitive. In order to overcome competitive difficulties, pay operators will have to become aggressive bottom-line oriented businesses - as the Australian networks already are. The networks are determined to evolve to provide a new diet, in a new climate, Branigan said.

Other media, such as newspapers, are likely to be more fragmented by the new services than is the existing TV industry. Branigan said that broadcast TV in 10-15 years will be the most dominant advertising medium. In fact TV revenue from ads may grow relative to other media, from 35 per cent currently to 40 per cent in 10 years, because of the effects of the new environment on other media. □

Barry Melville



CU Book Review

RACIAL STEREOTYPING AND OTHER MEDIA DISTORTIONS

Jakubowicz, Goodall, Martin, Mitchell, Randall and Seneviratne

Racism, Ethnicity and the Media, Allen and Unwin, 1994, ISBN 1 86373 364 7. \$24.95.

That the media present a distorted image of Australian society and at times propagate racist stereotypes would not be news to most readers.

Racism, Ethnicity and the Media is the result of a major study of the Australian media undertaken in the late eighties and early nineties by Jakubowicz et al from the University of Technology, Sydney. The focus is on representation in the mass media, i.e. television, radio, newspapers and popular magazines. The study uses a multidisciplinary approach to address some fairly tough questions about how cultural diversity and social difference are represented, whether there is conscious manipulation and whether media representations replicate social power structures.

Using media content analysis, interviews with media workers, discussion groups and media diaries to collect primary data, the media and racism project then overlaid cultural studies analyses to arrive at some damning conclusions. The analysis turns on race, ethnicity, gender and class, while acknowledging that these dimensions may seem out-of-date to proponents of post-modernism.

Coincidentally the book has come out at the same time as the Advisory Note on Portrayal of Cultural Diversity put out by the Federation of Commercial Television Stations (FACTS). The Advisory Note is a self-regulatory guideline aimed at preventing discrimination and stereotyping on commercial television. It may discourage the worst excesses of discrimination and stereotyping but being subordinate to the industry's obligatory Code of Practice, it lacks teeth and can do little to change industry practices. FACTS would do well to read this book.

For the reader, *Racism, Ethnicity and the Media* is a textual patchwork with its multiple authorship and diverse modes of investigation. Problems in the various sectors of the media are rigorously identified and criticised, but from a policy perspective, the book lacks conclusions and recommendations. Still, this is an important work which backs up analysis with plenty of instances of the media being blatantly offensive, paternalistic or culturally insensitive. The book, as part of the Australian Cultural Studies Series will be valuable for academics and students. It also deserves serious attention from media players and public policy makers. □

Barry Melville