

DEFINING COMMUNITY MEDIA AND ACHIEVING EDUCATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY

Working towards identifying a structure and definition of the Community Media sector, with the aim of enhancing deep educational value and sustainability.

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ABSTRACT

In Chapter Two of MacBride Report, the writers hint at the future gains from building a meaningful relationship between the communications sector and educational establishments. ¹

This paper will outline some of the findings of my ongoing research into the Community Media Sector, particularly paying close attention to the growing relationship between communication platforms and educational activities, outlining how each of these areas are inherent within the structure of the Community Media sector itself, independent from mass media institutions.

Now with the tools of communication being used extensively within formal and informal educational environments, I will describe the dominant approaches to using media tools for its own sake, (Media Education), and how they are being used to enhance the wider curriculum, (Media In Education).

This paper will then go on to suggest how community media educational activity can work more effectively with community based communication platforms, to enhance the educational potential of the sector not only to achieve a deeper level of cultural sustainability of the work produced, but also to harness the project models and processes to resist the tendency of "re-inventing the wheel" each project.

This paper will draw on a range of sources including case studies and action research. The presentation will include a screening of video clips that will highlight different approaches to 'media education' and 'media in education', and the workings of a 'map' that gives an overview structure of the community media sector and the roles within it.

¹ See page 25: introduction of section titled '*Educational Potential*', in Chapter Two, "The Contemporary Dimension". '*Many Voices, One World: Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow - The MacBride Report.*', Sean MacBride, et al. Kogan Page/Unipub/Unesco, 1980. 1988 Reprint.

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