

# ANCHISED AREA 380,000 HOMES

June 23, 1971

Beryl,

Here is the speech and the proposal for Open Channel that has been funded. I think it is all there. The main points are 1) the availability of public channels; 2) the liability question that still is not answered but will be soon, (that means that the cable operator still has the right to screen tapes before playing them and so can still censor). I tried to get a bill through the State Legislature to change this but was unsuccessful this year, therefore I will have to wait till next year, or until the FCC acts in. Please forgive me for not having details and a well thought out article but I'm right in the throes of organizing Open Channel\* and as you well know that is hell. We are in the process of developing rules of access; in other words how it shall be determined who gets on and when. If you could wait a while for those I think this whole thing would have more relevance to your readers. For that is the actual mechanism that will guarantee access to all those interested in utilizing the channels.

this area. However since the channels are available as of July 1, I am going ahead and will help to create programming for those channels. The importance of the success of this public use of cable here in Manhattan cannot be stressed enough. I truly believe that if we can make it work here we will be setting a precedent for the nation in opening up this utilization of television. However, if it fails, if these channels are not used, or if they carry programming that no one cares about or relates to, or if they are utilized for the entertainment of the esoteric few, then we probably will have provided the necessary fuel for those who are fighting against this opening up of the medium. See you soon. Thea

## COLN SQUARE DEVELOPMENT

Contact George Stoney, NYU—School of the Arts, 111 2nd Ave., NYC, for extensive information on their use of 1/2" portable video and plans for Alternate Media Center.



Dean Burch  
FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
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Washington, D.C.

Enclosed you will find a copy of the latest issue of our publication, *Radical Software*, which deals with alternate uses of television, videotape, and other communications technologies.

Our readership is composed largely of people who are involved in making their own television. Most of them are using portable half-inch videotape cameras manufactured by Sony and others. We ourselves also make our own TV with the portable equipment.

We are writing for some information of direct concern to ourselves and those we service. *Specifically, we keep hearing rumors from people we know in Washington that the F.C.C. is going to issue a ruling against the use of half-inch videotape equipment, that broadcast interests and unions are pushing for such a restriction.*

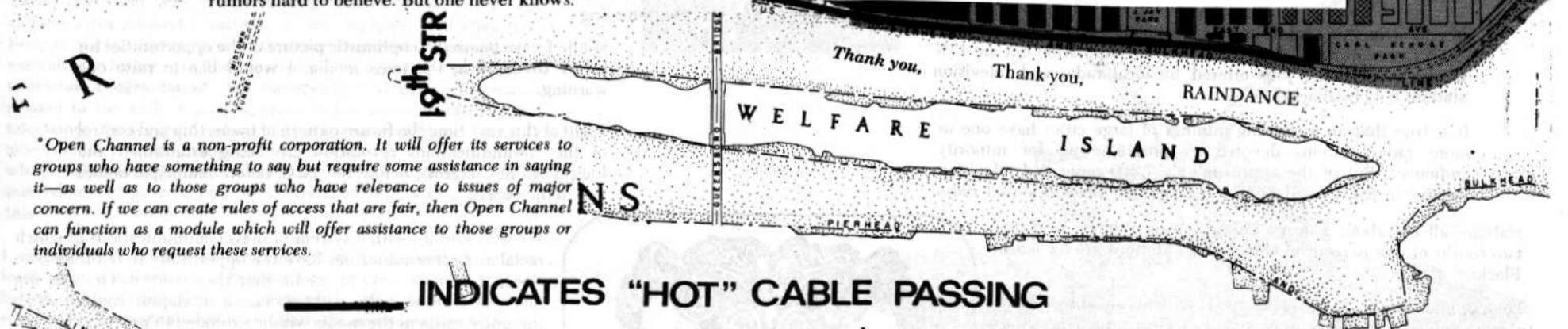
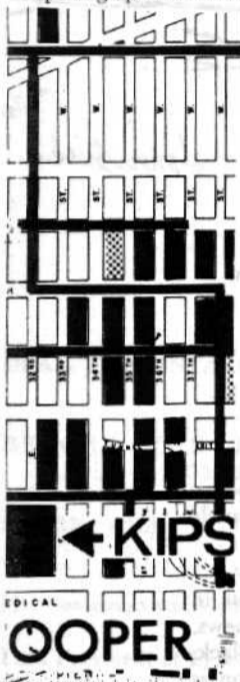
Given the current limbo on local origination we find these rumors hard to believe. But one never knows.

As you probably know, to ban half-inch portable equipment from CATV local origination uses would be equivalent to denying community groups access to cable as it would mean that they would be limited to either a heavy hardware investment or bound to just a studio situation (controlled by the CATV owner).

As you probably also know, half-inch portables are relatively cheap (\$1,500), fabulously easy to use, and can operate anywhere there's normal lighting conditions.

What we'd like to know is what is the F.C.C.'s position vis-a-vis portable half inch video used with CATV. Has it been discussed? Do you anticipate a ruling either way?

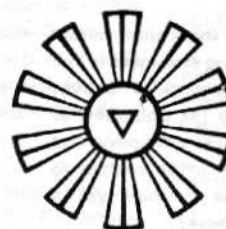
We'd like your permission to include your reply in the next issue of *Radical Software*. If this is okay with you, may we hear from you by the second week in June which is the deadline for our next issue.



\*Open Channel is a non-profit corporation. It will offer its services to groups who have something to say but require some assistance in saying it—as well as to those groups who have relevance to issues of major concern. If we can create rules of access that are fair, then Open Channel can function as a module which will offer assistance to those groups or individuals who request these services.

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I believe that *Radical Software*, Raindance, and Quantum are all trying to do something similar. I recently wrote to Ira Schneider and Raindance about a catalogue we are trying to do at Quantum. We are involved in attempting a twelve part manpower study of the cable industry in the seventies. My contribution (hopefully!) will be a catalogue/index of available programming for cable use. . . . I would appreciate it, if you would publish my request for information on programming available for cable television—having people include costs and lengths of tapes/films—in the next edition of *Radical Software*.



quantum  
communications  
incorporated

