

# The Amateur Computerist

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## Editorial: Is Democracy Working?

“Is Democracy Working?” was the theme recently of an international conference of political scientists held in Japan July 9-13, 2006.<sup>1</sup> The program was 181 pages with papers and talks on many aspects of the problems of democratic institutions and practices in our modern world.

The question, “Is Democracy working?” is a vital question for our times. This issue of the Amateur Computerist is intended as a contribution to an exploration of this question.

The opening article of the issue, “Carother’s Critique of the Transition Paradigm and the 2002 Presidential Election Campaign in South Korea” explores how the Internet and the netizens helped to create democratic political forms for the 2002 Presidential election in South Korea. These forms provided a challenge to the power of the conserva-

tive press which wields a lot of power in South Korea. An Internet fan club created by netizens called “Nosamo” was able to provide leadership for a different election campaign than the standard kind of campaign. The election year issues of policy, not of the personalities of the candidates were primary. The election represented a “shift from party politics to citizen politics” as one scholar observed.<sup>2</sup>

The second article in the issue describes the problem of workers in the U.S. Here employers and union officials have cooperated to take away labor rights and benefits that workers have fought hard to acquire. Three articles by a retired auto worker, John Goschka, present the need for workers to have a voice in the labor-management arena. The article which follows then is from a newsletter by auto worker Gregg Shotwell “Live Bait & Ammo #73.” Shotwell describes his response to a speech by the CEO of the Delphi Corporation, Steve Miller. Shotwell attended a talk Miller gave at the Detroit Economic Club on Monday, April 3, 2006. Delphi had gone to a U.S. Court to declare bankruptcy in its North American operations and asked the court’s help to end their obligations to workers under their union contracts. Shotwell’s response to Miller’s speech also reflects on the role played by the president of the United Auto Workers Union (UAW) Ron Gettelfinger in the crises auto workers are facing.

A review of the new movie “Who Killed the Electric Car?” follows. The film presents the little known set of events in the 1990s until 2005 when General Motors had a functioning electric car operating in the Western part of the U.S. Instead of supporting this new technology and mass producing the electric cars, the auto maker acted with other auto companies, the oil industry and the U.S. Department of Justice to get the withdrawal of the regulations which required the auto companies to have non polluting technology. In this situation, GM claimed that they withdrew the electric cars from operation and crushed them because no one wanted to buy them. The film demonstrates how that is not true. A similar situation is documented in earlier issues of the *Amateur Computerist* as the pretext given to end computer programming classes at Ford.

The last article in this issue is from a talk presented at a conference in Finland on the the History of Technology. The theme of the confer-

ence related to the problem of borders and the role of technology in rethinking borders. On July 1, 2006 Finland once again assumed the Presidency of the European Union. The talk describes a conference when Finland last had the presidency in Fall of 1999. At the conference, the question of overcoming the borders or boundaries that prevent citizens from having a say in government decisions was explored. The talk also refers to the process of how the Internet was built on a model of grassroots participation in its development. The talk raises the question of whether the Internet model of development may be helpful in providing gateways to help cross the boundaries preventing political communication between citizens and government representatives.

In considering the articles in this issue, it is clear that while the 2002 Presidential election in Korea and the building of the Internet were examples of democracy working, the problems in the U.S. auto industry and of the auto workers show that democracy there is not working.

We hope this issue begins to raise some of the problems which need to be identified and explored to be able to have more functional democratic institutions and processes. As Carl Johnson, an auto worker in Flint in the 1940s and 1950s recognized in a column he wrote in his local UAW newspaper, “Only More Democracy Can Save Democracy.”

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Notes:

1) The conference was the 20th World Congress of the International Political Science Association (IPSA) <http://www.fukuoka2006.com/en/default.asp/>

2) Kim Yong-Ho, “Political Significance of the 2002 Presidential Election Outcome and Political Prospects for the Roh Administration,” Korea Journal, Summer 2003, p. 233.

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# **Carothers' Critique of the Transition Paradigm and 2002 Presidential Election Campaign in South Korea**

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## **I - Preface**

The mass demonstrations in France in April 2006 in opposition to the youth employment law (CNE) and the mass demonstrations in Nepal protesting the actions of the monarchy, reveal the serious mass dissatisfaction with the political processes in both developed countries like France and developing countries like Nepal. Such examples of mass dissatisfaction help to highlight the widespread desire for democratic political processes.

In a similar vein, a report issued recently in Great Britain titled *Power to the People: The report of Power An Independent Inquiry into Britain's Democracy* documents a deepening public dissatisfaction with the political processes in Great Britain and the U.S.<sup>1</sup>

Thus even in the countries long considered to be models of democracy, democratic practices are now the subject of serious discontent. In light of such deep and growing dissatisfaction with the old models of democracy, the efforts of countries that have recently thrown out autocratic systems and are now searching for how to develop and sustain a democratizing process, become especially interesting and relevant subjects for study.

This article explores certain aspects of the current democratization process in South Korea (officially known as the Republic of Korea, but hereafter referred to most often as Korea).

## **II - Carothers' Critique of the Transition Paradigm**

Given the crisis of democracy around the world, it is not surprising that serious questions are being raised about what had been considered a model of how a newly democratizing country could be expected to develop.

One such critique is developed by Thomas Carothers, in his article “The End of the Transition Paradigm.” Describing the origin and impetus for what he calls the ‘transition paradigm,’ Carothers explains how in the 1980s U.S. policy makers desired a model to apply to newly democratizing countries in their official democracy-promotion work. He writes:

As early as the mid-1980s, President Ronald Reagan, Secretary of State George Shultz, and other high-level U.S. officials were referring regularly to “the worldwide democratic revolution.” During the 1980s, an active array of governmental, quasi-governmental, and nongovernmental organizations devoted to promoting democracy abroad sprang into being. This new democracy-promotion community had a pressing need for an analytic framework to conceptualize and respond to the ongoing political events. (Carothers 2003: 6)<sup>2</sup>

In response, a model for the democratizing process that Carothers calls the ‘transition paradigm’ was advanced which has been applied by scholars. In recent years, however, a number of problems have become obvious with the ‘transition paradigm.’ This has led Carothers to declare, “It is time for the democracy-promotion community to discard the transition paradigm.”<sup>3</sup> He argues that researchers interested in democratization need to shed the lens colored by these prior assumptions. When analyzing the democratization process in a country, he proposes that instead of asking, “How is its democratic transition going?,” the question researchers should ask is, “What is happening politically?” (Carothers 2003: 18)

South Korea provides the example of a country that has made significant progress with democratization since its June 1987 revolution. Therefore, it provides a useful case study to explore whether Carothers’ critique of the transition paradigm can be helpful in analyzing democratization.

I want to focus mainly on developments in Korea which took place during the 2002 presidential election campaign. This campaign resulted in the nomination and then election of Roh Moo-hyun as the 16<sup>th</sup> President of South Korea.

Roh’s election is a sign of the new found power of the Internet and

of the online citizen, the netizen. The events of the election campaign, provide useful experience to consider in trying to come to grips with the problems and achievements of democratization in Korea.

When considering Carothers' critique of the transition paradigm, one is struck by the fact that newly democratizing countries don't start out with a clean slate when they make the transition to democratization. Instead it can be expected that they will inherit at least some of the forms and power structures from their past. These countries have a handicap, the handicap of having to root out the surviving remnants of the political and economic authoritarian past. How they do this and what new forms and structures they find to replace the vestiges of the surviving autocratic system is a subject worthy of study.

### III - Forms and Structures from Korea's Autocratic Past

A number of scholars of Korean democratization are concerned with these surviving remnants of the autocratic system and their continuing impact on the economy and politics of Korea. One such scholar is Choi Jang Jip, a Professor at Korea University, and the author of the book *Democracy after Democratization*. Choi discusses how the holders of power from the autocratic period of Korean history, have continued to dominate Korean politics and economics after the 1987 Revolution. A major subject for his study are the structures supporting the continuing hegemony of the conservatives over Korean political and economic life. Among the strata that Choi is worried about are the chaebols, the conservative newspapers, and the conservative intellectuals. The conservative intellectuals according to Choi are those who "do not criticize the media and chaebol. Nor do they show any interest in the groups and social classes being victimized in the process of the entrenchment of the class structure." (Choi 2005: 48)

Choi argues that the forces which have continued from the authoritarian period that dominated post WWII Korea until June 1987, are those which "resist change." He proposes that they "have become gradually more organized and stronger." (Choi 2005: 49)

In evaluating the progress made in Korean society since the June 1987 revolution, Choi argues that conditions have gotten worse for people, rather than improving. He explains that it is no longer likely that

hard work and education will make it possible for most people to advance in their society. (Choi 2005: 41)

Hong Yun-Gi is another researcher interested in the nature of the power bloc that has emerged from the autocratic post WWII period. Hong writes:

The ruling group of the post-war order included extreme-right [wing] anti communist politicians, conglomerate capitalist groups called chaebol, military forces of politicized generals and officials, and the three largest newspapers, i.e. *Chosun Ilbo*, *Joong Ang Ilbo* and *Dong A Ilbo*. The social power of these groups survived the process of democratic consolidation which dissolved the system of formal military dictatorship in the June revolt of 1987. (Hong 2003: 8)

In his critique of this power block, Choi emphasizes the role that the conservative press plays in Korean politics. Choi argues:

The political agenda in Korea is set by the press, not initiated by the political parties. It is also the press that determines policy issues and priorities. From the President to members of the National Assembly, from cabinet ministers to political advisors, to ranking bureaucrats...the most they do in terms of making any decisions is to make decisions based on the expectation of how the press would evaluate such decisions. (Choi 2005: 41)

This may be a bit of an exaggeration, but it suggests the central importance in Korean politics of the press. Choi also criticizes how the press functions with respect to private individuals, "(I)t arbitrarily intervenes and defines a person's intellectual and emotional spheres, calling a person 'ideologically suspicious' or 'leftist' as they see fit. The press freely conducts ideological inquisitions that one would credit to the Japanese colonial rulers or a totalitarian regime." (Choi 2005: 41)

The effect of the conservative domination of the print press, Choi explains, is that public opinion becomes the views expressed in a few large powerful newspapers. This narrows the range of political and ideological viewpoints that are reflected as the public opinion of Korean society. (Choi 2005: 43)

Some scholars writing about the struggle for democratization in

South Korea explain that it was not until 1997, ten years after the June 1987 victory, that there was an actual transfer of political power to opposition parties. Even with this transfer, however, the conservative media is presented as one of the contenders for what form any reform of the political system will take. According to Chang Woo Young, after the June 1987 victory, rather than having curtailed the conservative media, it emerged as an “independent political institution.” (Chang 2005: 928)

Others emphasize the need to reform the conservative media. “Without the reform of the media, no success of democratic reform is possible,” argues Cho Hu Yeon, one of the founders of the civil society NGO People’s Solidarity with Participatory Democracy (PSPD).

The failure to put through reforms of the structure of the chaebols and of the conservative media from 1987 to 1997 has been blamed as contributing to the economic crisis of 1997.

South Korean Presidents Kim Young Sam and then Kim Dae Jung had promised to uproot the conservative power base. Several of the measures Sam took when he came to office did indeed make some impact. But the financial crisis of 1997 is attributed to the fact that not nearly enough progress had been made.

For example, Sunhyuk Kim writes:

There is currently an extensive consensus in and outside of Korea that the economic crisis could have been avoided had Kim Young Sam’s chaebol reform been successfully carried out. (Kim 2000: 28)

Similarly, “mainstream South Korean news outlets failed to apply a critical eye to economic reporting before the Asian slump,” a reporter explains, “a fact that many analysts say contributed to the crash.” He admits, “We were guilty of printing government statements without checking the facts.”<sup>4</sup>

The conservative newspapers most often cited as the problem are *Chosun Ilbo*, *Donga Ilbo*, and *Joongang Ilbo*. *Chosun Ilbo* (Daily Newspaper) was started March 5, 1920. It has a reputation as the South Korean print newspaper with the largest circulation (2,383,429 in 2004). The 2<sup>nd</sup> largest newspaper is *Dong Ilbo*, started in April 5, 1920. (In 2004 its circulation was given as 2,088,715) (Lee, Gunho 2004: 6)

These three major newspapers, have a market share of 70%,



explains Lee Eun-Jeung. (Lee, Eun-Jeung: 624) She quotes *Sisa Journal*, 5 January 2002 “Never had a politician won elections against the will of these newspapers.” (Lee, Eun-Jeung, 634)

In this context the success of the electoral campaign of Roh Moo-hyun, which was bitterly opposed by the major conservative print publications takes on an added significance. What was the nature of his campaign and how did it succeed despite the opposition of all the major conservative print publications?

#### IV - Roh Moo-hyun's Election Campaign

Roh's background was unusual for someone who would run for the office of President of South Korea. He had come from a farming family. He completed high school, but never attended college. He studied on his own to take the National Bar Exam. Passing the exam, Roh was licensed to practice law. Soon afterwards he became interested in helping students who had been prosecuted for their opposition to the autocratic government. Roh also supported labor activists. He was from Busan but had not been able to win a National Assembly seat from the area.

By the 2000 National Assembly election, Roh was able to win a seat in an area around Seoul. But he gave it up to run again for a seat in Busan in an effort to challenge the regional divisions in Korean political parties and politics. When Roh lost the April 2000 election, however, his efforts attracted discussion on his website among a number of people interested in election reform. Through their online discussion the idea was presented to create an online fan club for Roh, like the fan clubs for sports teams. Formed in April 2000, Nosamo, the online fan club, began discussion about how to support Roh as a candidate in the upcoming election for the South Korean presidency.

On May 12, 2000, the NGO People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy (PSPD) held an online poll to see which of several candidates was most desired. The candidates included in the poll were Rhee In-je, a representative in the National Assembly and an advisor to the Millennium Democratic Party (MDP), Lee Hoi-chang, the head of the Grand National Party, and Roh Moo-hyun, who appeared as the underdog, the candidate who was least likely to be able to win the election for the presidency. Yet Roh won the PSPD poll.

In April 2002 Nosamo held a meeting in a computer cafe in Busan. A hundred people attended the meeting. It was also broadcast on the Internet. An organization was formed to support Roh's candidacy. Its founding documents included a section committing Nosamo to participatory democracy.

A significant aspect of the election campaign for Roh, however, was the fact that his candidacy was strongly opposed by the conservative print press. For example, during the primary election, the major newspapers "almost everyday carried articles that both implicitly and explicitly criticized candidate Roh Moo-hyun," writes Yun Young Min in his article, "An Analysis of Cyber-Electioneering: Focusing on the 2002 Presidential Election in Korea." (Yun 2003: 154)

Surprisingly, however, the attacks by the print media served to increase the public's interest in Roh and his campaign. As Yun documents, "As a result more and more voters must have wondered to themselves 'Just Who Is This Roh Moo-hyun?'" In his study of the online activity on the Internet during the 2002 election, Yun documents the "sharp increase in the number of visits to Roh's Web site. Also, that must have been the reason," Yun writes, "why 'Roh Moo-hyun' became one of the most popular search terms in the news section of portal sites." (Yun 2003: 154)

Describing the effect that the criticism of Roh by the major newspapers had, Yun writes that it was akin to a David and Goliath effect with Roh being regarded as the brave David able to slay the more powerful Goliath.

Lee describes how attacks on Roh that appeared in the conservative print media were quick to draw responses and discussion in online newspapers and discussion forums. If there was a reference in the print media to a speech that Roh gave, the whole speech would be posted online with a response to the article that had appeared in the print media.

Similarly, online discussions were common and supporters of Roh would send each other articles they found of interest. The online discussion and exchange of views found particular favor among the younger generation who had previously found politics uninteresting.

Yun observes that a feedback system was created between the articles published in the conservative major print publications and the

comments and discussion that occurred online. (Yun 2003: 163) Lee argues that the election of 2002 “was a power struggle between the main print media and the Internet.” (Lee, Eun-Jeung: 634)

“In 2002 for the first time in Korean history,” writes Lee, “the power of the so-called netizen (‘citizen on the net’) made itself felt.” (Lee Eun-Jeung: 632) There were several well-publicized netizen actions in 2002. These included the online protest waged against the disqualification of the Korean track athlete in the Winter Olympics; the netizen directed celebration during the World Cup events in Korea in June 2002; and the candlelight protests against the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) in November and December 2002. The victory of Roh in the 2002 election was but one example of Korean netizens exploring how the Internet could be helpful in their efforts to have an impact on Korean politics.

## V - Role of the Netizen in Election Campaign

In his summary of his research about the impact of the online activity during the 2002 election, Yun observes that prior to the election, most experts would have assumed that it was impossible for Roh to win. But after the election, these same experts would have to agree that the Internet had played a significant role in the victory. (Yun 2003, 163) Though he is cautious about claiming causality without further study, Yun proposes that the “so-called experts” should also exert caution when making their predictions about “such events in the future.” (Yun 2003: 163)

Yun’s analysis is most cogent, however, when he considers the significance of Roh’s victory. He writes:

Cyberspace is making it possible for citizens to choose a political position free from the influence of the mainstream press.... Public opinion, which has been almost exclusively minted by a few mass media, can no longer be hidden beneath the control of the press. The...effect is expected to break the old equation, ‘the opinion of the press = public opinion = prevailing opinion.’ (Yun 2003: 143)

Lee’s summary is similarly optimistic. “In a sense the netizens mobilised themselves into the political realm,” she writes, “exercising

their power as citizens...” (Lee, Eun-Jeung: 635) She continues, “With their electoral revolution the netizens had transformed political culture in Korea.” (Lee, Eun-Jeung: 638)

## VI - Conclusion

Carothers’ advice to look at “what is happening politically” when trying to understand the experience in a newly democratizing country like South Korea helps to remove the filters from one’s glasses so that one can see new and previously unknown developments.

Something fundamental occurred during the 2002 presidential campaign in South Korea. Citizens found a way to turn the election campaign into a citizens’ event. They became actively involved in debating and exploring the issues that were raised. It wasn’t only the candidates or the elites and their newspapers that participated in the debates. To the contrary, articles in the conservative print media about the Roh candidacy were subjected to scrutiny, and citizens could respond in both discussion forums and online newspapers. Citizens had reclaimed their role as participants in the election process, rather than being resigned to the status of passive observers. The citizenry also became watchdogs of the process, as well as participants. They were able to contribute to and spread the discussion among other citizens.

It is reported that 80% of the South Korean population has access to high speed Internet. Thus a far larger percentage of the Korean population can contribute online to the discussion on politics than the limited number of writers who can be published in the conservative print media. Also the Internet provides a much broader range of views and discussion on various issues than any print media can make available. Even if one doesn’t choose to contribute articles and discussion to be available online, one can read a much broader range of viewpoints than one can read in the print media. From the controversy of ideas that developed during the 2002 election campaign, netizens were able to develop a more broad based perspective of the salient issues.

Carothers refers to an article by Dankwart Rustow “Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model” which was published in 1970, as a seminal article in the early academic transition literature. (Carothers, 2003: 8) In this article, Rustow raises the question “What

conditions make democracy possible and what conditions make it thrive?” This, I want to argue is a critical question for political scientists who are trying to develop a theoretical analysis of democracy. Rustow begins a process of exploring the genesis of a democratic society by a study of the origins and development of democratization in Turkey and in Sweden. Rustow’s conclusion is that democratization is not about establishing maximum “consensus” but rather about creating an environment where dissention thrives. (Rustow 1970: 363)

The 2002 presidential campaign in South Korea was an important development in the democratization of Korea. Out of the debate and dissension, emerged a broader form of public opinion than hitherto available in Korea. It is therefore an experience that merits serious attention from the community of scholars interested in democratization.

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## Notes

1. *Power to the People: The Report of Power: An Independent Inquiry into Britain’s Democracy*. London, 2006 <http://www.powerinquiry.org/report/index.php>

2. He also writes:

Confronted with the initial parts of the third wave – democratization in Southern Europe, Latin America, and a few countries in Asia (especially the Philippines) – the U.S. democracy community rapidly embraced an analytic model of democratic transition. It was derived principally from their own interpretation of the patterns of democratic change taking place, but also to a lesser extent from the early works of the emergent academic field of ‘transitology,’ above all the seminal work of Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter. (Carothers 2003: 6)

3. See Carothers 2003, p. 14-17. He lists what he proposes are five false assumptions of the ‘transition paradigm’. These assumptions briefly are:

a) That there was a predictable democratization script that could be expected to unfold.

b) That one could assume there would be a particular sequence of stages.

c) That elections would not only provide legitimacy for government officials, but also would “continuously deepen political participation and accountability.” (Carothers, p. 15)

d) That legacies from the autocratic period would not affect the democratization process.

e) That the previous power holders would not lock in the power and resources

they held.

4. Committee to Protect Journalists Country Report, December 31, 1998.

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## **The Fight That Confronts The Mighty, Mighty Workers**

by John Goschka

Good morning to the heros of the workers and retirees of this great world that we live in. My mind is always busy trying to piece together this RAPE of the workers in the world today and again I will share some of my thoughts and concerns as we move forward in this great struggle of ours.

As we all know, many of us have been asleep for many years while the powers that be have laid the trap that determines if we still have the will and fortitude of our forefathers to fight for the preservation of the middle class of the working force in the world today.

Many of us have enjoyed a good working life with adequate benefits and a retirement that would give us a decent way of life through our golden years. We worked long and hard hours in the plants to earn a

secure future for our retirement years.

Many of us have lived through long and bitter strikes to preserve and indeed add gains to what we enjoy today. And, at some point we fell asleep as we were led into the new way of partnership with the corporations and we “let the good times roll” as we continued on our way towards retirement.

The “BIG LIE” was now in place and many of us never saw that “BIG LIE” because we were earning a good wage with a good benefit package. Many of us didn’t like what was happening with the job speed ups and the added pressures that were added to our work assignments but, we just continued to “let the good times roll.”

We were lulled into this magical new way of doing business and forgot to watch our backs. As all of the free trade agreements were being passed by the powers that be, we actually believed that the corporations would stand behind us and honor their commitments and contract obligations as they made more and more money.

The political process was and is being influenced by the big lobbying dollars that can buy the conscience of our elected politicians. This in turn has set the stage for a corrupted court system where the laws have been changed and allow corporations to RAPE the workers and retirees.

Our UAW IEB (International Executive Board) has gone along with this destructive path for the workers and retirees and have become partners in this great RAPE that we are enduring. They have made of themselves leaders and dictators to preserve and enhance what they themselves stand to gain.

They are now in a concessionary mode (and have been for years) and sell their contract proposals with half truths (highlights). A half truth is a LIE. They LIE to us and we pay for them to do it. We continue to see our standard of living falling as they ROB from us the gains that we have fought for.

The great disgrace to this concessionary LIE that they are shoving down our throats is that there are no concessions for themselves. They enjoy what they have and indeed they will continue to hold on to them while selling the membership out.

Do you really believe that they want to see a strike and deplete the



strike fund? They draw interest from the strike fund. They see this fund as theirs. You can bet that they will do everything within their power to preserve the fund. Why would they want to risk a loss of income during this great RAPE?

What will the last concessionary offer be to the workers before the union is decertified? What half truths (highlights) will they throw before the membership in the hopes of averting a strike? The wolves are in their dens right now deciding what is good for us. When they decide on the concessionary offer they will show their pearly whites and we will finally hear from them. They will talk with half truths and take extra care to cover their fangs.

Mr. Miller [Steve Miller, CEO of Delphi] enters into the scene and puts Delphi into bankruptcy. The man would have us believe that this is for our benefit. The man is a habitual liar and will let nothing stop him in his quest to destroy Delphi and our lives. The man is on a mission for money and power and will try to crush any resistance that gets in his way.

He has met very little resistance in his past RAPES so he can just smile and tell us that this is for our own good. “Don’t strike because it won’t do you any good.” “Let me do my thing, and I will just move on to my new victim.” “I will tear out your heart and soul and leave you in poverty, but it’s for your own good.” “I leave my trail of misery and will continue to do so.” “So, just step back and allow this to happen.” “I will have the money and power that is really yours.”

Our UAW IEB allows the corporations to buy off the votes of older workers through retirement (another trap). These are very cunning and calculated measures that will rear their ugly heads in our future.

Everything that we have ever worked for is being taken from us. This is a slow process but if we allow it to continue, it will happen. A little here, a little there. We hold the hope that it will stop at some point. Money, power and greed will crush any hopes of this. Concessions will lead to more concessions and more job losses.

We must STRIKE. We must put a stop to this RAPE before we all become slaves to the corporate world. We have many enemies as you all can see. These enemies will have to be crushed one at a time. Who is our biggest enemy? I don’t have a clue. Politicians, courts, corporations, the

Millers of the world or our UAW IEB? The enemies surround us. They are moving in for the kill.

This STRIKE will be a great learning process for all of us. We learn by doing. We will learn how to take our enemies down one at a time. We will never agree on who is the biggest enemy. We know who they are. We know that we have to begin somewhere.

We the workers are a mighty force. As a combined force we will correct the injustices that have been placed upon us. One enemy at a time. We learn to walk before we can run. We are truly Soldiers Of Solidarity and we will fight for our livelihoods and dignity.

The day is fast approaching soldiers. Stand alert and stand ready. We will fight the good fight and stand as champions to an honorable cause.

In Solidarity

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## **Suppression of a VOICE**

by John Goschka  
UAW 699 Retiree

Good morning to the hero's of this great movement of the workers and retirees who are making their VOICE heard again.

**WE ARE THE WORKERS, THE MIGHTY MIGHTY WORKERS.**

Our VOICE has been slowly but surely put into silence over the years. We must regain that VOICE and never allow it to be suppressed again.

The unions in America were formed to represent and protect the workers and retirees in this great nation of ours. They were to be our bargaining voice and were formed to serve the VOICE of the membership who pay union dues to be heard.

Slowly but surely over the years the union representatives have

MADE themselves LEADERS. They have placed themselves to be IN CHARGE of and or IN COMMAND of the membership who pay for representation. Leaders WILL NOT represent. They will lead and take command. The VOICE will NOT be heard.

I would ask why our local union representation will do nothing until they hear from their LEADERS? You have heard this comment on the television and news many times over the past few months and will continue to hear it. WE must put a stop to it.

THEY ARE NOT OUR LEADERS. They are our representation. The WORKERS are the LEADERS and pay for representation. Our local union is looking in the wrong direction. They should be listening to the membership and directing our VOICE “UP” to OUR highest representation.

I will tell you that over the years that I worked for GM/Delphi even management recognized the role of our union. I was ALWAYS asked if I wanted union REPRESENTATION when warranted. I was NEVER asked if I wanted to talk to my LEADERS.

Have you ever gone to a union meeting to have your VOICE heard? If you talk the talk that our union representation wants to hear, you will see the smiles and pearly whites shining from the podium. You be allowed to talk.

Use your Voice to be heard on a subject that the union representation DOES NOT want to hear and your VOICE will be silenced. You will then see their twisted faces and the fangs will appear in place of the pearly whites. Try it.

Our representation must be held accountable. They must read the bylaws of the UAW Constitution and follow them. They must read our contract books and follow them.

How many of our representatives can go to our contract book and show you where it says in writing what they are telling you? LOL!! Most of them have no clue as to what’s in the contract. YOU must hold them accountable!!!!

WE the membership must get our VOICE back. The VOICE must go “UP” to OUR representatives. THEY ARE NOT OUR LEADERS. The VOICE must go “UP” in order to have democracy within our union.

WE must FIGHT to get this basic right back for our membership.

WE want a true democracy not a dictatorship. OUR VOICE has been subdued. FIGHT to get that VOICE back so that you are never left in the dark again.

You have the RIGHT to know what our representatives are negotiating or planning in these times of uncertainty. YOUR VOICE IS NOT BEING HEARD. OUR VOICE IS NOT BEING HEARD. WHY NOT!!!

WE ARE THE WORKERS, THE MIGHTY MIGHTY WORKERS. LISTEN TO WHAT WE SAY OR THERE'LL BE HELL TO PAY. YOU can make this happen. Will you? YOU have the VOICE to make this happen. WE have the UNITED VOICE to make this happen.

Do YOU want to make this happen???? Then "ROAR" workers of the world, "ROAR." The courts have been bought and paid for. Our politicians have been bought and paid for.

"ROAR" and be heard. "ROAR" and your VOICE will be heard. The world can't function without the WORKERS. THIS IS TRUTH. "ROAR" and get democracy back. "ROAR" for all of the injustices that are being done to US. "ROAR" and continue to "ROAR" until OUR collective VOICE is heard once again.

No more "FAST TRACK" voting on contracts. NO MORE CONCESSIONS. YOU, the UAW IEB are our representatives. YOU ARE NOT OUR LEADERS. WE, THE "WORKERS" ARE THE LEADERS. LISTEN TO WHAT WE SAY OR THERE'LL BE HELL TO PAY!!!!!!!!!!!!

In Solidarity

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## **We Are the Workers**

Good morning to my heros who fight for the workers and retirees in this great world of ours.

I tried out the new "We are the workers" song when we were at the protest rally in Detroit last Monday and it appeared to be well received.

This was my first attempt to use this song and after singing it a few times I felt that it should have more of a message in it. The people that were at that rally know the tune of the song.

I'm presenting an updated version of the song and will use it at a future protest rally if there is no objection to the wording in it.

Everywhere we go  
People want to know  
Who we are  
What we stand for  
So we tell them  
We are the workers  
The mighty, mighty workers  
No more paycuts  
No more givebacks  
No more suffering  
No more pain  
What we want  
Are our gains  
Work to rule  
Work to win  
That's our motto  
For your sin  
No more lies  
No more sorrow  
We will fight you  
Till we win  
We are the workers  
The mighty, mighty workers  
Listen to what we say  
There'll be hell to pay

In Solidarity  
John Goschka  
Local 699 Retiree

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## Live Bait & Ammo # 73

by Gregg Shotwell

While soldiers of solidarity chanted, “Steve Miller’s got to go!” I chewed synthetic lasagna warmed to room temp. I didn’t eat anything that touched the meatballs, they looked like freeze dried “Colorado oysters” and I eschewed the coffee which emanated an aroma reminiscent of high school biology class. A levy of polite manners subdued the normal aggressiveness of the free enterprise crowd but my appetite was in a self protective mode, wary and circumspect. I could have been described by security guards as the guy with “a small dark look in his face.”

While the corporati wallowed in the warm sty of mutual flattery, the industrial landscape of Detroit disintegrated all around us and a cold rain descended on the luckless and the damned. The third world status of Detroit’s inner city is emblematic of cities all over the United States. The deterioration is not accidental, it is not the by-product of capitalism’s vaunted “creative destruction.” The destitution was engineered for a purpose: to control labor costs. Solidarity House is surrounded by sweatshops.

On the dais Miller appeared to be enjoying himself. In Steve’s World that’s all there is to enjoy. Despite our differences which are both wide and substantial, Steve Miller and I do have some points of agreement.

**Point of Agreement #1: No partnership between union and management.**

Unlike Gettelfinger who displays all the social movement of a chicken crossing the road (Must you ask why?), Miller makes no bones about the adversarial relationship between union and management. On October 8, 2005 Miller shot jointness right between the eyes. An obituary notice was nailed to the door post of every GM-UAW local union hall.

On March 31, 2006 when Miller petitioned the court to void the

union contracts, I actually considered sending him a thank you card. Miller has done more to organize shopfloor resistance than anyone in the UAW.

## **#2: The problem isn't globalization.**

I agree. The problem is domestic. We have failed to organize and the litany of excuses can't withstand the scrutiny of history.

Was it easy when Walter Reuther got his head busted open at the Battle of the Overpass? Was it easy when he took a double barrel shotgun blast in the back? Was it easy when Victor Reuther was shot in the face and blinded in one eye? Was it easy for John L. Lewis to tell the Governor of Michigan that if he sent in the National Guard to oust sitdown strikers that 'the militia will have the pleasure of shooting me, too'? It has never been easy. It has never been fair. The bosses have never been nice. We can talk partnership until the outhouse blooms roses, but it won't change the stink of the bastards in charge of our livelihoods. [Live Bait & Ammo #31: excerpt from a speech made at the 33<sup>rd</sup> UAW Constitutional Convention]

The UAW should have built a union hall across the street from every transplant in America. Instead we built a golf course at our Family Education Center in Black Lake, MI. Our UAW International reps have turned into caddies for "economic hitmen" like Miller, Wagoner, and Ford.

Miller said, "Globalization gets blamed for this outcome but it is only part of the story." The full story is, as Miller notes, less than 20% of the auto parts industry is organized. Only two of the foreign transplants located in the U.S. are organized. Instead of organizing workers the UAW formed a partnership with the Corps. As a result, rather than taking workers out of the competition which is the goal of unionism, workers are subjected to "a competitive cost structure and modern operating agreements" which impoverish families and strip workers of their dignity.

Miller notes that transplants are competing "in our backyard with good pay and benefits and flexible work rules." He declares that "productivity has perhaps been more important than basic wage levels in overturning the established order." He conveniently ignores the enormous productivity gains of UAW workers. We make as many

vehicles and/or parts as we did before with half as many workers. “Flexible work rules” is simply coded language for unrestricted authority to whip the horses, and purge solidarity, democracy, and equality from the workplace.

The competitive disadvantage of domestic auto makers in the U.S. is a consequence of the UAW’s failure to organize which begs the question: Why would anyone want to join a union that is partners with the boss and bargains for concessions?

If the UAW doesn’t take a stand at Delphi, a stand that unites GM and Delphi UAW members and the broader community of uninsured and unsecured workers and retirees, the union busting plan embodied by Miller’s brand of vulture capitalism will spread like an epidemic. Retreat is not an option when your back is against the wall.

**# 3: Miller recognizes we need ‘Broader based health care programs.’**

I agree. Where we differ on health care is that for Miller it means transferring the cost from employers to workers. For soldiers of solidarity it means universal health care.

Miller said that when workers retired at age “65 and then died at age 76”...the social contract inherent in these programs seemed affordable. In The World According to Steve, now that we stand a chance of actually enjoying our fair share of those benefits, it’s unreasonable.

He explained that in the old days “employers passed along the costs to customers.” But now “since their customers won’t pay for it when they have choices,” it’s not viable. Miller asserts, “somebody has to pay” and it isn’t going to be him and his gang of shrugging Atlases.

Miller’s reasoning is fallacious. First of all, Toyota isn’t selling vehicles cheaper than GM. So “choices” that customers make have nothing to do with health care or pensions. They make choices based on personal preferences, not an automaker’s legacy costs. But more significantly, the customer is getting double billed.

As Miller explained, when the promises were made, the cost was shifted to consumers. Where is that money now? Rather than fulfilling their responsibility to retirees by setting the money aside in a trust fund, GM squandered it. GM like Delphi spent our legacy on assets overseas and extravagant compensation for executives. Now Miller proposes



passing the legacy cost on to taxpayers so that consumers will in effect pay for the same thing twice.

If taxpayers are going to get stuck with the bill, the investment should have a commensurate return, i.e., health care for everyone not just the privileged few. Furthermore, the return should ensure a level playing field for all employers. National health care is the only viable social-economic solution to the crisis in American industry and our communities.

If UAW members resist health care concessions and connect the struggle to all of the uninsured people in America, we may be able to leverage the automakers into support for national health care. The idea is not improbable. GM's 2004 annual report to stock holders stated: ...we need to encourage access to affordable healthcare coverage for all our citizens. It's simply not acceptable for over 45 million Americans to be without healthcare coverage. This causes a tremendous cost shift to those that do provide coverage, through higher bills to cover the costs of the uninsured.

Neither Delphi workers nor the UAW as a whole can succeed without broad public support. Such support will not come until the UAW is perceived as a partner in the pursuit of social and economic justice for all, not just their own members. The success of organizing in the thirties was due in part to the public's recognition that unions promote the common good. We will succeed in organizing and bargaining when the needs of the broader community dovetail with the goals of the union. Forty-five million Americans need our support.

The tide that raises all boats is social movement unionism; that is, a strategy of confrontation that links the struggle of one group with the struggle of all groups; a strategy of concerted activity that ensures a victory for one [GM-Delphi] is a victory for all; a strategy for striking action that rings the bell of liberty and justice in every American's heart.

Miller's attack is not confined to Delphi. His goal is the degradation of all working people. Miller insists we can no longer afford to pay good wages and benefits. Soldiers of solidarity see it differently. Our society can no longer afford extravagant rewards for fraud and incompetence. We can no longer afford to allow our legacy to be shipped overseas while our own citizens are deprived of a decent standard of living,

quality education, health care, and security in retirement. We can no longer afford to support vulture capitalists. We can no longer tolerate the bullshit that pervades The World According to Steve by Steve Miller. (sos, shotwell)

<http://www.soldiersofsolidarity.com/files/livebaitammo/lba73.html>

[www.soldiersofsolidarity.com](http://www.soldiersofsolidarity.com) [www.futureoftheunion.com](http://www.futureoftheunion.com)

Order your “Miller Isn’t Worth a Buck” t-shirts at:

[GreggShotwell@aol.com](mailto:GreggShotwell@aol.com)

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## **Powerful Interests Stifle Innovation**

### **Government, Business Conspire to Kill Electric Car Technology**

by Ronda Hauben

General Motors Corporation and its offspring parts operation Delphi are currently laying off more than 50,000 unionized workers in the U.S. The companies claim that their North American operations are not profitable, and GM claims that it has to do the layoffs since it is losing market share for its cars.

Given the problems that GM claims it is having in its North American operations, the newly released film “Who Killed the Electric Car?” offers a helpful framework from which to view the automaker’s current actions.

The film tells a little-known but significant story about corporate America and the U.S. government’s failure to support innovation. Few in the U.S. or elsewhere know that GM had produced and leased 800 electric cars, which dotted the roads of California in the second half of the 1990s.

This was a new and functioning technology, the charged-at-home battery operated automobiles. The EV1 proved not only a viable technology but also a joy to the drivers. Yet, by 2006, all the cars, with the exception of a few hidden away in some museums, had been sent by GM to a crushing station in the Arizona desert.

By this time, though, a set of activists who had leased the cars and had come to love them, were monitoring what GM was doing. The fact that GM chose to destroy the cars rather than welcome the support of and enthusiastic reception by their users, highlights the disdain with which GM treated a new technology that could have revolutionized its industry and the corporation.

The film was released June 30, 2006, for viewers in New York and California, and will be shown throughout the U.S. in the coming months. It raises some serious and important questions about the nature of corporate-government collusion in the U.S. when it comes to the ability of a society to transition to a new technology. This was similar to a problem that plagued the former Soviet Union. The story of what happened when a functioning electric car was introduced in the U.S. helps to show the forces at play that are hostile to a society's ability to embrace a new and needed technology.

The story starts in California in 1990. Plagued by high levels of smog that were very damaging to the health of its residents, the California Air Resource Board (CARB) adopted a regulation called the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) mandate. This government entity set a series of goals for automakers selling cars in the state. It required them to produce a percentage of cars with zero emissions. The regulation would require that automakers sell 2% ZEV's in 1998, 5% in 2001 and 10% in 2003.

In January of 1990, GM introduced a car powered by a battery at the Los Angeles Auto Show. The car was later called the EV1 (Electric Vehicle). By December 1996, GM made cars available on lease for U.S. \$400-\$500 a month. Later the lease rate was reduced to \$250-\$300 a month.

By 2000, GM was leasing 800 of the EV1s it had produced. Those leasing them found them enjoyable to drive and that they needed much less maintenance than older model cars. The batteries could be charged in one's garage overnight. There was no need to purchase gasoline or to do maintenance like oil changes. Though GM did not yet mass-produce the cars nor provide favorable publicity to let people know that they were an option for drivers, there were a number of people who learned of the cars and were willing to go through the hurdles put up by GM to

be able to lease a car.

The reluctance of GM to advertise the cars and offer them to drivers, however, is part of a larger story. The California regulations were an incentive for GM and other automakers to invest in and develop new technology. The state of California subsidized each EV1 leased in California. The automakers, however, did not welcome such incentives. Instead, they formed a trade organization, the American Automotive Manufacturing Association (AAMA) and set out to try to stymie the regulations.

In March 1995, the AAMA circulated a confidential proposal to develop a “grassroots education campaign” to repeal the CARB ZEV program. Andrew Card was then the president of the AAMA. He would subsequently become chief of staff in the George W. Bush White House, when the U.S. Department of Justice joined the GM and Daimler Chrysler lawsuit to end the CARB ZEV requirements.

In January 2002, GM, Daimler Chrysler and several auto dealerships sued CARB in U.S. District Court in Fresno, California, to repeal the ZEV mandate. In October 2002, the U.S. Department of Justice filed a “friend of the court brief” supporting the auto companies. The auto companies claimed that California could not require zero emissions, as this was an interference with the right of the federal government to regulate fuel economy standards.

Also, the Bush administration gave support to fuel cell vehicle technology, providing big financial incentives for research. Such technology, however, will take many years to develop, while the electric car technology was already functioning.

In 2002, Alan C. Lloyd, the chair of CARB, was named chair of the California Fuel Cell Partnership. This meant that Lloyd had a conflict of interest with regard to providing support for electric cars, as he headed an organization promoting a competing technology. Yet, Lloyd chaired the April 2003 CARB meeting, which decided to revise the ZEV mandate. Automakers no longer had the incentive to produce electric cars.

With this change in the regulation, GM announced that it would not renew the leases on the EV1 cars. It reclaimed the vehicles and towed those it had trouble reclaiming because of opposition to the removal of

the EV1s from operation.

The disappointed former lessees of the cars used the Internet to form a group of activists hoping to save their cars from destruction. They offered to buy the cars and release GM from any obligation to repair them, or other liability, but GM refused the offer.

In March 2005, the cars were loaded onto trucks, despite the efforts of some of the activists to block the final trip of the cars to the crusher.

The film is important since it documents the powerful forces that came together in the U.S. to thwart the development and adoption of a vitally needed new technology. It sets out to understand how an automobile that didn't pollute and that didn't rely on oil could be destroyed by the company that successfully produced it. Though not a typical detective plot, the film offers the viewer a cast of suspects to consider when trying to understand how the crime was committed.

Not surprisingly, GM, the Bush Administration, and Bush's former Chief of Staff, Andrew Card, are among the suspects. So is Alan Lloyd, who presided over the hearing where the ZEV mandate was butchered. Another suspect is the oil industry. The film documents how the oil industry bought up the battery technology that made the EV1 work, not to develop it, but to suppress it.

The film offers other suspects. It fails to indict the press, however, and the fact that there was little media attention to the fight by the activists against the destruction of an important new technology. There was little media attention to the question, "Why was GM gutting a potentially highly profitable component of its operations?"

GM and its offspring Delphi are currently the subject of various federal government investigations about their questionable accounting practices, which have misrepresented expenses and unsold cars, thus inflating profits. The opportunity that GM had to pioneer a new and desired technology was thrown into the crusher.

At a time when the U.S. government is occupying Iraq in order to control its oil, among other geopolitical aims, the promise of an automobile not dependent on oil is all the more desirable to the many Americans who oppose the war in Iraq.

Just as the Bush administration conducted a disinformation campaign to deceive public opinion about its reasons for invading Iraq,

so GM has conducted a disinformation campaign to deceive public opinion about its reasons for destroying the electric car it had produced and successfully put into operation.

The film helps to highlight the great need for media that will shine a light on corporate and government plans to subvert the public interest. In the absence of functioning mass media doing the needed investigative journalism, it is a welcome event to have the production and showing of a film like “Who Killed the Electric Car?”

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## **Citizen Model for the Study of the Internet**

**New Technology Demands New Paradigm, Methodology**

by Ronda Hauben

[Editor’s note: The Presidency of the European Union (EU) rotates among its member states every six months. In July 2006, Finland will assume the presidency for the second time. Recently Ronda Hauben was at a conference on “Technology and Rethinking European Borders” in Lappeenranta, Finland.<sup>1</sup> The theme of the conference related to the problem of borders and the role that technology has played in the construction of the European Union. Following is an edited version of her talk presented at the conference.]

My last visit to Finland was in December 1999, when Finland last had the EU presidency. I was invited to speak at a very interesting conference of NGOs from all over Europe that took place in Tampere, Finland. The title of the conference was “Citizen’s Agenda NGO Forum 2000.”<sup>2</sup> It was held to herald in the new millennium. Some at the conference had just returned from the 1999 World Trade Organization (WTO) protests in Seattle in the U.S.

The Citizen’s Agenda NGO Forum 2000 put on the table the problem that citizens in Europe, as well as citizens in the U.S. (as shown in Seattle), were feeling the problem of a lack of power. The EU conference demonstrated the efforts of citizens to pressure their

governments to maintain the social institutions and policies so vital to the fight against the harmful effects of globalization. I presented a talk at the conference exploring the question of whether the Internet could be helpful for citizens. The talk was titled, “Is the Internet a Laboratory for Democracy?”

In July 2006 Finland will again assume the Presidency of the EU. The problem of the citizen is again an issue in the EU, as it is in the U.S. What, if any, is the connection between this conference on the history of technology and European borders and the problem of the citizen in 2006?

The paper I submitted for this conference discusses the history of the Internet and the role that it has played in helping to make it possible for the citizen to communicate across the borders of diverse networks.<sup>3</sup> I want to propose that at its essence, the Internet is about communication – communication across borders. Similarly, communication is vital to those who desire to act as citizens in these times.

The Citizen’s Agenda Forum demonstrated that the border that citizens have to be able to cross in their communication is the border posed by their elected representatives, who all too often are not interested in hearing the ideas and views of the citizens. This problem – finding a way to have the representative system recognize a means of involving citizens in the decisions that are made – is a problem that was identified and discussed at the workshop, “Civic Participation, Virtual Democracy and the Net” held during the Citizen’s Agenda 2000 Forum. Research exploring whether the Internet could help citizens to bridge the borders blocking such communication was discussed.<sup>4</sup>

The problem of involving the citizens in the affairs of the EU, which was the subject of the Citizen Agenda Forum in 1999, had similarly been the focus of research and discussion in the EU in 1995-96. The debate over the ratification of the Maastricht treaty “revealed that there was still a degree of skepticism about European Integration” among the citizens of Europe, explains the EU document “Preparing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” The authors of this document explain that the “Maastricht Treaty makes citizenship an evolving concept.”

In a paper published in 1996, after the meeting of the EU’s Intergovernmental Conference, “The 1996 IGC: European Citizenship

Reconsidered,” Leszek Jesien, a researcher and advisor to the Polish government on EU integration, explores the problem of creating a European form of citizenship.<sup>5</sup>

Jesien argues that the bedrock principle of democracy is what legitimizes a government, and that is the “principle that power can be held and governance exercised only with the consent of the governed.”

A sign that there is a lack of such legitimacy, he proposes, is when “men and women distrust the institutions of their state.” Thus, Jesien identifies as a necessary aspect of democratic legitimacy “the need to find modern ways for [the] proper expression of the political will of the citizens.”

In the course of his research Jesien identified the ability to participate in the affairs of the state as the essential aspect of citizenship. But he still had a problem of determining how there could be a form of citizenship that was different from that of belonging to a nation.

To solve the problem, Jesien proposed as a model the role of the netizen – Internet users who act as citizens of the Net. Jesien recognized that the netizen was an active participant in the affairs of the Net. Jesien referred to the work of Michael Hauben, co-author of the book *Netizens: On the History and Impact of Usenet and the Internet*. Hauben did pioneering research which provided a conceptual foundation for the social phenomenon of the netizen.

In his paper about European construction, Jesien quotes Hauben’s description of the netizen:

Netizens are Net Citizens...these people are...those who...make [the Net] a resource of human beings. These netizens participate to help make the Net both an intellectual and a social resource.

Jesien recognized that just as the EU was having trouble determining how to develop a concept of citizenship, a related form of citizenship was being developed online. Jesien wrote:

At the time the European Union struggles to shape the European citizenship with much effort and little success, the other citizenship – Netizenship emerges.

What a rare researcher Jesien is, able to not only identify the significant aspect of the problem he was pursuing, but also to see a



model for a solution from what would seem on the surface to be an unrelated phenomenon. Jesien proposed that European “negotiators and...political leaders should look at this phenomenon with sympathy and attention.”

I have taken a significant portion of the time allotted for my talk to focus on one aspect of my paper. I believe that this aspect is worthy of the time for several reasons. One is that it focuses on a serious problem of European construction and of the crisis of democracy worldwide. A second is that once a problem was identified and studied, a solution to it was found in a model which emerged from the new technology, from the technology of the Internet. Third is that there is something new and significant to be learned from paying attention to technology and to the social phenomena which emerge as a result of the technology.

While this example on the surface doesn't refer to the problem of borders or boundaries, the relevance to the theme of this conference becomes clearer when one considers that an essential aspect of the Internet has to do with the problem of making communication possible across the borders or boundaries of dissimilar but interconnected networks.

My paper describes the means found to solve the communication problem facing the Internet pioneers. Their breakthrough was the design and creation of gateways to perform the functions needed to support communication across the borders or boundaries of dissimilar networks.

While the design of these gateways is only a part of the design for the Internet, it helps to demonstrate that a significant technical model was developed to help to solve the problem of communication across boundaries or borders of dissimilar networks. (One could add that an aspect of the problem was that these early computer networks were or would be under the political ownership and administration of diverse entities.) Similarly, the netizen provides a model for a social phenomenon that has made it possible to solve the problem of citizenship across borders or boundaries, a problem Jesien identified as relevant to EU construction.

I am proposing that the study of the origin and development of the Internet and of the netizen is a fruitful arena for research, as something new has been created and the research can make it possible to learn

about the newly emerging technology and the newly emerging social processes that it brings into being.

Not only is the study of the Internet a means of learning about collaboration across technical and social borders or boundaries, it is also true that the Internet provides a platform to nourish and support such collaborative research.

The significance of this research is highlighted by some observations about the nature and needs of new technology like the Internet that are presented in the work of a British researcher writing about the history of technology and engineering. In his article “Engineering Disclosing Models,” Michael Duffy argues that not only is it important to recognize the nature of the new and emerging technical and engineering developments, but also that the research to document these new developments will require new models and methodologies.<sup>6</sup>

Duffy argues that these new engineering and technical developments represent a change in the conceptual paradigm as fundamental as the change described in the book *The Elizabethan World Picture* by Tillyard. This book described the changed paradigm in the Elizabethan period that made it possible to discard the models of the old world of fire, air, earth, and water, and to substitute in their place a science that would focus on the nature of the phenomena being observed in order to determine their underlying principles and scientific laws. This paradigm, Duffy explains, led to the discovery of thermodynamics and mechanics and other scientific explanations that made possible the industrial revolution. Duffy proposes that the new technologies of our time are very different from the machines and systems which built and powered the former phases of industrialization.

Similarly, the new kinds of industry and technology being created require a new conceptual apparatus adequate for interpreting the new physical and biological phenomena. I would add that a new conceptual apparatus is needed to understand and develop the social phenomena that the new technology brings into being.

There is, Duffy argues, a need for a new history of engineering and technology and a new methodology that will focus on concepts and models as the basis for this new history. Essential for this is a need to focus on the actual technology and the new social forms that emerge as

part of these developments. I want to propose that the new technologies like the Internet also require a new research agenda to support the study and understanding of the changes that they have introduced into our society.

Even the simplest model can affect a revolution, Duffy observes, referring to the importance of the application of the model of the semi-permeable membrane from chemistry being transferred to describe the model of the heart by diastolic and systolic action.

Similarly, the model of gateways and the netizen are significant new models to help open up the study of communication across boundaries or borders of dissimilar systems. Citizens seeking to find a way to impact the decisions made in their society may well find that they can learn from the experiences and models that have developed on the Internet.

Just as Duffy is arguing for a new methodology appropriate to the study of new engineering developments, so I want to argue for such a new methodology for the study of the Internet that will focus on what is new, on how it was created, and on what its impact has been. As Geoff Long, in a book chapter titled, “Why the Internet Still Matters for Asia’s Democracy,” argues:

“The Internet is fundamentally different from any previous media communications technology.... The Internet was developed using a participatory model that has its own democratic traditions.... The Internet itself is still evolving...the full story has yet to be written.”<sup>7</sup>

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#### Notes:

1. For the program of the conference see “Launch of the Tensions of Europe Research Programme,” Lappeenranta, Finland May 24. <http://www.lut.fi/eki/toe2006/files/26.pdf>
2. The Citizens’ Agenda NGO Forum 2000 was held from the 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> of December 1999 in Tampere, Finland.
3. See “Communicating Across the Boundaries of Dissimilar Networks: The Creation of the Internet and the Emergence of the Netizen.”
4. See, for example, Seija Ridell, “Manse Forum: a local experiment with web-mediated civic publicness” [PDF]; Lasse Peltonen, “Civic forums, virtual publicness and practices of local democracy”; Ronda Hauben, “Is the Internet a Laboratory for Democracy?”

5. Leszek Jesien, "The 1996 IGC: European Citizenship Reconsidered."
6. Michael Duffy, "Engineering Disclosing Models," *Helvelieus*, edited by Oktawian Nawrot, University of Gdansk, 2004, pp. 22-64.
7. From *Asian Cyberactivism*, edited by Steven Gan et al, 2004, p. 72.

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