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Worldwide Media Regulation

Media Regulation functions in the US embodied by the FCC, to protect the spectrum as a public good and in that the body has had a share of successes and failures in passing legislation for the public's safety and benefit. Similarly foreign governments have established outlets to further communication and ensure the fullest access to information by the citizens. My purpose will be to inform you of the change over the last 70 years of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) in protecting incumbents of media to inciting competition amongst conglomerates. It will be important to recognize its replication within foreign countries and how basic human rights are important to protecting our access to creating and communicating with public electronic goods.

1. The FCC is made up of scientists, public relations, IT specialists, lawyers, broadcasters, programmers, engineers, audiovisual specialists, governing representatives, members of the public and many other interdisciplinary roles. Currently, the Commissioner of the FCC is Aijit Pai and he and other commissioners of the past have long-standing cases where federal courts have rendered their positions feasible in appeals. He introduced the rocket docket, to get to speed up decision making.
2. The FCC started to regulate radio broadcasting, for the sake of naval and air travel safety. Marconi created long distance radio transmission with other physicists in the 1890’s. The FCC (FRC) passed the Radio Communications Act of 1912 to protect certain frequencies from interference. In 1927, Federal Radio Commission roles to mandate the airwaves became relevant and responsible for

“descrambling signals in close radius,” making sure people were broadcasting from their stations at the right hours with tuning to the right frequencies and resonances(2). The Federal Radio Commission did complex things like specifically widening the spectrum to 550kHz -1500kHz, and depended on advertisers’ revenue to finance progressive commercial radio. The FRC issues licenses mainly to well financed stations rather than non-commercial stations. Commercial broadcasting dominates radio. In the 1940s and 1950s The FCC regulated heavily broadcast TV frequencies as well, attempting to provide audience share for UHF (ultra high frequency) and not just VHF (very high frequency). The FCC limited RCA (Radio Corporation of America) and NBC (National Broadcasting Company), and provided over 40 new channels for FM (frequency modulated radio). This decision was overturned in 1945 in favor of RCA’s television program sitting in just “12 channels of VHF.” (4) UHF would be seated with more of television’s channels later. Color standard also went to RCA’s NTSC over CBS’s color standard. “It would be hard to overemphasize the importance of the 1945 decisions that stemmed from these hearings. Much of their structure remains, and they are the source of many of today’s problems.” More oligopolies and less local programming on broadcast television occured in the 1960’s and 1970’s. FM radio without its creator was given a chance to rise in the ‘60s with more cable television. UHF never saw a larger share of television then. Cable got a policy to grow in major markets in the mid 1970s and early 1980s, a natural monopoly. A wide range of broadcasters, equipment industrialists and consumptive partners noted that “startup, coordination and splintering problems (in the cable tv industry) are more severe than those of other industries.” Fixed costs became the cables themselves, but the cable boxes were less expensive. They and the installing employees became a matter of the marginal cost. Cable companies have a massive fixed cost to build and promote their service to potential customers. Mergers were based on the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, and 40 companies quickly became 3 over 15 years. This overall has introduced some natural monopolies due to the nature of the industry, and also helped broadcasters further reach their content to satellite viewers. Satellite television was low cost to maintain and was allowed to run broadcast programs to distanced viewers by rule of the FCC. DBS could then offer cable services to its consumers on non-discriminatory terms, and the long term affordability prompted more users to go with direct broadcast satellites. The biggest issue that transpired was that the FCC had not accounted for the impact of the weather on the signal transmissions. Time and time again, the FCC has made the decision to let market factors control the adaptation the conglomerates face to fix a technological problem and to decide what standards to adopt to compete for consumers and cooperate. Less resistance to cable increased to stimulate new technology development, and promote employment and training to support universal service and promote delivery of telecommunications services to underserved rural and urban areas.

3. They prompted commercial and public access to citizens and moved the channels of broadcast television to make room for mobile carriers in the 1990's. and funded safety labeled and improved electronic transmission lines for telephone companies. They helped realize the Cartephone which lead to the development of companies like IBM and those who created the modem in regard to the deregulation of the customer premises equipment. Sales of product "Since deregulation, prices for this equipment have fallen, and as prices declined, sales increased. Sales of cordless telephones, for example, increased from approximately 4 million units in 1985 to 9 million units in 1992." (3) For example, at the time of the Carterfone decision, technology experts were developing "sophisticated data communications networks using combinations of dialup modems with acoustical couplers (rather than the direct connections that Carterfone allowed) and private lines with directly connected modems—all connecting to, for example, the early timesharing computers," (5) to create what was known as Remote Access Data Processing. In addition, public packet switching was also developed in the form of X.25 networks that preceded the development of the Internet. This goes to show that the FCC was integral in getting companies interested in services that otherwise would have been ignored. Another great example to mention is that the FCC has dealt with CDMA and GSM carrier lock ins for physical hardware, to make sure consumers can switch and won't get stuck with a plan and phone they are subjected to. The FCC has been responsible for rolling back and managing its own attempts to overly

manage and promote to a market share of consumers looking for mobile communications platforms, the best America can offer.

The FCC also had its share of government overextension in it's lawwriting when trying to correct broadcasters and internet forums that air extreme, incorrect or somehow improper political, economic or social statements. They couldn't not pass the 1998 Telecom Act due to the definitions in it being too generalized, not written specifically to a particular type of Internet privateer. It did try again to expand the investment of advanced telecommunications capabilities to all Americans, especially those in elementary and middle and high schools by removing “barriers to infrastructure investment,” (7). People use communications equipment on a daily basis, and it is relevant to think through the tools of radio, cable, broadcast, and satellite television, private / public access internet that resourceful people, places, or countries at first will prioritize what should be regulated and not what is promoted, which suggests that democracies do their best nurture economic affairs as a team promoting certain trends of action in regards to private investment. The only way newspapers could make money more off their small reader shares subscription was by selling their readers information to manufacturers and advertisers. Radio could sell time to advertisers and receive money from the product sales. Some trade agreements could get natural monopolies, depending on the delivery of the services. Broadly speaking, the FCC is important in ensuring new innovation and leadership in media regulation of US content stays relevant to the path that the companies take in relation to the public good that is the spectrum. The only issue that the public encounters most often is that the involvement of the government in the organization and production of media becomes cloaked in claims of censorship and state domination. The FCC was surely interested in growing RCA, If we are to follow that “democractic government is not just people voting, but rather the collections of their valued habits, beliefs,” (1) and controls, then in developing nations outside the US, the local media has to compete with the media conglomerates in more developed countries for public opinion over the internet, which is almost a form of antithetical freedom, like cable companies. If people have the resources, as the FCC did to invest time and effort into learning about, understanding, and seeking out the neutralities of communications technology, then they are able to execute their perspective in media, while other alternative think tanks and regulating bodies in foreign countries that did not allow market forces to regulate insurance of a fair market for the people using US - based Internet service providers. Accountability must be recognized in that unfair, competitive and deceptive practices do exist like not disclosing data caps on mobile broadband networks. If companies were to leech customers on their internet usage for cable broadband ISP, Our regulating body on Internet service providers, the FCC, stated less than two years ago that returning to the Internet Freedom Order would promptly require ISPs to disclose to consumers all network practices upfront to consumers, to see if their needs can be met. The FCC is there to ensure that consumers get treated fairly, and that the producers can meet the requirements that standardize them. We don’t subsidize our companies, but we don’t let them die of underexposure or acquisitioning.

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