

# AES Boston Section Newsletter

AUDIO ENGINEERING SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1998

## Looking Ahead

- Come participate in a post-convention discussion of “the state of audio” on **October 13**. See Page 4 for more details.
- On Wednesday, **November 11**, mastering engineer Bob Ludwig will be the featured speaker at Parsons Audio’s Expo 98 at the Wellesley Community Center.
- Reserve Monday, **December 7** for the traditional feast and white-elephant sale at the Needham Masonic Lodge.
- In a joint meeting with the ASA, we’ll again experiment with multi-channel recording, this time on location with a live orchestra at Boston’s Faneuil Hall on Sunday, **January 10**.

Details and location information for all meetings will appear in future newsletters and on the web.

Boston Section—Audio Engineering Society: online at [www.aes.org](http://www.aes.org)

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## Property rights and privacy may be at odds in the new world of digital media

By **MICHAEL FLEMING AND MARTIN POLON**

The 1998-99 Boston AES season began with a meeting at GTE on September 15 dedicated to current issues in intellectual property law and technology.

The two-part meeting began with a panel discussion moderated by Martin Polon, who described ongoing efforts by media distributors to protect copyrighted material (principally recorded music and video) through aggressive legislation. While certain legislation must be passed for the United States to remain compliant with the World Intellectual Property Organization Treaty and ConCORDs, most of the panelists expressed concern that industry lobbying may be threatening the freedom and privacy of media consumers.

A basic question raised by panelist David Moulton is “whether copyright is a regulatory tool or a proprietary right.” The answer to this question, he asserted, fundamentally determines how Congress should enforce copyright law.

Meanwhile, as Polon explained, media distributors have responded to the ease with which end-users can copy and transmit digitally-encoded information by introducing software “cookies” and watermarks into internet transactions. After a discussion of earlier anti-copying schemes such as Copy-Code Scanning and the Serial Copy Management System, panelist Scott Frederickson, a professor of music business at the University of Massachusetts, described the inevitable danger of “hard-wire cookies,” which might take the form of chip-sets or duplex connections in VCRs, TVs and computers.

As Polon noted, privacy “may be damned” if Federal law were to make it a crime to remove, alter or circumvent either hard or soft cookies. Although it sounds like a futuristic scenario, he explained that software “agents” are already capable of patrolling the internet and querying cookies on individual computers for signs of bootleg recordings or illegal transactions.

Panelist and radio marketing specialist Jeffrey Rosenburg expressed surprise that consumer electronics firms appear fairly

passive in the face of legislation that might, by regulating copying functions, restrict the development and sales of new technology. But according to panelist Bill Bauer, who studies entertainment marketing, movie studios and publishers have effectively expressed the opinion that their rights to protect their property supersede the rights of individual consumers.

In wrapping up this part of the presentation, Polon concluded that pending legislation seems to ignore consumer protections previously established both here and in the European Community.

The second half of the evening consisted of a presentation by Joseph Winograd from Aris Technologies, which has developed a sophisticated audio-watermarking system marketed under the name MusiCode. Provided such a technology is robust and audibly-transparent, Winograd explained, it could be used for a variety of anti-piracy, copy-management and accounting functions.

Winograd reported great success in Aris’s technique for perceptually-encoding audio samples with numerous short, unique data markers which remain legible to monitoring decoders despite repeated digital-to-analog conversion and vice versa, data compression, radio broadcast and even loudspeaker reproduction.

As a concluding demonstration, he loaded a CD player with an encoded music disc and fed the signal to a small FM transmitter. A separate receiver both played the music to the audience and fed a laptop running the decoding software. Within seconds of starting a track on the CD, the laptop displayed the Industry Standard Recording Code (ISRC) that had been encoded into the signal.

Given the context provided by the evening’s discussion, it should be no surprise that many distributors and royalty-organizations are very interested in this type of watermarking technology.

Thanks are due to the panelists and Joseph Winograd for sharing their time and thoughts with the BAES.

# Confronting a patriarchal legacy

Due to distribution problems in May, only a fraction of the BAES membership received the following story. Therefore, it is being re-published here for the benefit of the entire community.

By **DAVID MOULTON**

Approximately thirty-five people attended the Boston Section AES meeting on April 14, 1998, to discuss the issue of gender inequality in the fields served by the AES. With sociologist Allan Johnson as the featured speaker, the event proved to be a thought-provoking and highly engaging evening.

Carol Bousquet, Chair of the AES Women In Audio committee, opened the meeting with a progress report on the work of that committee. In 1995, the committee launched an initiative called *Women in Audio: Project 2000*. Since then, Bousquet reported, successful *Women In Audio* special events have been held at the American AES conventions in 1995, 1996 and 1997, with very popular "networking luncheons" as part of the programs in both 1995 and 1996.

The AES, however, has decided not to have a *Women in Audio* special event at the 1998 San Francisco convention, and the networking luncheons have also been curtailed. In contrast to this apparent decline in support, Bousquet noted that the Project 2000 committee has attracted more women to the AES and enhanced professional networking opportunities for women.

In addition, the committee has established an informal liaison with Girls Incorporated (formerly The Girls Club of America), and it has inspired the development of New England Women In Audio, a regional support group which produced a "Women's Music for Girls" fundraising concert last November for a New Hampshire chapter of Girls Incorporated.

Among further developments, a prototype Women In Audio web page is now available ([www.hyperbeat.com/wia/](http://www.hyperbeat.com/wia/)) which may become part of the main AES

website.

After dedicating the meeting to the memory of Peter Mitchell, Bousquet introduced guest speaker Allan Johnson, a sociologist on the faculty of Hartford College for Women and author of *The Gender Knot: Unraveling The Patriarchal Society*. Johnson began by noting that almost everyone knows that gender inequality exists—it is "obvious and self-evident." What most people don't know is "what to do about it."

The reason for this uncertainty, Johnson suggests, is that our culture allows gender inequality to be identified only as a *women's* problem. As such, references to men and male roles in the equation are not only taboo but capable of generating paralyzing defensiveness and other socially dysfunctional responses when broached.

To achieve progress, Johnson believes that we must talk realistically about gender inequality *without* alienating men. At present, men of goodwill typically avoid the subject of gender inequality because they (we) don't know how to acknowledge the issue without also receiving—and feeling forced to accept—blame.

Women, too, often avoid these issues in order to minimize antagonizing men. Yet in all these contexts, we use the individual as the locus of cause, assuming that evil consequences are solely the products of evil people. Johnson believes that individuals are not so much to blame as the social expectations of "patriarchy," a set of codes that guide how we live and work.

Johnson then identified our patriarchal system for what it is—a system—and for what it is *not*—men in general. Patriarchy has four primary characteristics: it is male-dominated; it is male-identified (using men and men's lives as a standard for people in general); it is centered on male activities and behaviors (here, Johnson drew from many examples of sports, movies and politics); and it relies on control as the highest value. And the real forces that keep patriarchy going appear

to be the social dynamics that exist *among* men, not between men and women.

While we are all born and raised into patriarchy, Johnson noted, this system survives because it offers a series of "paths of least resistance" that reinforce its dominance. These may range from failing to question or recognize gender-based stereotypes to consciously accepting subtle gender biases in the interest of avoiding conflict with superiors or colleagues. It doesn't occur to us that we can alter the system by refusing to take the path of least resistance.

Here, Johnson drew an analogy with the civil rights movement in the 1960s, where "paths of least resistance" were broken down on buses, at lunch counters and on public highways. By themselves, none of these actions (sitting on a bus, eating at a lunch counter or walking along a highway) were exceptional in the least, Johnson observed. What gave them their power was that they broke the social codes of the "system," leading to dramatic structural changes.

Our power as individuals, Johnson said, rests in our ability to change social rules through such actions. As a result, men's silence on the issue of patriarchy is, by itself, an extremely powerful statement.

After considerable, wide-ranging discussion with the audience, Johnson closed by asking the rhetorical question, "What can we do?" His suggestion for all of us, men and women alike, is "to break the silence" and openly acknowledge the existence of patriarchy. When stereotypes and biases are freely confronted and rationally assessed, positive change becomes almost inevitable.

Bousquet closed the meeting also urging AES members to "break the silence" by continuing this discussion, by listening to the *Women In Audio* special event audio tapes and by communicating with the Board of Governors on this issue.

More information on Allan Johnson, his workshops and writings can be found at <http://mail.hartford.edu/genderknot>.

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# George Avakian's story continues: The LP comes of age, reshaping the music industry

By DAVID MOULTON

During World War II, William Paley's CBS Sound Lab, directed by Dr. Peter Goldmark, struggled to develop a viable long-playing record. As described in last month's newsletter, Goldmark's project was abandoned in 1946, but the CBS organization finally found success in 1948, thanks to the efforts of an independent team at Columbia Records led by William Bachman. Accurate credit for the innovation, however, was never assigned to Bachman due to a political climate fueled by the personal enmity between William Paley of CBS and NBC head General David Sarnoff.

As producer George Avakian explained, in 1946—the same year Paley abandoned Goldmark's fruitless LP project—CBS had suffered another devastating setback when American industry adopted NBC's color television system instead of Goldmark's competing system. Now in 1948, Paley could not bear to admit that his CBS labs had again been outdone, this time with the successful invention of the LP by his own subsidiary!

Paley was determined that the success be attributed to the technical prowess of the CBS labs. Therefore, he publicly credited Peter Goldmark with the invention of the 33-1/3 rpm long-playing record and suppressed the central role played by William Bachman.

As George revealed, Paley was sufficiently tyrannical and obsessive that it was unthinkable to the various parties affected to try to correct this misrepresentation while Paley was alive.

For a few years, the LP had a comparatively small effect on pop music releases. Ten-inch pop LPs sold better than their

antecedent 78 rpm albums, but the pop business still depended on hit singles. Then, in 1949, the LP release of the original cast album of "South Pacific" was a groundbreaking hit. (Amazingly, the production-to-sale time was only four days! Recording began in New York on a Sunday morning; editing followed and continued through Sunday night; record pressing began at the Bridgeport factory Monday afternoon; and the first albums were in stores by Wednesday morning.)

Shortly after that, Benny Goodman brought acetates of his 1938 Carnegie Hall concert to Wallerstein, who played them for Avakian. With the project approved, Howard Scott transferred the acetates to four 12-inch LP sides which were released on Columbia's Masterworks label—its premium classical marque. While the recording continues to sell today as a jazz/pop icon, the initial success of its release opened doors for the creative marketing of long-playing pop albums.

Columbia's first original "concept" album soon followed in 1953 with Arthur Godfrey's TV Calendar Show, featuring 12 songs (one for each month) performed by members of Godfrey's "TV Family." When sales struggled with the album priced at \$4.85, Columbia realized that lower pricing was essential. By negotiating a 25-percent cut in royalties with major publishers, Columbia was able to reduce the price of pop LPs to \$3.95.

As anticipated, the price cut stimulated sales, in turn lowering manufacturing costs per unit. As George recalled, Columbia smugly made a handsome profit while its competitors wondered how long the company could continue to "lose money" by selling LPs for \$3.95!

Another successful "concept album"

artist was the pianist and entertainer Liberace, who was introduced to George Avakian by Paul Weston, Columbia's West Coast A&R producer. In this case, Liberace's albums were designed to appeal specifically to adult middle-class women. The results were spectacularly successful, and the rest is, as they say, history!

From the historical perspective, George remarked, the LP changed the record business entirely, shifting the way recordings were released from individual songs to album collections. Foreign markets which had previously exhibited no interest in American pop singles began to open to American records and artists.

During this period, Avakian produced albums as seminal and important as Duke Ellington's *Ellington Uptown*, Miles Davis' *Round Midnight* and *Miles Ahead* (with Gil Evans), Errol Garner's *Concert By The Sea*, Ellington's historic *Ellington at Newport*, Dave Brubeck's *Red Hot and Cool*, and the startlingly original and extraordinary *Music for Brass*, with Miles Davis, Gunther Schuller, John Lewis, J.J. Johnson and Jimmy Giuffre! Later on, Avakian brought Johnny Mathis, Bob Newhart, Keith Jarrett, Sonny Rollins and Mahalia Jackson into public view, to the great enrichment of us all.

What is particularly interesting about this sequence of events is how Avakian managed to guide the adaptation of popular musical genres to a radically new medium with such a sure hand, while also maintaining a technical craft and quality of production that continue to serve as examples of great recording.

Thanks George!!!  
(Part I of this story appeared in the September BAES newsletter.)

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## From the secretary: An open invitation

In addition to sponsoring regular meetings and activities in the Boston area, the BAES publishes this newsletter on a monthly basis. In case you miss a meeting, you can read all about it in these pages. And you'll always find new meeting announcements, updates and articles of interest for professionals and students alike.

We welcome your feedback, and we also welcome your contributions in the form of letters, articles and announcements. While we cannot accept commercial "advertisements," we will publish audio-related job listings and calendar items subject to timeliness and available space.

Send your e-mail to [Michael\\_Fleming@wgbh.org](mailto:Michael_Fleming@wgbh.org) or call (617) 492-2777 for more information. And be sure to visit [www.dplay.com/aes/aesbos.html](http://www.dplay.com/aes/aesbos.html) for electronic versions of this and past BAES newsletters.

—**Michael Fleming**

**Next Meeting:  
Tuesday, October 13**

## Hardware to vaporware: A convention review

By **ALEX CASE**

On October 13, the Boston Section of the Audio Engineering Society considers the results of the 105th AES convention in San Francisco (September 26-29, 1998).

If you were unable to attend the San Francisco show, attend this local meeting for an update on the most significant developments in our industry. If you did attend the show, bring along your knowledge, some opinions, your favorite preprints and any promotional literature you may have grabbed.

We'll evaluate the innovations that might truly change our business—for better or worse—and we'll try to identify the overly-marketed ideas that are bound for the landfill.

Join us to help in separating fact from fiction among the many in-

Location: Newman Auditorium  
GTE (formerly BBN)  
70 Fawcett St.  
Cambridge, MA

Off Concord Ave., near the  
Fresh Pond Shopping Center and  
the Alewife T-Station.

Reception: 6:30 p.m.  
Meeting: 7:00 p.m.

dustry trends, which include multi-channel audio, digital consoles, new tube gear, and countless digital audio workstations.

Using an open forum in which all attendees are invited to participate, this meeting is not just a chance to learn but also an opportunity to socialize and have fun.

Light dinner at 6:30 p.m. is followed by the discussion at 7 p.m.



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