

Please PIPEDOWN

The source for news about the campaign for freedom from piped music.



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Ruth Schiedermaier, editor

Hello Pipedown Supporters

I wish to remind readers that there are several places on the web that refer to the scourge of program audio, under whatever name it goes by. Readers may wish to visit the web page of Pipedown in the UK at <http://www.pipedown.info/>

Although the US organization does not currently have a web site, that could change in the future should there be enough interest in it.

Comments on Society: Media pushed on us

Unfortunately the audio portion of television media played in public is often just as loud and just as obnoxious as some program audio. Too often media offerings contain highly tonal and penetrating music that pierces through our attempts at blocking the video. Certainly some of the airport news channels have had that ability to drag us to the advertising message whether we wanted to listen or not.

Additionally program audio is often legitimized by the presence of in-store advertisements. The music is offered in between advertisements for products and services. This audio is considered necessary by the business as a 'soothing' by-product to help offset the advertisements. Music is used as an excuse to check that the PA system works.

News from readers:

There are two items to report this quarter.

The first item was a request from a reader to review his new book "Noise Wars", which appears later in this newsletter. I give this book a favorable review because it speaks to the continued approach to "push" media, including piped-in audio on people, especially captive audiences with disposable income. Along with that information I wish to refer readers to another web site:

<http://www.whitedot.org/>

The second item is the article in the October 2009 issue of Smart Money magazine concerning piped in music. This is the last article in the magazine, inside the back cover. Although Pipedown-USA has not yet grown to a large and active organization, I know from comments from my readers that the newsletter is appreciated. Although Ms. Kadet is accurate in her assessment of Pipedown USA, her reference to my negotiated quiet with my dentist is not current. The promise of "a lot of work" was useful in our first attempts at negotiating with a service provider at the time. Our current dentist agreed to turn off the music for my husband and me based upon a consultation we had when we first moved to Indianapolis, no promises of extra business were required because our dentist is a very accommodating professional.

Comment Cards

In addition to the comment cards available to hand to business owners, I also have cards that could be used to pass out to people to invite them to join Pipedown-USA. If anyone is interested in these, please send a S.A.S.E. These are nice to hand out whenever one does come across a quiet business. When noise is uninviting and you won't be returning to the store, these could also be handed to interested parties. You can do this at the same time one of the complaint cards is given to be passed on to management.

Advice: Use of Coupons

Restaurants haven't been doing as well as they once did in a booming economy. It might be a good time to remind restaurant owners and managers that they need to serve the public, not just serve food in a loud, obnoxious, noisy environment.

One idea may be to find and clip coupons, to show the restaurant that you have an interest in dining. Then if the background music proves to be too much in the foreground, you could take the coupon to the manager and tell that person you won't be using it after all. You could say something like: "The coupon brought me here but the music is driving me away"

Handing the manager the coupon plus one of the comment cards available from Pipedown-USA might be a good way to emphasize that not everyone likes the constant noise with food.

Bibliography, book review, and quote:

"Noise Wars: Compulsory Media and Our Loss of Autonomy" by Robert Freedman 2009 Algora Publishing ISBN 978-0-87586-714-4 (soft cover: alk. paper) — ISBN 978-0-87586-715-1 (hard cover: alkaline. paper) — ISBN 978-0-87586-716-8 (e-book)

1. Mass media—Social aspects. 2. Mass media—Technological innovations. 3. Advertising—Social aspects. 4. Advertising—Psychological aspects.

This book contains a thorough examination of media's intrusion into our daily lives with emphasis on this media being pushed upon us without our choice. Robert Freedman presents a laundry list of captive-media examples and identifies how we have less and less ability to control any of these.

The book has been extensively researched and various writer's ideas contributed to this book. The cited references allow for further reading and browsing by readers. Robert Freedman provides prophetic predictions, extrapolated from existing research, regarding the trends for more and more media intruding into people's lives. "If we always wait until there's evidence of a health impact, our shared environments risk becoming irresolvable battlegrounds of competing claims for a scarce resource."

I appreciated the author's emphasis on the moral dimension of forcing media on captive audiences in light of many research studies already done about TV and other media. He offers a very clear discussion of how forced media disrespects people's quiet enjoyment of their personal space, both in public and at home. He describes the difference between "Pull" media like magazines and "Push" media like televisions. Furthermore, the author promotes the need for respectful discussion by people opposed to media's intrusion.

I highly recommend 'Noise Wars' to those taking a critical look at media's impact on the commons. This truly is a quality of life issue and will grow in importance as all of us are impacted.

Available on Amazon.com for about 33 dollars. Other reviews of this book are also available on Amazon.

In the works:

Perhaps it is time to do more with the Pipedown-USA organization. The place to start may be to write an official organizational charter or other organizing documents, which would be needed to add some formality to Pipedown-USA. Please contact me if you wish to increase your level of involvement in these or other organizational activities..