

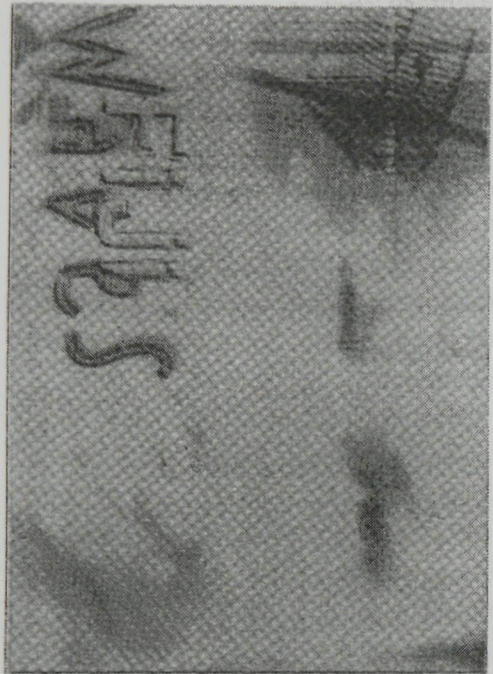
new edition is about how the Net can help that threatened industry species — freelancers.

“Even a student just coming out of university can opt for self-employment. It just takes great ideas, creativity, vision and perseverance — and not necessarily a large bank account,” Dr Quinn wrote.

“This is not an easy option, but the young ‘techno-journalists’ have the ability in the internet environment to make a living without a corporate parent.”

With the widespread industry semi-freeze on hiring new staff, this book, if you’ll pardon the old cliché, is an absolute must for any journalism student and for that matter, Net-deficient news executives.

PS: My review copy has gone to a bookshelf in Dili, East Timor — even though East Timor’s journalists still have (to their great disadvantage and the shame of the UN) very restricted Net access. □



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Frozen in time? Not so likely in tropical Fiji TV

Fiji Waves, produced/directed by Natalie Gouln. Canadian television documentary, 57min, 2001. Montreal, Quebec: Écran Total. ecrantotal@qc.aira.com

FIJI WAVES starts with a moving glimpse of Fiji. But it isn’t meant for Fijians.

In fact, the almost hour long docu-

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mentary shot in Fiji in late 1999 is meant to enlighten those that live in the “first world” — Canadian viewers.

The major and the most interesting part of the documentary deals with how globalisation, modernisation, new imperialism is affecting the minds, lifestyle and culture of the people who live in Fiji with the introduction of television.

The intro doesn't last very long and doesn't really make much sense either. Maybe it would, from a “first world” perspective, certainly not from where I stand in the so called “third world”.

It goes something like isolated, not connected, spread like flowers in the largest ocean of the world, frozen in time, giving whoever watch it a picture of the cliché “paradise island lost in time image”. Which wouldn't be very true to hang on the shoulders of Fiji. It just wouldn't fit too well.

However, there are good things to come, including the more than relevant issue of the part television plays in Fijian society. Television in all senses — including the introduction of videos and *Fiji One*.

The documentary focuses heavily on Fiji Television and shows that more than 90 percent of what is aired on Fiji TV happens to be western serials and sitcoms.

A wide range of media people and community advocates talk about the

irrelevance of the programmes we get on television, the effect of them on the Fijian society, youth, culture, traditions and way of life.

From the start of the documentary, Fijian villages, little, big and bigger Fijians come into view in close range. The romantic picture of the Pacific Islands comes into view.

This would appeal to the outside world. The documentary shows what outsiders like to see of Fiji — drums beating, grass skirts shaking, kava ceremonies and friendly smiling faces with lovely beaches in the background.

It looks untainted by the serials and sitcoms which air diligently every night from 7pm onwards on *Fiji One*.

But this isn't so, according to the interviewees. These voices belong to well known media personalities from Fiji, and some from outside, working in Fiji, including a couple of our very own journalism students, a very confident villager with a flower behind his ear and also a Fijian village chief.

This documentary not so loudly says that globalisation in the form of television is slowly erasing an identity of a nation and its people with an efficient eraser. It is sensitive in portraying Fijian culture — it makes us think, it makes some of us angry.

But then it's not made for us Fijians. It's Fiji packaged for the outside world.