

Soap operas and development

肥皂剧与发展

Good trash

肥皂剧也可以有用

How television and radio shows can improve behaviour

电视和广播怎样改进人们的行为

May 5th 2011 | from The Economist print edition

In the radio drama “Nau em Taim” ( “Now is the time” in Pidgin) aired in Papua New Guinea, a widowed father takes up dynamite fishing—profitable but disastrous for the reef. Then he meets a dashing marine scientist who warns him off. The idea is that by the end of the drama, which debuted in February, both he—and the listeners—will renounce dynamite for sustainable fishing.

在巴布亚新几内亚播出的广播剧 “Nautica em Taim” (用洋泾浜英语说就是 “现在是时候了” )中，一个丧偶的父亲开始从事用炸药捕鱼的行当——利润可观但对珊瑚危害很大。之后他遇见一位冲劲儿十足的海洋专家，这个人警告他不要再从事这项行业。这部于二月首播的广播剧的主旨就是播到剧尾的时候，这个父亲和听众都将谴责炸药对捕鱼业可发展性的危害。

The show’s producer, the Population Media Center (PMC) in Vermont, has been a pioneer of programmes with the goal of fostering development. But other groups have increasingly followed suit. In Vietnam Khat Vong Song uses radio drama to teach its listeners about domestic violence. In Kenya Mediae promotes civil rights with a television soap called “Makutano Junction” .

该广播剧的制作方式佛蒙特州的人口传媒中心(PMC)是通过电视广播节目来促进发展方面的先锋。不过其他机构也在不断效仿。在越南，Khat Vong Song 使用广播剧向听众教授家庭暴力方面的知识。肯尼亚的 Mediae 通过电视剧《Makutano Junction》推广民权。

Evidence that radio and television soaps can change behaviour was first spotted in the 1970s. But solid academic research was lacking until a few years ago. In 2008 economists at the Inter-American Development Bank, for instance, found that Brazilians receiving Globo, a television network, had fewer children and got divorced more often. Another study discovered that, as cable television spread, the fertility rate in rural India dropped by as much as if women had received five additional years of education.

能证明广播剧和电视剧可以改变人们的行为方式的证据首次出现在上个世纪 70 年代。但是直到前几年才有可靠的学术研究出现。比如 2008 年，在美洲发展银行的经济学家们发现收看电视网络 Globo 的巴西人生孩子较少、离婚更频繁。另一项研究发现，随着有线电视的普及，印度乡村地区的生育率降低的程度相当于妇女再接受五年的额外教育。