Abstract
The relationship between communication and active civic participation in democracy is studied here. The differences between representative and full democracy where citizens participate in processes that enhance and go beyond voting are examined. The importance of deliberation and face-to-face communication in community's environment is also pointed out, along with the menace to the quality of democracy derived from exclusion. The deviations and threats that represent the use and abuse of mass media in today complex democracies are discussed with emphasis on Venezuelan recent history.

Keywords
Democracy, participation, deliberation, exclusion