

# 'Radio Bemba'

Cuba's communist government regulates the Internet as a controlled substance. At the same time, the state owns all domestic media, but one domestic information source has slipped through the state's fingers: the traditional word on the street. Cubans even have a name for it: they call it "Radio Bemba."

Even though most folks trust it as much, if not more, than what they read in the Communist Party's Granma Newspaper, Radio Bemba is just Cuban slang for the rumor mill, the grapevine, street-side chitchat as news.

More times than not, some nugget of news rolling along Radio Bemba's "airwaves" turns out to be right, or at least to contain a grain of truth. Radio Bemba is the only place to go, Radio Bemba is prone to stretching the truth – the juicier, the better. Often only really source of information. But, gossip is only part of the picture. Radio Bemba is also about uncovering news the government aims to repress.

As you can imagine, word spread fast on Radio Bemba. It's pretty impossible to keep a secret with that many people involved.

Then and now, Radio Bemba can exaggerate or change the news. But as comedian Carlos Ruiz de la Tejera points out, "It remains one of the most effective means of communication" in Cuba.

extracted from:

[http://worldblog.msnbc.msn.com/\\_news/2007/02/15/4376286-radio-bemba-word-of-mouth-news-for-cubans](http://worldblog.msnbc.msn.com/_news/2007/02/15/4376286-radio-bemba-word-of-mouth-news-for-cubans)

